

NOVEMBER 2010



HUDDERSFIELD CIVIC SOCIETY

Newsletter

1,600 Homes Planned for Huddersfield's Green Belt

Kirklees Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panel has been told by Ken Gillespie, the council's director for development that Kirklees needs over 26,000 homes in the next 18 years.

Mr Gillespie was presenting an update report on the Local Development Framework's (LDF) core strategy. The report says that the council's approach to the location of new housing has been based on making maximum use of brownfield opportunities and minimising intrusion into the green belt. Through the previously announced Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment it has identified capacity for about 24,400 homes on suitable, developable and available land in and around Kirklees, excluding green belt sites. About 46% of this is brownfield.

The council is proposing that green belt land should be released for 2,400 on the southern edge of Dewsbury, 1,200 homes on the north and east sides of Huddersfield, 200 homes to the south of Honley, 500 homes in Childswell, Dewsbury, and 400 at Ainley Top.

In total the strategy will provide land for 27,700 homes, 1,500 more than the council requires. This includes a 10% contingency to compensate for problems that are likely to arise in bringing forward some sites.

The strategy has been drawn up following the council's LDF consultation early in 2009.

This is said to be the preferred approach which took as its starting point outcomes of the 2009 consultation: concentration of development in Huddersfield and N Kirklees (option 1); no housing on flood plains (option 4), emphasis on economic development in NE Huddersfield and N Kirklees (option 2) and a better balance of housing and jobs in S Kirklees (option 4).

The full LDF is expected to go to the council's cabinet soon. This would precede further consultation.

Clr Ken Sims, who chaired the panel on 28 October, told the meeting the obvious "It will be contentious and some things will not suit every body but somehow we have to come to a decision".

The report says "It is proposed that consultation will run from 6th December to 31st January 2011. Some latitude can be given to the closure date to enable any late responses. Realistically, the Council could accept responses up to and including 11th February 2011."

No doubt all civic society members are looking forward to spending Christmas being consulted.

More news in the next newsletter. For the report please see

www.kirklees.gov.uk/Secure/meetings/pdfs/1010/ospde28101040922S.pdf

WE NEED YOUR THOUGHTS – COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE – WE NEED YOUR THOUGHTS

The closure of the Civic Trust and the establishment of Civic Voice are amongst factors that have led to the Civic Society debating its future.

Our core activities will always aim to make the town a pleasant place in which to live and a more attractive place to visit. We need more members and hope that present members can take a more active role in the society.

To this end we are enclosing/attaching a questionnaire which we hope you will fill in to give us your considered opinions. Thank you.

Huddersfield's Design Awards - get involved!

The Society is proposing to start a new competition next year with the above title. The idea is not new and similar competitions can be found in other towns. They are a way of applauding people's efforts and help to engender a sense of pride in the town. They also bring good publicity to the operator.

The way the competition will work is as follows. There will be a number of categories which we need to define, such as "Best shop front" and "Best café", and the entries will be in respect of works carried out in each 12-month period. "Works" could mean anything from a brand new building at one end of the scale to a lick of paint at the other. All Members of the Society will be encouraged throughout the year to nominate entries to the co-ordinator. At some stage a photograph of the entry will be required and enquiries will need to be made to ensure the right person is identified as "the entrant". At a cut-off date, the co-ordinator will compile a list of that year's entrants. This would ideally be in PowerPoint form for easier judging, but that is not essential.

A panel of judges will be arrayed to determine the winners and the results announced at an appropriate annual ceremony when awards will be given out. It is proposed that the Society's Tidy Trader cup (which is now redundant) will be re-engraved and presented to the overall winner.

If you have any comments or suggestions then please do let me know. We want the competition to be successful, but success can only be achieved if the rules are properly established at the outset and members submit their nominations when we are up and running.

Finally, I have mentioned that the competition will be masterminded by a co-ordinator (with help and support from other Members of course). This is a nice job for someone; could that someone be you? Why not volunteer before you are "approached"?!

Richard Ward.

Palace Theatre – Planning Rules OK?

In 2008 planning consent was given for an extension to the Kingsgate Centre- 'Kingsgate II'. WD Kingsgate Ltd's planning application 2007/92060 showed retention and restoration of the existing façade incorporated into Kingsgate II. This was discussed and emphasised in the application's amended design and access statement and was the subject of illustrations and submissions by WD Kingsgate (of 46 Bedford Row, London) and others at the 2008 public inquiry. Retention and restoration were cited 25 times!

