

We didn't have very many engagements this week, but what we did have were varied and interesting.

On Tuesday evening I was very impressed by the Low Carbon Lifestyle exhibition at the High School which had been organised by the students. The exhibition was to show how we can all avoid wasting resources by using a little common sense by simple things like only filling a kettle with the amount of water you need to heat, fitting a more efficient lagging jacket to your hot water cylinder. There were some intriguing "gadgets" to try out- a static bike which operated a "smoothie" maker if pedalled hard enough, and a similar bike which produced electricity; both were in great demand, and I have a sneaking suspicion that the second device was in fact being fed into the school grid judging by the way in which the Chair of Governors was encouraging people to participate! An excellent and thought-provoking evening.

On Thursday evening Betty and I attended the first public concert by the Boroughbridge Combined Schools Orchestra in St. James' Church. I mentioned some time ago that this group of very young musicians was the brainchild of Jess Hayne, who realised that whilst many children were receiving peripatetic tuition on a wide variety of musical instruments, very few of these children had the opportunity to play with other young musicians. A total of 13 primary schools in the Boroughbridge area have children who are learning to play instruments ranging from trombones to violins, and Jess came up with the brilliant idea of approaching the schools and seeking permission to form an orchestra of children who had been playing an instrument for a year or more. The orchestra was duly formed and with some financial help from Yorevision duly performed last Thursday - and they performed very impressively. It was a joy for them and for the rather meagre audience. The second part of the concert was by the redoubtable Hautbois duo who had us singing old music hall songs (those suitable for the ecclesiastical surroundings, that is). A good evening which raised £57.00 towards the purchase of music folders. I know Jess would welcome help in either practical or financial form to keep this project "live", so if you can help please contact Jess on 01423 360739 or jess@cuthberts.org.uk. Thanks!

Friday evening saw us at County Hall, Northallerton for a reception for Town Mayors by the Chairman of the County Council Councillor Caroline Seymour and her Consort Mr John Seymour. This turned out to be a delightfully informal evening, and we had the chance to tour County Hall, which really is a magnificent old building, built at a time when quality, taste and workmanship were accepted as the norm and the future was apparently stable... how life has changed.