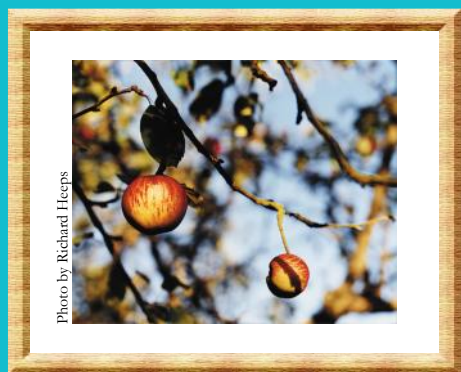




The winner of the group's FEEF competition was Mrs Sue Heavens of Brenda Gautrey Way, who correctly identified that the mystery photograph was of the Wooden House on Twentypence Road.

Her prize is a framed copy of the 'Apples' photograph that is featured on the front cover of the Cottenham Village Design Statement.



The Cottenham Village Design Group would like to thank the following for their support in providing this prize.

Richard Heeps Photography
2 Springfield Road, Cambridge
Telephone 01223 513721
Web www.richardheeps.co.uk

County Frames of Cottenham
59 Harlestons Road, Cottenham
Telephone 01954 251666
or 07767 324959

CVDG Events

This year seems to have been busy for the group. Two talks have been arranged already, both well attended: one on the Cambridge Cycling Initiative and the other on the proposed A14 improvements. Recently the Fen Edge Family Festival provided the group with an opportunity to attract new members; interest in our stand, which was set up in the culture tent over the two days of the main event, was high and a competition was run which received over ninety entries. The group also conducted walking tours, introducing people to the interesting buildings we have in the village, which were again well attended.

Looking to the future the group is already thinking ahead to what the next event might be, but we would like to hear whether any members have any ideas that may be of interest to others. Please get in touch with any suggestions. In the meantime here is a thought from the committee:

Accordia – The 2007 winner of the RIBA Stirling Prize and right on our doorstep. The last piece of brownfield land in Cambridge (apparently) has been used for a scheme of housing utilising much existing mature planting to create a new quarter within the city. *"Some day all housing will be built this way"* argued Matt Weaver in his Guardian review of this exceptional residential scheme close to the centre of Cambridge. A feel for the scheme design is outlined within the images here.

Alex Darby
Information Officer



Fen Edge Family Festival walking tour

As a part of the festival weekend and on behalf of FEEF the design group was also busy running guided tours of the North end of the High Street. A number of houses were investigated in the course of the tour and by looking at a few key details some idea of how factors such as fashion, population pressure and changes in the availability of materials affected their development were revealed. A short note on the content of the tours is included within this newsletter to keep members abreast of the activities of the group but each tour was slightly different, and in answer to specific questions we did wander off script on a few occasions.

A walk of the High Street might leave the impression of similar brick villas lining the extent of our High Street, however this is not a truthful reflection of how varied the housing within our village actually is. The tour started with a detailed look at the Old Vicarage, different parts of which span across a number of centuries, then on the main High Street between the ubiquitous brick built villas and behind later brick façades are 17th century houses, the tour showed how these can generally be identified by the placement of the chimney in line with the front door. We were also able to show a number where later alterations have hidden this historical layout. Other key details discussed for these houses were the change in the type of timber used in the frame, Oak originally but later Elm as supplies of this wood ran out, the types of thatch, types of window (before Victorian replacements were

introduced) and how details on the buildings encouraged water to fall away from them.

Amongst the brick and slate villas differences in the windows, eaves, roofs, chimneys, brick coursing, doorcases and joinery were highlighted to show how each was individual even though at first glance similar to its neighbours. Amongst the later villas the introduction of stone details from the first builders merchants catalogues were highlighted and

how differences in the orientation to the High Street and use of polychromatic (red bricks in this village generally) could be used to tell you that the houses that these were found on were generally late 19th and early 20th century.

The end result was a degree of new knowledge for the tour leaders and hopefully those that took part enjoyed the experience as well, thank you to all those who attended.

