

# LEICESTER CITIZEN

THE JOURNAL OF

## LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY

[www.leicestercivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.leicestercivicsociety.org.uk)



*Photo: Phil Taylor*

**No.24      March 2011**

**CITY COUNCIL ADOPTS CORE STRATEGY. 40<sup>TH</sup> AGM. CIVIL WAR IN LEICESTER. PROPOSED NEW CONSERVATION AREAS. WESTERN PARK OPEN AIR SCHOOL. LEICESTER MUSEUMS TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION. THE 2010 AWARDS. BOSTON TOUR. LEICESTER HERITAGE FAIR. PLUS REGULAR FEATURES AND MUCH MORE.**



# LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY

Founded 1971

Patron: Olwen Hughes MBE. M.Phil. Dip.Ed. FRSA  
President: J.B. Josephs MA (Oxon.)  
Vice-President: The Very Reverend Alan Warren MA  
*Provost Emeritus of Leicester*

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 502932

MEMBER OF THE HISTORIC TOWNS FORUM

MEMBER OF THE EAST MIDLANDS ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC & HERITAGE SOCIETIES

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**SOCIAL SECRETARY: TRUSHA CHAUHAN.**

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- **CONSERVATION TEAM**

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**POSITION VACANT: Conservation Officer Leicester South & East. (South Highfields,  
Evington Footpath, Spinney Hill Park, Knighton Village, Evington Village,  
Old Humberstone & Upper New Walk Conservation Areas)**

**NICK KNIGHT: Stoneygate Conservation Area Society.**

**SUSAN BARTON: City Council Conservation Advisory Panel.**

**RICHARD & ANN ALLSOP: Conservation Assistants.**

- **CAMPAIGNS TEAM**

**BEN RAVILIOUS, SUSAN BARTON & STUART SIMMONDS.**

- **PUBLICATIONS and EXHIBITIONS TEAM**

**STUART BAILEY, GORDON GOODE, SIMON HARRIS & JENNIFER MACGREGOR.  
*The deadline for Leicester Citizen No.25 is 18<sup>th</sup> June 2011.***

CREDITS: Phil Taylor, John Pelmore, Su Barton, Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service, Leicester University Students Union, BBC, Nick Knight, Leicester Museums Technology Association, FreePhoto.com

The opinions expressed in LEICESTER CITIZEN are not necessarily those of the editor or Leicester Civic Society.

Front Cover: Some of us were local but some of us didn't know South Knighton at all. This delightful brick cartouche illustrates what wonders there are in Leicester if only we look for them. See the article on the potential for New Conservation Areas at South Knighton and the Portland Enclave in this issue.

## APRIL to JUNE EVENTS DIARY

Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15 pm. Society General Meeting: Regent Club, Regent Road. Members welcome.
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	7.15 pm. <u>THE 2010 CIVIC SOCIETY AWARDS</u> . Reception, Presentation Ceremony and Dinner with Guests of Honour Sir Peter and Lady Soulsby at the City Rooms, Hotel Street. See Handbill and the Bookings Page for full details. Bookings are now open.
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> April:	<u>EAST MIDLANDS ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC AND HERITAGE SOCIETIES</u> . 10 <sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting at Newark, Nottinghamshire, as the guests of Newark Civic Trust. Members welcome. Contact Stuart Bailey or Howard Wilkins if you want to join us.
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> April	IN SEARCH OF THE SAXONS: Jewry Wall Museum from 11.30 to 3.30pm, with The Friends of Jewry Wall Museum. Admission free. See the advertisement for full details.
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	10.30 pm: Guided Walk <u>CIVIL WAR</u> . See the advertisement and the Bookings Page for full details. Bookings are now open.
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	7.15 pm. Society General Meeting: Regent Club, Regent Road. Members welcome.
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	All members are invited to the Leicester Civic Society <u>40<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</u> . 7.30pm: THE REGENT CLUB, Regent Road. See the Official Notice.
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	<u>SUMMER COACH TOUR to THE HISTORIC PORT of BOSTON</u> . Liable to be very popular. Discounts for members. See advertisement and the Bookings Page for full details. Bookings are now open.
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	7.30 pm. Leicester Early Music Association. The Longslade Consort at Castle House. £10.00. Advance booking essential as places are limited. <a href="http://www.earlymusicleicester.co.uk">www.earlymusicleicester.co.uk</a>
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> June	<u>LEICESTER HERITAGE FAIR</u> : Bishop Street Methodist Church. <u>MEET THE CIVIC SOCIETY AND OTHER HERITAGE GROUPS</u> . Our committee members and our exhibition stand will both be there. See the advertisement for full details.
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	7.15 pm. Society General Meeting: Regent Club, Regent Road. Members welcome.
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	<u>THE EMACHS AWAYDAY</u> : Join us in the historic Peak District village of Eyam. Contact Stuart Bailey or Howard Wilkins for details.
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> June	Jazz at The Jewry Wall Museum. Enjoy a lazy summer afternoon of music.
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	7.15 pm. Society General Meeting: Regent Club, Regent Road. Members welcome.

SEE THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR ABBEY PUMPING STATION SPECIAL EVENTS IN 2011.

