



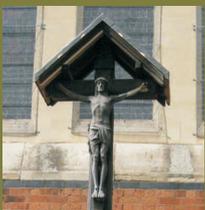
WORCESTER CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2017

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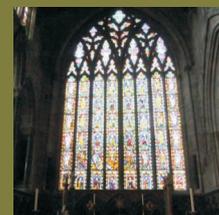
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CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Having completed almost four years as Vice Chairman and three years as Chairman, I should by right be standing down at the AGM in November. However, at our last meeting there was no one willing to stand as Chairman for next year, so unless anyone of you is willing to stand, I have agreed to do just one more year. David Saunders has agreed to be responsible for our programme of events next year and is making good progress.

I will be spending my time trying to increase our membership, and if any of you know of any group, who would like a talk on the Worcester Civic Society, please let me know. My other two projects for the coming year will be Queen Elizabeth House and the Heritage Trail.

As some of you will know I am also a trustee and Vice chair of Civic Voice, which is the umbrella organization for the civic society movement, and I chair their membership committee. Part of that role means that I travel around the country talking to other Civic Societies and have over the last twelve months come to the conclusion that the word "Civic" means very little to most people and in some cases puts people off joining. Therefore, at the AGM I will be proposing that we consider changing the name of the Worcester Civic Society to either "The Worcester Society" or "The Worcester Heritage Society". If you have any views on this, please let me know before the AGM.

I look forward to seeing you all at St Peter's Baptist Church at 7pm for a 7:30 start on Wednesday 22nd November.

Phil Douce
Chairman

Worcester Civic Society Officers 2017

President: Professor Michael Clarke CBE DL

Vice-President: Vacant

Vice-President: Stephen Inman

Chairman: Phil Douce

Vice-Chairman: David Saunders

Hon Treasurer: Mike Ridout

Hon Secretary: John Wickson

Membership Secretary: Michael McCurdy

Projects & Campaigns Chair: Vacant

Planning Panel Chair: Heather Barrett

Publicity Officer: Sandra Taylor

Committee: Vacant

Website: www.worcestercivicsociety.org.uk

Membership News

We are pleased to welcome the following new members.

- Susan Wilcox
- William Edmondson

Membership:

Individual Membership £20

Family Membership £30

Corporate Memberhip £50

Cheques should be made payable to Worcester Civic Society

To Mr Michael McCurdy
56 Camp Hill Road, Worcester WR5 2HG

You can contact Michael on:- 01905 353438
or at:- wrcivicsocietymem@yahoo.com

FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER

This is the fifth of a series of articles about the various people and organisations who have received the Freedom of the City.

On 23 September 1937, two giants of industry were honoured with the Freedom of the City of Worcester. It was the first time the world of industry has been so honoured, and the first time two Freedoms had been awarded at the same time. Unfortunately, as space here is limited, we will have to deal with CWD Perrins and Lord Nuffield separately.

William Richard Morris was born in Worcester in 1877, although his family moved to Oxford three years later, and he spent the rest of his life in Oxfordshire. At the age of 16, he established a business repairing bicycles, before moving on to motorcycles and cars. He designed the Bullnose Morris in 1912, but World War I saw his company diverted to munitions work. After the war he returned to car manufacture and opened factories in Abingdon, Birmingham and Swindon. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s he bought other car companies and the manufacturers of components when they ran into financial difficulties.

Morris was created a baronet in 1929, then baron in 1934 and viscount in 1938, taking his title from the Oxfordshire village where he lived. He founded Nuffield College in 1937 (one of the colleges of the University of Oxford) and in 1943 he created the Nuffield Foundation with an endowment of £10 million, in order to advance education and social welfare. He also gave generous gifts to several universities and hospitals. In 1938 he offered to give an iron lung made in his factory to any hospital in Britain and the Empire that requested one; over 1700 were distributed. The following year he established the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust to coordinate the activities of all hospitals operating outside London, which was instrumental in the creation of the NHS.

In 1927 Nuffield had provided financial backing for the Oxford and District Provident Association, a health care insurance scheme. After the war, many such societies amalgamated to form British United Provident Association, with Nuffield backing it to the tune of £50,000, almost £2 million at today's value. It is now known simply as BUPA.

