



## Fen Edge Family Festival 2011

At the end of June the village hosted another stunningly successful Fen Edge Family Festival. Over the weekend the Design Group joined other exhibitors in Cottenham Village College's new sixth form building to promote the group and its activities.

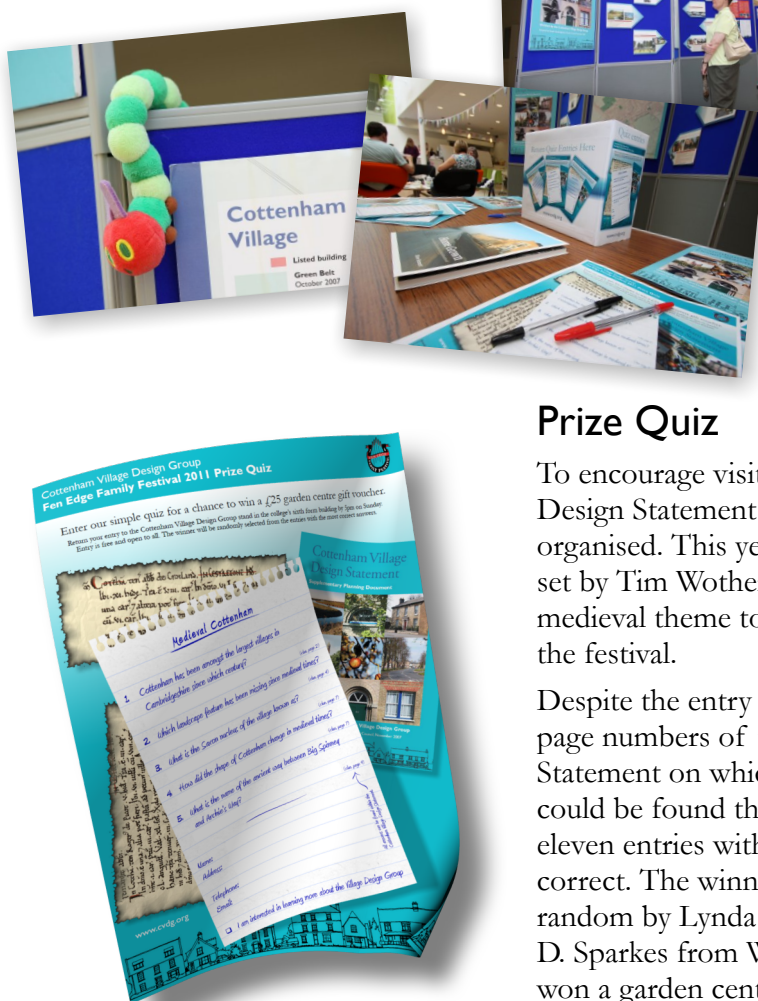
As usual an enlarged version of the village map from the Design Statement's centre pages was one of main draws. The displays also provided details of the recent AGM talk and visit to Accordia, as well as advertising the Orchard Park tour that took place a couple of weeks after the festival.



