

Bank of Worcestershire Project

David Hallmark has long been known in Worcester for his creative activities for causes in the City where he was born and which his family have served in different capacities for many generations. His father was a much respected city solicitor who adopted many causes including the Royal British Legion and the Association for the Deaf and sat on Mental Health Tribunals. His mother was for many years the energy behind the Friends of the Worcester Eye Hospital. His grandfather was a City Councillor and Alderman.

David Hallmark has been in at the beginning of sundry local charities including the foundation of the St Richards Hospice and of the Maggs Day Centre and of the Acorns Hospice and of the new Boathouse Fundraising at WRC and the new Training Shed at WRFC and has been part of the evolution of local institutions as Governor of the University and Fellow of Worcester Law School and President of Worcestershire Law Society and the Worcestershire Medico-Legal Society. His events for fundraising for the St Richards Hospice and the Cathedral and for promoting the Battle of Worcester Dinners (recently made into a book) indicate his dedication to the local scene. His effort, with others, to relocate WCFC to Nunnery Way remains unfinished. He says this bank project must be the last effort.

David Hallmark has been developing privately this idea for a local bank for several years and traces early meetings with local colleagues to 1993. Now retired from his law firm the time has come to finish or file the project. With massive mentoring from Mike Ashton CEO of HWChamber of Commerce and encouragement from Ken Wigfield of Worcestershire Federation of Small Businesses and supportive comments from Harriet Baldwin MP and positive meetings with County Councillor Adrian Hardman there has been a

general welcome for this initiative. The Regional Representative of the Bank of England Graeme Chaplin has provided steerage into the labyrinth of the Financial Services Authority where Nicola Wildman has in full and friendly manner provided directions on compliance challenges.

David Hallmark has canvassed the idea with others involved in the provision of financial investments facilities including bankers and investors such as Thin Cats and those experienced in supporting charities providing start-up funds such as Mick Maton for many years closely connected at senior level with the Prince's Trust and the local Finance Forum.

Local businessmen have been to a series of breakfast sessions and the concept has found favour particularly with David Rodway himself a third generation family businessman with his son Charles now also involved in the industrial estate development enterprise.

Using David Hallmark's academic connections from his election as a Visiting Fellow in International Law at Trinity College Oxford University has provided access to discussions with the Oxford Said Business School and its specialists in entrepreneurial and philanthropic and social enterprise financial courses. David Hallmark recognises that many strategic alliances and instructors and advisers will be required to nurture this project but as with the proverbial journey of many miles it must start with the first step. The amount of research into relevant issues has accumulated over the years and now amounts to piles of papers and new books. The examples and experiences of other ventures nationally and internationally and of variants such as credit unions and micro finance and P2P lending and charities and models of small town banks and building societies and

co-operatives are a learning curve which has been steep and will no doubt be steeper.

David Hallmark has concluded the time has come to begin to share the vision.