For Nuffield, the day began with a visit to the Royal Infirmary, where he opened an extension to the nurses' home, to which he had contributed £26,000. He then inspected the premises and was presented with a porcelain cider cup by the medical committee. He then moved on to the freedom ceremony at the Guildhall.

The ceremony was attended by the mayors of Bewdley, Dudley, Droitwich, Gloucester, Halesowen, Hereford, Kidderminster, Oldbury, Stratford, Tewkesbury and seven former mayors of Worcester. As per the usual format, the Mayor, Lady Atkins, explained why the recipient was being awarded the honour – in this case, it was granted to Nuffield 'In recognition of his Beneficence to many Hospitals throughout the Country, his Eminent Services in the Cause of Learning and the Sciences, and in all phases of the Motor Industry'. Furthermore, the Mayor noted that 'In conferring the honorary Freedom on Lord Nuffield we are conferring an honour on ourselves and one which we hope will be a reminder in the days to come of the desire of the citizens of his birthplace to pay honour to a great man and recognise his services to the country.'

The Town Clerk then administered the oath of admission, and presented the oath in a casket. The recipients signed the roll of Freeman and were welcomed by Alderman Leicester. In his response, Nuffield said that he felt 'greatly honoured that the City of Worcester, the place of my birth, should think me worthy of this honour.' He also made the point that if anyone was in a position to do good for others, it was a scandal that would follow them 'to the grave' if they did not do it.

The casket was made by local jewellery firm J. W. Cassidy & Co., from 'solid silver finished in dull gilt and mounted on an ebony plinth', according to the report in Berrow's Worcester Journal. After a celebration tea, with more speeches, the parties moved on to Brickfields where Nuffield opened the King George V Memorial Playing Fields and participated in a tree-planting ceremony.

Cathy Broad
cgbroad@tiscali.co.uk



Lord Nuffield
by Reginald Henry Lewis, Nuffield College, Oxford

ST PAUL'S WAR MEMORIAL

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, we remember those who died fighting for their country by attending ceremonies at war memorials around the world. Sadly, to many people war memorials are simply a list of names of those who died. Yet these monuments are a reminder of major events in our history and behind every name lies the story of an individual, the families they left behind and a life prematurely ended.

In the heart of the bustling historic city of Worcester outside St. Paul's Church stands a particularly special and unique war memorial. Like most others in the United Kingdom it was commissioned and built through public subscription, money donated by relatives and friends of those who gave their lives during World War 1. The design of the memorial was chosen by those who paid for it with significant input from the vicar of the church at the time, namely the Reverend Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy who had served as an army chaplain during World War 1. He gained the nickname 'Woodbine Willie' due to his habit of giving out cigarettes to the troops in the trenches. With a keen interest in the young men from his parish who went to war he was always deeply concerned about the effect on the families when a loved one was killed.

The parish of St Paul's was in a particularly poor area of the city and many families were poverty stricken so the loss of the main breadwinner was a major blow. Of the men of the parish who went away to war, 128 never came home and their names are inscribed on the memorial outside the church. After various meetings relating to the collection of funds, the design of the memorial and who would erect it, those who had contributed decided on a six foot high Portland stone obelisk on which the names of those who had died would be inscribed on three panels. The obelisk would support a wooden Calvary with a carved figure of Christ under a small wooden pitched roof. It is the figure of Christ that makes this memorial unique, certainly within the local area and most likely further afield as Christ has his head raised as a symbol of victory for the fallen rather than the normal bowed head status. It was this particular feature that was designed by the Reverend Studdert Kennedy who fought both the Diocese and other church officialdom to secure this most 'irregular' feature.

With the battle won, the memorial was commissioned and erected and on Sunday 10th April 1921 a very large crowd gathered outside the church in what must have been an emotional ceremony when Reverend Studdert Kennedy dedicated the war memorial to the memory of the 128 men of the parish who gave their lives in World War 1. A restoration project completed in 2010 has ensured that this memorial will remain one of Worcester's important historic features for today's and future generations.

Sandra Taylor



St Paul's War Memorial



ASTWOOD CEMETERY

Worcester's Historic Victorian Cemetery

During the Victorian era the increasing population and high mortality rates meant overflowing churchyards and this led to a number of private and public cemeteries being opened all over the country. Astwood Cemetery in Worcester was opened in 1858, six week old John Ryan being the first burial to take place on 9th October in an unmarked grave. This was not uncommon during Victorian times as a 'decent' burial was all important even if it meant hardship for the surviving family members; hence many families were unable to afford a gravestone.

