

news

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hereford civic society

the city's built environment forum

Winter 2014

Sustainable Safety

The Dutch approach

Future of the old Working Boys' Home

Application for listing sent to English Heritage

Venn's Arch Restoration

Detailed report on required repairs

Amazing places of Hereford

Hollywell Gutter Lane

Hereford Now

Connect 2 Bridge

The City's forum for discussion about the built environment.
Check the back page for details and meetings in different locations.

www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk

Special Event

Café Pol

What should be the future of the
**Former Working Boys Home
Bath Street?**

- The Council want to sell to the Fire Service
- Our Society want the buildings listed
- And there are other options

Come and contribute to the discussion,
using an innovative format that shows
whether there is a consensus in the room,
and where it is

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Preface.....



Our precious City is made up not just of listed buildings but groups of buildings and terraces developed over centuries. All are within the Conservation Area. Many properties are owned by the Herefordshire Council. HC is strapped for cash, disposals are being made. HCS has major concerns about the process of selecting those for sale.

The people of Hereford have a right to know which buildings are on the disposal list. The old Working Boys' Home and Industrial School might be demolished to make way for a new Fire Station. Geoff Hughes, Director, Economy, Communities and Corporate, Herefordshire Council tells us the consultation will be in the form of the planning application to demolish!

Clearly this is not good enough. We have been given a copy of the Condition Survey and Recommended Maintenance Report (C000378091 – Amey) and the Heritage Impact Assessment Report (STWD 3250.1.Rev A) both of which suggest there is the possibility of a new use; including detailed costs to bring back to contemporary office standards. This might not be feasible but conversion to residential, or just partial demolition, is a real possibility.

An application for listing has been submitted to English Heritage by the Woolhope Club and supported by Hereford Civic Society. My sketch scheme on page 6 is a possible, and pragmatic way, of maximising income whilst retaining the best of our past. We need to know the sums, the justification for the proposed deal with the Fire Service, and where this deal fits into the overall scheme. HCS, whilst remaining non political, considers it has a responsibility to shout about this issue of how the Council disposes of property.

Excitingly we have a new Café Pol discussion to be held on Monday 3rd February at 3.30p.m in All Saints Café; to be led by new member Perry Walker. This is all about consensus voting – trying to come to a positive compromise. We'll be discussing the whole question of **What should be the future of the Former Working Boys' Home in Bath Street?** Representatives of the Council, the Fire Service and architects have been invited. Come and join us embrace this innovative style of discussion.

Sustainable Safety – the Dutch Approach is featured on page 4 – it is such logical sense; and should make embarrassing reading for our British highway engineers! We remain the City's forum for the built environment. We remain positive and attempt to be positive in our approach, here's to 2014.

John Bothamley

News and comment

Briefly

20 mph zone – hoping for April start following consultation.

Signage – minimum 20 mph signs to the zone but pedestrian signage still under discussion.

Bridge Street/King Street – work to start on "improvements" in February, which unfortunately still incorporate a contra cycle lane.

St.Owen's Street – Balfour Beatty re-measuring (why?) for the contra flow cycle lane, in advance of public consultation. From our investigations it looks as though it will be an entirely flawed scheme – respond to the consultation when it comes out.

Positive news

When a visitor from that sophisticated town of Henley on Thames commented that Hereford's Christmas lights and atmosphere was "streets ahead of us" that is, hugely, to our credit. There was a real buzz pre Christmas and not just on the free parking Wednesdays; and enquiring of the Council regarding rental property, we were pleased to hear that the green shoots of recovery really are here! The only retail units HC has available are stalls in the Butter Market. There is activity at Rotherwas and enquiries for the Enterprise Zone continue with two about to sign up. Let's hope this is the real start of better things to come.

Butter Market

Currently (January 2014) the Herefordshire Council is considering the approach made by the City Council; HCS wonders if a broader approach to this iconic building should be taken. We do have a lot of retail opportunities in the City and might there be a better use? Of course there will be unhappy tenants but the broader picture ought to be considered. Refer to the ground floor plan for ideas?