**MEMBERS MAY WISH TO HELP SAVE THE PLANET - AND SAVE THE SOCIETY SOME MONEY - BY OPTING TO RECEIVE FUTURE COPIES OF LEICESTER CITIZEN, INCLUDING ALL SOCIETY ENCLOSURES, ELECTRONICALLY. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO READ YOUR JOURNAL WITH THE ADDED PLEASURE OF SEEING THE COLOUR ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR - AND BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE. PLEASE JUST EMAIL OUR CHAIRMAN OR TREASURER IF YOU WISH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OFFER.**

***THERE'S A LOT HAPPENING IN LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY  
IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER  
TELL YOUR FRIENDS***

## The Chairman's Page

If you blinked you might have missed the all important Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (In effect our new Local Plan) passing through the City Council Planning Committee, Overview & Scrutiny Management Board, Cabinet and the full Council in just sixteen days during November - and with no publicity. Actually this is a very unfair thing for me to say as the process was subject to lengthy public consultation during 2008 to 2010, and in which we participated fully. Formal adoption was just the final boring bit. Still it only shows how fast our City Council can move when it wants to.

The most important bit from our point of view is CS18 Historic Environment. This is so important that I repeat it in full, opposite. I include those sections of the preamble amended by agreement between the Planning Inspector and the City Council but exclude simple matters of fact and the sections on archaeology. As this is supposed to be the brief for planning and planning decisions for many years to come, I shall be harping upon it *ad nauseum* from now on. By any standards it is impressive but having read it - please do - you may wish to ask yourselves if the Council isn't just jumping through Central Government hoops? Is it business as usual? Perish the thought - but we will no doubt soon find out.

Something else that happened in almost the blink of an eye was the crisis over City Council budget cuts, in particular the proposals to charge museum admissions to non-city residents and the threat to actually close four out of our six museums. Both proposals would have reduced this great city to the status of a grubby little provincial backwater and have created a cultural desert in which to try and educate our children. Luckily the public outcry was so massive they were soon dropped. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who spoke up for our museums during this crisis - and this includes some of our councillors. Thank you. We couldn't have done it without you. But this sort of thing happens every few years in Leicester and I have written to the Head of the Museums Service calling for strategic planning of museum development to prevent any reoccurrence of this short-termism.

Meanwhile I have also written to the Director of Planning & Economic Development, criticising proposals to cut qualified Conservation & Design staff, on whom planning officers - and the rest of us - will be heavily dependant if the wise words of CS18 opposite are actually to be implemented in practice. As I type this page, a decision is due by Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. So by the time you read this you will know if the City Council is serious about our historic environment, or more interested in saving a bob or two!

In this edition you will be able to read more about the ongoing battle to save Aylestone Meadows Nature Reserve. This is due to go to Planning Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> March. In view of the recent debacle over All Saints Brewery this is a body that I would not trust with much at all, never mind a sensible decision over Aylestone Meadows. In my opinion the jury is hung at the moment, so it is up to us all to keep applying pressure on councillors. As I have said many times it is no use bemoaning what has happened afterwards if we have done nothing whatsoever to prevent it before.

Finally on a happier note, please don't forget the 2010 Awards, a prestigious ceremony at the City Rooms on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April, with our guests Sir Peter and Lady Soulsby. And please don't forget our 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting at the Regent Club on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May. I look forward to seeing lots of you on both of these special occasions.

Happy Reading!

Thank you.

***Stuart Bailey***

## LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.

### CORE STRATEGY.

Adopted 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

Paragraph 4.5.12. New national policy set out in PPS5 has shifted the emphasis from individual designations (scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, historic battlefields, conservation areas and locally listed buildings) to a more holistic treatment of the historic environment. This recognises the importance that our heritage plays in people's quality of life for this and future generations, as well as its contribution in creating sustainable places and as a place-making tool within existing and new developments. The City Council recognises this change in emphasis and will seek to take a holistic view of designated and other heritage assets within the overall strategy for the City.

Paragraph 4.5.13. The City Council recognises the importance and impact of the historic environment on communities throughout the City. It is therefore committed to pro-actively engage members of these communities in the earliest stages of any work, which may affect the way they value their historic environment. This includes local heritage groups, religious groups, local community groups, residents and other interested parties.

Paragraph 4.5.16. There are 10 Scheduled Monuments, over 400 Nationally Listed structures and 24 locally designated Conservation Areas in Leicester, all of which are afforded statutory protection. 370 locally listed buildings have been designated due to their architectural and historical importance as well as their contribution to the historic character of the City.

### CS POLICY 18: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets. We will support the sensitive reuse of high quality historic buildings and spaces, promote the integration of heritage assets and new development to create attractive spaces, encourage contemporary design rather than pastiche replicas, and seek the retention and reinstatement of historic shop fronts and the protection and where appropriate, enhancement of the historic public realm. Within the regeneration areas particular importance will be given to the integration of the historic environment with new development through encouraging heritage led regeneration.

The Council will pro-actively engage with local communities to protect and enhance the quality and diversity of Leicester's historic environment, in particular through the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisals incorporating management strategies, other development plan documents and guidance notes.

The City Council will monitor historic buildings at risk and take action where necessary to secure and improve those buildings deemed most at risk.

We will consider the advice of statutory and local consultees in considering applications affecting designated and other heritage assets.