Gravestones can provide a wide variety of information on the deceased providing they are not too weathered, covered in lichen or totally lost in overgrown churchyards. Common inscriptions include the age of the person or the date/year of their birth along with the date/year of death. More than one family member may be buried in the same grave and the relationship is usually given. During Victorian times, graves were associated with the family's social status with the middle class being particularly keen to distance itself from the working class. Gravestones were much more elaborate than they are today and they were usually symbolic, being either religious, related to their profession or symbols of death. Religious symbols include not only crosses and angels but also the following:

- Doves (flying down: with the Holy Spirit, flying up: the spirit ascending, perched: like Noah's dove after the flood)
- Anchor and chain – firm faith in salvation (or a sailor)
- Butterfly – resurrection
- Book – the Testament
- IHS – the monogram for Jesus Saviour of man in Greek
- Gate or Arch – gateway to heaven
- Palm – symbolises the triumph of life over death through resurrection
- Rocks – a reminder of St Peter, the rock of faith.

Other commonly used Victorian symbols found on gravestones include:

- Broken or severed flowers – early or sudden death (a severed bud denotes a child)
- Clasped hands – the hope of being reunited in the next life or 'farewell, see you soon'
- Heart – love and adoration
- Ivy – memories remaining evergreen
- Laurel – life's achievements
- Rose – goodness and innocence
- Tree – the tree of life
- Gathered Wheat – 'harvested' into a new life, often denoting someone dying in later life.

Not all Victorians opted for a traditional style gravestone. Those who had sufficient wealth could choose from:

- Obelisks – a tall rectangular or triangular pointed column which was the ancient Egyptian symbol for life and death
- a Severed Column – cut off in the prime of life or loss of support
- a Mausoleum or
- a Tomb.

Mausoleums are enclosed, they freeze death and isolate it whilst tombs are seen as standing in the air, the winds bringing the world to them and evaporating their sorrows. Many of these tombs, mausoleums and gravestones can still be found in Astwood Cemetery.

The First World War brought to an end to the elaborate Victorian-style funeral and its elaborate headstones and mausoleums. The huge numbers of soldiers who died and were buried overseas led to mass grief which made grand funerals and individual displays of mourning at home seem inappropriate and self-indulgent. One hundred and fifty-nine years after the burial of baby Ryan, the meaningful headstones of the Victorian and Edwardian era can still be found in Astwood Cemetery, surrounded by a mixture of unmarked graves, Commonwealth War Graves and modern day headstones.

Sandra Taylor



Worcester City Ordinances

The Bye-Laws of the 15th Century

Today our local council is given permission to make bye-laws by Act of Parliament, but the process started 740 years ago, in 1227, when Henry III, son of King John who lies buried in Worcester Cathedral, gave the first charter (now stored in the City Archives at the Hive) to the City of Worcester. Among the provisions of this charter was the granting of a 'gild merchant' by which the citizens of the town became responsible for ordering their own trade and exacting their own fines and tolls. Over the years the organisation of the town affairs became codified in a series of 'ordinances'. The earliest surviving collection of these, also in safe keeping in the City Archives at the Hive, is dated 14th September and entitled

'Ordinances Constitucions and articles made by the kynges comandement and by hole assent of the Citesens inhabitantes in the Cyte of Worcest[e]r at their yeld marchaunt [gild merchant] holden the sonday in the feste of the Exaltacion of the Holy Crosse the yer[e] of the reigne of Kyng Edward the fourth after the conquest the VIte . ' [ie 1467] A later version of these ordinances was produced in 1497. It contains fewer ordinances but includes amendments to some already formulated.

The ordinances related both to the citizens and to the city officers. The first ordinance provided that 'the articles of the present yeld[e] be openly redde' and the charter put in the common coffer and a copy made in a book lodged with the Baillies. The book was to be placed in a 'Casket loken' and to be available to be 'redde or seyn'.

Money collected in fines and tolls, the city's 'tresour', was to be stored in a strong coffer or chest, with six locks. Security was enhanced by the distribution of the keys amongst six individuals, the two Baillies, one of the four Aldermen, the chamberlain chosen by the clothier (the most prominent group in the city – often known as the Great Cloth or Clothing), the chamberlain chosen by the people and, finally, 'ii thrifty Comyns trewe sufficia[n]t and feithfull men'. It was the mediaeval equivalent of the multiple signatures required of organisations in modern financial transactions.



