



Welcome to this Autumn 2009 Dronfield Civic Society newsletter. As you will see from this packed edition, the Society continues to be involved across a wide range of issues in the town. We thank you for your support and look forward to working in close harmony with the many Dronfield-wide organisations which all work so hard in maintaining a good quality of life across the town.

John Harvey - Chair

Annual Dronfield Lecture

For the first time the Dronfield Civic Society is joining the Trustees of the Peel Centre in sponsoring this year's **Annual Dronfield Lecture**. Entitled '**Pictorial Meadows**', the speaker is Dr. Nigel Dunnett, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Landscape, University of Sheffield. With a background in both horticulture and ecology, his interests are in developing innovative urban landscape features such as green roofs and pictorial meadows applicable to both large scale projects as well as gardens.

The lecture will be held on Friday 9 October at 7.30 p.m. in the Edward Lucas Hall of the Peel Centre, High Street, Dronfield at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are £5.00 including light refreshments, and are available from Pat Millington, (415997); Judith Vernier (418607); Susan Ingham (410732).

Eric Charlesworth's seat.

On the sunny morning of Saturday 8th August some 25 friends and neighbours of Eric Charlesworth, who died earlier this year, met around a seat situated on the green triangle at the bottom of Drury Lane, Coal Aston, where Eric and Dora (who, sadly, was not well enough to attend) used to live. Pam Staunton, whose determination to ensure that there should be a suitable memorial to Eric initiated the project, unveiled a brass plaque on the seat, the wording for which had been chosen by his family. Friends Libby Long and John Ramsden spoke of Eric's contribution to his community and to individuals, given modestly and without seeking

any reward, and Muriel Stonehewer offered thanks for a life well lived in the service of others. So generous have the donations been that a donation of over £200 will be going to the Woodland Trust, one of Eric's favoured charities which reflects his love of nature.

In this Issue

Main News

- Annual Dronfield Lecture – 9th October
- Eric Charlesworth's seat
- AGM Report
- Dronfield Station goes from strength to strength
- The Civic Society Initiative

Other news

- *Planning issues*
- *Anti-social behaviour issues*
- *Recycling Facilities – improvements required*
- *East Midlands / Dronfield in Bloom*
- *The Lea Brook Valley Project*
- *Antiques Evening*
- *Hinckley Civic Society*
- *Litter Pick*

We are again pleased to be associated with the **Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School Young Achiever Awards** - John Harvey attended the award ceremony where young people were recognised for their personal achievements and for their contributions to the school and local communities. We were delighted that **Olivia Ford received the Young Achiever of the Year Award** sponsored by the Civic Society - thanks to member Gary Lycett for organising this on our behalf.

Annual General Meeting - Report

The Society's AGM was held on 12 May 2009 following an interesting and informative talk entitled 'Hot stuff or hot air – is the government really committed to protecting our historic environment?', given by Bob Hawkins, Heritage Protection Adviser for English Heritage's East Territory Heritage Protection Team. (This subject has proved particularly relevant in the light of subsequent developments with regard to conservation areas – see below.)

Ian Collins, Treasurer, presented the annual accounts and, following an item in the last Newsletter, proposed that the annual subscriptions should be increased slightly for some categories of membership. As a letter had been received from a member unable to be present querying why there was to be no increase for business members, there was a lengthy debate, following which a motion was put to the vote and carried to increase subscriptions in line with the original proposal. These will come into effect from April 2010 and in her membership report, Rita Oliver praised the use of standing orders and encouraged members to consider this method of payment. **REMINDER: Please amend your standing orders to the new rates below from April 2010**

Revised Membership Rates

Senior Citizen, Unwaged or Junior	-	£4.00
Single	-	£5.00
Family	-	£8.00
Small Businesses or Societies	-	£10.00
Corporate	-	£25.00
Single/Joint Life	-	£60.00/100.00

Please Note:

Members are reminded to amend their standing order payments to take effect from APRIL 2010

Bob Clough gave a review of the society's activities during a year when two former committee members, Eric Charlesworth and Lena McKenna, have, sadly, died. He listed the planning issues that had been commented on, reported that the Society had donated bulbs to all local schools, and its participation in and support of other local bodies, e.g. Dronfield in Bloom, Friends of Dronfield Station. Robert Hardcastle also reported on planning matters, particularly with regard to Callywhite Lane and David Ingham gave a resumé of proposals now accepted by the Highways authority for safety improvements within the 20 mph zone.