## EVENTS PAST & FUTURE

### SKITTLES MATCH & PUB SUPPER.

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November: We split into two teams, the 'County Set' and the 'City Slickers', the former of whom won by just two points. However this doesn't mean a thing, as the level of incompetence demonstrated by both teams had to be witnessed to be believed. A great comic evening with a great supper. Many thanks go to Trusha Chauhan for organising the event.

### VICTORIAN LEICESTER AT CHRISTMAS.

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> December: A large turnout for this popular guided walk. Special thanks go to Anita Harrison who, for the second year running, interrupted her Christmas holiday to open the Guildhall for us. Some developed cold feet on route and everyone had cold feet by the end. But that pint tasted good afterwards!

### 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY DINNER.

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January: A large and enthusiastic gathering for this special occasion at the Regency Hotel. Thank you once more to Trusha for organising this event, and to Dennis & Wendy Allum for their generosity. Olwen Hughes and Stuart Bailey both made speeches - not too long. We had a great time and look forward to our 41<sup>st</sup> Dinner next year.

### THE 2010 CIVIC SOCIETY AWARDS.

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm: Reception, Presentation Ceremony and Dinner at the City Rooms. Prices held at £25 courtesy of Mr. Parmar. Our guests of honour, Sir Peter and Lady Soulsby will be presenting the Awards. The event will once again be open for those members who wish to attend the reception and the ceremony but not the dinner. (Only £3.00) See the handbill for full details. Please use the bookings page for advance booking, which must be made by Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March.

### IN SEARCH OF THE SAXONS.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April: Jewry Wall Museum. 11.30 to 15.30. Admission free. Join the Friends of Jewry Wall Museum in the Saxon town of Ledecestre. See "Wulfingas" Anglo-Saxon re-enactors battle it out. Arts & Crafts, Jewellery, Weaving and Poetry. Fun for all the family.

### CIVIL WAR.

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April: Guided Walk from the Hawthorn Building Steps on The Newarke at 10.30 pm. Violent times! Join us on the morning of Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May 1645 and follow the fighting from The Newarke to St. Martins Churchyard. See the advertisement and use the bookings page. Bookings open now.

## 40<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm: Ground Floor Function Room at the Regent Club, Regent Road, Leicester. See the official notice opposite. If you do nothing else please come to our rather special 40<sup>th</sup> AGM - the annual opportunity to tell your committee just what you think of them! See you all there.

### DAY TOUR: HISTORIC PORT OF BOSTON.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May: Many of you following our earlier publicity will have been expecting a visit to Hodnet Hall Gardens in Shropshire but Hodnet is now only open on Bank Holidays, so we have moved on to your second choice. There are few places as beautiful as Boston and we make a much-requested return visit after an interval of nearly twenty years. See the advert on the back cover and use the bookings page. Book now to avoid disappointment.

### LEICESTER HERITAGE FAIR.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June: Following last summer's success we are repeating this chance to see the Civic Society and other heritage bodies in action at Bishop Street Methodist Church. See the advertisement. Meet their activists, see their work, ask those searching questions - and join up! (Volunteers needed to help please)

Advance notice is given for the following events, which will be advertised fully in Leicester Citizen No. 25, due to be published on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011, and on the Society's website.

### THE FESTIVAL OF BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July: Bigger and better than ever. A full range of events at the Jewry Wall Museum during this prestigious national festival.

### CITY OF THE DEAD – SECRETS OF WELFORD ROAD CEMETERY.

Guided Walk: Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July: Welford Road Cemetery is a vast necropolis full of fascinating people, their splendid monuments and their humble graves. It is also a beautiful wildlife haven. Join us on this brand new guided walk.

### COLD WAR JETS.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August: Self drive visit to the often underrated collection at Bruntingthorpe. Our guide will be Geoffrey Pond who owns one of the aircraft. Bring a barbecue or bring a picnic for a great afternoon with a difference.

### DAY TOUR: POWYS CASTLE, WALES.

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September: Truly exotic! Robert Clive transformed this grim medieval fortress



perched high above the Severn Valley into a paradise of great halls and gardens with the loot of his Indian campaigns.

#### HERITAGE OPEN DAYS.

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September: Once again we shall be joining in this national celebration of our heritage with an extended display of our work at All Saints Church, Bishop

Street Methodist Church and The Secular Hall. Once again we need volunteers to help please.

#### ROMAN LEICESTER.

Guided Walk: Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September: The welcome return of one of our most popular guided walks. Includes a grand tour of the Roman Baths and guided visit of the Jewry Wall Museum to view its splendid treasures.



Photo John Pelmore



**1971 - 2011**

*40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner at the Regency Hotel on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January. Table No.3. Left to right: Jennifer Macgregor, Jim Salmon, Mr & Mrs Malcolm Elliott, Olwen Hughes, Geoffrey Pond, Ann and Richard Allsop.*

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is hereby given of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Leicester Civic Society to be held in THE FUNCTION ROOM, THE REGENT CLUB, 102 REGENT ROAD, LEICESTER on**

**WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MAY 2011 at 7.30pm.**

**In accordance with the Constitution of the Society, the purposes of the meeting will be:**

- 1. To receive the Annual Reports of the Chairman & Public Relations Officer, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.**
- 2. To elect a Chairman & Public Relations Officer, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, together with not more than nine other society members, to comprise the committee of the Society for 2011 - 2012.**