The election of the city's officers was also addressed. All had to be resident in the city. The officers were summoned to council by St. Andrew's bell and were expected to attend on penalty of a fine; their deliberations were intended to be secret and there were penalties for those who made windows, doors or holes into the council chamber in an attempt to spy on the council. Elections for Parliament took place in the Guildhall 'by the moste voice'. No secret ballot here! There was legislation regarding trade practices. Wool and its derivative, cloth, were the basis of the city's wealth and extensive orders were made to control the quality and ensure that the city profited by the industry's prosperity. Wool had to be weighed at the Guildhall and unsold wool had to be stored there. Both operations added to the city's coffers.

It was stipulated that craftsmen seeking employment were to stand at the Grass Cross from 5.00 am in the summer and 6.00 am in the winter. Bakers must not buy corn on market day in the summer before 'xii of the bell' and it was laid down that the 'said bakers buy no corne ne meal in hur houses aforne the seid owres'. No baker was to bake 'horsebread' ie a bread made of bran or beans and only suitable for horses. Local brewers had preference over 'foreign' brewers and

Butchers were not to trade as cooks – so no meat pies from the butcher! Fish were to be checked for 'fitness' and 'olde' fish was condemned and the sellers fined 13s 4d. There were regulations concerning the price and the quality of ale and every ale house and 'hostry' had to display a sign in order to trade. There were orders against public nuisances. Householders were responsible for keeping their frontages clean and well maintained. No swine were to roam the streets 'in a noysaunce or grevaunce of hur neyghburgh'. Butcher's waste was to be disposed of properly; 'no intrailles of eny man[s] bestes nor no putts of bloode be clansed or caryed away on the day but ov[er] nights in due tyme and before used and that no blode putte be unclensedyd ov[er] a' day and a night be it Wynter or Somer on peyne of xiid'. Also, no butchers' or leatherworkers' waste should be cast over the bridge or put into the river between the bridge and the slip. Neither 'tenys' nor hand ball were to be played in the Guildhall!



The quays, slips and bridge should be kept in repair. The gates, in particular, during the dangerous period of the 'Wars of the Roses' had to be maintained, 'for grete peryll yt might fall unto the seyde Cite'.

In an age of candles and open fires in buildings of wood and thatch, fire was an ever present concern. It was decreed that all chimneys of timber were to be rebuilt of brick or stone and thatched roofs were to be tiled. In an effort to encourage the tiling of roofs the tilers were forbidden to group together and to exclude 'foreign' tilers from working in the city. Every tiler was required to mark his tiles to ensure quality.



Primitive firefighting equipment was available. Ordinance number 15 states 'that the bitters be redy wt hur horses and bittes to brynge water unto every citezen when he ys required by every man or child when eny parrill of fuyre ys wtyn the Cite'. A 'bit' was a water cask (OED) and the 'bitters' were the water carriers whose job it was to transport water from the river into the city. Hooks were also supplied to pull down thatch and burning timber. 'Also that there be v fuyre hokes to drawe at any thyng wher paryle of fuyre is in eny parte of the cite.' The later, 1497, edition of these ordinances expands this statement. Then there were four fire hooks, two at the Guildhall, one at the All Hallows Well (outside All Saint's church) and one at the Cardinal's Hat (the earliest known mention of a city inn).

There were strict rules about the carrying and use of weapons, fines for drawing a dagger and for being involved in a riot.

Two ordinances dealt with the pageants enacted by the craft guilds. There were to be 'v pageants among the craftes to be holden yerly'; they were intended both to promote 'the worship of god and profite and encrease of the seid Cite' and to raise money for 'lights of torches and Tapers ... to be born before the Bailies at the Vigil of the Nativitie of St John Baptist.' No scripts for the pageants have survived but they were probably similar to those which were used at Chester, York or Wakefield. We know from the later version of the ordinances that three pageants were to be performed on Corpus Christi Day and two on the Sunday after. The pageants were staged on carts which travelled round the city in procession, stopping at prescribed stopping places. Later deeds show that some of these carts were stored on the site of nos. 5/6 the Cornmarket, then open ground.

