

# Beverley and District Civic Society

## **NEWSLETTER**

### **SPRING 2016**

#### **Future venue for meetings of the Society**

The closing of the Beverley Arms has meant that we can no longer hold public meetings there. Sadly, we had to postpone the meeting arranged for Tuesday 8th March but I am glad to say that Arthur Credland, our speaker, has agreed to come to a meeting in 2017. I do hope that as many members as possible were aware of this cancellation either by receiving an email, seeing the notice in the Beverley Guardian or the notice pinned to the Beverley Arms door or by word of mouth.

Now we are searching for a new home. Our needs are to find a venue which is easily accessible, has car parking nearby, a hall with insurance for more than 50 people and the equipment we need. We have investigated several venues but the only one which seems to suit is St Mary's Church Hall. Several improvements to the hall have been made since we were last there: the heating system is now silent, the sound system is improved, a projector suspended from the ceiling means that we would no longer need to bring our own equipment – we are all getting older and find this a chore!

The only downside is that we could no longer meet on a Tuesday as the hall is already booked for that day. We could, however, meet on Thursdays. The hall has now been booked and the April and May meetings will take place there at 7.30 pm.

Thursday, 14th April - an open forum at which Stephen Hunt, Head of Planning and Development Management of the East Riding Council, will talk about future planning.

Thursday 12th May when John Phillips will talk about the choir stalls of Beverley Minster.

I do hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend these meetings. Meanwhile we will continue to seek for a hall which is available on a Tuesday. Change is always difficult but certainly in this case it has to be a change of venue, a change of day, or both

Pamela Hopkins  
Secretary of the Beverley and District Civic Society

## **BDSC Open Meetings**

### **Medieval Feasts**

On 8th December Mrs Berna Moody, local historian and Civic Society member, gave an entertaining talk on banquets of the 15th Century. Using a display of the types of tableware of the time and referring to original documents, she described these grand occasions when the nobility displayed their vast wealth to both their social equals and to lower ranks.

The legendary Feast at York in 1467 for 2,500 guests given by George Neville, Archbishop of York, in the presence of the future Richard III, demonstrated the high degree of organisation then possible to produce such an ambitious culinary performance. The records of the Percy family, who owned Leconfield Castle, give a detailed account of feasts attended by large numbers, necessitating the hire of tableware from Beverley gold smiths.

Strict hierarchy over seating and eating was observed with the very best meat and wine reserved for the top tables while the lower orders received more modest dishes accompanied by ale. There were only three courses but a number of dishes were served at each one. The first course consisted mostly of meats but also included some sweet dishes. The addition of seasoning and spices was very important. In the interval musicians, jugglers, acrobats and magicians would entertain until the next course arrived. This consisted largely of fruit and nuts often imported from the Mediterranean. The third course of sweet pastries, gingerbread, etc., demonstrated the skills of the pastry chefs, possibly from France. Left-overs were gathered up as "broken meats" and offered to the poor who waited outside.

Richard III's Coronation in 1483 was followed by a great banquet in London, for which he ordered 3,000 cups. Then the new King lost no time in travelling north for a week of celebrations in his favourite city of York. Berna was warmly thanked for her informative and timely presentation along with the members who supplied the authentic looking tableware. Members completed their evening's enjoyment with wine and mince pies.

Rosemary Major

### **The Restoration of Christopher Pickering's former home in Hull**

On January 12th at the Beverley Arms a large gathering heard Simon Kelsey's frank account of his efforts to restore a Victorian house in Coltman Street, Hull. The home of trawler owner and public benefactor, Christopher Pickering, from 1874 to 1890, it was acquired in 1920 by Hull City Council, used as a children's clinic, and then turned into flats. Purchased through sealed bid about 4 years ago, the house was featured on the BBC programme "Restoration Home" which tracked the progress of Mr Kelsey's work to return it to its original glory.

Through sheer hard work, ingenuity, personal sacrifice, including living in a tent for several months in a tip of a back garden, plus help from a £56,000 Heritage Lottery grant, this Landscape Gardener has transformed the building. From a windowless warren of featureless rooms stripped of all their original details, 114 Coltman Street now boasts many of the characteristics of a distinguished residence. From restored windows, ceiling cornices and authentic fireplaces to some grand furnishings, in part donated by viewers of "Restoration Home", the old house is resuming its rightful place in the street. Simon is particularly gratified by the way in which the handsome appearance of the exterior and the gardens, both front and back, is inspiring neighbours to make their own improvements. There is a growing sense of local pride now which contributes to the city's aims for 2017 as City of Culture

Rosemary Major

### **Hull Old Town 's importance to "City of Culture 2017"**

On Tuesday, 9th February Paul Schofield, a full time guide in Hull, shared his boundless enthusiasm for his city at its "most exciting time". In particular he emphasised the vital contribution being made by the old town, with a history going back 700 years, and which luckily escaped the heavy wartime bombing inflicted on other areas.