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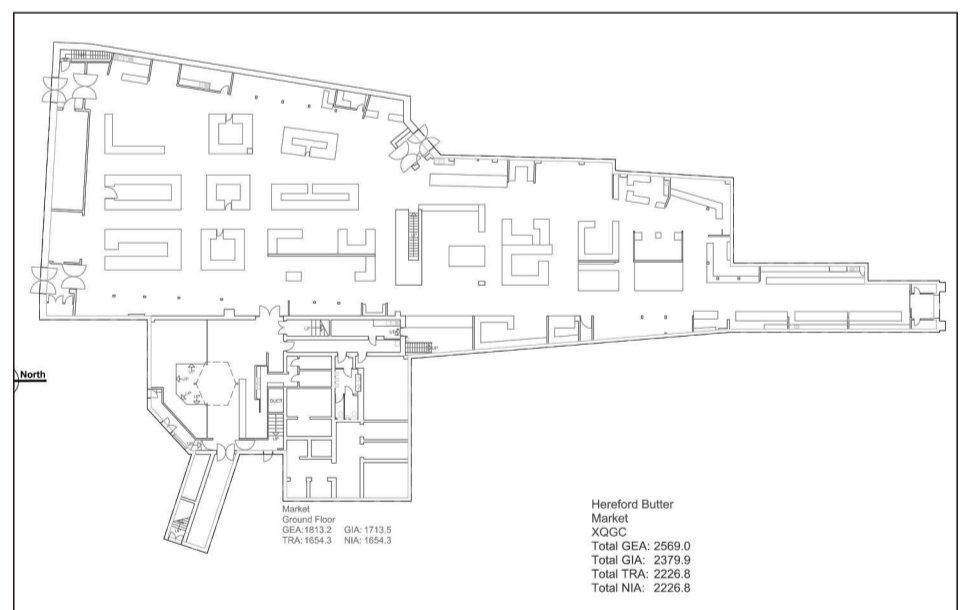
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Contributors

- John Bothamley** – chairman HCS, architect developer and chair of charitable grant making trust
- Mo Burns** – green activist and researcher
- John Faulkner** – retired chartered civil engineer, chairman of the Society 2003-2006
- Gareth Calan Davies** – freelance transport geographer
- Alistair McHarg** – Hereford property manager
- Andree Poppleston** – researcher and architecture critic
- Joan Simple** – auditor and local activist
- David Whitehead** – founder member of HCS, historian and author, secretary of the Woolhope Club

Front Page Image:

Former Working Boys' Home, Bath Street.

Carpark

The Merton Meadow carpark has, for a very long time, provided adequate car parking on some rough old scalplings, essentially waste tarmac and alike used to provide a semi-permanent base. HCS wonders why the temporary carpark at the former Rockfield's site has been beautifully surfaced in smooth tarmac, when there were piles of suitable material on site. The planning consent is for a temporary use over three years. Cllr.Price recently said that the Link Road would be completed by April 2015. This means the carpark will be used for little more than twelve months. Would we tarmac our own front drives for just 12 months use?

Community Asset Transfers

With the possible transfer of the Butter Market to the City Council still undecided, many other smaller projects are under way. The criteria are clear, assets will be transferred to community groups in order to promote the widest public value. Just how this is estimated is difficult to define, but transfers can be made at less than market value if there is real public benefit. The building of the Old Market is an interesting asset transfer. We were told that we (us citizens) would share in the profits. Now when HCS ask the question as to whether the project looks like being a success, we are told that we have to wait and see the huge economic regeneration that will result, and it is just not possible to put a figure on it. So the advice from HCS to all budding local groups wanting to run their own lavatories or play facilities is pull the same one "huge economic benefits will flow to our locality from this project – give us the freehold for free".

HC Community Asset Transfer Policy 15.4.13

Asset Disposal Policy

The objectives of the strategy are to only hold those assets that meet the authority's operational property, socio-economic and investment objectives. The value realised (if any) of these assets can be offset against Council borrowing, so reducing interest payments which are treated as revenue expenses. It is difficult to understand the process of selection of assets to sell.