From these two documents, we can catch a glimpse of life in 15th century Worcester and realise that the preoccupations of the City Council were similar to those of today. They, too, were concerned about building regulations, food laws, health and safety and public nuisances – but in ways appropriate to their culture and their state of knowledge.

Pat Hughes
Illustrations by Joan Stephens

Salway Brothers

Two Brothers, Two Continents

Twenty-nine year-old Richard Salway/Salwey was one of the drapers and clothiers appointed by the City Chamber to provide it with cloth to outfit the King's soldiers during the Civil War. Richard's bill for red and maroon cloths and 67½ yds of Worcester's famous broadcloth together with some cheaper fabrics was £108 4s 11d and so entered in the Chamber Order Book under the date of the Battle of Worcester - 3rd September 1651. Following the Civil War the cash-strapped City Chamber would take years to repay the debt to Richard.

Richard's brother Anthony paid for his own passage to the American colony of Maryland, probably in 1657, settling in Anne Arundel County. He was soon appointed J.P. and Commissioner. Anthony had indentured servants working for him on his tobacco plantation; they were men and women from the British Isles who did not pay for their own passage to the colonies, but instead had signed contracts to work bound as servants, usually for four or seven years. At the end of that time they would be freed and could stay in America. An indentured servant's life was tough and they could receive harsh treatment from their masters. Some servants were so desperate that they committed suicide. In 1663, Anthony was on the Coroner's Inquest Jury, which included his father-in-law, brother-in-law and two kinsmen including John Sollers from Worcestershire. They examined the case against the late Thomas Teedsted, one of Anthony's indentured servants, who appeared to have stabbed himself in the neck. Teedsted was indicted, "hee not having the feare of god before his Eyes for feloniously and willfully murthring himself." Another of Anthony's servants, Anne Vaughan, killed herself with two stab wounds to the throat with a pair of scissors and is described as having "one wound in her Belly supposed to bee with a knife".

By 1670 Anthony's brother, Richard Salway, had bought the house which is now The Farrier's Arms in Fish Street, near St Helen's church. In 1672 Anthony died whilst on a visit to this country and although he requested in his will to be buried at Severn Stoke, his name appears in the St Helen's burial

The bulk of Anthony's estate was left to Richard who was the sole executor; it included his plantations and "all my servants belonging unto me". Edward Perrin, a Quaker from Bristol, was given Power of Attorney to act on Richard's behalf in Maryland and in 1679 the estate was sold unusually for money – £400 – rather than in kind with tobacco*.

Richard was Mayor of Worcester in 1674/5 and over the years took out loans with the City Corporation, who respited the interest because of the £108 the Corporation owed him for the cloth for the King's soldiers. In 1682 Richard purchased a property in Quay Street and the following year mortgaged it to Wintour Harris, a wealthy apothecary. When Wintour died in 1689, the full extent of Richard's debts was revealed. By now Richard was 67 years old and owed £3,100 to the Harris estate. He raised the money to clear that debt by selling land. Richard's son-in-law, Francis Savage, stood surety for the other debts, which were £120 owed to the City and a further £460 to fourteen individuals. The City Chamber Order books show that 3s was paid in expenses when the Mayor and Aldermen met with Mr Savage to discuss Richard Salway's house and debts. In 1690 Francis bought the house in Quay Street and repaid the £120 owing to the Corporation – and presumably was also obliged to repay the fourteen other debtors.

What became of Richard Salway? I wish I knew! In 1692 the Corporation Purprestre Account book indicates that John Hughes was the occupier of the Fish Street property. Richard's son-in-law Francis Savage was from Tetbury, Gloucestershire, so perhaps Richard moved there. Neither a will nor a burial record has been found – so far.

Jacquie Hartwright

– Friends of Worcestershire Archives

www.fwarchives.org.uk

Sources for this article at the Worcestershire Archives include –
City Chamber Order Ref 496.5 BA9360/A14/Box 7/1; Purprestre Books – Ref b496.5 BA9360/B10 and St Helen's Parish Registers on microfilm. Ref 899:749 BA 8782/12/C18/8.
Richard Salway's debts: On-line sources – Maryland State Archive and The National Archives, Kew. Special thanks to Richard Perrin Day of <http://www.perrinhistory.net> for his help with Anne Arundel County Deed Book WH 4: 73. and *explanation concerning 17th century Maryland & Virginia transactions usually being in tobacco, rather than money.