**The existing Chairman & Public Relations Officer Mr. Stuart Bailey, Hon. Secretary Mr. Howard Wilkins, Hon. Treasurer & Membership Secretary Mr. Gordon Goode, Campaigns Manager & Webmaster Mr. Ben Ravilious, Society Archivist Mrs. Jennifer Macgregor and committee members Dr. Susan Barton, (Conservation Area Panel) Ms. Trusha Chauhan (Social Secretary) and Mr. Stuart Simmonds (Conservation Officer for West & Central Leicester) have all indicated their willingness to stand.**

**There are vacancies for up to five other committee members.**

**Any nominations for officers and other committee members must be received by the Hon. Secretary in writing with the supporting signatures of proposing and seconding members, no later than Wednesday 4th May 2011. Please note that:**

- i) The position of Vice-Chairman remains vacant.**
- ii) The ex-officio position of Conservation Officer for South & East Leicester remains vacant.**
- 3. Any other business proper to the meeting. Please inform the Hon. Secretary Mr. Howard Wilkins no later than Wednesday 4th May 2011, if you wish to raise any items under this heading.**

**Howard Wilkins, Hon. Secretary.**

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

# CIVIL WAR

A Guided Walk by Stuart Bailey



**SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2010 at 10.30am**  
**HAWTHORNE BUILDING STEPS, THE NEWARKE.**  
**ADVANCE BOOKING ESSENTIAL - SEE THE BOOKINGS PAGE**

## NEWS

### EAST GATES COFFEE HOUSE.

There has been growing concern over the deteriorating condition of the splendid Victorian Coffee House, by Edward Burgess, on the corner of Church Gate and East Gates. The Victorian Society has applied to have the building listed. The owners have now submitted a planning application that includes restoration of the timber facade, which is welcome. However for some strange reason they propose painting the entire East Gates and Church Gate facades in a uniform dark grey, and with a large bright orange fascia to East Gates. The Society has made representations and we hope that common sense will prevail.

### ALL SAINTS BREWERY.

Following our feature in the last edition of Leicester Citizen, on 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November remaining fragments of the historic brewery complex were destroyed by two further "accidental" fires. Leicester City Council said it would serve a repair notice under Section 215 of the Planning Act but never got around to doing it before either fire, and this heritage asset is now effectively lost. Both the Civic Society and English Heritage are extremely angry. The naivety of the City Council Planning Committee was responsible for this debacle and the remaining parts of All Saints Conservation Area are now at grave risk of permanent loss of character. The Conservation Area may well have to be de-designated, which would be a tragic first for our city.



## MUCH APPRECIATED

**THE BROWN WAREHOUSE:** Thanks to the City Council Economic Development Team, the Brown Factory and Warehouse at 82 - 86 Rutland Street dating from 1855 are to be restored as a business centre to complement the LCB Depot. Leicester has secured matching European funding. Heritage led regeneration at last.

**ROSE & PENNY CUSTOM:** Thanks to the Lord Mayor Councillor Colin Hall and the management of O'Neill's Bar, the 17<sup>th</sup> Century custom of paying the rate of the historic Rose & Crown in Loseby Lane with one penny and a damask rose, is to be reinstated. In keeping with tradition the ceremony will take place at the pub on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, 24th June this year.

**10,000 TREES:** Congratulations to Leicester City Council Parks Department for planting its target of 10,000 new trees in our City in just three years. The last tree - a lime - went into the ground as part of the new pedestrian crossing on Granby Street. However vandals almost immediately killed the tree and its fellow saplings. The replacements are to be protected by cages and CCTV coverage. (And you thought that they only sacked Rome!)

**OUR AWARD WINNING MARKET:** Congratulations to everyone who voted for Leicester Market, now winner of the National Market Authority's Award for the Best Market in Britain for two out of the last three years.

**DOMINOES TOYS:** Meanwhile over on High Street, Dominoes Toys have scooped the prestigious Toy Industry Award for best independent toy shop in the UK. Well done Dominoes.

## ENJOY YOUR SHOPPING IN OUR AWARD WINNING CITY CENTRE



*Western Park Open Air School is currently subject to a proposal for partial demolition with construction of a four-storey retirement home that would have adverse impact on the visual amenity of houses and gardens in Letchworth Road, in addition to the historic Western Park.*

*Su Barton*

## AYLESTONE MEADOWS

The Civic Society has responded at length to the amended plans submitted by the City Council. The plans are little different in proposed effect from those originally submitted. They still represent irreversible damage to the Aylestone Meadows Nature Reserve by the imposition of all-weather football pitches, car parking, fencing and floodlighting. The revised ecology assessment still fails to answer the underlying concerns expressed by Natural England, Friends of the Earth, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in their own submissions.

Meanwhile Councillor Wann continues to shoot himself in the foot almost every time he speaks. The objectors were described as "one or two people in Aylestone", which is hardly the case and which produced an appropriate outcry. The offer of compensation land as mitigation has only poured fuel on the fire, as some of this is currently rented by a charity for sick horses, which might have to put its animals down if public access is to be allowed. Councillor Wann described this classic own goal as "a bit drastic". Quite apart from the fact that the land is already part of the whole meadows and is therefore already enjoyed by wildlife, some of it involves public footpaths that might require diversion. The Society will vigorously oppose any attempt to stop up footpaths using Sections 16 or 18 of the Highways Act. We are well used to such battles in Magistrates Court following the Bowstring Bridge Campaign and relish any such fight.

