



# Newsletter

Yet again we have an action-packed newsletter with much to report on our activities since the summer.

Our events programme over the autumn months has been well-attended and we're pleased to announce more events in the lead up to our AGM in May.

You may also recall that we presented our ideas on the Civic Voice Street Pride campaign, and, as you will see we have now made some progress on this.

Thank you yet again for your support.  
John Harvey - Chair

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## North East Derbyshire District Council and the conservation areas.

The three conservation areas of Dronfield, Dronfield Woodhouse, and Coal Aston have been in place for some years and their character assessments are now dated. We are pleased that NEDDC has now appointed a conservation officer, Lisa Walton. Whilst having only part of her time in this role this is a welcome step forward and we look forward to working with Lisa with our friends from the Old Dronfield Society.

To this end we are meeting Lisa to discuss the review of the Dronfield conservation areas she has been asked to undertake. Such a review is long overdue as the Dronfield conservation area in particular has suffered much degradation over the last few years due to inappropriate shop fronts, signage, and other development.

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## Frith Wood

You will be aware from our last newsletter, that a number of members raised issues with us about the management of Frith Wood and the Unstone mineral line loop by the County Council's 'Three Valleys' team. The main concerns were about the enlarged and re-surfaced tracks.

Following this we met on site with 'Three Valleys' manager, Gemma Gregory, who talked to us about the longer term plans for the establishment of a Frith Wood nature reserve. Gemma and her team are keen to involve local people in the management of the Wood, and a Civic Society meeting - arranged for January 12<sup>th</sup> - will provide an opportunity for us to hear about and have an influence on plans and to get involved.

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## Dronfield in Bloom

As part of our continued support, a member recently donated 4,000 crocus bulbs which were planted along Eckington Road. Daffodil planting continued at other locations in the town and thanks are due to David J Fruits of Barnard Avenue for the donation of 'daffs' at the Eckington Road with Ferndale Road junction. Watch this verge!

The Dronfield in Bloom Committee this year nominated DCS member Frank Smith for our own special DCS Rosebowl Award in recognition for his services to the Dronfield in Bloom Committee - well done Frank!

### In this Issue . . . .

#### Main News

- Frith Wood – public meeting
- Street Pride
- Landscaping – the Network Rail way

#### Other news

- *Traffic calming measures – DCC Report*
- *Aldi about to go ahead*
- *Helping businesses on Callywhite Lane*

## Dronfield 20 mph Traffic calming scheme

We have now received a copy of the report of Derbyshire County Council traffic engineers concerning the traffic calming plans for the Dronfield 20 mph zone. This report has been to the Cabinet member for approval which we understand has been given. It proposes to introduce a limited number of speed platforms including either side of the Lea Road/Church Street junction on High Street above the Peel monument, and High Street between the Sainsbury's roundabout and the corner by the library. Most of Lea Road is excluded but engineers will continue to monitor traffic speed on Lea Road. A zebra pedestrian crossing will be installed on Lea Road opposite the Forge and there will be an identified (but not zebra) crossing on the platform above the Peel monument. Speed bumps are planned for Green Lane below the junction with Park Avenue, including a raised platform on the existing pelican crossing. These are improvements to pedestrian safety but we continue to be concerned about the need for crossings at the bottom of Church Street and on High Street from the Library Gardens, and the absence of calming on Lea Road.

A plan with details of the measures can be seen on our web site. [www.dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk)

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## Gosforth Field Sports Association (Gosforth Fields).

We were recently invited to attend an open day event at Gosforth Field, and are delighted to advise members that in addition to the sporting activities, the facilities also include modern and licensed multi-purpose premises which are open to all, and are available for private functions, should any members wish to hire them.

See [www.gosforthfields.org](http://www.gosforthfields.org) or 'phone 01246 419029 – *GFS Association is an 'educational body' member of DCS*

## Friends of Dronfield Station - FoDS

Network Rail's drastic removal of trees and vegetation trackside features elsewhere in this Newsletter. On a smaller scale and constructively planned, the 'triangle' has been cleared in preparation for re-planting next spring to provide an attractive area alongside the northern exit ramp down to the track, thanks to a tremendous effort on the part of a very small number of volunteers,. Another long term project is moving forward – a mining truck has been procured and delivered to a location for refurbishment. Eventually it will stand on a short length of track on the grass outside the station to commemorate Dronfield's associations with the coal industry and rail making. Our thanks go to members of Rotary and DCS who have provided funds, transport and a working environment. Volunteers are always welcome – to use a popular slogan – "every little helps"!

## Dronfield Civic Society Events Diary

- Members £3 / non-members £5

### 2011

**12 January** - Managing Frith Wood - An illustrated talk about current and future plans for this ancient woodland

- Gemma Gregory, Assistant Area Manager, Derbyshire County Council Countryside Services

**16 February** - "Reducing your carbon footprint" - Ian Ward (DCS Member)

**16 March** - 'Porridge' - an illustrated talk by Reverend Barrie Cooper, Lead Chaplain, H M Prison Durham

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## The Cruck Barn Church Street

Members frequently ask what we know about plans for the Church Street Cruck barn.

