

## GREAT FARINGDON TOWN SIGN – SHAPING OUR IDENTITY

The four shapes represent mockups of four possible approaches: *traditional*, *contemporary*, *quirky*, *rotating*. The elements chosen to put the mockups together are illustrative at this stage, and do not represent particular preferences.

### SHAPE 1: SHIELD (traditional)

In spite of it's rich history, Faringdon doesn't at present have a coat of arms. The College of Arms ( see <http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/>) is where we would officially register our Coat of Arms should we wish to do so, and The Court of Chivalry would handle any disputes arising - probably in the jousting arena. Working with local artists, the Pink Pigeons have developed a shield-shaped candidate for our Town Sign, and the results of our efforts appeared in the local Faringdon press earlier in 2015. It is clear that there is room for only a limited number of elements before a shield-shaped design begins to look cluttered. On the other hand, the Tower lends itself well to taking pride of place. This approach does give a traditional heraldic feel, and perhaps at some point our shield-shaped Town Sign could also become our official Coat of Arms?



Images: Karen Vogt/Helen Gibbs



## SHAPE 2: HILL (contemporary)

Some village signs are indeed shield-like in shape – resembling a coat of arms perhaps. Others might be plough-shaped, or shaped like a bicycle or a spitfire, if that happens to be relevant to the area. The silhouette of the shape needs to be distinctive.

Folly Tower & Folly Hill together make an instantly recognisable silhouette. Other elements can then be incorporated into this overall shape.

This approach lends itself well to the wood/wrought iron look; a hybrid between olde-worlde and contemporary, in a shape that is instantly recognisable.

*Images: Karen Vogt*



### SHAPE 3: HAT (quirky)

The symmetrical look of Shape 2 - based on a local landmark – is still a very traditional approach for a town sign. There are many village signs that have taken a local landmark to define the overall shape.

What if we start with something completely different - such as the Berners bowler hat for example?

*Images: Karen Vogt*



## SHAPE 4: ROTATING - THE GREAT FARINGDON GYRATORY

The flat shape (whatever the shape: shield, or hill or hat) has its drawbacks. The number of elements that can be incorporated is inevitably very limited, therefore the design process will involve painful selecting, short-listing, eliminating and simplifying. This could be very frustrating when you have a town as interesting as Faringdon! And there's another drawback. The 2D shape looks good from the front; possibly ok from the back; but doesn't work at all from either side. After all, it's flat.

But why not go 3D?