Part of one of the pages from the Chamber Order Book for 3 September 1651, the day of the Battle of Worcester – by kind permission of the City Council.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOUSE

UPDATE



As most of you will know, I have been trying for some time to have Queen Elizabeth House opened to the public and to be used as a base for a number of societies in Worcester, such as the Civic Society, the Industrial Archaeology & Local History Society, Battle of Worcester Society and a number of others. It could also hold exhibitions of local artifacts and archives from the various societies. All have shown interest in the project. We are one of a few cities where the local societies do not have a permanent base.

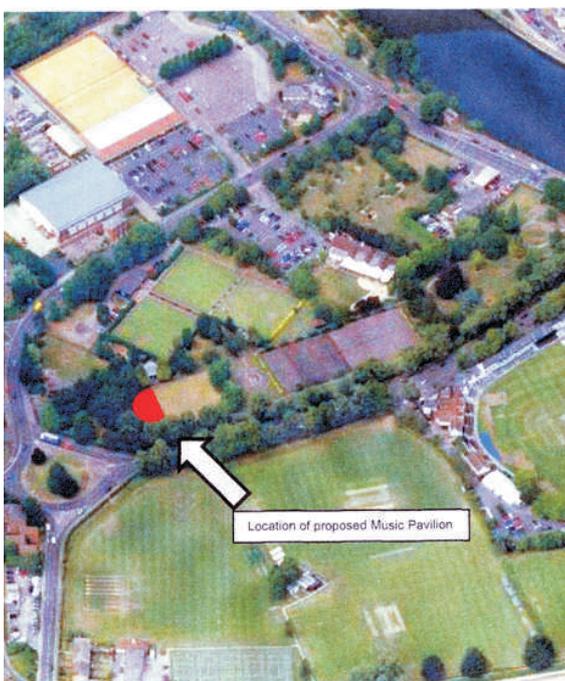
The project started some many months ago and we have had a number of meetings with the City Council about how we can achieve this. At the last meeting I was asked to put together a business plan which I had started to do. As part of this I asked the Council if they could arrange access to the property so that surveys could be done in order to determine the costs involved. In a reply from them, I was informed that the Council was in negotiations with Worcester Live for a further seven year contract.

The building currently is used as an office for Chris Jaeger who runs Worcester Live, and as a storage depot for costumes for the Swan Theatre, both of which could be accommodated at either the Swan or Huntingdon Hall.

Queen Elizabeth House is an important building that is Grade 2* listed and as such should be available not only for visitors to see but also the people of Worcester.

Phil Douce

STRIKE UP THE BAND!



For the first time in its history, Cripplegate Park is planning the construction of a music performance pavilion, better known as a bandstand. Plans are underway to raise funds and prepare designs for this much needed structure. Cripplegate Park is host to musical events throughout the summer but has not been able to offer a purpose-built performance space.

The bandstand would be located on the southwest side of the park opposite the cricket practice fields and would nestle among the trees facing the existing fountain. Set into the landscape with a slightly raised platform, the pavilion would be accessible by wheelchair users and when not in use for performances would be available to the public, offering a sheltered and welcoming place to gather out of the rain or hot sun.

Local architectural practice Herlig-Marles Ltd. have joined the Friends of Cripplegate Park and organisers to prepare preliminary designs and offer advice. Public opinion about how the pavilion might look is needed and the organisers will be hosting several consultation events.

Phil Douce

Worcester Civic Society Planning Panel:

South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP)

A key supplementary planning document (SPD) of the SWDP was out for public consultation in the summer. The Residential Design Guide SPD will be a key document in helping to promote good design and guiding new housing development in the region. However welcome this guide, we responded to the consultation noting it lacked some detail and focus. Parts of the document were yet to be published (the detailed character guidance), and therefore the guidance seemed to lack specific context to ensure local character and the historic environment are respected, and bland anywhere developments avoided.