Alex Darby
Information Officer

Walking Tour of our Historic High Street
by CVDG members for and on behalf of FEEF

Join us on a guided tour of the North end of the High Street where you will find a range of buildings constructed over four centuries. Find out just what lies beneath the unusual uniformity of the houses along the route; there is a greater diversity than might first be assumed. See how factors such as fashion, population pressure and available materials have led to the changes in these buildings over time.

Start

Finish

Timetable:-
Saturday 20th June
- 1:30pm & 3:30pm
Sunday 21st June
- 1:30pm & 3:30pm
- Tour duration: Approx. 1 hour
All Welcome
Admission Free

FEN EDGE FAMILY FESTIVAL



CYCLE



CAMBRIDGE

Cottenham to Histon (and elsewhere) by bicycle

There are a few disappointments for cyclists in Cottenham: one is its development on the Fen Edge which has provided it with few footpaths, and fewer still that make good cycling; a second is the speed and density of traffic on its roads; a third is the poor provision intended to ameliorate some of these disadvantages.

The route from Cottenham to Cambridge is shown as a white line on the Council's cycle route map, although for much of its length there is little physical representation on the ground and where there is provision, some is dangerous.

Two new developments are therefore welcome. The first is the consideration being given to lower speed limits. The second is Cambridge's designation as a "Cycling Town".

Last year, the County Council, in partnership with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council bid to Cycling England along with 74 other applicants to become one of 11 new 'Cycling Towns and Cities'. Cambridge's bid was successful and it was named as one of 10 Cycling Towns.

The £3.6M allocated to Cambridge will be match funded over the next two years to give an overall budget of £7.2 million to be spent on a range of infrastructure and initiatives to encourage cycling. The bid was not only for Cambridge, but importantly includes the necklace villages within a radius of some 5-6 miles around the city.

A well attended public meeting was held in the Village College on 13th May hosted by the Design Group, to receive a presentation by Mike Davies, Programme Manager for the Cycle Cambridge Initiative. He described the background, as above, and set out the long list of physical and practical initiatives and projects covering:

- Soft measures: cycle training, marketing, leaflets, mapping, signing, personalised travel planning, journey planning, etc to influence behaviour; and
- Hard measures: Infrastructure schemes and cycle parking improvements.

Most of these were at the stage of feasibility studies, with implementation to follow.

Of particular interest to the meeting was the inclusion on the list of a complete upgrade of the route between Cottenham and Histon. This will be much wider than the existing shared footway and, so far as possible, be segregated from the road – up to 5m – by running behind the existing hedge. Discussions with landowners about the acquisition of strips of marginal land were underway. A start on construction was anticipated towards the end of this year.

The views expressed in this article are those of its author and do not necessarily represent the views of the CVDG or its committee



Cottenham Village Design Group

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It was made clear to us that the route will not begin within Cottenham, but at the village boundary. It was not said where the segregated route will end in Histon but it will finish well short of the A14. Following the road is the only practical solution – there is no realistic direct line across open fields or of a bridge across the A14.

To some extent segregation represents an admission that a compact between cycling and motoring is not possible in England as it is on the continent, and there is a risk in that approach. Some motorists seeing the limited provision expect cyclists to be off the road for all of its length, and abuse and intimidate where sharing is necessary. Limited provision – such as this proposal – does not reduce the danger beyond either end and so may not succeed in winning the extra cyclists expected. The second risk is that instead of seeing that further investment would make it more likely that expectations would be met, there is disappointment at the poor reception and an unwillingness to spend more because it is thought that the money was wasted.

Traffic engineers have in the past had both feet fixed in a car and have required a head lock to look the cyclists' way. Any relaxation of that grip and provision has been inadequate, poorly designed, badly executed and in some cases dangerous. The Warrington Cycling Campaign has been documenting examples (including some in Cambridge) on their website <http://www.warringtoncyclingcampaign.co.uk>

for some years, and the 50 best of the worst have now been published. We were assured that the lessons have been learned. Provision will be to a very high standard and there will be full consultation on the proposed designs.

There were some concerns about visual intrusion: red tarmac in a green land; and about security – cycling for a kilometre alone, behind a hedge, in the winter dark, unlit. We were told that lighting would double the cost, but there may be rechargeable LED lights set at surface level as there are on the re-graded route eastward from Histon. Nobody asked about salting and gritting in the winter.

