

Some success, much unfinished business



by **John Steele**
chairman of
the Horsham
Society

It not only saved this beautiful green lung forever but reminded us all of the importance of protecting our many other small greens.

The recent unveiling of the new frontage of Dulcima House in Carfax also ended a long battle to remove the eyesore perpetrated during the building's conversion into flats.

The new cladding, and muted colour, allow this unremarkable but dominant building to fit more appropriately into one of our most important street scenes.

The work to tidy up Causeway, installing a new path and improving the island, has at last been completed. For 30 years or so the council has been discussing a complete make-over for the street so these improvements may seem little reward.

But any further plans must await an assessment of the impact of changes to East Street; and with a street this precious, slow change is no bad thing.

At last there appears to be a glimmer of hope that the county and district councils are beginning to work together to control the epidemic of A-boards which clutter the town centre and are both ugly and potentially dangerous.

East Street is unfinished business. The pilot pedestrianisation scheme has not been helped by its flawed implementation and the inherent problems with servicing premises at either end of the day.

A decision on whether to make the scheme permanent is expected in the New Year. Having listened to the

arguments, our view is although more work is needed to resolve the difficulties that have been revealed, we support the principle of pedestrianisation.

East Street is an important location which needs to be linked more effectively with the core shopping area. It also badly needs a facelift. A good pedestrianisation scheme, implemented with style, could provide the boost it needs.

The Horsham Town Hall saga will continue to drag on. The council has ignored public opinion and presses on with its doomed scheme for a restaurant. Meanwhile, the building remains virtually unused, becoming an ever greater drain on resources instead of delivering a small income stream. It will end in tears.

And, finally, there is Swan Walk's failure to deliver its promise to restore the swan sculpture to its former glory. Due to return in the New Year, it reappeared in August, poking out of the top of an ugly box.

It is an insult to the sculptor and the many hundreds of people whose anger at the sculpture's removal forced a climb down. Nothing less than full restoration with the swans landing on moving water will do.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the town's past, present and future and seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces.

For more information and details on how to join visit our website

www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 272814.

THIS is the time we reflect on whether we end the year with Horsham in better shape than we found it in January.

There have been a few successes to celebrate but unfortunately these seem outnumbered by the issues that drag on relentlessly.

Successes first. The registration last May of Cootes pond and the surrounding area in Merryfield Drive as a town green marked the culmination of years of work by the local residents.