During the consultation process the façade retention plan received the support of the Theatre Trust, The Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society and Huddersfield Civic Society.

In July 2010 a section 80 demolition notice for the theatre was served on the council on behalf of the owner, Hallco 1127 Ltd (of 46 Bedford Row). The civic society was dismayed that the 1937 façade was to be demolished along with the rest of the theatre.

The society does not believe any approval is needed for the demolition of the building, but by demolishing the whole building, including the façade, it would seem difficult to implement the 2007/92060 permission in accordance with the approved drawings.

Until July the society was not minded to seek listing of the theatre believing that façade retention without listing was the best option, allowing partial demolition. However with total demolition this heritage asset would be lost.

In July the civic society applied for spot listing of the old theatre. English Heritage produced a very poorly researched report that led to listing being refused in October. Because of the poor report, the civic society has, on principle, lodged a decision review request. We await the review decision.

Now a 'For Sale / To Let' sign has been fitted on the Palace building.

A 2009 brochure on the website of WD Ltd (of 46 Bedford Row) states 'Details, plans and concepts for Phase Two are being worked up towards a detailed "follow on" application during 2010 (http://www.wdlimited.co.uk/Portals/0/WD_Brochure_09.pdf page 10).

What next?

See memories of the Palace on page 5

Theft of Time

In the September 2009 newsletter I asked readers for the whereabouts of the nearest public sundial. This followed an enquiry made to Huddersfield Local History Library that was passed to me.

So far sundials have been found in Birchenclyffe, Longwood and Springwood and one missing from Ravensknowle and we had reports of others.

Now we have confirmation of more Huddersfield sundials.

St Paul's Church, Armitage Bridge has a large and elaborate stone sundial with a traceried iron gnomon.



St Paul's, Armitage Bridge

The dial's temporal indicators, down to 5 minute intervals, are shown as a folded tape measure. It seems appropriate for a textile mill village. Above is the biblical quotation; 'Yet a little while is the light with you' (John 12: 35-36). 'Beneath is the motto 'Pereunt et Imputantur', common on clocks and sundials. It is from Martial's poem "Character of a happy life" It is usually translated as 'they perish and are reckoned to our account', referring to the hours that we spend, wisely or not.

All Hallows Church, Almondbury had a sundial (dated 1682) until it was stolen several years ago. The theft was reported and its loss included on a stolen antiquities database. The sundial reappeared at the London auction

house, Sotheby's and has now been returned to All Hallows.



The recovered sundial in All Hallows, Almondbury

The sundial now rests in the gloom of the South Aisle where it is safe but rather out of place.

Still missing is the 1921 sundial that use to be in Ravensknowle Park. My enquiries have led to the news that it was stolen in March 2009. The theft was at night, when a security guard was on duty!



Ravensknowle sundial before its theft.
Courtesy of Kirklees Image Archive

There is also news of sundial having been at Green Garth, Dalton. Do you know Green Garth?

Christopher Marsden

Town wars - 1977 style

It would be interesting to learn how many people have tidied out their loft in the last couple of years thanks to Kirklees Council's brilliant Warmzone scheme. It is surprising what you find when you do and what memories such finds evoke. The scheme could be a boon for antique auctioneers too!

I found a dusty file which took me back to 1977. In those days New Towns and so called Development Areas spent vast sums on advertising their supposed attractiveness to the new, growing, light industries, now long since gone to China. "Bring your industry to South Wales," "Peterlee is the place to be." Not having such largesse Huddersfield just kept quiet and continued to make textiles, gears, tractors, valves and electric motors etc of world renown.

Back then Milton Keynes was only a six years old upstart. With money to burn they decided to take a double-page spread in the new *Sunday Times* colour supplement. Beneath a large, depressing, black and white photograph of a gloomy, obviously northern industrial scene the advert proclaimed, "There's no doubt about it, the Industrial Revolution made this country what it is today." Smaller type told us "50% of British industry still lives and works under the same conditions as the Victorians did. At Milton Keynes we have a new philosophy." The right page extolled the delights of Milton Keynes, "offering people more of what they want." These, at that time included countryside and over a million, newly planted trees and the largest undercover shopping area in Britain with a Woolworths and John Lewis.

