

Civic Voice

Paul, Beryl and Ken travelled to Bristol one snowy Saturday in February to support the South West Network meeting and joined other Civic Society's including Bristol, Bath, Tewkesbury, Swindon and Chippenham in discussing the civic movement. Topics covered developing a common voice, improving communications, growing memberships and established campaigns including Street pride, Heritage Counts and Neighbourhood planning.

The new National Planning Policy Framework was published in March and after months of lobbying by many national amenity groups, including Civic Voice, together with much debate in the local, regional and national media, the final version of the Framework was much better than the draft version had led everyone to believe. The former clear bias toward development and a under-weighting of environmental and social issues had been tempered so we are happy with the outcome.

For national Civic Day (23rd June) from 8.30am we manned a display stand at Castlepoint Shopping Centre which featured photographs and information on the Society and our history together with us engaging with passers by through the Civic Watch survey. It was good to see several members and former committee officers on the day but due to gale like wind that almost blew our displays and leaflets away we decided to cut the day short at 2.30pm - but one new member was signed up!

Council Meetings

As well as contacting Councillors and Officers on specific or one-off matters and our monthly submission of comments on current planning applications, we maintain our longstanding and mutually informative thrice-yearly meetings with Mike Holmes, the Council's Director of Planning and Transport. Topics covered this year include the Imax, Surf Reef, Localism, DNPPF, Throop Mill, Gipsies & Travellers Sites, Exeter Road, Winter Gardens, Pavilion, Terrace Mount, BCCA, Cliff End Hotel, Mouchel, St. Peter's Hall and Bournemouth by Night report.

Civic Trust Awards

The Civic Trust Awards were established in 1959 to acknowledge excellence in design, architecture, planning, landscape and public art, and are given to projects that have a positive cultural, social or economic contribution to the community. In 2009 when the Civic Trust went into administration, thanks to the support from the volunteer assessors and the national panel, and with a little funding from half-a-dozen sponsors, the Awards have been able to continue. Every nomination is visited by a team. Each assessment team is headed by an architect (not from the area), and consists of an access or inclusive design assessor and local or lay assessor, who researches the history of a given site together with local views. The visits are usually co-ordinated by a representative from the local authority.

For the last thirteen years I have been privileged to act as a local assessor. The buildings I particularly enjoyed visiting as part of the assessment process over the time were Brompton Court in Bournemouth, the new Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the architect Richard Horden's house, both in Poole.

In 2011 one of the sites we visited was the Seagull and Windbreak in Boscombe - two beach huts for the disabled. Winners last year included the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh (Gareth Hoskins Architects), The Longest Bench in Littlehampton (Studio Weave), Brockholes Visitor Centre in Preston (Adam Khan Architects), and The Hepworth Wakefield (David Chipperfield Architects). A winner for 2012? - my money is on the amazing Titanic Centre in Belfast!

Sally McGrath

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The views of contributors are not necessarily those of the Society.



BOURNEMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

August 2012

"A Picture of Curious Aspect"

Peter Treleven writes "I recently bought, via the house clearing industry, a nicely framed professional photograph (20" x 13")," described below the picture as. "Old Christchurch Road from the Lansdowne, 1928". It is one of a series.

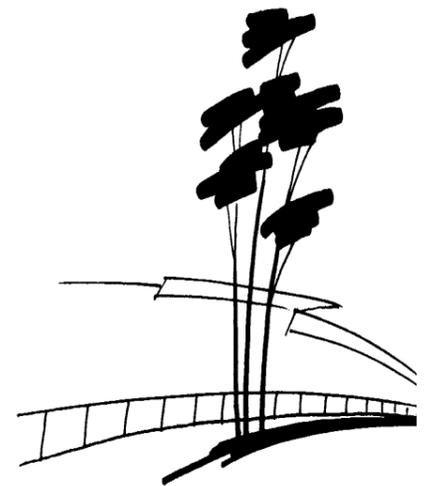
What is surprising is that the scene is of a 'dreadfully wet, stormy day'. The focus of this very busy picture is tram No 83, showing "The Square" on its rear end. Also included are a number of motor cars, a man on a tricycle and an elderly lady struggling across the road in the wind and rain.

"Timothy Whites, the chemists, the Lansdowne Hotel, and numerous umbrella wielding pedestrians are included in a busy scene". Peter would welcome any comments (Tel: 737439) or a note to 6 Arley Road. Poole BH14 8DW.

