

From:

Sent: 26 October 2021 12:50

To: Shona King; Planning

Subject: Water tower comments for planning decision

Dear Shona King,

I would like the following comments to be recorded regarding the amendment of the S106 agreement to remove the demolition of the water tower from the Bunkers Hill planning application.

I am sure that the planning department & councilors will be well aware of our family's campaign to save the water tower as a habitat for bats & the small, rarely visited woodland that would be destroyed in the demolition. This is a valuable habitat for many birds and in particular it is home to a family of hedgehogs which are becoming increasingly endangered.

There is no need or reason to demolish 'Old Walter' apart from fulfilling the S106 agreement. The placement of the camper van on top was firstly to raise public awareness of the failures of the planning system that allows relentless building in the open countryside; especially when it prioritises the building of large executive homes without starter housing for young families, coupled with the reliance of cars to get safely to local amenities such as schools & shops.

Secondly, lots of promises were made to our community six years ago which have disappeared one by one. Recently the promise of 20 years sewerage maintenance was converted into just £6k and the £48k land purchase from residents to site the klargester also vanished. Outline planning was given against government guidelines based 'on balance' that it would greatly benefit our community but it is now hard to see how this is the case.

The camper van remained on the water tower in an effort to get the developers back to the negotiating table and to support the removal of the demolition order. Unfortunately, no lost benefits have been offered to residents but myself & supporters of the campaign are pleased that the developers now appear to support saving the tower for wildlife.

However, I would ask that the council & councillors consider insisting that the demolition cost be given in lieu to residents (+ cost of not providing a steel building to house pumps). Then residents can decide whether to use this to buy community land or use it to maintain the tower & woodland.

As a final note, our family is dedicated to raising awareness of mental illness & continuously fundraise for Mind along with nature conservation charities. The wildflower Meadow which is overlooked by 'Old Walter' is playing a big part in this and has recently raised several thousand pounds for these charities by inviting families to enjoy the wildflowers & admire 'Humphrey & Old Walter'. See attachments for more information.

The water tower's sad face has been recently changed to a happy smile and is the future focus of ongoing education to children & local primary schools to teach about kindness to each other & to the environment. In addition, we are planning to write children's books with Humphrey & Walter as leading characters.

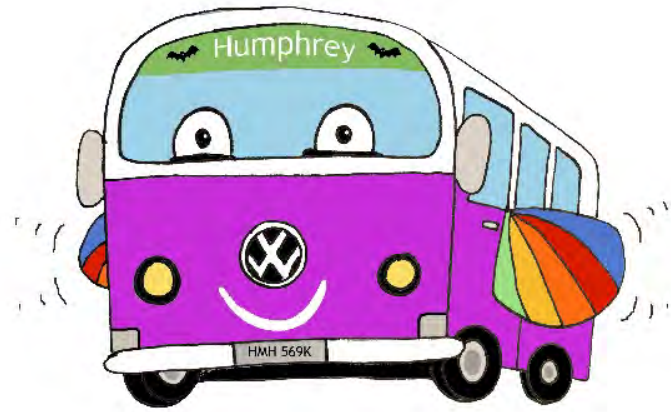
I hope that a decision can be made to save the water tower for all the right reasons & not just to reward the developers in saving the demolition costs.

Kind regards
Mr & Mrs Leaning
1 & 2 Bunkers Hill



Humphrey

The



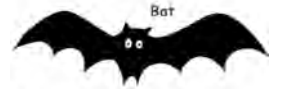
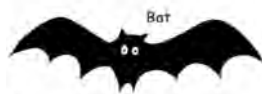
Eco-Discombobulator

If you look up towards the sky you will see Humphrey perched upon Old Walter's loaf of bread (head)!

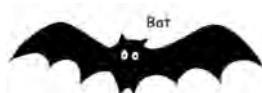
Why is he up there?

Local developers wanted to demolish Old Walter the water tower as part of a condition to gain planning permission for 10 houses describing him as "unsafe" & "an eyesore".

Humphrey didn't want to lose his best friend or the surrounding woodland so he flew on the top of Walter's head to protest against the demolition.



Boris the bat & his cloud are hoping to move into the derelict water tower which is dark & a perfect residence for endangered, homeless flying mammals.



Did it work?



Humphrey's antics have drawn attention to the unfair treatment of Old Walter who was used as a pawn in a mean game between the developers & council to secure planning permission for 10 executive houses on a former bowling green & sports club (sadly no starter homes or first-time buyer homes).

Since Humphrey's heroic protest, the developers have recently applied to the council to have the condition removed from the s106 planning obligations.

This is a big success for Humphrey and his woodland friends! If approved then the birds & animals will be able to enjoy the safety of the small woodland which won't then be felled. The water tower will then be preserved for a unique bat roost.

But...what happens to the demolition costs the developers save?

What about allotments & recreational area for the community?



What about giving it to the community for future maintenance costs of Walter & the

Maybe it will be used to build a footpath/bicycle lane to Kidlington?