A main focus for enhancement is Trinity Square which is becoming a major open space for visitors and events. Holy Trinity Church, originating from 1285, is to gain minster status, and will be an integral part of the square as its boundary wall is removed. The nearby Grammar School of 1583, whose pupils included Andrew Marvell and William Wilberforce, will have more prominence and Marvell's statue will be re-sited outside.

Paul frequently witnesses his visitors' surprise when they discover the charms of the old streets around High Street and he is particularly pleased with the plans to emphasise the important historic connections there which tend to be forgotten. These will include Hansa events as Hull was a member of the prestigious Hanseatic League.

With market shopping making a come-back, the food indoor market is getting a £1 million refurbishment. Paul's favourite interior shopping experience, Hepworth's Arcade, with its elegant glass roof and traditional shops, is another visitor attraction to be celebrated. Exploiting the city's open spaces is a major objective. Among several projects, work is already under way around Queen Victoria Square to introduce new surfacing, water features and lighting. Future plans for Queens Gardens are being developed. Both the Ferens Art Gallery and the New Theatre are presently closed for refurbishment in preparation for next year. Public interest is already evident in the recent marked rise in visitor numbers to Hull.

A significant additional asset in planning a brighter economic future is Hull's position on the Humber. The estuary frontage and the dock areas behind already offer popular experiences such as The Deep, while Scale Lane Swing

Bridge is a unique internationally recognised technical achievement. New walkways will link these features and others in demonstrating the city's pride to visitors from home and abroad. A new cruise terminal is being designed near The Deep to allow easy access for passengers visiting the City centre and beyond. Professor Barbara English expressed the Society's appreciation to Paul Schofield for his inspiring introduction to Hull's promising success as "City of Culture 2017".

Rosemary Major

### Some good news....



The building on the SW corner of Hengate, the restaurant Grant's Bistro (22 North Bar Within), has been repainted a cheerful green. To our delight, the blind windows on the upper floor have also been painted, with their small-paned 18<sup>th</sup> century windows. For years these have been slowly fading into brickwork – now the windows 'match' the age of the building.

Ivan Hall, distinguished architectural historian, said the windows were probably blocked up to avoid window tax. The 18th-century had some weird taxes (on footmen, for instance, - never been a problem in my family) and windows was one of the most logical, as the taxman could see from the outside how many windows you had, and so slap a tax on you without making personal inquiries into your wealth. Not a bad idea, actually.

Window tax was first imposed on England in 1696, and only repealed in 1851. It was introduced to make losses caused by clipping of coins (if you could cut enough off silver and gold coins without being caught, you could make a bob or two). Householders in 1747 paid rates on the number of windows, from about 6d to 1s, but the tax was constantly raised until 1851.

Blocked up windows were a reaction to the tax, but are comparatively rare in Beverley. Grant's Bistro is a Grade II\* listed building from the early 18th

century, raised in the mid 18th century, with a charming bow window. Congratulations to the owners on this restoration of part of the building's history.

Barbara English

### **Not good news...**



Members of the Executive Committee and our Vice President, Mr Graham Stuart MP, met with Nigel Leighton of East Riding of Yorkshire Council to discuss the ongoing problem of all-day parking on Westwood, which is particularly bad near Westwood Road and on the York Road/Newbald Road junction. The parkers are commuters or (currently) builders, who come in the morning and leave around 5 pm, in defiance of the restrictions which allow parking for four hours only (the intention of the four-hour rule is to allow recreational users, but not commuters).

The Society made the point that the parking was damaging the common by degrading the grass verges, and that it was dangerous as most people parked across the footpath, forcing pedestrians, the disabled, young cyclists and those with child buggies to walk on the narrow road between the parked cars. Cattle were also endangered, as motorists cannot see them, the animals being hidden by the cars and vans.

Mr Leighton explained that the police seemed unwilling to act; that the pasture masters had no enforcers of parking breaches; and he believed that the builders had been accommodated elsewhere. The Council was working with the Pasture Masters towards a solution.