Presentations were made to Chairman, Bob Clough, and Vice-chair, Robert Hardcastle, who both stood down from office as did Founder and past Chair, Maureen Green, who has served on the committee throughout the Society's twenty years of existence. Very sincere thanks are due to them all for their years of hard work and it is good that Bob and Robert wish to continue as active committee members.

In their stead, John Harvey was elected Chairman, David Ingham, Vice-chair and John Fletcher was also elected to the committee.

Steve Broadhead, Ian Collins, (*Treasurer*), Rita Oliver (*Membership Secretary*) and Judith Vernier (*Secretary*) were also re-elected.

DIARY DATES

Litter pick Gosforth Fields 25th April 2010 - We were pleased to be supporting our member the Dronfield Field Sports Association once again on a Spring clean – up session

Hinckley Civic Society are putting on a Day Event at the Sir John Moore Heritage Centre at Appleby Magna, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch with the broad theme of 'the history of education', an ideal subject for a venue that includes an authentic Victorian school housed within a Sir Christopher Wren designed building of 1697. For further details of this interesting day, please contact Judith Vernier (418607).

Civic Society Initiative.

Members will be aware that the Civic Trust, the national body to which we were affiliated, has gone out of business. However, a new national body headed up by Griff Rhys Jones and a small fulltime team has been formed, funded for one year by the National Trust and other bodies. **The Civic Society Initiative**, as this new organisation is called, is proving very active in working with English Heritage and Government on planning and heritage matters.

David Ingham attended a regional event under the auspices of EMACS in Beeston on 18 July 2009 with Tony Burton and Ian Harvey of the Civic Society Initiative. This examined:

- What are the needs of Civic Societies?
- What is needed to bring Civic Societies together and provide gravitas?
- How should this be organised?
- What Civic Societies are doing.
- What the most successful Civic Societies are doing.
- What Civic Societies need in general to get to the level of the most successful societies

Amongst the most important needs identified were:

- Building relationships and partnerships
- A national lobby through some kind of national body
- A place to go for advice and expertise

Recycling Facilities

We are now regularly monitoring the bins behind the Sports Centre, (not a good location,) to try and head-off future problems. **We often see large build-ups of bags containing recycling materials at recycling facilities, usually because one or more bins are full.**

In addition, there is an unacceptable level of fly-tipping near these facilities, or incidents where people fail to use the relevant bins and dump things in the general vicinity.

Whilst apologies are always received when bins do not get emptied in time, we believe it is important that this should not happen as often as it does. A further problem arises through litter and broken glass being spread around when bins are emptied, and not getting swept up as a matter of course. Despite several clean-ups as a result of our requests the associated litter problem is not yet as we would like it.

Friends of Dronfield Station

Dronfield station goes from strength to strength! In June the Friends carried out a further survey of passenger numbers which indicates an increase of some 12% over the numbers recorded in January and which takes the annual figure to around 100,000 p.a. This gives the Friends more elbow in campaigning for better facilities from Northern Rail, and Neil Codrington, Estates Manager at NR and speaker at the AGM, took copious notes on various issues raised by travellers. In case you haven't noticed, the station is looking splendid and the good news is that vandalism has dropped over the last few months!