HC Asset Disposal Policy 17.4.13

Corporate Accommodation Strategy

The revised proposals for the Herefordshire Council have recently been released, and as an interested party in the use of our properties we have reviewed the proposals. With the iconic Town Hall and Shire Hall to be retained, as essential parts of our establishment, we are intrigued that the once heralded proposal to move all departments to Plough Lane (the former Bulmer's offices) has been dropped. Perhaps that is because we have to provide accommodation for the separate delivery company of many of our services - Hoople Ltd.? But more worrying is the absence of any real information concerning our library.

To summarise the updated strategy for the "residual administrative estate" there will be:-

An integrated front facing facility based in Hereford City (The Hereford Centre) designed to provide the customer with access to both Council and other public services with the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. (completed in 2011 –Franklin Barnes).

An integrated back office solution based at Plough Lane to include both Council and Partner needs (Hoople etc.) approx. 500 work stations supporting 800 staff. (completion due June 2014)

A Civic Hub (Town Hall and Shire Hall and annexes) for Council's law, governance and resilience services, Hereford City Council, the County Courts and Care Closer to Home Services.

A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) Secure accommodation for vulnerable children and adults. Possibly to be relocated to un-specified Council premises in 2014.

A Herefordshire Archive and Record centre (HARC) (Due for completion in Rotherwas June 2015)

A series of Locality Offices in the Market Towns, providing front facing and back office touchdown space for officers, generally based in the libraries. Which suggests that if this is fine for the Market Towns why not use the Hereford Library for the "Front facing facility" here? We scrapped and demolished the adequate Garrick House (built 1986), and moved to Franklin Barnes in 2011 so probably time for a move again! Brockington is to be sold for residential development.

Somewhat surprisingly the Accommodation Board is keeping the Strategy under **perpetual review**, to provide jobs for the boys and girls. No doubt a revision to the 500 "standard" workstations for the 800 staff when "team building" returns to popularity.

Hereford Now

Connect 2 Bridge



Our new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists is finished and operational after struggles with failed companies and complicated funding. It looks impressive and creates an excellent link from the City to Rotherwas, benefitting workers and leisure users alike; but remember, it is shared space you fast cyclists!

Contemporary, stylish and robust it makes a positive statement and is not unlike a much higher profile project in Rotterdam. "This is the route to Rotherwas – our enterprise zone!"

But when are cycle routes going to be designed by cyclists? There are two right angled corners at the City end of the bridge. Certainly too sharp to pass cyclists coming the other way and not easy to navigate for a competent cyclist. There is no excuse, this is a new bridge that, respectfully, is barely fit for purpose. JB

NB We're having a meeting about Herefordshire's bridges on 15th May 2014 which will include a full discussion on the design and execution of this project, led by civil engineer member, John Faulkner.

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Sustainable Safety

The Dutch approach that underlies Shared Space

British roads are not designed like those in Holland, where Shared Space originally started. The Dutch take care to distinguish between roads, streets and lanes, build them differently, and have clear and widely understood differences in the expected use of and behaviour on them. They build them following the principles of "Sustainable Safety". It is the principle of design by which Dutch roads and streets are made to be easy to use, self-explanatory and safe by default. Dutch roads are different, they're a pleasure to drive on, very easy to use and as a result, very safe.

It was introduced and quickly adopted by all road managers in 1992 and has since been very successful. In 2005 it was revised and extended. The approach began with establishing that the road system was inherently unsafe. The goal was to fundamentally change the system by taking a person as a yardstick. The guidelines for design were to be the physical vulnerability of a person, but also what a person can and wants to do (humans make mistakes and don't always follow rules). There is now an integral approach to the road system which refers to 'human' (behaviour), 'vehicle' (including bicycles) and 'road' (design). Roads and vehicles must be adapted to the human capabilities and the human has to be educated enough to be able to operate a vehicle on a road in a safe manner. The approach is pro-active, it wants to remedy gaps and mistakes in the traffic system before crashes occur. So Sustainable Safety is about a lot more than just infrastructure.



Sustainable Safety is based on five principles:

Functionality of roads

Homogeneity of mass, speed and direction of road users

Predictability of road course and road user behaviour by a recognizable road design

Forgivingness of both the road/street environment and the road users

State of awareness by the road user

1. Functionality of roads

To the Dutch, the most ideal situation is when roads and streets have only one single purpose. To achieve this mono-functionality a hierarchy of roads was introduced.