The amended proposals are due to go to Planning Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> March. If this cannot be prevented then be prepared for massive public protest on the day.

## WESTERN PARK OPEN AIR SCHOOL

The Western Park Open Air school was designed by J.O. Thompson and opened in November 1930. The arts-and-crafts-style building, with separate chalet-block classrooms, was described by contemporaries as, "domestic – quite unlike any ordinary school and a distinct addition to the amenities of the park as well as eminently suitable for its purpose, harmonises admirably with its rural surroundings". It was built following medical principles based on those of sanatoria: fresh air, rest, exercise and good food were keys to health. Pupils spent as much time on outdoor activities as possible, even sleeping in the playground every afternoon. Glazed all around, the chalet-style classrooms, and the hall, could be opened up to the air and sunlight. Another novel feature of the school was a spray (shower) room, not just for cleanliness but also as hydrotherapy, supposed to stimulate and strengthen the body. The school allowed children with respiratory and other debilitating illnesses to gain access to education.



THE  
2010 CIVIC  
SOCIETY  
AWARDS



It was a great pleasure to once again receive nominations for, and to visit examples of, both restoration and outstanding new buildings that enrich our historic built environment. These beautiful buildings are the heritage of our future. The adjudication panel was disappointed that the number of nominations fell for the second year running from a peak in 2008 but this is perhaps only a reflection of the current economic climate and in other respects may have spared our City a few horrors. However there has been no diminution in quality, which led once again to some tough decisions having to be made.

In the field of restoration we were immensely impressed by St. Martins House, Peacock Lane. A prominent building in the Cathedral/Guildhall Conservation Area and listed in 2009, it was originally built as the Wyggeston Hospital Boys School by Leicester architects Shenton & Baker in 1876. The building has a complex architectural history, reflected in its complex internal layout with extensions and additions dating from the 1880's, 1920's, 1950's and 1980's. Project Manager Rev. Peter Hobson, Architect Michael Goodhart of Pick Everard and their contractors are to be congratulated on a first class job of restoration and reuse as Diocesan HQ offices and function rooms.

The Equity Works dating from 1895, was the last surviving Boot & Shoe Factory in Leicester and an important part of the social history of our City. Leicester's leading suffragette Alice Hawkins worked at Equity, where she was visited and painted by Sylvia Pankhurst. When the works finally closed it was the end of an era. However the building has been rescued by Jamie Lewis Residential Lettings and, as with the Gimson Houses last year, Mr. Lewis has come to the rescue of an important building on the Local Interest List, which otherwise has had no protection from the demolition men.

Both of these entries win commendations for restoration, and both will be the subjects of an article in Leicester Citizen No.25 to be published in July 2011. However there can only be one winner.

The Award for Restoration goes without doubt to The Central Fire Station, Lancaster Road, designed by another local architect Trevor Sawday in 1925, and now restored meticulously to its original condition both inside and out. The most remarkable feature of this building, and one that instantly caught the imagination of the adjudication panel, is that it is still a busy working fire station after eighty-five years and as such is obviously more than fit for purpose. Yet at the same time the care and attention to period restoration has to be experienced to be believed. Everything from brass fittings, to plasterwork, bricks, window frames, woodwork, clocks, lawns and fencing has been carefully restored to a high standard. The building is an inspiration for what can be achieved if only people care enough for their historic built environment and is a tribute to both Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and Leicester City Council, who bought the whole splendid project to fruition in time and within budget.

We gave a commendation for the new building works at South Lodge, London Road. They clearly needed to be much larger than the existing building, yet have been carefully designed to compliment and avoid overwhelming this fine Stoneygate house of 1880.

By a unanimous decision however the Award for New Build goes to the O2 Arena at Leicester University. The panel found this to be an exciting new building constructed on an extremely difficult and sensitive site almost ringed by the listed buildings of the University Campus and the historic parkland of Welford Road Cemetery. The building is large and of a striking design yet manages to be almost unobtrusive in its setting. This is a difficult achievement for any architect or designer on such a site. The building is obviously new yet somehow looks as if it has always been there.





*Leicester Central Fire Station looking very much as it did when new in 1927. The largest wyvern in Leicester is made of brass and is resplendent in gold and scarlet paintwork. (Leic. Fire & Rescue Service)*

We are delighted to announce that on Friday 8th April 2011 our guests of honour Sir Peter and Lady Soulsby will present the 2010 Awards, with a reception and dinner at the City Rooms, Hotel Street, Leicester. Full details are given on the enclosed handbill. Please see the bookings page to reserve your places at this prestigious event. As we have said before, encouraging and celebrating restoration and design excellence in historic Leicester is a noble cause and one in which Leicester Civic Society is proud to be taking the lead.



*The O2 Arena adjoins the Percy Gee Building of Leicester University. The magnificent terrace overlooks the historic parkland of Welford Road Cemetery. (Leicester University Students Union)*

# STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA SOCIETY

[www.stoneygateconservation.org](http://www.stoneygateconservation.org)

## THE BIG SOCIETY HEADS TOWARDS STONEYGATE

There won't be many readers who haven't heard about the Localism Bill. The Bill is at the heart of the new government's ambition to promote 'Big Society' ideals and its main objective is to devolve power from central to local government and, ultimately, local people. Championed by cabinet minister Eric Pickles, the Bill was introduced into parliament in December, underwent its second reading in January and looks set to be in the news throughout the coming year.



