

BOURNEMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Mid-winter 2013

Churchill Gardens Appraisal

This rare (for Bournemouth) urban "Square" in Boscombe to the west of Palmerston Road is bounded on the west by Walpole Road, by Churchill Road to the north and east, and Borthwick Road to the south. The four roads enclose an area of grass used for leisure with some play equipment for children. My own memory of it from the early 1940's to the late 1960's was of trees on each side and, a 6 foot high fence around the ground used as a private sports field by the Gorsecliff Preparatory School. There are some attractive terraces on each of the four sides but some decay as well and the reappraisal is intended to recommend ways of improving the area as a place to live. A first step has been for the Council to buy one of the many "Houses in Multiple Occupation" in the area and convert it into five self contained flats for tenants with a local connection.

Next Spring I hope to arrange a walk in the area which will include a visit to St. Clement's Church and a look at what remains of the buildings that comprised the House of Bethany, a former Anglican convent.

Throop Mill, the URC Church and its Manse

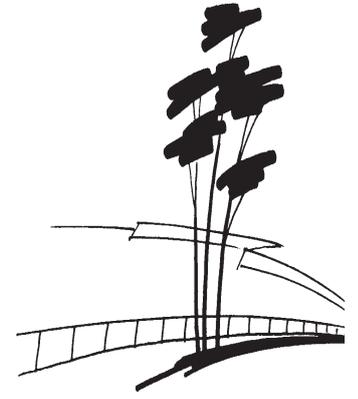
Councillor Ron Whittaker has for many years advocated a public use for the Mill as a historic attraction for residents of the town and visitors alike. Ken Mantock has visited the owner of the Mill, Mr. Heygate to press this case but to no avail. Concern has also been expressed at the poor state of the URC Church and it's manse. Civic Society members have joined local residents and others to cut the grass and tidy the churchyard. There are now some hopes that the Church and Manse will be offered for sale.

Town Centre Vision

The Leader of the Council, Councillor John Beesley attended the September meeting of the Society's committee to update members on the "Vision". It was initiated in 2007 but the necessary checks and consultations meant it was only now coming to fruition. The Bournemouth Development Company had been created as a partnership between Morgan Sindall, a management company and Bournemouth Borough Council. Development is in progress on three sites, two on the North side of Madeira Road (accommodation for Arts University students and a multi-storey car park) and another at Leyton Mount where mainly affordable properties for first-time buyers will be built. The erection of a new hotel on Terrace Mount has also commenced.

Russell-Cotes Tapestry

The proposal to sell this item which was specially commissioned to hang in the café has agitated a number of our members. It is claimed that there is no place for the tapestry in the re-designed café nor for the furniture which was made by Matthew Burt a notable designer. However, it is now said that this latter caused a number of accidents!!! Over the years many items with a connection to the town have been disposed of with very little publicity.



Wessex City

The desire to amalgamate the three towns of Poole, Christchurch and Bournemouth into a single civic authority can be traced back to the 1920's but has usually become unstuck by the wish of Poole and Christchurch, two towns with long histories, to remain independent. This desire has re-emerged this year backed by former Councillor Douglas Eyre and others. The arguments in favour stress that the energy supplies, e.g. gas, electricity and water have a common source and nowadays the buses serve all three towns. Also that there would be considerable savings in amalgamating the administrative services and reducing the number of councillors. Although experience shows that bosses of larger departments expect larger pay packets. The subject is open for discussion.

Three Towns Travel Policy

There is a "three towns travel policy" which is intended to improve movement in the conurbation between the three towns for all means of travel. The works at the top of Richmond Hill should ease access for cyclists. The entrance to Horseshoe Common from Old Christchurch Road will be improved by moving the bus stops and some of the street furniture to reduce congestion. Changes to the Travel Interchange at Bournemouth railway station are planned as well as at other sites where obstacles to free movement can be re-sited.

Westover Road Cinemas

The proposals to provide a number of multi-screen cinemas in some of the proposed new developments has raised doubts about the future of the Odeon cinema. The management has indicated it wants to move. There is a campaign to save the present cinema as it is one of the few left of its size and capacity and a popular venue for visitors.

