

**UPDATE ON THE "REBELLION" BOARD**

**Meeting held in Ilminster Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 2014**

There has been considerable difficulty in determining the most a suitable location for the board because of the objectives that needed to be met.

1. The board should not be on private land because of the potential problems in the future.
2. The board should not be sited in a position that could be impacted by future development.
3. It should be placed in a central location most likely to be seen by tourists
4. There should be enough space to allow people to stand and read the board in safety and without causing obstruction to others.

The need to avoid private land meant that it would almost certainly be in Highway land owned by Somerset County Council. For that reason a meeting was held with the following people in attendance to review the possible options

- Mike Fear                      Assistant Highways Service Manager Somerset County Council
- Zoë Harris                     Neighbourhood Development Officer (West) SSDC
- Linda Piggott                President Elect Ilminster Rotary Club
- Tony Walker                 Community Services Committee Ilminster Rotary



**Replace the existing board.**

This has been discounted as there is insufficient space to install the required size board and there are too many services in the pavement to permit a stand-alone board

**In The Swan Precinct**

This was the initial proposal as there was plenty of space. It was, however, not , at the time, followed up as, at that time, the development status was unsure.

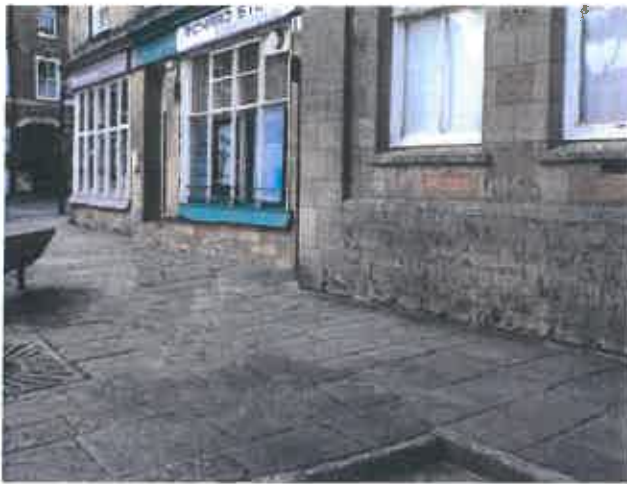
Development is now underway but still fails on objectives 1 and 3. However Zoe has since pointed out that as it would be on private land, it might save us the £510 licence fee so might have to be reconsidered!!



**In the left-hand archway of the Market House.**

This would be similar to an existing board installed in the right-hand archway.

This has been dropped because the impending construction work for the Gooch and Housego site meant that it failed objective 2 above



**On the pavement in front of Stent's Opticians and Gooch and Housego**

Again this had to be dropped because of objective 2 above, the outstanding planning application for the Gooch and Housego site. When plans and timescales become available it may be worth reconsidering

**On Wall of the Meeting House / Frog Lane**

This was originally thought to have been a good idea because it was still close to the Town Centre with the advantage that the Tourist Information Office was in the Meeting House. It was finally discarded because of the cobbled slope instead of a pavement and it was likely to be difficult to get permission to level the slope.





### **McColls wall in Ditton Street**

This had the advantage of plenty of space on the pavement but lost favour because it failed objective 3 being somewhat out of the way for Tourists.

### **Outside Milford & Dormer adjacent to the Co-Op**

This has become the favourite option, provided Milford and Dormer does not object and it meets all of the objectives.

Mr Fear also felt that there would probably be no objection to moving the "No Parking" sign to the left and possibly using it to provide one leg of the board support.



Having agreed that the Milford & Dormer / Co-op site met the highest number of site objectives, it was suggested that the display objectives of the board should be re-visited In the light of further work that had been carried out and a preliminary project plan created with revised costings that could be presented to relevant organisations with a view to obtaining their support.

In view of the need to obtain a licence from the County Council at a cost of approximately £510 and the possibility that an A0 size board may be needed instead of the original planned A1 board, it is probable that additional funding will be required. Zoe Harris and Linda Piggott have done preliminary work to determine possible sources of income. These will be investigated further but it does appear that a possible source of additional funding, the Heritage Lottery Fund may be rather too ambitious. We shall have to see!!

## **Review objectives of the board**

During the time that discussions have been going on about possible location of the board, more study has been carried out on the basic objectives of the board.

The current "Rebellion" board suffers from poor graphic design, the colour is rather drab and does not attract attention and there is a lot of text and little in the way of images that would attract greater attention. The point has also been made that whilst the story is of interest Ilminster's involvement is relatively limited as the battle itself was held in Westonzoyland. There is, of course great local personality interest because of the involvement by many Ilminster residents, relatives of whom are still living in the Ilminster today. Another important item of history is the Bloody Assizes held by Lord Chief Justice Judge Jefferys. Whilst it is suggested that the trial was held in the Swan Hotel Ilminster, others claim that the assizes were actually held in the Castle in Taunton.

Whilst this is undoubtedly an interesting historical story it has been pointed out that Ilminster is actually very rich in other historical facts. For this reason a further proposal has been made that we base the content of the board on a "timeline" of Ilminster history. This would have a number of benefits.

- The Monmouth rebellion and its relationship with relatives who are still alive can be retained.
- It could be possible to for the board's information to support the work being done by the Ilminster Forum and its work in producing tourist information leaflets.
- We could also look to the successful History Trail run by the Ilminster Experience last summer.
- The historical range going back to AD 995 would create stories from a wide range of Ilminster history thus increasing the level of interest.

Of course the wider historical timescale creates even more information so a great deal of work would be required in selecting the detail that should be published. With this in mind, both Mr Edward Wells a local solicitor with a great knowledge of local history and Mr Duncan Chalmers, recently retired deputy Keeper of Documents for England have produced timelines showing the significant dates from AD 995 that could be used as a base for further work. It is hoped that other people and groups with local interest and knowledge would be willing to help with this work.

For the reasons mentioned above, it is suggested that the project name is changed from "The Monmouth Rebellion Board" to "The History of Ilminster Board". With the agreement of Ilminster Town Council and also The Ilminster Forum, it is also suggested that the existing "Rebellion Board" remains in place with minor reparation work being carried out by the project team.

## **Preliminary Outline Project plan**

- Agree the revised project objectives and site with The Rotary Club, Ilminster Town Council and The Ilminster Forum.
- Start minor repair work on the existing board.
- Seek agreement with Ilminster Town Council that they will be prepared to adopt the new board so that it can be covered by the ITC insurance in the future.
- Prepare installation plan showing outline construction and position.
- Seek agreement in principle with Milford and Dormer for the proposed position.
- Verify with Somerset County Council that the proposed site is acceptable
- Set up project development team to determine
  - The items to be covered by the board
  - Verify that this will be consistent with Ilminster Forum plans
  - Examine possibility of creating a “history trail” based on the 2014 work carried out by the Ilminster Forum and Robert Stone, Solicitors.
  - The layout and wording on the board
  - Seek out images and drawings that can be included
  - Determine overall design and colour scheme
- Obtain costs for
  - Manufacturing of the board
  - Professional board design and its creation
  - County Council license costs
  - Planning Approval costs
  - Siting and Installation work
- Determine acceptable timescales
- Seek formal agreement to take consolidated plans forward
- Agree final funding arrangements.