Explorations

Beryl Parker, Keith Barnes and prior to them Gail Crawford and Penny Rigby Hall arranged many visits to interesting and historic buildings in Hampshire and Dorset which whetted our appetite for more. They also included guided walks around local towns and villages. To supplement these I have led a number of walks (strolls) in the local conurbation. One of the earliest followed the course of the pottery railway that led from the Redland's retail park (once the site of the Bourne Valley Potteries) at the southern end of Alder Road down to Bourne Valley via Cromer Road and the level crossing, climbing to the junction of Alder Road and Herbert Avenue (one of the Alder Road Hills) and eventually arriving at the clay pit that supplied the Pottery (now the Alder Hills Nature Reserve). We then returned through the Winston Avenue estate to the Gas Works and home. Later we took a walk from the head of the Bourne Stream along its banks (where negotiable) through Talbot Heath, Coy Pond and the Upper Gardens to the sea. The sun that day was very hot and many of our party absconded before the planned route was complete.

I tend to see these walks as "urban green" walks because to connect the "green" parts the route takes in some housing areas. One took us through Turbary Common and Evergreen Valley to Kinson Common and on to St James's Church at Kinson. Most start and finish near bus routes. Another led us from Kings Park to Queens Park and the site of former clay pits and on to Littledown and East Cemetery. Here we inspected Cumberland Clark's grave and what was said to be the largest memorial in the cemetery. We have also explored Wimborne Road Cemetery (one of Christopher Crabb Creeke's creations) as well as looking at the buildings of Westbourne and Moordown. Starting at Boscombe Pier we climbed the hill to Boscombe Cliff Gardens and then explored Shelley Park, looked at Shelley Manor, then in a sorry state, before walking through Chessel Avenue to Christchurch Road and returning to the Cliffs through Woodland Walk and finally to the pier down Manor Steps and the promenade.



Town Centre

Despite the slow down in the economy and very few cranes now visible on the skyline a steady stream of plans and proposals for important buildings and sites in the town centre have been scrutinised and commented upon by the Society in recent months.

A huge and monolithic commercial, residential and leisure development planned for the former Winter Gardens site failed to respect the character of the area in which it sits. Having objected and asked for a complete design rethink we were pleased that the plans were withdrawn by the applicants just prior to them being considered by the Planning Board.

The empty plateau site along Priory Road adjacent to the Bournemouth International Centre has now seen new plans approved for the Hotel Training School and associated hotel together with improvements to the BIC facilities. We welcomed the revised scheme and believe its street frontages will be a positive contribution to the townscape.

Further along Priory Road we objected to the redevelopment of the amalgamated sites of the Bournemouth International Hotel and Ocean Palace restaurant feeling the scheme to be an over-development and the layout/design of the new blocks out of character with what is still a predominately Victorian area.

Although the approval in principle plan for this was approved by the Planning Board we have subsequently liaised with the architect and have hope that some positive and practical design suggestions of ours will be taken on board before the final plans are approved.

Across at The Pavilion we supported the latest set of plans to improve the external appearance of the listed theatre and remove the unsightly modern additions and features. We have been endeavouring for months to meet representatives of the Trevor Osborne Group to understand more fully their further plans for the improvement of The Pavilion, its grounds and of course details of the progress of the new Nautilus development and its impact on Westover Road.

Over at Horseshoe Common we have generally welcomed, subject to elevational improvements, two recent large mixed use schemes being promoted by the Bournemouth Development Company. The first on the Leyton Mount Car Park has been approved by the Planning Board, while the second, stretching up Madeira Road toward the Police Station, awaits a decision.

We have also discussed the proposals contained in the recently published Bournemouth by Night report, completed by Bournemouth based consultants Fera urbanism and welcome its plans and suggestions on how the town centre can be improved and better managed to bring a more stylish and quality provision, especially between the hours of 6 to 11, so that not just the Stag, Hen and bar / nightclub markets dominate.

Boscombe

We have been keeping an eye on plans within Boscombe and continue to welcome Council and community partners' plans to regenerate and improve those areas where pockets of decline or deprivation exist. We supported the plans to create new affordable housing and a small community facility at Haviland Mews on the site of the long closed BCCA as believe these are more sustainable than alternatives mooted and will act as a catalyst in the wider area. We have chased the improvement and completion of building works to apartments in The Crescent and commented on the latest plans to redevelop the former ARGOS building opposite The Crescent, suggesting design improvements.