Encouraging residents to take a more active interest in the development of their community is something that SCAS wholeheartedly supports and we read with interest those aspects of the Bill relating to planning. Our first impression was that some proposals (particularly for the setting up of 'Neighbourhood Forums' and the creation of 'Neighbourhood Plans') sounded strangely reminiscent of the sort of popular committees much loved by 1960s Marxist-Leninists and the TV sitcom character, Citizen ('Power to the People') Smith. Looking more closely, however, we were reassured to see that there is more evolution than revolution. Local government professionals will still administer the planning system and carry the major burden, as they do now. The difference will be that planning inspectors will be less able to override their decisions and local people will have significantly greater opportunities to contribute to policy in their area.

If (or when) the Big Society does arrive in Stoneygate, it will be able to build on established foundations. For the last three years, SCAS has been working hard to develop a closer, more effective relationship with planners, Conservation officers and councillors of every political hue to help safeguard the area's wonderful historical and architectural legacy and ensure that it retains its special character as a community.

One example of this has been in Springfield Road where (as featured in the last issue of the 'Citizen'), prompt action by SCAS members and residents halted the further unauthorised removal of original windows at a pair of characterful semi-detached early twentieth century houses, converted into flats during the 1970s. The thoughtless 'modernisation' which had –unfortunately– already seen century-old timber frames and ornate leaded glasswork consigned to a skip and replaced by inelegant and inappropriate UPVC units so exasperated nearby residents that they convened a neighbourhood meeting in November to discuss the management of the premises and other related issues. Over a dozen people attended, including Castle Ward councillor, Neil Clayton, Castle Ward beat officer PC Emma Jayne, members of the SCAS committee and -showing admirable courage and good faith - the owner and landlord.

The results were very encouraging. The owner confirmed that he had been in discussions with the Council's Planning Enforcement and Conservation Teams and that the UPVC windows would be replaced by new timber windows to match the originals, including the delicate leaded features. New windows to the original design would also be added to the other houses. He explained that he had acquired the block of three tenanted properties relatively recently and had no experience of property management and lettings in a conservation area like Stoneygate. He also admitted that he was having difficulties with some of his tenants and reassured neighbours by adding that was prepared to take strong action against those who behaved in an anti-social manner.

Time of course, will tell but we hope that, as a result of this constructive meeting residents, owner and tenants have the basis for a positive future relationship and three delightful properties will once again enhance the street scene, rather than looking like, as one resident put it 'sorry relics from Springfield Road's 'bedsit-land' past, hurriedly modernised using UPVC products on special offer in the local free press'.



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PROUDLY PRESENT THE

LEICESTER HERITAGE FAIR

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METHODIST CHURCH

COME ALONG AND MEET YOUR LOCAL HERITAGE SOCIETIES.  
SEE THEIR WORK AND TALK TO THEIR MEMBERS.

OPEN 10.00 TO 4.00 PM. ADMISSION FREE.



While we should be thankful that central government and the local planning authority between them provide the administrative framework for development and the means to safeguard our conservation areas, we should also remember that the vast majority of changes to buildings in residential conservation areas are the work of private property owners. In Stoneygate residents have for many years been making attractive and sympathetic changes and additions to their properties – taking the initiative without waiting to be prompted.

Lately, this has produced some very impressive results. Before Christmas it was a pair of particularly smart timber garage doors in Clarendon Park Road. More recently, it has been an elegant new front gate, piers and railings in Knighton Drive, apparently modelled on original Victorian designs for the property (left). We are also delighted to see that timber sash windows are making a comeback and have recently replaced functional 1970s metal units in both Portland Road and Allandale Road.

Power to the People indeed. And thanks to the City Council's Conservation Team who has been all too willing to provide them with expert help and guidance, when asked.

*Nick Knight*



## NEW CONSERVATION AREAS.

The Civic Society is committed to the promotion of new Conservation Areas in Leicester. Currently twenty-four conservation areas occupy 4.6% of the City, which is an inadequate representation. We believe these figures should be closer to thirty-seven and 8.5%. The team of Ann & Richard Allsop, Stuart Bailey, Peter Jones, Jennifer Macgregor and Howard & Joan Wilkins conducted a total of seven surveys of South and East Leicester in 2010 and the streets and addresses to be recommended are given below together with some excellent photographs by Phil Taylor. Detailed submissions will go to Leicester City Council by the end of April this year. Work will then start on Clarendon Park, Evington Footpath, Evington Village and the City Centre over this coming summer.

### 1. SOUTH KNIGHTON NEW CONSERVATION AREA



*South Knighton Road. The splendidly idiosyncratic Ilford Houses date from 1900. (See front cover for detail)*

Holbrook Road:	All numbers.
Knighton Church Road:	2 to 114 even, 1 to 113 odd.
London Road:	415 to 453 odd.
South Knighton Road	2 to 68 even, 1 to 101 odd.