Tourist Information Centre

The lease of the site has not been renewed as the owners want to use it for another purpose. Many other tourist information centres in resort towns have closed to the detriment of visitors and the businesses that serve them.

1943 Air Raid Memorial Unveiled

John Walker represented the Civic Society at the unveiling of a memorial for the 70th Anniversary of the German Air Raid which destroyed the Metropole Hotel at the Lansdowne on Sunday 23rd May 1943 as well as a number of other buildings in the town. A large number of civilians and allied servicemen died in the raid which was the worst suffered by the town in World War Two.

Other Issues

These include the future of the Dean Park Cricket Ground, the Crescent Boscombe, a Bus station in Exeter Road, a site for the last Bournemouth Tram in existence and Holdenhurst Village Appraisal. This has been completed and returned to the Council.

Web Site

The Society does have a website but at the moment no one to keep it up to date. This means there is no list of events to consult. Is there someone out there who could help?

Offshore Wind Farm

In October our observations on the proposed wind farm were sent to Navitus in the form of a critique by our Built Environment Officer, Dr. John Soane.

Whilst we naturally support the global principle of reducing carbon emissions and exploring viable green energy systems we consider the negative local impact of the Navitus Bay Wind Park on Bournemouth and its neighbouring towns is too great to justify us supporting the scheme.

We share with other groups concerns about the economic viability, long term sustainability and environmental and visual impact of the proposal on the area but are also concerned with the impact of the wind farm on the scenic setting and sense of place of Bournemouth - the critique, viewable on our website, expands on this.

Gypsy and Traveller Issues

The threat of proposals for siting gypsy and traveller sites in Muscliff and the Lansdowne has receded following a recent Dorset county-wide study into the need of this community. Previous reports suggested that every local authority area had both the need and legal requirements to provide sites but the latest study indicates that in Bournemouth there is no real need for residential plots. There is still a need for transit plots but it is becoming apparent that nationally the law is now being more reasonably applied so that local authorities can work together to find and create joint sites rather than having to struggle to find plots in each of its own boundaries.

Supporting Other Bournemouth Groups

As well as attending to matters of interest to the Civic Society and our committee members having active links to other local groups, as an organisation we are also members of Bournemouth 2026 Partnership and Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Services. We receive updates and news of these pan-Bournemouth organisations and attend their AGMs and events held throughout the year.

Comments on Planning Applications

In recent months we have commented on planning applications including: 7 Belle Vue Road, Southbourne - flats; Royal Arcade, Boscombe - renovation and new homes; Royal Bournemouth Hospital - new buildings; Bournemouth Pier-Zip Wire; 51 to 65 Holdenhurst Road, Lansdowne - student flats and offices; 137 Stewart Road, Charminster - Houses; Hogshead Pub, Westbourne - new sign; Priory Road, West Cliff - flats; 51 Manor Road, East Cliff-flats and 3 to 7 Lansdowne Crescent - extension to flats. Copies of the observations made each month to the Planning Department by our Built Environment Officer, after consideration by our committee, are viewable on our website.

Social Events

Beryl Parker and Keith Barnes continue to organise a huge range of visits, trips and social events for members to enjoy. During the Summer and Autumn members visited Shawcross House, Bramshill House, Stratfield Saye, Avebury Manor and Milton Abbey. Monthly lunch club meetings have been held in local pubs and restaurants. Saturday morning soup and sandwich with a talk have been held in an East Cliff hotel. Speakers have told us about smugglers and the Bloomsbury Group.

The amount of work and preparation that goes into organising these events is very great and we pay tribute to the work that Beryl and Keith do - especially as they both, suffer from poor health. The committee have agreed that helpers must be found to lighten the load on our activities secretaries and assist with future years events - if you are interested do give us a call.

Your Committee wish you all good wishes for the coming year and hope that those now ill will recover and enjoy our future activities.

Contacts

Ken Mantock	Chairman	Tel: 01202 420199
Jean Bird	Vice Chair	Tel: 01202 757051
Beryl Parker	Social Activities	Tel: 01202 512717
Keith Barnes	Social Activities	Tel: 01202 397073
John Barker	Newsletter Editor	Tel: 01202 292871



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