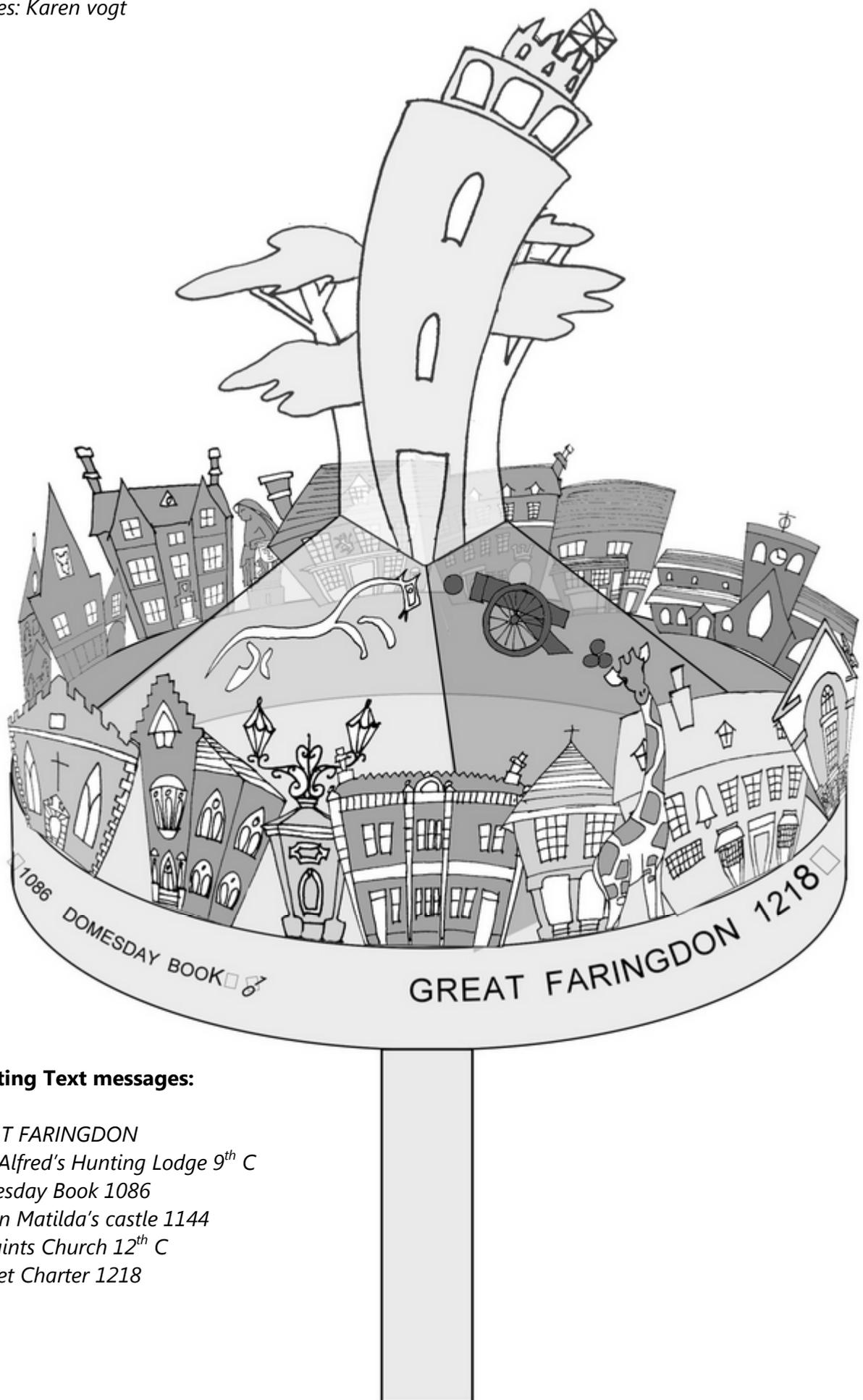
The 4<sup>th</sup> approach is therefore completely different. We have a ribboned circular "townscape" slowly rotating on a vertical axis around the Folly and Folly Hill. At night it becomes the rooftop skyline, as all the interesting buildings are silhouetted against the night sky.

As well as being potentially stunning and definitely unique, this approach has a number of interesting advantages:

- *The Great Faringdon Gyratory (GFG) becomes a major town attraction in its own right*
- *There is much more room for words and events - not just 1218...*
- *Emphasis is on the two Follies at the centre, with the market place townscape rotating slowly around it. Many other elements (cannon, fossils, white horse, giraffe, pink pigeons, blackbird pie, sheep.... ) can also be incorporated to add interest. Because it rotates it doesn't look cluttered.*
- *The huge level of detail adds to the "stickiness" (people linger for longer and notice details that they haven't spotted previously).*
- *Motion inevitably catches the eye, which in itself adds to the fascination.*
- *The traditional "wood and metal" village-sign approach would not work for this level of detail. It would need to be highly engineered from laser-cut aluminium - making it very long lasting, robust, durable and low maintenance*
- *Interesting merchandising opportunities spring to mind; including GFG-shaped hats (to be worn by the mayor on special occasions), construction models for children, building quizzes, calendars, mugs (360deg wraparound).*

The **Great Faringdon Gyratory** would also reinforce the important point that the folly is the exact rotational centre of England.

Images: Karen vogt



**Rotating Text messages:**

*GREAT FARINGDON  
King Alfred's Hunting Lodge 9<sup>th</sup> C  
Domesday Book 1086  
Queen Matilda's castle 1144  
All Saints Church 12<sup>th</sup> C  
Market Charter 1218*

Images: Karen vogt



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