*St. Guthlac's Church, Holbrook Road.*

### 2. PORTLAND NEW CONSERVATION AREA



*Portland Lodge dates from 1860.*



*A fine display of Edwardian villas on Morland Avenue.*



*Portland Cottage and Portland Towers date from 1868.*

Grenfell Road:	2 to 16 even, 1 to 21 odd.
London Road	436 to 474 & 474c even. 510 & 512 even.
Morland Avenue:	2 to 32 even, 1 to 33 odd.



Plus: Knighton Cottage, Pine Cottage, Portland Cottage, Portland House, Portland Lodge and Portland Towers.

**3. STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA**  
**EXTENSION No.1. ASHFIELD RD. & HOLMFIELD RD.**



*The beautifully manicured lawns and gardens of Brookfield Bowling Club are a Stoneygate gem.*

Ashfield Road: 14 to 46 even, 21 to 45 odd.  
 Plus Brookfield Bowling Club, club house and grounds.  
 Holmfield Avenue: 1 & 2.  
 Holmfield Road: 24 to 68 even, 23 to 85 odd.  
 Oakfield Road: No.24.

**4. STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA**  
**EXTENSION No.2. THE SOUTHERN EDGE.**



*High quality detailing in Knighton Grange Road.*

Barrington Road: All numbers.  
 Guildford Road: 2 to 16 even, 1 to 13 odd.  
 Knighton Grange Road: 2 to 10 even, 1A to 13 odd.  
 London Road: 396 & 398 even.  
 369 to 413 odd.  
 Shirley Avenue: No.1.  
 Shirley Road: 2 to 42 even, 1 to 43 odd.



*Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century mansion on Shirley Road.*

**5. STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA**  
**EXTENSION No.3. ELMS ROAD.**



*Unspoilt Edwardian terrace at the far end of Elms Road.*

Elms Road: 36 to 72 even, 35 to 65 odd.  
 South Knighton Road: No.154

**6. STONEYGATE CONSERVATION AREA**  
**EXTENSION No.4. SOUTHERNHAY ROAD.**



*Outstanding Art Deco house on Southernhay Road.*

Avenue Gardens: All numbers. (Included by virtue of tree preservation orders only.)  
 Southernhay Road: 32 to 40 even, 15 to 27 odd.

The Association is a volunteer group with around 100 members mostly from Leicester and the surrounding County. It provides physical and financial support for the Leicester Museum of Science and Technology, Abbey Pumping Station, Corporation Road, Leicester. Opened in 1891 as a Sewage Pumping Station it was made redundant in 1964. The present Museum opened in 1972 became part of Leicestershire Museums and returned to Leicester City Council control in 1997.

Leicester City Council provides a Senior Curator, and a Conservation Officer and 3 sessional technicians, who work with the volunteers in the evenings and weekend events. There is also a front of house team comprising an operations officer and 3 customer service assistants.

Two distinct volunteer groups meet most Mondays throughout the year, a daytime group comprised mainly of retired members and an evening group, which comprises of a mixture of young and old volunteers. The groups perform a variety of tasks including maintenance of exhibits, restoration of items in the Museum's Collection, grounds maintenance and the staffing of all events in the year along with the permanent staff members. It is not unusual for over 1,000 visitors to attend a 4-hour event at the Museum.

In most years there are also major projects (such as replacing 500 railway sleepers) so additional weekend working is also the norm. Taking all of this into account it is estimated that member's time on site is over 10,000 hours p.a.

The scope of member's expertise ranges from electrical, plumbing and hydraulics engineers to catering, crafts and exhibitions. Many examples of this expertise are seen around the site on open days. Of special mention are: a 1938 Chip Van operated with the original coal-fired-range, a 1939 Double-Deck Bus ex-Leicester City Transport, the operational passenger site railway with its 1919 steam locomotive (which operates eight months of the year) and a 1891 Steam Roller & Leyland Tower Wagon ex-Leicester Tramways Department (which will be 100 years old in 2011) Not forgetting the running of those magnificent Gimson Beam Engines! It is intended to steam all four Gimson Beam Engines (hopefully in 2011) and this will become a unique event - as nowhere in the world are four beam engines in tandem to be seen in steam.

During a typical year the variety of events staffed by volunteers include: six days when the Gimson Beam Engines are steamed, thirteen days when the Steam Railway is operated and eight days when school break activities/ special themed days take place. In addition the largest Steam Toy exhibition in Europe is held annually at the Pumping Station and is now in its 21st year.

The Museum is open February to October annually, and ranks as the second most visited museum attraction in the City



*Leicester Museum of Science & Technology in the winter snow last December. The massive pumping station building looms in the distance. (LMTA)*

## **ABBEY PUMPING STATION 2011 SPECIAL OPEN DAYS**

**SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL : APRIL STEAM & FOOD FAYRE.  
SAT. 25<sup>TH</sup> & SUN. 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE : URBAN STEAM RALLY.  
SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPT : SEASIDE SPECIAL STEAM DAY.  
MONDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER : THE GHOSTLY ENGINEER!**

**ADMISSION FREE (Small charge for the Steam Trains)**

## **In Search of the Saxons**

**Jewry Wall Museum**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

**11.30 to 3.30pm. Admission Free.**

**Wulfingas - Saxon re-enactors battle it out!**

**Anglo-Saxon Arts & Crafts  
Jewellery, weaving and poetry.**

**Fun for all the family.**

## THE BOOKINGS PAGE

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PRESENTATION CEREMONY & DINNER AT THE CITY ROOMS ON FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2011.

