



12th January 2015

Dear County Councillor,

THE FUTURE OF SNIBSTON DISCOVERY MUSEUM

As elected members the decision on the future of Snibston museum rests with you. Since its opening in 1992 it has attracted millions of visitors and school children and has been a 'jewel in the crown' for the County Council and a credit to the foresight of its elected members and the hard work and dedication of its staff and volunteers. It is highly respected by the people of Leicestershire and further afield who have shown overwhelming support for its continuation. It is also highly regarded among key stakeholders; for instance, the President of the Museums Association, The Director and Chief Executive of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce, North West Leicestershire MP Andrew Bridgen and the Secretary of State for Culture Sajid Javid have all expressed their support for the continuation of the existing museum.

The Friends appreciate the difficult financial position that the County Council are in and have worked hard over the last year, to demonstrate their commitment and expertise in being able to work with LCC to help run the museum in a more effective and economical manner; meeting the saving targets and providing the basis for growth and development at Snibston. The assessments of our business plans and the conclusions and recommendations as presented to you by the senior officers are unsound; containing errors, omissions and a lack of objectivity. The details about our concerns on the assessments are made clear in our document '**The Future of Snibston: Response to the Assessment of Business Plans**', which, we hope you have taken the trouble to read.

The officers are asking you to reject our detailed and robust plans and to back a pale and hollow alternative for which no comparable detailed plans exist, has no public support and which now it is being suggested may not even be implemented. The whole site is now under threat of closure and demolition. The collections at Snibston, including the unique and profitable Century Theatre, containing Leicestershire's highly significant scientific, technological and cultural heritage is in danger of being dispersed at best and at worst, lost or denied access to existing and future generations.

In view of these serious concerns and reasons we urge you to reject the recommendations of the Director of Adult and Communities and the Director of Corporate Resources contained within the Cabinet report of 14th January 2015 and instead support the Friends proposals.

The Friends group has grown in numbers and is now a legal entity registered as a not for profit company with limited guarantee. With LCC collaboration and assistance, consistent to that being offered regarding the devolved delivery of libraries, together we can establish a more cost effective, sustainable and resilient future for Snibston.

With rising visitor numbers, up 15% in the last year for the gallery and 14% for the Century Theatre, the benefit to the local economy must now be more than the STEAM annual forecast of £4.2m. Why kill the goose that lays the golden egg?

We can save Snibston Discovery Museum if we work together effectively and strategically but only you as elected members have the power to make that decision and we urge you to do it for the benefit of your constituents and future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Brian R Vollar

Chair of Friends of Snibston Ltd.