The Civic Society responded that parking on the footpath was surely a police matter because of the risk to life and limb, and that the builders were still using Westwood, although it was a planning condition for the hospital site that all the contractors' vehicles would be kept on site.

Since that meeting on 15 January nothing has changed, the parking situation is as bad as ever and the grass verges now need regrading and reseeding (which could only be achieved by closing them off). We will continue to press for a solution – this situation has been going on for far too long, and every time a new controlled parking zone is imposed, the commuters turn to our beautiful common to save having to pay parking charges. Many town car parks are half full, and Westwood has become a car park.

Barbara English

### **Annual Dinner**

This was held last October at Cerutti, Station Square, Beverley. 42 members attended, and we enjoyed a delightful meal and good company. Our President, Andrew Marr, talked to us about his life and the diversity of his fishing company. This was followed by a question and answer session. Mike Hildyard was Master of Ceremonies.

Wendy Usher-Bacon

### **Plans for the Development of land to the South East of Beverley**

Members will be aware that under the Local Plan much land to the South of Beverley, namely up to the new Southern Relief Road, has been designated for development. Development briefs have been drawn up by ERYC for two areas accounting for all of this land; one for land to the South West (West of the railway line), and the second for the land to the East of the railway line. Details of both briefs are available on ERYC's planning website, under the title of 'Supplementary Planning Documents'. Use the link as shown below:

<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/east-riding-local-plan/supplementary-planning-documents/>

These briefs have been approved by the ERYC's cabinet, so the next stage is about to begin, the first of which is for the land to the South East. The developers (Linden Homes and Strata Homes) held a public exhibition organised by their planning consultants Barton Wilmore at St Nicholas' Community Hall in January, and we understand that they are proposing to submit a detailed planning application soon; possibly in March 2016. This url will link you to their initial plans, as shown at the exhibition:

[http://www.south-eastbeverley.com/SEB\\_Consultation\\_Boards.pdf](http://www.south-eastbeverley.com/SEB_Consultation_Boards.pdf)

We have copied a diagram below which shows the area, although we appreciate that the detail of the various sections is difficult to see on this reproduction. The following list summarises the plans but please do read the actual document.

- Construction of between 800-1000 new residential dwellings, including a mix of both market and affordable homes.
- A new Park and Ride Facility, to provide approximately 300-500 car parking spaces and complimentary commercial uses, potentially including a hotel, convenience store and restaurant.
- Main vehicular access will be taken off a new roundabout from Beverley Southern Bypass with a secondary access through the proposed employment area directly to the east, but yet to be constructed.
- New pedestrian/cycle access will link green spaces and provide connections within and beyond the site.
- Existing structural planting and tree belts will be retained and enhanced wherever possible; knitting these into the proposed green recreational spaces within the site and increasing visual amenity and ecological value.
- A simple network and hierarchy of streets is proposed to create an attractive and easily navigable environment.
- Creation of new areas of publicly accessible open spaces throughout the Site providing both a recreational and amenity function for residents.
- Open spaces designed to accommodate space for potential surface water run-off from the surrounding area, creating biodiversity opportunities and contributing to a diverse landscape setting on the site.

Members will note that the proposals include the construction of a new roundabout on the Southern Relief Road to give access to the Park and Ride, and to provide the main access to the whole site. A second access may be provided from the employment area at the Eastern end, but there is to be no vehicular access from Parklands.

The Society awaits further details, and shall make representations to the planning application when these are available.

The Development Group of the Society had, in 2014, a meeting with the consultants (Barton Wilmore) when they made many suggestions for improvement including relating to access, infrastructure and drainage, number of dwellings, affordable homes, design of the housing, educational provision, and green open spaces. In particular we made the point, which we continue to make, that these two very large developments to the South of the town, East and West of the railway line, should have been considered together with suitable links made for the provision and the accessing of common facilities, for example for education, health and other services. We shall await the full planning application to see what improvements have been made, and shall be making further detailed representations when this is available.



Dick Lidwell (Development Group)

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**Please send material by email if possible: this saves re-typing.** However, if you do not use email, no matter – all contributions and letters, no matter how brief, are welcome. **The deadline** for copy to be included in the Summer 2015 Newsletter is **Tuesday 31st May 2016.**

**Please note this date in your diary if you are likely to contribute**

Over a third of our membership now receive this newsletter in electronic form via email, thus saving valuable Civic Society resources for other use, not to mention the distributors' shoe-leather and time. It is appreciated that many do not use email or prefer to receive their newsletter in hard copy form; but if you are willing to join the e-circulation list, please could you let me know via the above email address. Many thanks.