- Through Roads for high volumes of fast traffic on longer distances
- Local Access Roads from which end destinations can be reached
- Distributer Roads which connect through roads and local access roads

All Dutch streets and roads have been classified (under a legal obligation) and are or will be re-designed to the Sustainable Safety principles by the road managers. This led to areas where people stay (residential areas and areas for shopping/sporting/theatre etc.) and designated space used for the flow of traffic in order to transport people from A to B. Under the Dutch vision these functions cannot be mixed.

2. Homogeneity of mass, speed and direction of road users

Large differences in speed and mass of different road users in the same space must be eliminated as much as possible. Road users can best be forced to travel at lower speeds by road design. This works better than using signs. If crashes occur at lower speed differences they cause a lot less damage to the most vulnerable road user.

Where speed differences cannot be eliminated types of traffic must be separated. On roads with higher speeds road users travelling in opposite directions should be separated by a division as well, to further eliminate conflicts. Cycle paths and pedestrians are always separated from these through roads, following the principle of homogeneity of mass as well as speed. Because of this principle the Dutch will never implement a combined bus/cycle lane as is common in some other countries. Eliminating crossing movements is possible

with roundabouts because on roundabouts traffic flows in less conflicting directions than on an ordinary traffic junction.

3. Predictability of road course/road user behavior by recognizable road design

Road design should be so consistent that road users instantly understand what they can expect and what is expected of them on a certain type of street or road. The road design itself gives information about the type of road/street. If the street is paved with bricks, there are parked cars and the street is shared with cyclists and gives access to homes, the road user will instantly know and feel this is a 30km/h (19mph) local access street. However, if the road has two carriageways separated by a median, there is no parking and cyclists have their own cycle paths, it is clear to the road user that this is a through road.

4. Forgivingness of both the road/street environment and the road users

Humans make errors and willingly or unwillingly break rules. This is a given that cannot be changed. So roads and streets should be designed in such a way that this natural human behaviour does not lead to crashes and injuries. An example is a shoulder with a semi-hard pavement. A road user coming off the main road will not crash immediately; the semi-hard shoulder will give this road user the ability to get back to the main carriageway. The equivalent for cyclists is a curb with an angle of 45 degrees instead of 90 degrees. Hitting this curb with your front wheel will not immediately result in a fall. Forgivingness towards other road users is enhanced when road design leads to a predictable behaviour of road users. A result of this principle is that motorized traffic sometimes gives priority to cyclists even if they don't have it. Because it is so clear where the cyclists want or need to go the motorist anticipates their behavior and gives the cyclist more room than he or she is legally obliged to, often to the surprise of especially foreign cyclists.

5. State of awareness by the road user

This principle is about the ability of road users to assess their own capabilities to perform tasks in traffic. This has to do with understanding vehicle operation and knowing how speed changes the behavior of the vehicle and to understand what speed is safe in a certain situation. It also has to do with the assessment of speeds of other traffic users to estimate crossing times. These abilities can be improved by education but there are limits; for instance when road users are children or elderly.

Effects of Sustainable Safety

Many countries have seen a considerable drop in traffic injuries and deaths since the 1970s. Reasons were the introduction of seatbelts, drink-driving laws, helmet laws for motorcyclists and mopeds, car cages and airbags. But in the Netherlands there also was a dramatic drop in injuries and deaths of the most vulnerable road users: cyclists and pedestrians. Traffic researchers attribute this difference to the introduction of Sustainable Safety.

Ten years after the introduction researchers found a traffic death and injury reduction of, on average, 6% per year - and that wasn't the only positive outcome. When the costs of the measures that had to be taken were compared with the benefits of the reduced traffic injuries and deaths it was found that the benefits outweighed the costs by a factor of four.

Students of the Northeastern University in Boston compared the Netherlands with the US. After analysing all they had learned on their study tour in the Netherlands in 2010 they found the following: "In the 1970's, the Netherlands and the US had the same traffic fatality rate. Both countries have seen dramatic decreases in traffic fatality rates over the past forty years. However, the Netherlands has put much more emphasis than the US on making their roads inherently safer. The result: the Netherlands has reduced its traffic fatality rate to less than half of the US traffic fatality rate; the Netherlands now has a traffic fatality rate that's only 23% of its 1970 rate, compared to the US whose traffic fatality rate is 54% of its 1970 rate."