There also needed to be cross-reference to yet to be published SPDs on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Water Management and Flooding to ensure that design guidance in each is complementary rather than contradictory. Finally, there was little information on how guidance would be 'enforced' and developers made to reference it. In 2018 there will be further consultations on SPDs for Archaeology and the Historic Environment and Biodiversity. Details of the SWDP process, consultations and key documents can be found at: www.swdevelopmentplan.org

Transport Matters

The big recent transport story has been the announcement of £54.5 million of government funding to turn Worcester's Carrington Bridge into a dual carriageway as the last phase of the project to ease congestion on the Southern Link Road. Work is planned to start in 2019 and finish in 2021. Investment in Worcester's transport infrastructure is always welcome. However, with the continued lack of clear commitment to completing Worcester's ring road fully and 5000+ houses in the pipeline to the south and west of the city as part of the SWDP allocations, it is not clear how much 'relief' this will provide for the city longer term. We need to see continued commitment to investment and strategic planning as part of a robust Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), which includes all transport modes and

additionally tackles congestion in the city centre by removing through traffic as much as possible.

Since the consultation on the LTP4 earlier in the year it has gone rather quiet. When contacted the County noted that due to the high number of responses to the consultation it is taking time to process these and the timescale for publication of the revised document has been pushed back and is still awaited. There will not be further opportunities to consult on the document, but we will be able to contribute views as various schemes are brought forward for delivery. In the summer there was a consultation open on the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy.

This document included schemes in the LTP4, which we had welcomed, and additionally plans for longer-term rail capacity development, which would also be welcome. Finally, until the end of November there is the opportunity to comment on the Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide, looking at how our roads are designed. The Panel will be reviewing this document and making a Society response. Information on the LTP4 and other recent transport consultations can be found at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp

News from Conservation Areas Advisory Committee

We continue to see both the good and the bad in terms of development relating to listed buildings and conservation areas. Recent good schemes include refurbishments to important buildings like the Commandery and St Swithun's church. Poor commercial pastiche design was evident in a recent proposal for a 'gin palace' for the former Coop supermarket in Angel Street – rightly refused in our view. We will continue to review and monitor the extent to which the views and input of CAAC have a positive impact on decision making.

Conservation Area Appraisals – the production of revised area appraisals for existing conservation areas is continuing with Warndon Court and Trotshill the latest out for consultation. The review is moving forward at a good pace with some good quality documents being produced. The review is due to be completed in 2020, with the Historic City the last, and most complex, to be reviewed.

Dr Heather Barrett
Chair of the Planning Panel



TRIP TO SHREWSBURY

20th September 2017

Following the success of last year's autumn trip to Lichfield, we decided to select another historic location within easy reach of Worcester for this year. Shrewsbury was the destination and it did not disappoint, largely on account of our excellent hosts for the day, key members of the Shrewsbury Civic Society.

Our coach dropped us off at Shrewsbury Abbey which, although not having cathedral status, is a fine building with a long history. It was founded in 1083 as a Benedictine monastery by Roger de Montgomery. Though reduced in size at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and although situated across the river away from the main town centre, it has remained the key place of worship in the town. Perhaps its more popular claim to fame nowadays is that the Abbey provided the inspiration for Ellis Peters (whose real name was Edith Pargeter) to write the Chronicles of Brother Cadfael.



Wyle Cop - heading up to the centre



Old building - modern use



St Mary's Church - Jesse Window

Anyone looking at a map of Shrewsbury will immediately see how its history and growth over the centuries is undeniably linked to its topography, being virtually encircled by the River Severn. This makes for a compact and tight-knit centre which gives it a distinct charm and character appealing to visitors and locals alike. It provides something of a contrast with Worcester which has a much more linear north-south corridor with the Severn running parallel.

Shrewsbury certainly has its share of listed buildings. There are over 600 of them, the majority being within the central area, including many churches and pubs. Our guides had time to show us only a handful. One of note was the Nags Head, a quaint low-ceilinged pub with nooks and crannies situated on Wyle Cop which we were able to wander through thanks to the kindly landlord. It was just a little early in the day to succumb to a pint! We ventured inside two further churches, St Alkmund's with its wonderful interior and St Mary's which dates back to the 14th century and is noted for its Jesse stained glass window filled with Old Testament kings and prophets.

As well as viewing the sights, we were keen to engage with the Civic Society which over the years has been very pro-active in establishing itself in the town. In 1968, when what is now known as Bear Steps was in danger of demolition, they raised the not inconsiderable sum of £50,000 to buy and restore it, so now it provides an attractive gallery, an exhibition space, a café and office space for the Society. It is open throughout the week to visitors and gives them a valuable shop-window to the public. It gives food for thought as to whether we could achieve something similar in Worcester.

Stephen Inman
Visit Coordinator



Heart of the town near Bear steps



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