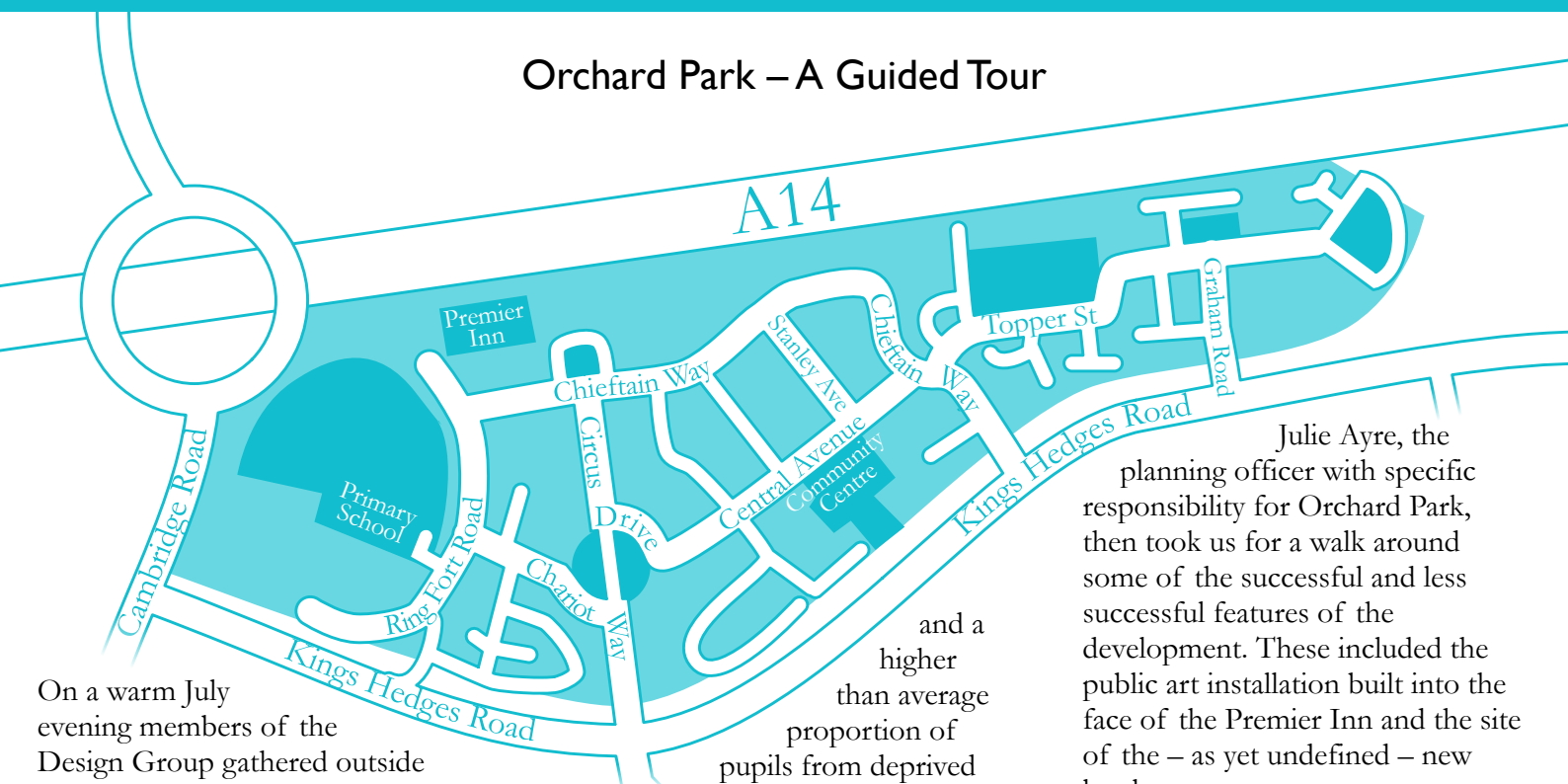
## Prize Quiz

To encourage visitors to read the Design Statement a prize quiz was organised. This year the questions, set by Tim Wotherspoon, all had a medieval theme to match that of the festival.

Despite the entry form giving the page numbers of the Design Statement on which the answers could be found there were only eleven entries with all answers correct. The winning entry drawn at random by Lynda Harford was D. Sparkes from Waterbeach who won a garden centre voucher.



## Orchard Park – A Guided Tour



On a warm July evening members of the Design Group gathered outside the Primary School at Orchard Park. We were joined by members of South Cambridgeshire District Council for a guided tour of this new settlement on Cambridge's northern fringe.

Formerly known as Arbury Park the site was originally the location of an orchard for Chivers and a testing ground for Unwin Seeds. It is now the location for up to 900 dwellings, of which 300 are classed as affordable, as well as two hotels.

The tour started with a look around the Primary School led by Clare Blair, chair of the school's board of governors and member of the Orchard Park Community Council. The school is clearly thriving despite having to deal with rapid expansion

and a higher than average proportion of pupils from deprived backgrounds or with special needs.

However, it was noted that the school's green energy measures had been of mixed success. The original hot water solar panels were intended for a much larger school so required significant attention to prevent Legionella growth. These panels were replaced by a far more successful photo-voltaic installation that generates more electricity than the school requires so makes a net profit via the feed-in tariffs.

The iconic helical wind turbine (Quiet Revolution QR5) was also considered to be more of a public art project than a practical device – it takes more electrical power to start the blades spinning than it ends up producing!

Julie Ayre, the planning officer with specific responsibility for Orchard Park, then took us for a walk around some of the successful and less successful features of the development. These included the public art installation built into the face of the Premier Inn and the site of the – as yet undefined – new local centre.

The tour concluded at the Community Centre where members of the Community Council laid on refreshments. A few passionate individuals are clearly striving to turn Orchard Park into a thriving community.

This was an informative visit to a site that has received a lot of negative press. The planning officers are the first to admit that not everything has worked, but they seem genuinely interested in learning from their mistakes and actively seek ideas for how to improve the areas of the site that are still to be developed.

*Alexander Thoukydides  
Information Officer*





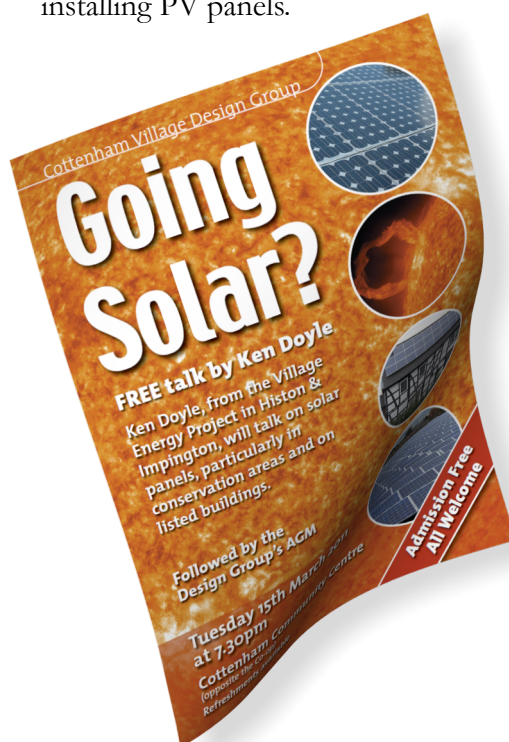
### Going Solar?