So the system of Sustainable Safety is undisputedly successful.

Sources

SWOV Factsheets (English, PDF) from the Institute of Road Safety Research (Netherlands) www.swov.nl/index_uk



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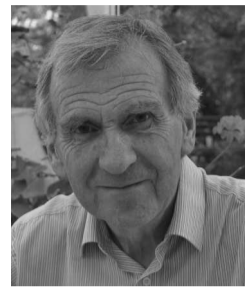
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Amazing places of Hereford

David Whitehead – Hereford historian and author

Hollywell Gutter Lane, Tupsley



Hollywell Gutter Lane forms the south-eastern boundary of the City of Hereford. It is an un-adopted footpath, which extends from the Hampton Park Road to the Hampton Dene Road, marking the edge of the Liberty of Hereford, the legal definition of the discrete area

– or franchise - within the shire of Hereford, which has at its heart the ancient city of Hereford. It was, according to most authorities, established in the 8th century, probably by the Mercian king, Offa. The ditch or gutter defines the royal endowment given to the newly established bishopric of Hereford. But, although the bishop gained material benefits from the land within the Liberty, it remained under the jurisdiction of the king, represented by the royal bailiffs who governed Hereford until Elizabeth I's charter of 1596. The Liberty of Hereford is thus, older than the shire or county, which was created later in the 10th century. It was probably created around 700 A.D. and remained an independent jurisdiction until Hereford City Council was largely subsumed by the Herefordshire Council in the 1990s. In effect this lane is as old, and as precious, as Offa's Dyke.

The use of 'gutter' in the name of the lane suggests that the boundary was marked by a ditch – perhaps, like the scheduled Rowe Ditch at Bartonsham. Moreover, on this section of the boundary there was a 'holy well' and several fields employing this name are recorded on the 1840 tithe map. They lie in the SE corner of the extensive development site, recently designated for housing. There may also have been an enclosure here, as the name 'Bromyard Hill' is used in 1840 for the highest part of the site. 'Yard' or 'geard' is often used to indicate ecclesiastical enclosures, as at Bromyard,

Herefordshire (*Cambridge Dict. of Eng. Place-Names*), and may be indicative here of the precinct around the holy well. Until the 1930s the bounds of the Liberty – which extends all round the city - were regularly 'beaten' and school children were given the day off to participate. Where Hollywell Gutter Lane leaves the Hampton Park Road, the Franchise Stone – a name still used on modern maps - marks the site of one of the open air courts that regulated the lives of those who lived in remote parts of the Liberty in earlier times. In a medieval copy of the earliest customs of Hereford, the place is referred to as *Adhekerdston* (*Jnl. of the British Arch. Assoc. XXVII (1871)*). The holding of these courts certainly pre-dated the Norman Conquest and were probably as old as the boundary itself. Serious disputes between individuals were often settled by regulated conflict, hence nearby, closer to Eleanor Avenue, we find 'Battle Oak Meadow' on the tithe map. There were also frequent boundary stones along this stretch of the boundary, marked on earlier maps, which seem to have been buried or dug-up.

All this history lies along Hollywell Gutter Lane and needs to be acknowledged and treated with respect. Already the southern part of the lane has disappeared under Copsewood Drive, presumably because neither the Council nor the developer recognised its importance. I would suggest that this last surviving stretch of the lane should be carefully preserved without any disturbance – it is, after all, of considerable archaeological importance. The hedgerows on either side need to be maintained and managed, and a ten metre margin created on the estate side as a *cordon sanitaire*, grassed over and used as an additional walk. This will avoid dumping, which would occur if the gardens of the new houses extend as far as the lane- as has happened behind Park Street – disguising the original form of Rowe Ditch. A story-board could be erected to inform curious pedestrians of the significance of the lane and encourage respect of its 1300 year-old history.