There was just something about the photograph, the tall chimneys, the mill, the viaduct, all enveloped in black smoke. Recognising it as Milnsbridge, taken from, probably, the top of Whiteley Street I informed the Examiner. Then the war broke out!

"Huddersfield people are seeing red at black picture." said the Examiner's Stephen Cliffe.

Someone had suggested that whoever had placed the advert should be sued. A group of postmen was sure the photograph had been doctored to make it look even worse. Milton Keynes denied this and loftily said; "There was no intention to point the finger and the advert had brought an encouraging response from industry - mainly from the south".

National newspapers took up the story. "Portrait of a town in fury," "Black photo makes town see red." The Kirklees Council public relations officer said it was an adolescent trick. "Not so." responded the

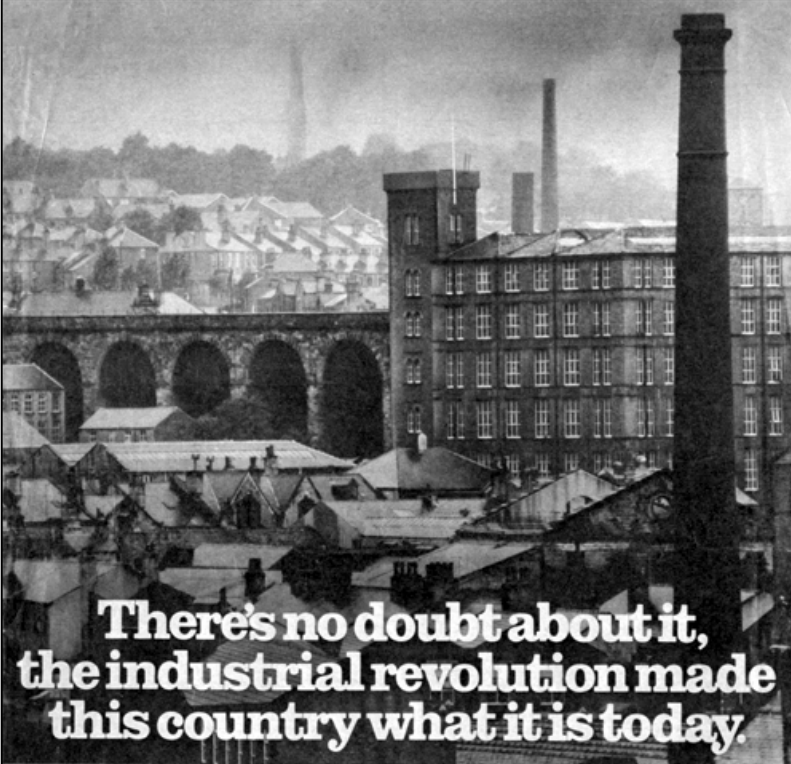
general manager of the Development Corporation. "I'd use the same technique again."

I seem to remember that Huddersfield had the last word proclaiming that if you wanted to see modern art, in the form of concrete cows, then go to Milton Keynes but if you wish to see real cows then come to Huddersfield!

It was all 33 years ago and I'm sure relationships have improved vastly since then.

John Lockwood

Picture – part of the advert with the montaged and doctored scene.



**There's no doubt about it,
the industrial revolution made
this country what it is today.**

It's surprising, but it's true.
In a time when we desperately need new investment, over 50% of British industry still lives and works under virtually the same conditions as the Victorians did. Redevelopment will solve some

of the problems. But it can't solve them all.
It takes more than a bulldozer to create a new city. It takes a new philosophy. At Milton Keynes, we have a new philosophy. **It is, quite simply this: that the**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON MILTON KEYNES AND WHAT IT CAN OFFER, PLEASE WRITE TO: THE DIRECTOR, OF

Remembering the Palace

Keith Kaye of Bridlington recalls variety theatre in Huddersfield

My memories of the Palace Theatre stem from the period 1948 to 1953 when my parents had a regular booking for the first house every Saturday night. These nights were part of a routine starting with Sports Report on the radio at 5pm and the purchase of the 'Pink Un' in the Market Place on the way to the theatre. Our seats were in the front row of the dress circle. As was common with variety theatres at the time there was a full pit orchestra. The box office was to the left of the foyer and could be reached by a separate entrance for advance bookings.

