

# NEWS RELEASE!

13 January 2004

## BUSINESSES SUPPORT BID TO SAVE WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FOR COMMUNITY



**Melton businesses are demonstrating their support for Melton First's Hill House Project by displaying appropriate 'green' Melton First posters in their windows, and distributing 'Support Melton First' leaflets to customers.**

In King Street, picture framers and art materials stockists, Cobwebs, will undoubtedly benefit if Melton First's regional design arts project goes ahead. Proprietor Martin Putnam is understandably a fan of the scheme;

"I support any art & craft development in the local community. But Melton First's proposal will also bring many more people into the town. Then there's the community issue - the War Memorial Hospital was originally given to the community and should continue to be used by the community. If the site is sold for housing, it'll never be available to the community again - it'll be lost to us for ever. We need to make a stand and use Melton First's project to develop resources that will benefit the community for the future."

David Hume, MD of electrical contractors, WT Hume & Son, also sees the opportunities and supports the Melton First initiative. "What's more housing going to do for the centre of the town?" Mr Hume asks. "Melton First is run by business people who understand the problems we face in Melton. Purchasing the Hospital site is an opportunity for everyone to benefit, and it saddens me that the business community hasn't been more supportive to date. Melton needs some fresh ideas and Melton First's project could make a real difference."

Martin Putnam is also concerned about the way the Melton, Rutland & Harborough Primary Care Trust is putting the issue across. "Money raised from the sale of the War Memorial Hospital by the PCT isn't going to build the new Melton hospital, which is what I feel the PCT is trying to imply", he explains. "I believe the PCT has decided that selling the site for housing will make them more money, but they've failed to take into account the strong feelings of local people."

Photographer Derek Whitehouse agrees; "We have to think about what benefits the town and what will bring people into the town. Other towns are thinking ahead and planning for tourism, and now we have the opportunity to do something really special ourselves. Over the years Melton's poor planning has ruined parts of our town and we mustn't do the same to the town centre; I can't imagine anything worse than looking up at the Hospital site from the Town Estate or St Mary's Church, and seeing flats and washing lines. Melton's most attractive landscape and potentially the town's future, could so easily be lost. We don't need housing in this location - it's just greed."

**ENDS**

### **Editor's Notes:**

Melton First's Hill House Project will be discussed at a Public Meeting at Melton Working Men's Club, Norman Way, at 7pm on Thursday 22 April. The meeting is intended to provide a visible demonstration of Melton First's support to those who would sell the Hospital site without regard to the community.

CONTINUED OVER PAGE 1/2

**For further MELTON FIRST information contact Mitch de Faria on Tel 01664 561700**

**MELTON FIRST:  
BUSINESSES SUPPORT BID TO SAVE WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
FOR THE COMMUNITY 2/2**

**Editor's Notes (continued)**

Originally bequeathed to the town in 1921, the fully sustainable Hill House Project, the largest fully environmental project of its kind in Western Europe (ENVIRON quote), is an attempt by Melton First, soon to become a registered charity, to keep one of Melton's few remaining heritage sites for the community. If Melton First's purchase bid is unsuccessful, the site will become a housing development, most probably a gated community denying public access.

Donations to Melton First's Fighting Fund can be made at any Melton Mowbray Building Society branch, or via the banking transfer system, to Melton Mowbray Building Society, Sort Code 40-32-14; Account Number 10572780, Ref Melton First 3315711.

Melton First's bid must be accompanied by messages of support, essential to ensure a successful outcome. Please send a brief support message by email to [meltonfirst@theeventmakers.co.uk](mailto:meltonfirst@theeventmakers.co.uk) or by post to Melton First, Steans Yard, 12 Burton Road, Melton Mowbray LE13 1DJ.

Companies or individuals able to assist Melton First by supplying manpower, copying, franking or other resources, are asked to call Tel 01664 561700.

**Available for comment:**

**Martin Putnam, Cobwebs, Tel 07966 152466 or 01664 500700**

**David Hume, WT Hume & Son, Tel 01664 563830**

**Derek Whitehouse, Derek Whitehouse Photography, Tel 01664 561704**

**For further MELTON FIRST information contact:**

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