Onward journeys to Cambridge remain an issue. Improvements at the A14 roundabout will be considered, perhaps by phasing the lights. As noted above, there is no immediate prospect of a bridge like that at Milton.

Questions were asked about this lone route's place in a network. Another project under the same initiative will improve the route between Impington and Milton. Although it would be a roundabout way, it could open up a direct connection to the riverside paths, to Wicken, and to the developing Route 11 (Harlow to King's Lynn) of the National Cycle Network.

It was regretted that there are no current plans for provision in a direct line to Landbeach and on to Waterbeach and the station (which could be and should be, but is not, served by an extension to the C7 bus route), but further tranches of money will enable new schemes.

The Northstowe development requires the construction of a cycle path from Cottenham to Westwick – and so to the footpath and cycleway that will parallel the guided bus route to St Ives. But a new route will be as delayed as Northstowe. Meanwhile, the busway path could be joined through Histon – which also give access to National Route 51, ultimately linking Colchester to Oxford and already open from Newmarket to Huntingdon.

Or there is the modestly and recently improved route to Rampton which also gives access by farm tracks to the guided busway and – by crossing it – Longstanton.

In an age when banks are bailed out by billions in hours, cycle improvements still take decades. The next generation, or the one after, may find Cottenham if not at the hub of a network, at least at a node, and they will have the freedom to cycle in relative safety in any direction. That will be a worthwhile legacy that current support should deliver.

Meanwhile, the Council is trying to discover what keeps people off their bikes and what might make them get on. It is therefore important that everyone, whether or not they cycle, whether or not they have any intention of using any new provision, and whether or not they have any interest in cycling at all, completes and returns the questionnaire that was recently delivered to every house.

Nicholas Wilson
Non-member

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Cottenham Village Design Statement travels to Kitakyushu, Japan

It probably seems strange to find an article in the Cottenham Village Design Group newsletter relating to Kitakyushu, a large city of 1 million people in Japan. However, researchers from Cranfield University, based at Kitakyushu considered that the approach taken by Cottenham Village Design Statement to preserving the aesthetic character of its village should be of interest to the Wakamatsu ward (local government district) of Kitakyushu city.

Kitakyushu is an industrial city that lies on the northern tip of the

Japanese island of Kyushu and it was established in February 1963 by the equal basis amalgamation of five existing and conjoining cities: Moji, Kokura, Wakamatsu, Yahata and Tobata. In the 1960s Kitakyushu was the birthplace of environmental protests in Japan, led by a group of housewives who were concerned about the pollution created by the city's heavy industries, particularly from steel production. Kitakyushu is now the leading city in Japan regarding its anti-pollution measures, recycling strategies and desire to achieve sustainable

development, aiming to become the "World Capital for Sustainable Development". Kitakyushu is separated from the main island of Japan, Honshu, by a narrow but 50m deep sea channel known as the Kanmon strait, an important shipping route between East Asia and the large conurbations of Osaka, Yokohama and Tokyo.

The Wakamatsu ward of Kitakyushu city lies adjacent to the Kanmon strait and has been at the heart of Kitakyushu's port and industrial development for over 100 years. Since the late 1990's the north

