

For Publication

Commemorations Review

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	12.01.2021
Cabinet portfolio:	Governance
Directorate:	Corporate

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To report on the findings so far of the commemorations review and to move to the consultation stage of the review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the findings from phase 1 of the commemorations review and the work undertaken to develop a broader understanding of the borough's monuments, statues, plaques and street names.
- 2.2 That phase 2 of the review is commenced which includes further public consultation to inform future commemoration activity.
- 2.3 That information is improved on the Chesterfield Borough Council website regarding street naming and re-naming and that Derbyshire Building Control are also requested to review and improve information on their website.
- 2.4 That Chesterfield Borough Council works with Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Civic Society to seek to improve the information listed about current and future blue plaques to provide more historical context and support educational opportunities.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations

3.1 To improve access to information about current commemorations within Chesterfield Borough and to help to shape future plans.

4.0 Report details

4.1 Background

In June 2020, the Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council made a commitment, alongside the leaders of a large number of other Councils to review the appropriateness of commemorations within Chesterfield Borough on public land including monuments, statues, plaques and street names. A commitment was also made to ask our communities who is currently missing from our commemorations and how we can ensure future commemorations provide opportunities for education and to celebrate the history of Chesterfield Borough and our diverse communities.

4.2 Monuments and statues

There are a large number of monuments and statues across Chesterfield Borough which showcase our rich industrial heritage and culture. There is a particular wealth of commemorations dedicated to the mining industry, early trade unionism and railway engineering. There are also a number of first and second world war memorials.

4.3 The council has operated a 'Percent for Art' scheme since 1994 which has seen the completion of over 80 new art schemes located throughout the borough that help to create a sense of place and add character to the built environment.

4.4 Many of these schemes draw on our industrial heritage including the statues of industrial workers in Staveley Market Place commemorating our railways, mining and steel industries or Mollusc at Riverside Village which depicts the huge water turbines once made at Markham Works which used to occupy the site. Other schemes draw inspiration from nature and our environment such as the Woodland Guardians at West Wood in Inkersall and Summer Fruits at Linacre Road which commemorates our rural history. Other schemes highlight our ambitions for the future including the famous Growth sculpture at Horns Bridge roundabout which signifies the confidence and continuous growth of the town.

- 4.5 The Chesterfield Borough Local Plan previously required all development schemes within the borough costing over £1 million to include a work of art to the value of 1% of the total cost of the project. Smaller schemes were also encouraged to include artworks within their design. The percent for art scheme has not only provided over 80 fantastic art works and schemes for the borough but also included considerable community involvement with artists leading workshops with schools, Chesterfield college and with community groups to develop the works.
- 4.6 During the last Local Plan examination in 2020 the Planning Inspector recommended that this requirement be eased. This may impact on our ability to increase the number of art works and commemorations within the borough but we have made a commitment to continue to encourage developers to commit to the scheme and community involvement.
- 4.7 The review of monuments and statues has identified a large number of commemorations which are a valuable part of our heritage and commemorate individuals, organisations, historical events, our industrial past and future as well as our environment. These have helped to shape our great borough and have formed a valuable part of our townscape for many years and will continue to do so. The full percent for art trail guide can be found [here](#).
- 4.8 In June 2020, we asked residents to identify any monuments or statues that they would particularly like the review to consider. No submissions were received.

4.9 Plaques

Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Civic Society place blue plaques to commemorate either the intrinsic worth of a building, or an association with people or historical events of significance to the borough. There are currently twenty within the borough.

- 4.10 Some of the plaques relate to prominent individuals with key links to our borough such as Emma Miller the women's rights activist and founder of the Queensland (Australia) Labour movement or George Stephenson the engineer and railway pioneer. There are also more contemporary plaques including the commemoration to James Pullen

MBE at the corner of Elder way for his service to all the charities he collected for over a 40 year period at that site.

4.11 The majority of plaques however relate to key buildings showcasing our rich architectural heritage including Tapton House, Elder Yard Unitarian Chapel and the Peacock Building. One of these commemorated buildings is Heathcote House, a grade II* listed stone-built house c.1620, however the site history at St. Mary's Gate can be dated to 1496. The plaque was erected by the Chesterfield Civic Society on private property and relates to the building rather than the Heathcote family.

4.12 The Chesterfield Civic Society website includes a small amount of information regarding the Heathcote family in relation to Heathcote House and Chesterfield *"It was acquired in 1614 by Gilbert Heathcote , who probably erected the present structure before his death in 1634 . The Heathcote family were prominent in the business and corporate life of Chesterfield from the end of the fifteenth century to the seventeenth"*. During our review of commemorations, we identified several direct links between members of the Heathcote family and the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonialism.