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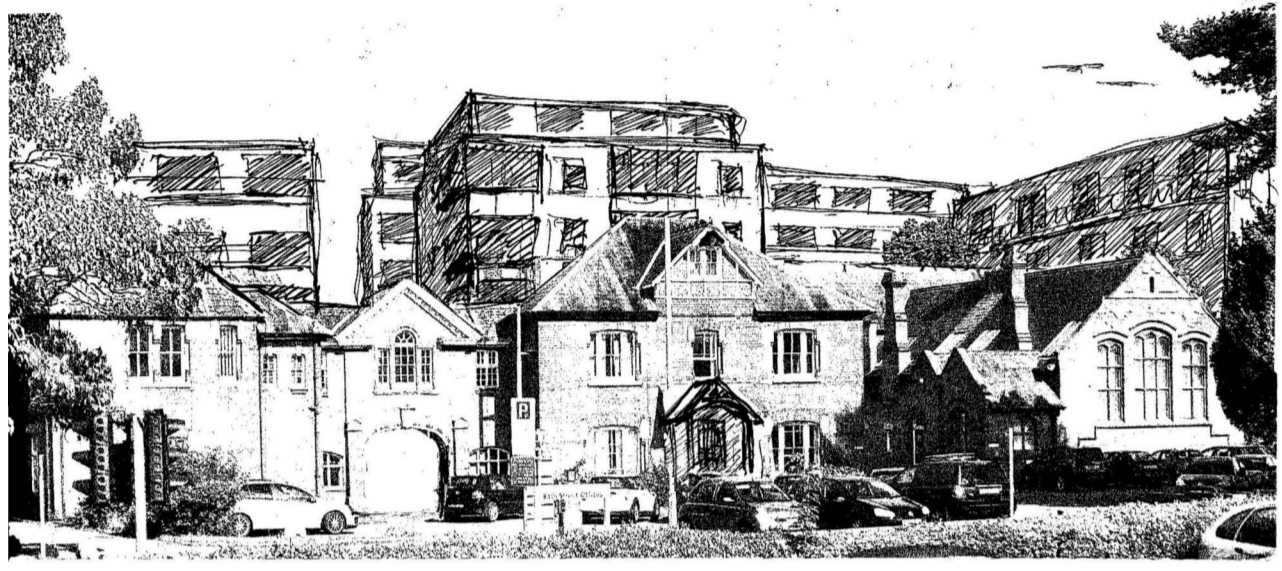
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Inspiration????????

Herefordshire Council continues to dispose of its properties. The former Working Boys' Home in Bath Street, inspired by John Venn and others, opened in 1877, owned by the Herefordshire Council, is at risk of demolition, to make way for a new fire station, subject to the results of an application for Listing. Our chairman, John Bothamley, has an alternative proposal to that currently being discussed.



Good governance requires the Local Authority to secure maximum value from the sale of its surplus premises. Against this can be set the difficult to value "community benefits" that might accrue to the people of Hereford. These benefits could include the "perfect" location for a new fire station, or the retention of historic buildings to maintain a unique city scape. Here I attempt to be the complete pragmatist, by proposing a scheme that would possibly secure maximum value whilst preserving part of the heritage buildings. I see no case for the siting of a new fire station here. There are several alternative and less expensive locations, including sites on the new Link Road. This is not the place for a garage for large vehicles.

My proposal involves the retention of the front parts of the original Working Boys' Home and the rooms behind the facades facing onto Bath Street, including the registry office. Behind these retained buildings tall blocks of flats will rise, enclosing informal courtyards. Access for vehicles will be from Bath Street and egress using Central Avenue to the rear. I submit that this would provide us with much better value than a cosy deal with the Fire Service! 141 modern flats, so conveniently located, retained history, and all accomplished through organic growth; proving that Hereford can both

"maintain the best of the old and create the latest in contemporary housing"
John Bothamley

If you have an "inspiration" for Hereford send it to us and we'll be pleased to promote it.

The Future of Venn's Arch

A large and comprehensive report, assessing how best to preserve this important piece of heritage gives well drawn options as to the best way to proceed.

