

Observer

The Leamington Spa



Thursday, August 17th, 2006

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The new gate designs are welcomed by - left to right - Leamington Society chairman Archie Pitts, district council chairman Bill Evans, parks manager Nigel Bishop, Shaun Green of George Worrall Engineering, Paul Edwards and mayor Andy Leahy. 32.06.018jb

Gates get the finishing touch

A FANCY decorative scroll has belatedly added the finishing touches to the gates of Jephson Gardens.

The gates, on Leamington's Newbold Terrace, were put in place when the gardens were renovated back in 1998.

But they carried the initials of Leicester City Water Works - where they had first been used - and when the letters were removed a gap was left.

Eight years on, the gap has finally been filled thanks to the Leamington Society.

It commissioned Paul Edwards, a landscape architect and society member, to design a decorative scroll to adorn the gates, and Warwick-based engineer George Worrall helped with the construction.

Leamington mayor Andy Leahy was among the party that unveiled the new design on Monday (August 14).

Town set for first home turbine

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OWEN'S of Emscote

WIND turbines could become a common sight on homes in the area if a landmark planning application is approved.

The first case of its type to come before Warwick District Council will test the official line on turbines outside people's homes - which one councillor says could change the landscape of our towns.

Some 30 more applications are already waiting on the outcome and will be submitted if this one gets the green light.

There are currently only about 120 domestic wind turbines, which cost around £1,500 to install, in place throughout the UK.

They recently hit the headlines when Conservative Party leader David Cameron clashed with neighbours over his bid to put one on the roof of his London home, and the government is backing them as part of a drive towards so-called DIY power generation.

They are a hit with environmentalists - and there are also financial attractions, as they help homeowners cut down on their electricity bills.

But critics say they are eyesores and not economically viable.

Tom Moseley

Warwick District Council's planning committee was set to rule on Tuesday (August 22) on a bid by former Green Party parliamentary candidate Janet Alty to attach the two-metre turbine, with 1.75-metre blades, to the side of her home in Lillington Road, Leamington.

No objections have been received from neighbours, but council officers have delayed a decision, feeling the ruling will be so important it needs a longer period of consultation. Their verdict is now expected by the end of September.

Council officer Joanne Fitzsimons said: "It is the first of its kind and raises a lot of issues so we felt it should have more public input."

"On the one side we do have a duty to protect conservation areas, but on the other hand the government wants to promote renewable energy - so it is a balancing act."

Ms Alty, who has secured government funding towards the turbine by ensuring the rest of her house is environmentally efficient, said she was delighted there was no opposi-

tion to her plans.

She added: "It is no worse than a large TV aerial."

And Matthew Rhodes of Leamington-based micro energy provider Encraft, which is helping organise the project, said he had already had about 50 enquiries from people in the area about domestic turbines.

Warwick councillor Roger Smith added: "The time has come for the council to take a stance on them, because they could lead to a very different-looking skyline in towns."

Wind turbines like this one could become a regular sight on houses in the area (s)



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