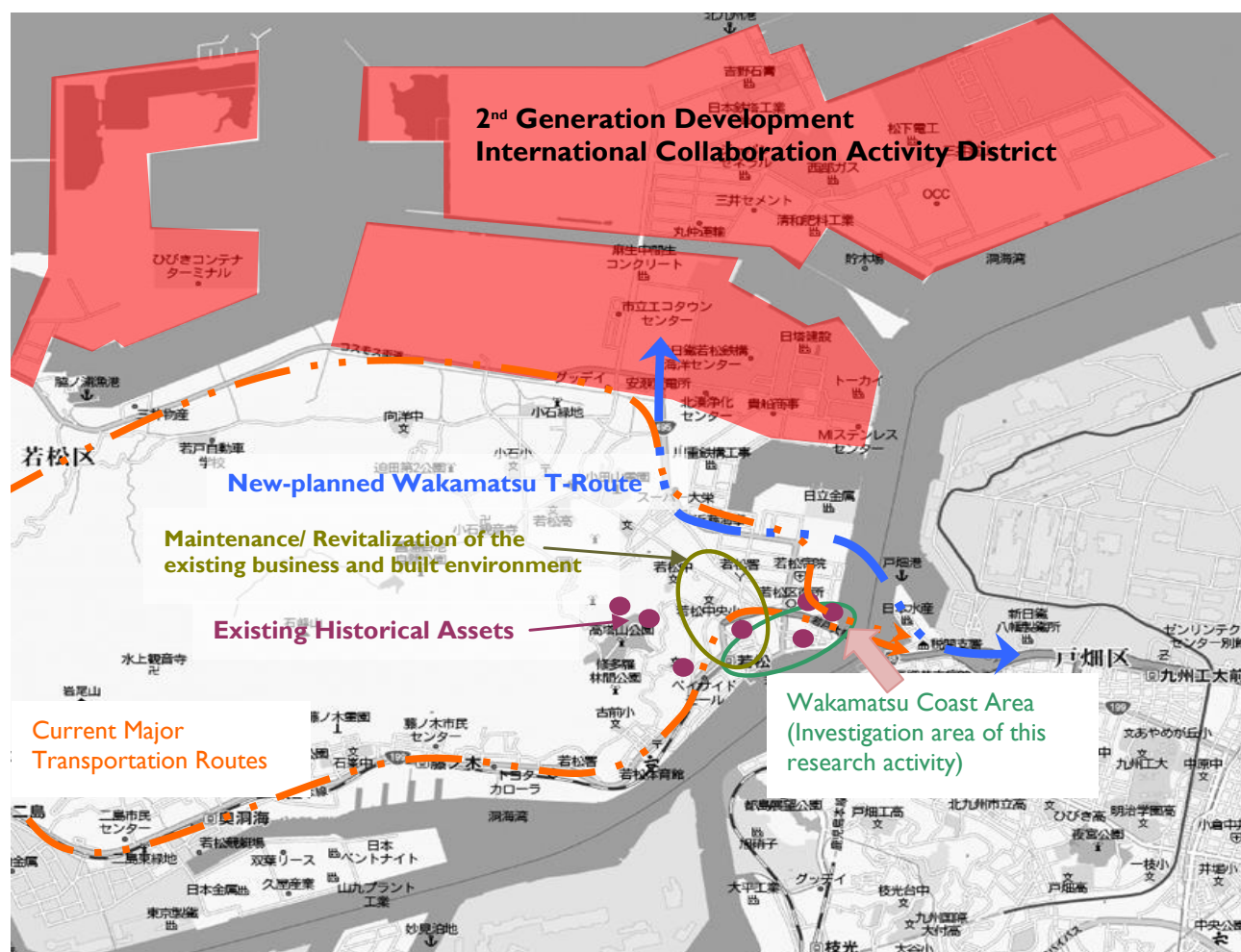


Figure 1: The western region of the Wakamatsu district showing the areas of industrial and port facility development