Venn's Arch is a Grade II listed structure, in Commercial Road "a pretty Jacobethan archway by E.H. Lingen Barker, 1881, an entrance to St. Peter's Cemetery erected in memory of Emelia, sister of the Rev. John Venn; it looks ancient, so badly has its red sandstone weathered." (Brooks & Pevsner 2012) Emelia Venn worked actively with the church and aided Hereford's poor with her brother Reverend John Venn. On the death of Reverend John Venn in 1890, the archway was re-dedicated with a plaque placed on the archway to commemorate his passing. Both Emelia and John Venn are buried in the cemetery, with Reverend John Venn (1823 – 1890) known as one of the greatest benefactors of Herefordshire. Both Emelia and Reverend John Venn's work within Hereford influenced social reform and changed the way the poor and underprivileged were cared for. Reverend Venn was involved in many projects during his time, including the formation of The Hereford Society for Aiding the Industrious, which is still operating today.

Today the Arch is in a parlous state in need of restoration to preserve this important piece of heritage. The report suggests three possible options for the restoration and remedial works necessary.

Option 1 – Heavy Intervention: This option carries the most impacts to the significance of the structure as a result of "creating heritage" by replacing and re-carving architectural motifs and taking the structure back to a particular point in time. The main archway is the most significant component of the archway and the re-carving of the motifs could be seen to be detrimental to the heritage significance.

Option 2 – Medium intervention: This option would be a half-way approach which takes elements of heavy and low intervention, whilst maintaining elements which are important contributors to the structure's significance. The option preserves the archway in its current state, with the removal of elements such as cement render which impact upon the weathering and decay of the structure. The option also allows some ability to replace and restore stone, such as re-carving elements such as side scrolls and the replacement of stones along the plinth to enable re-bedding of missing rails. It would also result in the application of a protective layer which would help preserve the stone in its current state. Lime mortar would hide more details than a lime wash, and the lime wash would require further maintenance and applications.

Option 3 – Low Intervention: This option conserves the structure in its current state with works done only to preserve the structure. The main problem with this option is that the stone will continue to weather at a high rate due to the lack of protection which is required to continue the life of the stone, which would come from the application of a lime mortar or lime wash.



Conclusion: It is recommended that Option 2 is appropriate in the restoration of the structure due to the level of impact this option has to the heritage significance. Whilst estimates of costs have not been provided clearly it is the logical way forward. A positive intervention with the best chance of reducing future costs.

Report by JS Conservation Management and Town Planning. July 2013.
www.jsconservationplanning.com

Planning Matters.....

Andree Poppleston continues to search planning applications for interesting and controversial schemes. All applications are accessible using the Herefordshire Council web site – www.herefordshire.gov.uk

There have been a good number of applications these last few months all of which we have perused. Whilst the web has allowed to do this from our own homes the applicants for planning consent do not make it easy. For example, an application from Stanhope, 112085/RM referred to 104 drawings, all of which were referred to as Drawing. On clicking on this a seven figure number is downloaded, still giving no hint as to what the file covers; on opening one has to see if this is an integral or important part of the application for further perusal.

Household applications seem to be a little more helpful. Interestingly, if one submits an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, they insist on, not only, a file name but, also, an indication of what it includes. Some planning applications considered by us appear to be somewhat lacking in detail.

We comprise a group of qualified and experienced people, from architectural critics to industry professionals and developers. This quarter we noticed, and approved of, a number of applications to bring back first floor accommodation to residential use and change from shop to residential. We remain concerned by the number of applications for small infill plots that provide very little amenity space. Whilst a more dense city is positive and accommodation for small families is welcomed, it must come with decent sized rooms and gardens. To suggest that we know best is not our remit, but often we would like to suggest small improvements in an endeavour to maintain a unity and yet diversity to our great City.

A whole evening is to be devoted to this subject in April. (Design Review Panels – 17th April 2014)

Signage

HCS has concerns about shop signage and believe we have examples of good and bad. This last quarter has seen two applications for large signage on the Old Market site. Essentially we think we should retain the market town feel throughout both old and new parts of the City. This doesn't mean we won't embrace new ideas and forward thinking, it means we think retail advertising should generally be restricted to the ground floor of buildings. Then the architecture of our very eclectic mix of building styles can sing out, without been cluttered with signage and advertising; and keep Hereford a special place. Hereford has good and bad examples of shop signage and advertising. We're looking for somebody to do a positive report about the current situation and how it might be improved. Any offers? We'll moan about the proliferation of A boards in towns across the nation on another occasion!



