



# Media Release

*Lynne Mee*

***Direct line 01423 556022***

**Communications and Media Manager** Direct fax 01423 561154 not 24 hrs

24 hour fax “ 556010  
Mobile 07884 226409

Email [lynne.mee@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.mee@harrogate.gov.uk)

[www.harrogate.gov.uk](http://www.harrogate.gov.uk)

pr.1057.St John's Well 04.doc

DATE: 6 October 2004

**photo opportunity – see below**

## **FROM BEGONIAS, TO BATHS AND NOW BABY CLOTHES**

One of the most important sites in the history of the Harrogate spa has a new tenant. 'Helene of Harrogate' has recently taken over the tenancy of St John's Well on Wetherby Road, Harrogate and will be trading in the sale of christening gowns, vintage baby clothing, hand-made quilts and hand-embroidered children's bedding.

St John's Well is of considerable historic importance as one of the earliest springs to be discovered in Harrogate. The chalybeate spring discovered at the site in 1631 by Dr M Stanhope, was originally known as the sweet spring. Lord Loughborough built the original pump room in 1786 and the Harrogate Improvement Commissioners erected the present building in 1842 to the design of Isaac Thomas Shutt, the architect of the Royal Pump Room.

It is probably also one of the country's most unusual and small council tenancies with a floor area of just 21 metres. And the man in charge of letting it, Bernard White, Chief Estates Surveyor for the council, said:

“Such buildings are always difficult to let. However, in the past we have had tenancies from florists to fine bathroom fittings. One of the earliest surviving tenancy agreements we can find is from 1964 when Doris Lewis of Knaresborough Road sold sweets, tobacco and light refreshments. Doris was also permitted to serve the water at up to 6 old pence a glass.

Hugo Rychlik of Claro Road took the tenancy on in 1980 and was allowed to serve the Chalybeate water but the maximum charge had gone up to 10 old pence per glass with a limit of not more than four pints per person! Mr Rychlik carried on with his tenancy selling flowers and pot plants until he was well into his seventies – so there must be something special in the spring water.

“The previous tenant, Spartacus Interiors, gave up the tenancy earlier this year to concentrate on their showrooms in Leeds Road. So the latest tenancy of our smallest building for the sale of baby clothes is very fitting. Everyone here at the council wishes Helene the very best for her future business success.” ENDS

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: 3.00 pm, Tuesday, 12 October, St John's Well, Wetherby Road, Harrogate when the Mayor of the Borough, Councillor Margaret Ann de Courcey-Bayley will perform the opening ceremony.**