The Palace also boasted a commissioner who would stand at the front of theatre in full regalia. No visit to the Palace was complete without purchasing a programme for there were no comperes in those days, just neon lit signs at the side of the stage giving the number of the next act as per the programme. The manager who was a friend of my father's at the time had been or later became manager of the Empire Cinema and subsequently mine host at the Peacock on Leeds Road close to the Town ground. Whilst he was manager at the Empire I remember being given a bag of cowboy hats and Red Indian headdresses to take to school advertising the film "Red River". I was a very popular boy that day!

The Palace theatres in both Huddersfield and Halifax were owned by the McNaghten Vaudeville Circuit and although only seven miles apart were able to support back to back weeks with the same artists. The stage door of the theatre was in Venn Street. I was reliably informed by my father that the public house at the corner next to the Empress was popular with the artists between performances.

Artists of whom I have recollections of seeing there include Albert Modley, Tessie O'Shea, Billy Cotton, Old Mother Riley (Arthur Lucan), Reginald Dixon and Josef Locke and Big Bill Campbell. Campbell was Canadian and presented a weekly radio show. His radio and stage shows always had a cowboy theme. His stage show was popular with children because of his use of Mobo toy horses for races across the stage. One of the big stars of the time was Frank Randle of whom strangely enough I have no clear recollection although I must have seen him as he was a regular visitor to the Palace. Other artists to appear at the Palace during this time included Dave Morris, Syd Millward and his Nitwits, Dr Crock and His Crackpots, Hughie Green, Five Smith Brothers, Peter Brough and Archie Andrews, Harry Korris (who appeared at the 1937 reopening following the disastrous fire in 1936), Max Wall, Robb Wilton, Winifred Atwell (supported by a new young singer – Frankie Vaughan), and Sandy Powell. There was also the interspersing of such nude performers as Jane and Phyllis Dixey of whom I have absolutely no recollection at all which perhaps suggests that I was not allowed to go every week!

Reminiscing about variety and the Palace in particular would not be complete without reference to Pantomime. At the Palace it was not uncommon to see four pantomimes each year. The shows were presented by such impresarios as Jack Gillam whose office address in Manchester was 'Pantomime House'. There were no big stars in these productions but rather a company of seasoned performers supplemented by local dancing schools. The same performers worked for Gillam in touring revues and in summer shows.

When the Palace was converted to the Continental Palace resident artists included Victor Seaforth, Arnold Loxam (who died only recently) and Frieda Hall. Ms Hall hailed from Keighley and was popular at all the Yorkshire resorts during the summer seasons. She eventually settled in Selby and was married to a local councillor who had a spell as Mayor of the town.

My lasting memory of the Palace is the appearance by a performer billed as Lofty the World's Tallest Man. As I recall he was exceedingly tall and did little but stand there appearing to have no other skills at all. But, hey that was variety!

See news of the Palace on page 2

Planning news

by Frank O'Brien

Like a thief in the night, a change in national planning policy was sneaked upon us in the last throes of the Labour government. The old guidelines, known as PPG15, were replaced by a brash new usurper called PPS5 on March 23rd. The previous system has served us well since 1994, giving precise and strict protections; preventing developers and property owners from altering listed buildings and despoiling conservation areas. The old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" sprang to mind as I digested the terminology and policies in PPS5. The document and its appendices are full of vague and confusing terms trying, like Caesar's wife, to be all things to all men. The ghastly new term "heritage asset" has been introduced as shorthand for listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological sites, gardens, battlefields, world heritage sites and ancient monuments. It includes "locally listed buildings" which are those which an authority deems to be a valued component of the historic environment.

The danger with the lack of clarity in PPS5 is that it will lead to poor decision making by planners. An example of this was seen in Kirklees within a week of the document being introduced. One officer tried to recommend that permission be granted to an application involving a listed building in a conservation area which would not have occurred under the old policy guidelines. The justification made was couched in newspeak: "the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the local heritage assets". The recommendation was rejected. The confusion over terminology exemplifies Humpty Dumpty's dictum: "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to

mean – neither more nor less." (Through the Looking-glass, Ch 6).

On the practical plane, I suspect that the new guidelines will lead to its becoming easier for developers to restore rather than repair listed buildings, something that PPG15 strongly discouraged. Section HE11 states, under the heading 'enabling development,' that "authorities should assess whether the benefits of securing the future conservation of an asset outweigh departing from national policies." Developers will be salivating at the prospect of taking advantage of this clause.