4.13 While the blue plaque itself relates to the Grade II* listed building (privately owned) rather than the Heathcote family, there is potentially an opportunity to work with the Chesterfield Civic Society to better reflect the historical context of the house and family connections within the plaque listing. There is also an opportunity for Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Civic Society to improve the information listed about current and future plaques to provide more context and educational opportunities.

4.14 In June 2020, we asked residents to identify any plaques that they would particularly like the review to consider. No submissions were received. Further information about blue plaques and their locations can be accessed [here](#).

4.15 Street names

There are over 1600 street names within Chesterfield Borough, a very small number of which have associations with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and/or colonialism through significant historical figures. This includes three roads named after Boar War Generals – Lord Roberts

Road, Redvers Buller Road and Baden Powell Road in the Birdholme area of Chesterfield.

4.16 In June 2020, we asked residents to identify any streets names that they would particularly like the review to consider. Representations were made by the public regarding the street names Rhodes Avenue in Newbold and Rhodesia Road in Brampton. Concerns were raised around potential links to the British Crown colony of Southern Rhodesia and/or linked to Cecil Rhodes the Prime Minister of Cape Colony. There is however a weight of evidence that these particular street names were named for William Rhodes the former mayor of Chesterfield, Alderman and Freeman of the Borough. William Rhodes was a developer and builder but also one of the most prominent borough councillors in the inter-war period driving forward a number of large private and public housing schemes.

4.17 Street naming

Derbyshire Building Control Partnership (on behalf of Chesterfield Borough Council) are responsible for all street naming and property numbering within the Chesterfield Borough Council area. The primary objective in naming streets is to facilitate easy identification of premises by, the emergency services, postal / delivery services and general visitors to the area, amongst others. All addresses form part of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which covers the whole of England and Wales.

4.18 In the majority of cases the developer will propose names for the new development or request suggestions from the Council. In both cases local ward members for the area will be consulted. A number of street naming conventions are followed including:

- Street names for new developments should not be duplicated within a postal district area
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell
- Names of living or deceased persons will not be allowed, unless agreement of the named person's family or estate administrators has been obtained
- Street names, where possible should reflect the history or geography of the site or area
- Street names construed as advertising will not be allowed

- Street names that could be considered to be offensive will not be allowed
- Dependant street names will not be allowed (eg Mill Close, Park Lane)
- Where a road is in two parts, the use of North, South, East and West in street names should be avoided (eg North Road East and North Road West). It is preferred that two different road names are used
- Phonetically similar names within a postal town area should be avoided
- Historic street naming and Numbering practices have often resulted in many streets in close proximity being assigned the same name but with a differing suffix, eg. Brunel Road, Brunel Avenue, Brunel Close, etc. The Department of Transport advises against this practice. Proposals to name new roads in an area using a differing suffix will normally be refused

4.19 Street re-naming

Street re-naming is a lengthy and complicated legal process to complete. A key part of the process includes consultation with residents living at properties on the street or road and businesses operating from that location. This is important as any name change will affect residents and businesses in many ways. This could include updating property deeds, mortgage, rental, insurance and bills associated with the property, personal records such as driving licenses, medical records and bank details and for businesses website changes, letterheads and tax and payroll records, this is all at a cost to the residents and businesses residing on the particular street. A number of statutory bodies would also need to be consulted including the Highways Authority, Derbyshire County Council. Key information including the consultation responses would then need to be considered by Chesterfield Borough Council's Planning Committee with a decision being taken on the name change. Residents have a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court.

4.20 Street naming information

Information about street naming and re-naming is fairly limited on both the Chesterfield Borough Council website and on the Derbyshire Building Control website. This is potentially a barrier for residents seeking to make suggestions for future street names on developments and to consider if they would like to apply for street re-naming. We are

recommending that information is reviewed and improved on both key websites.

4.21 Other types of commemoration activity

Chesterfield Museum's main display tells the story of Chesterfield, from its beginnings as a Roman Fort to the building of the 'Crooked Spire', the growth of the market town, the industrial revolution and into more modern history.

4.22 The Museum also has a changing programme of exhibitions that look at Chesterfield in a variety of different ways including the commemoration and celebration of people, organisations and communities. This has included building a trench to commemorate the end of World War One, hosting exhibitions from local community groups and organisations including the Chinese Big Society, Chesterfield College and Derbyshire LGBT+. In 2016 there was an extensive exhibition looking at the 'Great and the Good' of Chesterfield in portraits. Chesterfield Museum presents a significant opportunity for further commemoration, celebration and education.