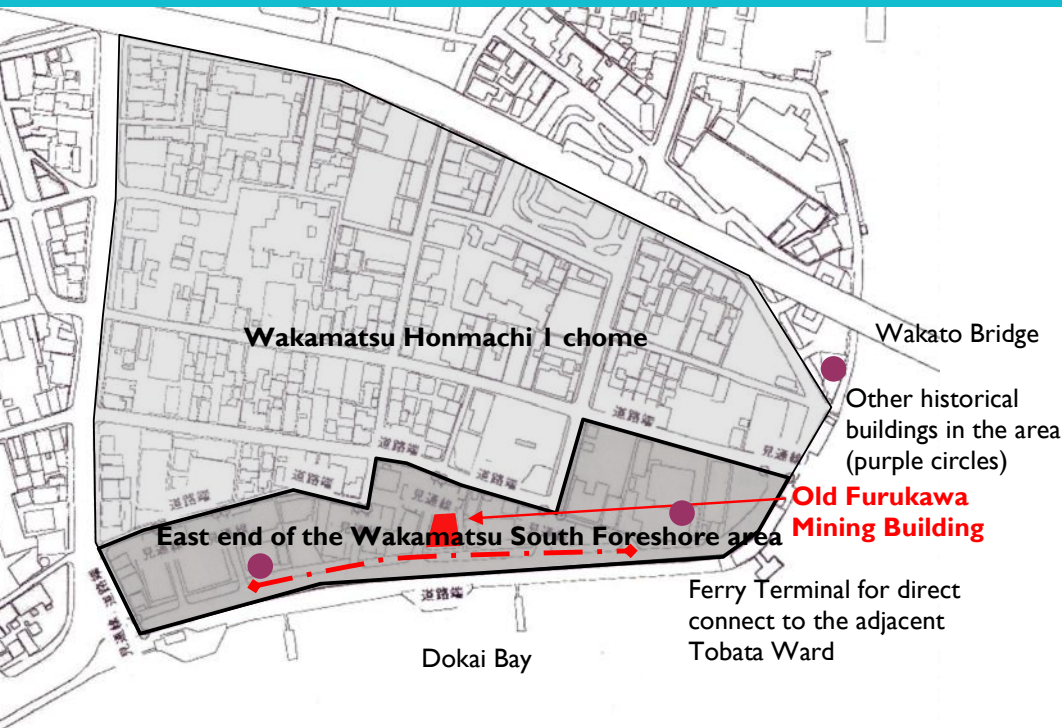


Figure 2: Wakamatsu south foreshore and part of the “old town” district

part of the ward has been developed, see pink areas in figure 1, to contain the city’s Eco-town recycling industry development and a new international container port facility, all built on reclaimed land. Additionally to the northwest, not shown, is an international science and research campus.

Currently, two major transportation routes, shown in orange, wrap around the major part of the ward transporting traffic in and through Wakamatsu onto the Wakato Bridge which connects it to other areas in the City. Because of the continuing development activity a new transportation route is planned with a road tunnel structure providing a more direct and easy access, shown in blue, to the Tobata side of the Dokai bay; an alternative to the existing Wakato Bridge. This active development on the northern edge of the town consequently has generated the need for new industrial, commercial and housing

development, as well as plans and strategies to re-generate and refurbish the existing built environment of the old town district.

At the turn of the 19th to 20th century Wakamatsu became a major port for the export of coal and was served by both a railway link and shipping. Since the 1920’s, and more recently through the closure of the local coal mines and the decline of the steel industry in the Yahata and Tobata wards of Kitakyushu city, Wakamatsu town has experienced a gentle decline. The areas adjacent to the waterfront have achieved a quiet charm but are in danger of falling into disrepair. The surviving buildings, including the old railway station gave Wakamatsu’s waterfront area a special character. Local concern regarding the threat to the integrity and continuity of this historical urban environment was initially aroused when Japan Railways West demolished the old

Wakamatsu railway station without consulting either local government or the public. Local opinion was incensed by this action.

However, this gentle economic decline for the Wakamatsu district has recently been reversed with the development of Kitakyushu city’s recycling industries in the Eco-town area and the new Hibiki port container terminal and loading facilities. The “old town” areas of the city have become threatened through insensitive development as housing (mainly apartment blocks) and commercial companies seek opportunities for redevelopment.

Consequently, members of the local population set up a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) with the intention of highlighting historic buildings on the old port area of the Wakamatsu south foreshore that were in danger of demolition and more generally to preserve the nature of the core of the district, which lies behind the waterfront area. The NPOs interest became focussed on the former Furukawa Mining building that was constructed in 1919 with the establishment of the Furukawa mining company. Through many phases of changing ownership and building functions the building continued to serve and adjust to different usage requirements until its final owner moved out in 1996. The building was then left unoccupied and abandoned. The owner’s wish to demolish the building caused much local anger, particularly in view of the previous demolition of the old railway station. The Wakamatsu residents began an activity to save the “former Furukawa Mining



Cottenham Village Design Group

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Wakamatsu Building” through the NPO by participating in fund raising activities to save the building for the community. In response to such a strong wish to keep this building and the enthusiasm shown by local residents the Wakamatsu Ward office through representation to Kitakyushu city assisted the local community based NPO to purchase the building from the last owner. This created an interest within the Ward office regarding future planning for the “old-town” area of Wakamatsu and the processes that might be required. It is in this context that the Cranfield University research team introduced the Japanese Ward office officials to the Cottenham Village Design Statement, the notions contained within it and the processes involved. The design statement documents created much interest especially regarding the idea of recognising key architectural features and transferring them to future development as well as providing guidelines for preservation. These ideas were tested during a meeting between a joint Cranfield and Kitakyushu research team and officials at the Wakamatsu Ward office concerning the proposed demolition of the Aso building on land adjacent to the Furukawa building and the new apartment building being planned to replace. The research teams saw this development as a test of the success of the Ward’s refurbishment plans and processes and their ability to protect important buildings within the South Foreshore area.