A lot of hard work went into planting to impress the East Midlands in Bloom judges and thanks are due to Dronfield Town Council who more than made up a shortfall in plants from Northern Rail at the very last minute. These efforts were rewarded by a special Judges Award Certificate 'for their voluntary work undertaken'

FoDS have also been shortlisted for an ACORP award for the **Best Station Adoption Group** and await that result.

Other needs included:

- More members with an improved demographic profile
- A higher, more respected profile locally
- Better fund raising

Dronfield Civic Society is now affiliated to the Civic Society Initiative and is working with them on a response to Government's new planning guidelines on heritage assets.

The Civic Society is working with the Old Dronfield Society on a number of areas of mutual interest, in particular concerns about the state of our three conservation areas – Dronfield, Dronfield Woodhouse, and Coal Aston, and planning applications which have an impact on our conservation areas and listed buildings. Both societies attended a recent English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk' day at the newly renovated Derby Roundhouse.

Anti-social Behaviour

We continue to monitor anti-social behaviour in the town as effectively as possible, but more takes place than we currently hear about. There have been a number of serious disturbances requiring police attendance since the New Year, all seemingly alcohol related.

- A number of windows smashed in commercial premises in recent months- incidence of this is on the increase. There have been around a dozen incidents that we know about so far this year, mostly along Chesterfield Road.
- Some premises have been hit on more than one occasion. Again this is believed to be alcohol related.

We continue to lobby for action to reverse this worrying trend and remain concerned that not enough is being done and, as a consequence, matters will get worse.

Planning Issues

We have been approached by two developers about proposed plans for sites in Dronfield.

1) **Consultants acting for Aldi**, are looking at developing the 'Lucas Top Yard' on Sheffield Road, opposite the former Greyhound Pub. This is to be a mixed commercial / retail development. Aldi are now arranging a public exhibition : October 28th Civic Hall, from 4pm : CS invited to a prior meeting.

2) **Bloor Homes**, is proposing a mixed commercial / housing development of the old Padley and Venables site on Callywhite Lane. Industrial units would be accessed from Callywhite Lane and housing through the existing Shireoaks estate. We met with Bloor Homes in August as they are looking for our support. At the CS meeting on September 3rd we agreed to oppose the development on the grounds that it was against the interests of the development of the commercial / industrial area of Dronfield and would also have a serious impact on traffic at the already congested Green Lane/ Callywhite Lane junction.

East Midlands in Bloom and Dronfield in Bloom_ -

we continue our involvement in these competitions. With support from the Town Council and the Old Dronfield Society we have initiated 'hands on' refurbishment of both town ladles. Awards winners including winner of the DCS Rose Bowl were announced at the Presentation Evening on 15 September, Civic Hall

The Lea Brook Valley Project 'First Thursday 9.30 am litter picks/work sessions' - meet at the lower car park off Farwater Lane. A workday, hopefully involving families is planned for Saturday 10 October, all are welcome to join,' phone 01246 413778/414903 for details or if you wish to increase DCS participation.

Recent works include construction of a third weir on the river, siting of a secure and substantial memorial bird feeder and provision of wood piles. Grants totalling £15,000 have been received towards the project and will be used significantly for the enhancement of the water balancing facility area at the upper end. The recently planted wild flower area, approximately one hundred metres downstream of Gosforth Lane is also to be seen.

Antiques Evening 20 April. 66 members, including the Town Mayor, enjoyed an informative event with Sheffield's well known auctioneer Michael Dowse as guest speaker throwing some light on to the world of antiques. In lieu of a fee, Mr Dowse requested that a donation be made to a nominated charity.

Contact numbers.

If members are aware of instances of anti social behaviour they should report them to Derbyshire police – on 999 for immediate assistance or 0345 123 3333.

Problems at any of the recycling facilities or flytipping are the responsibility of North East Derbyshire District Council (01246) 231 111. If the authorities were better informed, then the assertion frequently voiced that Dronfield does not have problems as few complaints are received, would be easier to dispute.