We were disappointed that both Boscombe and Pokesdown missed out on the recent Portas funding bids and wonder how such deserving bids have gone unsupported nationally. We note though the great work being done in both areas especially at Pokesdown with its recently created partnership between traders and residents and their events including the heritage board on the green next to the former Bell Inn opposite the railway station. On the clifftop and in the Boscombe Manor area we continue to object to "Sandbanks-style" glassbox looking apartment redevelopments that sit so uncomfortably in their stylish Edwardian and inter-war street-scenes.

In Memorium

We were sorry to learn of the deaths of two members, Elizabeth Edwards and John Wolstencroft in the in the past few months. Mrs Edwards from Yorkshire who came to Bournemouth in 1962 will be remembered for her "History Of Bournemouth" published in 1981 and illustrated by her husband. She wrote several other books dealing with the local area and its people. She was a life member of the Society as was John Wolstencroft. John with his wife Eleanor was a doughty defender of Bournemouth and in particular of the East Cliff. He served as a committee member for a number of years and always made a positive contribution to its discussions. Former MP David Atkinson, although not a member supported a number of the Society's campaigns, particularly the move to refurbish Bournemouth Railway Station in which he was very active. He supported the Society in its efforts to proect the "green belt" and the town's architectural heritage. He spoke at last year's AGM in support of of the memorial for those who died when an Halifax bomber crashed in Moordown in 1944.

Your 2012 Committee



Front row: Beryl Parker, Jean Bird, John Barker.
Middle row: Keith Barnes, Elaine Cooper,
Ken Mantock, Sally McGrath.
Back Row: John Soane, Peter Jackson, Paul Newsome

Throop and Muscliffe

Nearly twenty years ago the Society and the Throop & Muscliffe Residents' Association together organised a series of open days at Throop Mill by kind permission of Heygates, the mill's owners. On several Bank Holidays and on national Mill Day across the mid 1990's we welcomed hundreds of visitors each time the Mill was opened. Volunteers showed visitors around the Mill and within the grounds displays, arts & crafts stalls and light refreshments were available. Walking tours were also given around Throop and Muscliffe. The fact that so many people attended on these open days shows there was real interest in the Mill and so many people commented on their surprise that so much of the original Victorian/Edwardian milling machinery remained within the Mill.

Although the open days were fully organised and managed by volunteers and we covered costs including insurance etc the owners eventually decided that they would prefer it not open to the public. Since then the building has been in effect mothballed, though as reported in past newsletters the indefatigable local councillor Ron Whittaker has championed its protection and ideally its re-use as a heritage centre or public refreshment facility so that all the people enjoying the riverside area can share in its history. We naturally support this idea and believe a sympathetically designed and managed facility would be ideal here. Recently officers of the Council have met Mr Heygate so we are hopeful that something positive will come from this and the opportunity offered by the building is recognised.

Up in Muscliffe Lane near Broadway Lane, we have supported Cllr Ron's calls for the protection of historic and listed Throop Church and its Manse, both originally dating from late Georgian times, which have been empty for years now. We understand that plans are being discussed with the Planners to renovate the Manse and built several houses in its grounds and also to convert the church to residential use. No details are available but we are concerned to see how houses can be built and accessed in the grounds without impacting unfavourably on the existing heritage buildings here or their modern neighbours. Importantly we are not convinced that the church needs to be converted since at least one other local church group have real interest in using the building to accommodate their growing congregation.



40th Anniversary

Plans are well advanced to celebrate the Society's 40th Anniversary later this year and a sub-committee comprising John Barker, Ken Mantock, Paul Newsome, Beryl Parker and John Soane have been working hard. Material has been gleaned from the Echo archives, our first Chairman, Ian Dickins, has been found very much alive and well in Wimborne. We have produced display material debuted on Civic Day, are putting the final touches to a commemorative booklet and look forward to our celebration lunch on 7th November. We plan to have our display material at local libraries and community centres and look forward to some retrospectives in The Echo. Do support us at the lunch, this is certain to be a jolly and important occasion - details of the event/menu and the booking form to be returned to Beryl are enclosed.