One anomaly remains: there has not been a new Heritage Bill to accompany PPS5, so the primary legislation is still the 1990 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act. This affords us some hope as the Act has stringent powers: it is still a criminal offence, with scope for a custodial sentence, to carry out unauthorised work on a listed building; owners and developers should be wary! We will not see the full implications of PPS5 until it is tested in the courts.

Perhaps observers of the new policy statement should have smelt a rat when they saw that the first priority of PPS5 is combating climate change. What on earth climate change has to do with listed buildings and conservation areas is beyond me. The climate change mantra seems to permeate all aspects of public life. O tempora! O mores!

Frank O'Brien

Thanks to all contributors to this issue. Apologies from the editor for the delay since the February newsletter. More regular publication is planned.

The Huddersfield Civic Society Newsletter welcomes contributions from all society members and friends of the society. The next edition is planned for late 2010.

Please send your ideas, proposals, comments, letters and articles to the editor by email to c_marsden@hotmail.com or by post to Christopher Marsden, 106 Lamb Hall Road, Huddersfield HD3 3TJ

Notes and scenes from Civic Society Week 2010 in Huddersfield

We chose the period 15 - 22nd June.

Our aim, through the medium of public art was to raise awareness of the Society and recruit new members. This was to be achieved through a series of seven guided public art walks and a public art photograph display in Queensgate Market. We also had a members' debate on what makes a town great. Thanks to everyone who talk part .



Over 70 people joined the walks (picture left is of a group of walkers). The walks and the display (below), which was 'staffed' by society members throughout each day, gave opportunities to discuss a wide range of topics with the public.

Drawing attention to existing public art in Huddersfield gained us much press coverage.

Photos by Christopher Marsden



Feedback from a participant:

"We were very pleased to be able to join two of these most interesting walks on our recent visit to Huddersfield. Having no previous knowledge of the subjects covered I found there was a lot to take in, so have since done further research on the internet. As well as discovering more about Huddersfield, I have learnt about the work of civic societies nationwide. I would be pleased to receive information about future events as I often come to Huddersfield."

Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee 2012?

Castle Hill's Victoria Tower was built as a memorial of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Despite difficulties in raising the money required through public subscriptions the tower was opened in 1899.

In 1977, to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee, Huddersfield Civic Society through public subscriptions raised the money needed for the erection of the tower's beacon.

The society's chairman has written to the leader of the Kirklees Council asking what plans the council has to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth. Should Huddersfield Civic Society commemorate the jubilee? If yes, how? Please get in touch with the newsletter or any committee member and share your views.

Society meetings and events

You are welcome at these forthcoming Huddersfield Civic Society meetings in Room F035 at Kirklees College, New North Road:

Monday 15th November 2010, 19:45 Business meeting

Monday 20th December 2010, 19:45 Business meeting

Another view – Huddersfield’s model market

Recent publicity has been given to a model of the Victoria Tower on Castle Hill.

Wakefield based company Peter Jones, that recently opened a shop on New Street Huddersfield, commissioned 2,000 models from Carlisle company, Enesco under its Lilliput Lane brand. The 12.5 cm model retails at £24.95.



Peter Jones says “The model is an interpretation by the sculptor and does not replicate exact details. However, we think the finished piece shows all the key features of the site and is also an attractive model for the home. It includes the medieval well to one side of the tower, the tower top beacon and even some rabbits by the gorse bushes!”

The Examiner reported “It’s thought to be the first time a Huddersfield landmark has been turned into a sculpture for sale”.

The model is said to feature the 1977 beacon that was installed at the top of the tower to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee. It was paid for by public subscriptions to an appeal by Huddersfield Civic Society and a plaque at the bottom of the tower records this.

News of the Lilliput Lane model led to the Examiner being told of an earlier model was another Victoria Tower model, in a 2,000 edition, sold by Strawberry Fair in the 1980s.

Now I can scoop the Examiner with news of a much earlier Huddersfield landmark model.

A 15.5 cm Willow Art crested model of the town’s market cross has recently appeared on the online auction site, Ebay. No bids were received when listed at £89.99 and relisted at £125!

Willow Art of Longton, Stoke on Trent was a major pre-war crested china manufacturer.

Do you know of any other Huddersfield landmark models made for sale?

Christopher Marsden

Photos: above, the Lilliput Lane model; right, the Willow Art model. Both (at A4) are shown actual size.