The CVDG Annual General Meeting this year was preceded by an informative presentation on solar energy given by Ken Doyle from the Histon and Impington Village Energy Project. Ken set the scene by describing 2010-2019 as a “decade of crisis” and cited a number of examples why this may be the case – more frequent extreme weather events, increased food prices as a result of climatic events and a crisis in our oceans with fish stocks depleting. This is the decade where we could see peak oil being reached and with the debate over nuclear energy heightened following the recent earthquake in Japan, a challenge was made for how we could become more self-sufficient in terms of energy production – generating solar energy on individual properties or as a village cooperative was suggested as one way.

The use of photo-voltaic (PV) panels gained recognition as a form of energy production in the 1970s. The Government has incentivised the uptake of PV panels for homeowners through creation of the feed-in tariff scheme. This means that homeowners who have bought their own PV panels can sell back to the grid any unused electricity produced from their PV panels at a rate of 44p/kWh. Alternatively, homeowners can rent their roof space to investors and benefit from free electricity (the investors would then benefit from the feed-in tariff by selling back unused electricity to the grid). The feed-in tariff is valid until 2012 then could be reduced however, if homeowners sign up now, they can

take advantage of the scheme for the next 25 years at the current rate.

For maximum efficiency PV panels would be ideally south-facing (although south-east or south-west would suffice) and at a 45 degree angle (although 30 degrees would suffice). Examples were given of different design solutions for installing PV panels.



As well as on roofs they could be installed on louvres, awnings, glass roofs, garages, conservatories or even on stands in the back garden. Homeowners who are considering PV panels are advised to first commission a survey to confirm they have a suitable property or location. In Histon and Impington, 275 homeowners signed up within 9 weeks of the launch of a scheme to assess their properties for suitability.

Installation does not typically require planning permission as long

as PV panels do not extend above the peak of the roof or a certain distance above roof tiles. Installation on listed buildings or buildings within a conservation area however, is likely to require consent. In any case, it would be advisable to give the local planning authority a call to confirm.

In Histon and Impington, some owners of listed properties were considering PV panels but were cautious of making a planning application. One member of the audience highlighted their own experience where an application for PV panels on their listed property in Cottenham had been rejected. South Cambridgeshire District Council had considered that the panels would be “too shiny”. The design of PV panels is however evolving – flexible thin film panels are now available allowing installation along the top of the roof line or to match the existing roof tiles (the latter may be appropriate for a listed building) – and it is hoped that this, together with a potential fall in price following increased uptake, may make the purchase and installation of PV panels more feasible for any homeowner with a suitable property.

*Clare Le Brecht*  
Secretary



### Design Group Committee 2011 – 2012

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Chair	Mike Smith (Fen Edge Community Association nominee)
Vice Chair	Steven Poole
Secretary	Clare Le Brecht
Treasurer	Henry Le Brecht
Membership Secretary	Bill Miller
Planning Comments Coordinator	Alex Darby
Information Officer	Alexander Thoukydides

#### Non-Officers

Alan Leeks (Cottenham Parish Council nominee)
John Williams
Patrick Clark
Robin Heydon
Sue Gymer (Cambridgeshire County Council nominee)
Tim Wotherspoon

### FEFF Historic Buildings Walking Tours

Two walking tours were given on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June. The afternoon tour was memorable for the hot sunshine and the need to keep participants in the shade. Group sizes were not too large and therefore the tours were informal and quite interactive. This time the tour was located around the Green and up towards Lacks Close so there was not too far to walk.

In the early 80's the local historian Jack Ravensdale gave evening classes on local history and these were fascinating. He also Published "Liable to Floods", a very detailed and informative history of the Fen Edge. I say this because the idea of the tours was to try to integrate the history of the development of Cottenham, a village with an agricultural focus sited above the 20' contour, with the construction methods and buildings erected and used by successive generations.

The agricultural focus is easy to appreciate especially as we started

the tour at the very beautiful Elm Barns. (Thanks to the residents for this) and saw quite a few other barns on the tour.

With respect to timber frame houses it was appreciated that the frames were prefabricated and made off site with the individual members numbered, before being delivered by cart to the site for erection. Early frames were oak which was soon used up and frames in Cottenham became elm by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> C.

Early brick houses would have had bricks delivered by cart from outside the village, and red bricks can often be seen in older houses. Later the Ivatt Brick works opened and the railways delivered slate which could be collected from Histon, giving the village the look that we see today.

I enjoyed guiding the tours as it was a pleasure to have the chance to talk about the evolution of old buildings and their materials.

Bill Miller  
Membership Secretary



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