4.23 The Council directly delivers and supports other partners to deliver a range of activities and events across the Borough. Some of these offer excellent opportunities for commemorating, celebrating and supporting education activities linked to individuals, historical events and communities. For example, Chesterfield Borough Council and the Chesterfield equality and Diversity Forum have supported Black History Month projects with the African Caribbean Association, supported and promoted Chesterfield Pride amongst a range of events and activities.

4.24 In more recent years flag flying from key buildings and social media activity has become more prominent in commemorating events and celebrating our diverse communities. The Mayor of Chesterfield is also often invited to represent the Borough at a range of commemorations and celebratory activity. There are also civic commemorations including Alderman status for former elected members and Freeman of the Borough – the highest honour that Chesterfield Borough Council can give in recognition of service to the borough and out communities.

4.25 Future Commemorations consultation

As part of the review we are recommending further consultation around future commemorations. This will include:

- Preferred ways to commemorate and celebrate key figures, organisations, historical events and communities
- Principles for commemorations for example links to the Borough
- Gathering ideas for potential future commemorations and celebration activity
- Improving access to information about existing commemoration activity

5.0 Alternative options

5.1 No alternative options have been identified.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

6.1 This activity contributes to the improving the quality of life for local people strand of the Council Plan.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

7.1 The majority of commemorations have previously been funded via external sources including percent for art contributions, grant funding or community funds. Funding is in place for a small number of temporary exhibitions at the museum, events and flag flying. Community Infrastructure Levy (Neighbourhood Portion) funding has recently been used to support Chesterfield Civic Society in creating further blue plaque commemorations for the borough. There is currently no budget set aside for commemorations – either their creation or indeed removal where appropriate.

7.2 Estimated costs of further commemoration activity has been identified as part of the review:

- Additional blue plaques £500 each
- Additional museum exhibition - £1,000
- Additional equality and diversity event or partnership support £500
- Additional sculpture – up to £15,000

Street re-naming incurs the following estimated costs from Derbyshire Building Control Partnership (DBCP) - £309 fee per street name change for up to 20 properties then £11 per property thereafter. In addition to DBCP fees there will also be financial and resource commitments for:

- Visiting all properties to discuss the name change with residents prior to the formal DBCP consultation
- Preparing and submitting block plans for existing street names and numbers including any business addresses
- Developing and potentially consulting on new name options
- Preparing the report for Planning Committee
- Legal action taken against the Council for additional costs emerging from the name change by residents, organisations and businesses
- Changes to street furniture including new street signage

8.0 Implications for consideration - Legal

8.1 The street naming legislation covering England and Wales (excluding London) is contained in:

- Section 64 and 65 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847
- Section 160 of the Public Health Act 1875
- Section 21 of the Public Health Act 1907
- Section 17, 18 and 19 of the Public Health Act 1925
- The Local Government Act 1972

9.0 Implications for consideration - Human resources

9.1 Additional commemoration activity including schemes, event, activities, funding bids and support all require human resource commitments. These will need to be considered against other commitments and priorities as part of the decision-making process.

10.0 Implications for consideration - Risk management

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Being unable to secure additional funding and/ partnerships / developer agreements to enable support further commemorations.	M	H	Continue to encourage developers to take part on the percent for art scheme. Work with partners and funders to levy external funding where possible. Creativity with existing funding streams to	L	M

			improve commemoration, celebration and education activity.		
Human resource challenges to support new commemoration develop.	M	H	Ensure human resource impacts are fully assessed before committing to and engaging in activity. Re-prioritisation of resources where possible. Take a partnership approach where possible to maximise capacity and skills are all partners.	M	M
Street re-naming costs financial, human resources and legal implications.	H	H	Improve access to information about street naming and re-naming to ensure full implications are known prior to applications being submitted. Support a resident led approach to street re-naming.	M	M

11.0 Implications for consideration – Community wellbeing

11.1 The proposed commemoration consultation offers an excellent opportunity for further community engagement and will help shape further commemoration, celebration and education work.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Economy and skills

12.1 No specific considerations have been identified.

13.0 Implications for consideration – Climate Change

13.1 Climate change considerations including the carbon footprint will need to be a key consideration in developing plans for future commemoration activity.

14.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

14.1 Past and future commemorations offer an excellent opportunity to celebrate the Borough of Chesterfield’s diverse communities. Members of the equality and diversity forum along with all residents and community groups will be encouraged to take part in the proposed consultation. Any policy or practice change following the consultation will include development and consideration of an equality impact assessment as part of the decision-making process.

Decision information

Key decision number	1001
Wards affected	All

Document information

Report author
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Background documents
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
None
Appendices to the report
None