Will it perhaps go to planting trees to offset the environmental impact of having new houses built?



Unfortunately, the most likely outcome is that it will stay in the developers' pockets



Who helped Humphrey with his Campaign?

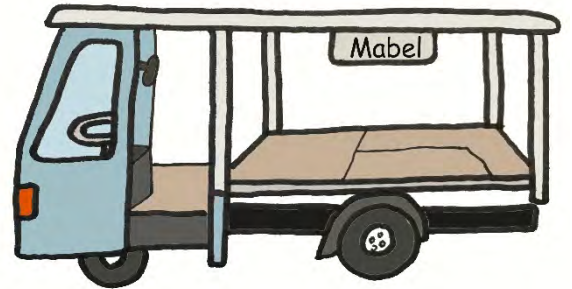
Humphrey had help from a lot of friends!

The milk float girls

On hearing that the developers may try an offensive, the nursery's

vintage milk floats came out of retirement to help him!

Mabel, Mildred & Maud formed a rear-guard blockade whilst Florence (the nursery's famous orange & white Unigate) stood guard at the front approach ready for a 5mph dash to save Walter & the woodland!



Humphrey & Old Walter's Allies

Hundreds of our determined friends, family, customers & those from afar supported Humphrey in saving Old Walter.

They offered to form human-chains around him, signed petitions & shared his story around the world to raise awareness of his plight.



Andrew vowed to move into Humphrey the campervan should a wrecking ball & chain saws be mobilised in a dawn raid. He was quite looking forward to a break from watering the nursery & moving into the camping pitch with the best view in Britain!





Who is Humphrey?

He is our nursery family's 1970 VW Campervan who enjoys going on adventures & exploring the natural world.

Humphrey is a very special Campervan & unlike any you are likely to meet...

Despite his cheerful & easygoing personality, he can be rather stubborn at times. He especially dislikes rudeness, bullies & bad manners.

Nincompoops who pollute and discard litter and industrial waste, as well as anyone who is unkind to nature & animals makes him particularly grumpy.

Then instead of being Humphrey 'the happy camper' he transforms into...

Humphrey the Eco-Discombobulator

He has all manner of hidden gadgets at his disposal which come into action at the flick of a switch like the popcorn-flinger, the fuddle fogging machine, the marshmallow-pult.

His greatest ability is being able to fly! Rather like an oversized bumblebee, his rotary rainbow wings allow him to defy the laws of physics & gravity.

The future for Humphrey?

Once Humphrey has flown down to the ground, he is on a mission to help others!

There are 2 main focuses for him:

Helping communities with development issues

There are countless communities, especially rural ones, who are falling prey to developers' greed. Promises to the residents are made but once planning is granted then quickly fall away until they are left with nothing but a new development & the countless problems that come with that when the location is unsustainable & cars are the only way to get to shops & schools.

Humphrey wants to help those communities by **gaining publicity** for the campaigns to stop the rural countryside being sacrificed to development – Humphrey will visit villages under threat & join in their campaign to thwart unreasonable planning application.

Educating & Inspiring Children

Humphrey plans to travel to schools & children's groups to inspire them to care for nature and to help protect the environment.

They will be able to see his superpower gadgets that help him to tackle environmental nincompoops who are spoiling the natural world for future generations!

He will explore ways in which we can all do something to make a difference, such as planting trees, cutting down on plastic use, encouraging nature into our gardens, working at one with the environment, walking to school, growing our own vegetables, stopping litter, recycling & community kindness.

He is also set to star in his own books where he travels the world helping those affected by environmental problems



The future for Old Walter?

Awaiting the result of the council's decision...

We hope that Old Walter remains surrounded by his woodland and friends.



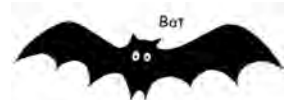
We know that he would enjoy his twilight years overlooking his wildflower meadow and seeing the joy it brings to so many families.



He may even become a unique home for Boris the bat & his cloud. They are frequently seen flying over nursery & meadow!



Boris has stated that the dark & dank water tower interior is just what he was looking for & would be pleased to move in. The abundance of flying insects above the meadow will provide many tasty snacks for him & his chums.



Walter's Meadow...the story so far



Walter's Meadow began as a piece of farmland. A few years ago, it was purchased by the nursery in order to protect it from developers.

sowed the field with (late) and it produced display of colour i.e. cornflowers & dozens perennials made a spectacular display in the autumn.



In the 1st year we wildflower seeds the most amazing Poppies, of other annuals &



The 2nd year it was left to its own devices and it became a mass of ox-eye daisies, knapweed & other perennial wild flowers.

This year the meadow has some bits left as perennial wildflowers but then mazes & swirls of annual wildflowers, plus pathways of clover were sown. The weather was a bit temperamental this year so flowers & grasses have come up at different times.

Future years will be keeping the balance achieved this year between annuals & perennials but will be introducing more buttercups, scabious & foxgloves and keep our fingers crossed for the odd self-wandering orchid.