The Aso building, was constructed in 1936, but did not benefit from the example set by the

refurbishment of its neighbour the Furukawa building. Despite public interest in preserving the Aso building it was purchased and demolished in 2007 by a speculative developer and has been replaced by a 14-storey apartment building that was completed at the end of 2008. Although planning documents and guidance, provided by the City of Kitakyushu directly addressing buildings in this specific area (the Wakamatsu seashore) do exist concerning the building height and the architectural character of the area, and despite the efforts of local residents, academic consultation and a city-held urban building landscape evaluation process, the only concession to the existence of the Aso building was that the surface finish of the new apartment building should be the same as the original building, and that a literal partial imitation of the Aso building façade should be used as the entrance gate to the apartment complex, see figure 3(d).

The desire of local citizens to preserve the aesthetic and architectural nature of their cities towns and villages is the same throughout the world. However, the contexts, social organisations and economic pressures for change may interact differently across cultures. It is to be hoped that the example of the Cottenham Village Design Statement could provide a useful methodology that could be adapted for use in the Wakamatsu ward to preserve the existing fabric and ambience of the Wakamatsu “old-town”.

Bill Batty & Yiyin Tsai
Non-members



(a) 1929



(b) 1936 - 2006



(c) 2007



(d) 2009

Figure 3: The Furukawa mining company building from 1929 to the present



Commenting on planning applications

The first Cottenham Village Design Statement was adopted in May 1994. Since about that time, the group has viewed planning applications associated with all development proposals across Cottenham Parish. Where applicable, we have submitted comments on these applications to the local planning authority - South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Most members will likely be aware of this key activity carried out by the group - but some may not be familiar with how we go about this.

The most important consideration is that comments must be based solely on the principles and guidelines set out in the Design Statement and as far as possible they should be consistent - across different but similar applications and over time. We achieve this through appointment of a Planning Comments Coordinator, an officer role within the committee, and the adoption of a Code of Conduct: <http://www.cvdg.org/conduct.html>

The Coordinator receives notification of planning applications from SCDC via their online facility, normally with a 3-week window within which any comments must be submitted. All supporting plans and drawings are also available online - a fairly recent development which has helped ease the pressure of meeting these constant deadlines. Full-size paper copies, still helpful for larger or more complex applications, remain accessible when needed either at the Parish Council or SCDC's offices. The Coordinator collates a small number of applications together, identifies another member of the group (sometimes two) and arranges a meeting to discuss the applications and agree the key points that should

be covered. During this meeting members draw on their local knowledge and experience. A volunteer rota is maintained for this purpose - to share out the workload and to allow all interested members to take some part.

Where applications are straightforward, meetings are often virtual - with discussion taking place by email and telephone. The Coordinator then drafts the comments, supporting each one with a copy of any relevant guidelines and quotations from the Design Statement. Draft comments are then shared with the volunteer(s), discussed again where necessary and adjusted and developed until all parties agree they are suitable for submission. Occasionally, perhaps when an application has wide public interest, it is necessary to refer an application to the full committee for discussion.

Comments are then submitted to SCDC, copies are provided to the Parish Council, deposited in Cottenham Library and uploaded to the Design Group's website: <http://www.cvdg.org/comments.html>

The aim of this process is not to prevent change, although we do sometimes object to applications, but to enter a positive dialogue with the aim of producing better developments. It also helps the group to monitor changing trends in planning and to assess the effectiveness of the Design Statement in relation to these.

Any member of the Design Group may volunteer to assist with this process; I am always looking for new members to become involved. Please contact me with any interest.

Steven Poole

*Planning Comments Coordinator
steven.j.poole@ntlworld.com*

The group's stand at the FEFF...



Email membership@cvdg.org
Web www.cvdg.org

