

## **All Change on the High Street: Salisbury's Heritage Open Days 2023**

The 2023 Heritage Open Days, organised by the Salisbury Civic Society, will take place between September 7<sup>th</sup> and September 10<sup>th</sup> and will include visits to 20 historic shops as well as a talk by John Abbott on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Building on the very successful Civic Society Heritage Open day theme of 2011, the focus is on shops in historic buildings and changes in their use. The death of the High Street across the country has been predicted on a regular basis in recent years but as our historic shops illustrate, changes in shopping habits and economic activity are not new and may be seen as a normal part of business.

Salisbury's Market Place was laid out in the initial town 'plan' and was originally much larger than what we see today. As shops moved from stalls to more permanent buildings, including some where people lived 'above the shop', they encroached upon the market space. The development of specific areas for goods and services reflects this and is marked by names such as Fish Row (now fittingly with a new fish shop) and Butcher Row.

Just as the Market Place has adapted it is no surprise that both the buildings and their tenants have been many and varied with change the norm. At its simplest we can see this in recent building conversions with some shops whose upper floors had been empty or used for storage and stockrooms now having residential spaces above.

The Open Days will offer a self-guided walk around the 20 shops, each with a poster indicating their participation. This will provide insights into the history of the buildings and their changes in use over time. A map of the participating shops will be available with information about the times the different shops welcome visitors and identifying some of the changes that have taken place. The map will be downloadable from the Society's website as well as available in hard copy from the Library, Tourist Centre and Museum. Each shop will have a more detailed story of its past, available in hard copy and downloadable through a QR copy at the shop itself.

There will be a talk by John Abbott, local historian and former Mayor, entitled 'All Change on the High Street: Glimpses of Salisbury's Past'. It will be held on Thursday Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm at the Methodist Church in St Edmunds Church Street. Booking for the talk is not required .. just come along!