We can report that there are now plans to develop the barn for residential purposes and that the owner, Mr. Gary Singleton, will at some stage be submitting a planning application. This is not good news for one of our members, Kuchene, but it does mean that at last there is the beginning of a plan to secure the future of this important part of the Town's historic fabric. We are informed that English Heritage has surveyed the barn and are currently updating the listing description. We also hope that this might be an opportunity to undertake a dendro-dating of the cruck timbers. We will, of course, keep a close watch on developments.

## Street Pride

Our Street Pride campaign has been kicked off with a review of street signs in the town centre conservation area. This was conducted in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council Highways Department, and we were able to identify quite a number of signs and redundant posts that are superfluous and will be removed. Also it has been agreed that some of the more obviously unnecessary signs outside the conservation area will be removed. The photograph shows Chairman John Harvey outside the Peel Centre with the first sign to be removed. We will keep you posted as and when more signs are removed.



### Street audits

We have decided that our street audits should initially be confined to the three conservation areas in the town. Our audit template has been successfully tested in an audit of High Street, and we are currently investigating how to link the audit matrix with photographs identified with locations using Google Maps.

### Award of Professional Support

Towards the end of September we submitted an application to the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) for direct support in Street Design. We were competing for the support with other organisations nationally and to our surprise we were successful. Unfortunately this support now has to be completed by the middle of December due to government funding for CABE having been withdrawn.

This means that we will not receive the level of support that we had originally hoped but it will nevertheless enable us to expand our Street Pride programme into Street Design, enabling us to study more advanced projects. We will, of course, keep you informed about this in future newsletters.

### A Vision for Dronfield

Our most recent event was a talk by Derek Latham on 10 November entitled "*Dronfield – A Vision for the Future, A Practitioner's View*". We were not only fortunate to have such an experienced conservation architect and urban designer to deliver the talk but someone who is also familiar with the town.

Derek used examples from architectural and regeneration schemes with which he has been involved in order to illustrate what can be achieved in Dronfield. He pointed out the conflict in the use of public realm space in High Street, Church Street and Lea Road that favours motor vehicles and places pedestrians at a disadvantage. This fact provides an important pointer to the work we wish to undertake in our Street Design project.



## OTHER News SNIPPITS

### Road Surface Improvements on Callywhite Lane.

The Society has been working for some time with local businesses to urge for improvements to road surfaces and pavements along Callywhite Lane. Although a £60,000 contract was awarded by North East Derbyshire District Council to obtain grants for this work, readers of *Dronfield Eye* will be aware that no money is available for improvements. Having approached NEDDC, the Civic Society has been advised that only patching repairs can be undertaken. Some of this work was completed some months ago.

We continue to support businesses on Callywhite Lane in their efforts to tidy up this industrial area of the town, and are grateful to Corporate Member Wm Lee for their tree planting work which stretches from the River Drone to the top of the "Callywhite Lane land-tip".

### "Landscaping" by Network Rail

Many members who use the train station will be aware of the recent harsh landscaping undertaken by Network Rail. We have been approached by a number of members asking us to raise several issues with Network Rail about the severity of the work and the impact it has had on the landscape of the town, on wildlife, and on the resulting increase in train noise, and pointing out the fact that this area of the town is a 'Conservation Area'.

At the time of going to press, we have yet to receive a reply. *Their response will be posted on the Dronfield Civic Society website. (Ed)*

### Planning Issues

Members are probably aware of our opposition to the Cyclamax proposal for the incineration plant at Dunston and that it was rejected overwhelmingly on 19 October. This was a major achievement for all concerned.

**ALDI** – Plans for a multi-million development of the old Lucas Works on Sheffield Road were expected to be "rubber stamped" at NEDDC Planning Meeting held on 23 November.

### Fair Trade Evening

On 15 September we were pleased to welcome the Town Mayor, Councillor Philip Blackburn, to an informative illustrated talk by James Pogson, director of Northern Tea Merchants on Fair Trade Coffee.

**The Dronfield Lecture**, sponsored jointly by the Peel Centre Trustees and the Civic Society, took place this year on 8 October when Jackie Toaduff, co-owner of the Chantry Hotel, drew a full house to hear him talk about his recent book *'From Coaldust to Stardust'*. Above all, Jackie's warm character and natural modesty shone through – truly a citizen of whom Dronfield can be proud.

**Wanted - volunteer to take over role of secretary from Judith Vernier in 2012 - but willing to 'job share' for next year.**

Includes minute taking, correspondence, arranging speakers - and being an active member of the committee. The role could be split.

**Please give John Harvey a call if you think you can help (tel. 412313)**

### Would you like to help with our work?

There are many ways in which you can help the Dronfield Civic Society for example bulb planting, litter picking, street audits and surveys, traffic surveys, or keeping an eye on issues and developments around where you live. If you think you can help we would love to hear from you. Contact either via our web site ([www.dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk)) or telephone John Harvey on 01246 412313.

