

The Tolsey Clock is attached to the Tolsey building and is one of the feature landmarks of the town. This particular clock has been in place since Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, but there has been a clock on the building since 1595. The Clock is now looked after by the Town Council, which took over the responsibility from Wotton Town Trust a few decades ago.

In Spring 2015 the clock was given a thorough overhaul by volunteer Mark Woolfrey (honorary keeper of the clock movement), with support from the Town Council, in order to repair and safeguard it for the future. In addition, local artist, Rob Collins repainted his original portraits of Queen Victoria which embellish the top of the clock and which had faded in the sunlight.

The following report details the works undertaken.

Jubilee clock conservation report 2015

On 8th June, following 3 months of weekend conservation work, the Jubilee Clock (1897) on The Tolsey was restarted. Although the clock movement inside the building had been properly maintained it had been probably 20 years since any servicing or maintenance of the clock face and its gearbox was undertaken.

The clock face had appeared to be in reasonable condition when viewed from street level, so it was expected that a simple inspection and re-greasing would suffice, but up close, it was obvious that its condition was poor. Thus, a complete strip down and rebuild was undertaken to treat the corrosion found on the rings supporting the clock faces; worn gearbox shafts; and flaking paintwork.

The clock was dismantled, the gearbox refurbished and the face support rings repainted. The faces were refitted with the supporting rings rotated so that the corroded sections are now in the dry area at 12 o'clock; also with new fixings to make future removal easier. At the same time the owner of the Tolsey building refurbished the cupola which houses the bell where two of the columns had rotted through; and the original portraits of Queen Victoria that had faded in the sunlight were repainted.

The clock is now looking almost as good as new with a repaired gearbox, drainage holes to help prevent recurrence of the corrosion and LED back lighting. Hopefully this, along with regular preventative maintenance, will prolong the lifetime of this key monument in Wotton by another few decades.

On restarting, the clock has run well - just half a minute/week slow which was corrected at the end of August 2015 by the addition of an 8g correction mass to the pendulum. The movement is electrically wound (since 1984) but the consequence of this is that the traditional clock winder no longer corrects the time every week as necessary, so now it either needs to run accurately or have an interrupt mechanism installed.

Enjoy the clock as you walk on Long Street and High Street. The following are some photographs of the mechanisms and parts of the clock not normally seen by the public and photos of the work whilst in progress.



