

# Community MATTERS

THE NEWT IN SOMERSET

## Dear Neighbours,

The Sunflower Festival has been a highlight of the summer in Castle Cary, with the town bathed in yellow and wonderful displays seemingly around every corner. Cary in Bloom is about much more than beautiful flowers however, and we were delighted to support the Sow, Grow, Bloom Festival, which raised more than £7,000 for local causes despite the blisteringly hot weather. The day also offered a first taste of The Angel Inn, just one of several exciting upcoming projects.

We know there is always plenty of interest in what we are building and restoring locally, so it's over to Paul, our Director of Developments, for the latest rundown on what is taking shape in our community.



### The Angel Inn

The bar has been fitted, and the beer taps will soon be going in!

The renovation of The Angel Inn has been something of a mammoth undertaking. Almost every wall, floor and section of roof has needed to be carefully strengthened, repaired or replaced, drawing on an enormous amount of skill and craftsmanship.

With the scaffolding now down, much of that work can finally be seen, although the new breathable lime render and limewash take some time to settle, so a little patience is required.

Inside, the three-bedroom suites are taking shape beautifully, while the glass roof craned into place over the courtyard has enhanced the downstairs space. We look forward to completing the final stages over the next few months and, we hope, opening the doors before the New Year.

### The George

Following lengthy and detailed discussions with the local planning authority and historic building conservation officers, the revised design for the renovation and extension of The George Hotel is taking shape.

The proposals retain the facilities previously planned, including hotel rooms, a pub bar and restaurant, but the design has evolved considerably. We believe the revised scheme is more characterful, more closely connected to Castle Cary and certainly, more exciting. We look forward to sharing our proposals at a drop-in session at the Market House, Castle Cary, on 8 October, from 4.30pm to 7.30pm.

### Shatwell Yard

Work to integrate Shatwell Yard into the Farnyard Hotel is now well underway, with the main construction programme four months into its anticipated two-year schedule.

The opening phase has concentrated on below-ground drainage, services and foundations. Three approved surface-water attenuation basins have also been completed, which will help the site capture and manage rainwater during even the heaviest future rainfall events.

Over the coming months, the replacement buildings will begin to emerge, and the new shape of the lower yard will gradually become visible.

### Succulent Eco-mound

The project team continues to work with the local planning authority and its specialists to finalise the planning application for the Succulent Eco-mound - a proposed covered growing space for our extensive Karoo succulent collection within the main visitor attraction.

The ancient woodland near the proposed site is an important habitat. We are therefore working closely with arboriculture and ecological specialists to ensure the design enhances, rather than harms, its setting.

Alongside the new garden within the Eco-mound, the proposals include hundreds of new trees, hedgerows and areas of biodiverse groundcover planting across the surrounding landscape. We look forward to progressing this exciting project through the planning process.

### From the Farm

Unsurprisingly, it has been a challenging summer on the farm. The drought has significantly affected grass and crop growth, although the early harvest brought one unusual advantage: the combine enjoyed an almost uninterrupted run throughout July.

Development of Sleigh Farm is progressing well. All the main buildings have now been erected and, with the milking parlour taking shape, the team remains on track to begin milking by the end of October.

### Final Word...

from Cameron, Farm Manager

Despite the grass burning off in the extreme heat, our British White cattle have fared remarkably well. Their rare-breed, low-input genetics allow them to make the most of poorer-quality, drier grass and continue supporting their calves throughout the summer.

Elsewhere, our buffalo have been making the most of the shade beneath the trees and cooling off in their wallows. Unlike cattle, buffalo have very few sweat glands and prefer to regulate their temperature by covering themselves in cool mud.

Our orchard harvest is also likely to begin early. The prolonged dry spell could give the apples an especially sweet flavour - something our cyder team will be watching closely when blending this autumn's juices.

## Get in Touch

As always, I'd love to hear from you. If you have ideas, feedback, opportunities for collaboration or know of a project that could benefit from support, please do get in touch.

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## Dates for your Diary

THE GEORGE CONSULTATION: 8 OCTOBER

CASTLE CARY CARNIVAL: 17 OCTOBER

APPLE DAY WEEKEND, THE NEWT: 17-18 OCTOBER