I ENCLOSE \_\_\_\_\_ IN FULL PAYMENT (£25.00 PER PERSON BY SATURDAY 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH)

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PLEASE RESERVE \_\_\_\_\_ PLACES ON THE DAY COACH TOUR TO BOSTON ON  
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## NEWS

### RAILWAY STATION FAÇADE.

We are delighted to announce that on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2010 English Heritage finally responded to our application of June 2009 and granted listed building protection to all street level parts of Charles Trubshaw's magnificent London Road Railway Station. Significantly this includes the Station Street façade, which is intact but hidden behind the 1930 Parcels Office Building.

### FRIARS MILL.

Regrettably there is still no word from English Heritage on our application made in July 2009 for upgrading of the historic Friar's Mill on Bath Lane. They have now been sitting on this application for nearly 21 months.

### CITY CENTRE CAR PARKING.

The Society was asked to comment on the City Centre Car Parking Strategy and a mass of information was provided for us to do so. However this apparently boring exercise revealed that by 2016 our City Centre will have a nett oversupply of 4,475 car spaces, and that this figure assumes zero impact of City Council Green Transport Policies. Naturally we shall be reminding the Council of these facts as appropriate opportunities arise.

### TRANSPORT PLAN.

By complete contrast the all important Local Transport Plan was kept as quiet as possible and one only found out about it by reading "Link" Magazine. We are of course enthusiastic readers of any publication packed with things the City Council would like us to believe, so we didn't miss the opportunity to comment at length.

### CITY GALLERY.

There is understandable opposition to the Council decision to abandon the City Gallery and we appear to be guilty by association. So let us make one thing clear - the only objection this Society had was to the proposed unsuitable site on New Walk. Leicester Civic Society is firmly in favour of at least one major new art gallery for Leicester and bitterly regrets that the City Council rushed to close the former gallery in Granby Street before it had constructed a replacement.

### VICTORIA PARK HEALTH CENTRE.

The controversial new health centre next to Victoria Park duly received planning permission. A major worry is that this was on the casting vote of the Planning Committee chairman. It is surely common sense if you want to avoid splits in your committee that may threaten your future as chairman, that you avoid being responsible for voting in controversial measures, even if you are keen on them

personally. But not apparently in the topsy-turvy world of local politics, where common sense so seldom applies.

### MARKET CORNER.

The new open space in the Market Place is to be called Market Corner - an unimaginative name that one can only hope will grow on its users.

### REGENT COLLEGE.

A major scare is looming as Leicester University is apparently casting covetous eyes on all that lovely open land occupied by Regent College and Regent College is apparently casting covetous eyes on all that lovely money that Leicester University might offer them to build on it.

### INTERNATIONAL HOTEL.

The former hotel on the corner of Rutland Street and Humberstone Gate, must rank as one of the ugliest buildings in Leicester (No mean feat!) but we have been asked to comment by the new owner on its refurbishment and reuse and have been very happy to do so

### LONDON ROAD SPINNEY.

An application to build on the land adjoining 349 - 353 London Road, and occupied by a spinney subject to a Tree Preservation Order, has been withdrawn. Stoneygate Conservation Area Society is applying to have the spinney designated as "Urban Woodland" and they have our full support in this endeavour.

### 48 KNIGHTON DRIVE.

Planning permission has been given for a new house on the corner of Knighton Drive and Elms Road, but following representations from Leicester Civic Society and Stoneygate Conservation Area Society it will have to be in traditional red brick. (The original proposal being for cream coloured brick)

### JOHN BURROWS FOR MAYOR! OLWEN HUGHES FOR MAYOR! STUART BAILEY FOR MAYOR!

And finally you will be delighted to read that various members and supporters of this Society have been making their own suggestions for candidates in the forthcoming mayoral race and we rushed to interview these potential contenders - all of whom are otherwise renowned for their personal reticence. Former Chairman John Burrows said, "I am too old", though this has never to our knowledge stopped him doing anything he likes before now. Our Patron Olwen Hughes said, "I dash about so much I've been accused of behaving like a scorched earwig, so I can't dash about any more than that can I?" And our current Chairman Stuart Bailey was approached and made a number of colourful responses for Leicester Citizen - but of these none are printable!

**LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY**  
**SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2011**  
**The HISTORIC**  
**PORT OF BOSTON**



*Freephoto.com*

**THERE IS NOWHERE QUITE AS BEAUTIFUL AS BOSTON. WE SHALL HAVE A TOUR OF THE FAMOUS BOSTON STUMP, ONE OF THE GREAT GLORIES OF MEDIEVAL CHURCH ARCHITECTURE, AN OPTIONAL GUIDED WALK OF THE ANCIENT TOWN AND TIME TO VISIT THE MAUD FOSTER WINDMILL. THIS MUCH REQUESTED RETURN VISIT IS BEING ORGANISED BY THE SOCIETY AFTER AN INTERVAL OF NEARLY TWENTY YEARS.**

**COACH DEPARTS: HUMBERSTONE GATE (Secular Hall)  
LANESBOROUGH ROAD (Owl & Pussycat)**

**8.45AM  
9.00AM**

**RETURNING AT 5.45 and 6.00PM**

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(MEMBERS £17.50) Senior Citizens, Students,  
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