Fire Station at risk of demolition?

Old Market (133004) Debenhams

We objected to this proposal for illuminated advertising panels in the strongest terms for these reasons.

1. There are too many panels scattered over the various elevations without any apparent reference to the design of the building. There is no apparent reason for siting in any one particular place.
2. The large sign measuring over forty feet in height is clearly, and obviously, out of scale, both with the building and Hereford.
3. The sign referred to above will not be readable for much of its height, once the trees are planted in the middle of Newmarket Street, so what is the point of it?
4. The internal illumination is too bright according to the Highways Agency.

Old Market (133318) Odeon

HCS is concerned that due process has not been followed.

There has been no pre-application advice.


There has been no neighbourhood consultation.

The grounds for our objection are that

1. the proposed name signs, to be sited at approx. 60 feet above ground level, are too large at c. seven feet high.
2. the vast majority of signage throughout the City is at ground floor level, why should there be an exception here?
3. the Old Market development is inward looking and signage should more appropriately be directed to the internal mall.
4. this iconic building should be kept as designed, a great cube like box, unadorned with advertisement, in the same way that the iconic Town Hall and Shire Hall are statements in their own right.
5. Newmarket Street should not become a Las Vegas style strip. This advertisement could be the start of a rash of high level intrusions into the city scape.
6. Hereford should retain its reputation as a country market town, this is the stated intention of the developers of the Old Market, and the design reflects this.
7. To enhance connectivity with the City Centre there should be a similar approach to the siting of advertisements.

The Hereford Civic Society has embraced the Old Market and looks forward to a positive joining with the existing centre BUT details of design are important and these proposals are not good for Hereford.

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Recent Meetings

15 October 2013 - **HCS at 40 - (Part 2)**

Continuing our look at our history John Faulkner, our chairman 2003-06, recalled the valiant attempts by our Society to inspire Herefordshire Council to plan imaginatively. Garry Thomas produced a paper, Vision 2020, that showed a pragmatic way forward, developing back streets and creating places for people. The Hereford Regeneration Group was formed to host a day's conference with visiting experts brought in to inspire our councillors. Alas all to no avail, even the offer to take over the running of the old Canoe Centre for community use failed. Positive suggestions for the Cattle Market redevelopment fell on deaf ears. We tried.

John Bothamley then spoke of our efforts to influence HC, and the redirecting of the Sustainable Transport grant originally earmarked for improving Broad Street into improved cycle routes. Recently HCS has been involved in supporting the creation of a 20 mph zone in the City centre, along with other improvements through Destination Hereford.

Rhys Griffiths, from the Hereford Records Office, described their current work cleaning archives ready for the move to the new facility at Rotherwas, designed by Architype, being the first storage building built to Passivhaus principles in the Country; and he received 40 years of HCS News (84 editions) in two large binders. Will we be here in another 40 years?

21st November 2013 - **Geoff Hughes** – Director, Economy, Communities and Corporate, Herefordshire Council.

The conversation, with the man working under the directions of our councillors, and who has worked through many administrations, started with our chairman (JB) asking his views on the cabinet system compared with committees. A consummate diplomat GH suggested that it was the quality of the councillors, rather than the system, that was important.

The suggestion that HC consultation was poor and unnecessarily complicated, especially if residents were only able to devote a few hours to the process, was rebutted with the comment that Counsel for the Council had praised HC processes as one of the best in the country! JB suspected all the members and visitors present, found this hard to accept. GH reiterated that consultation on the Local Plan (LDP) was the fifth in the series and needed to be constantly updated as other plans were approved!

Updates on the transfer and sale of Council owned premises to other organisations were touched upon with little detail, but GH emphasized that value was not the only criteria; the contribution to the future wellbeing of Herefordians was as important. The possible transfer, to the Fire Service, of the former Working Boys' Home in Bath Street being a good illustration.

19th December 2013 - **Gareth Davies** - Hereford's Pubs

This was a light hearted natter about ale houses, boozers and cider. Gareth started off, possibly surprising some of us, that drinking places were around before churches! Places where men, and women, gathered socially. Change is inevitable and Gareth doesn't mind that but he does fear the further demise of the public house network; to some extent helped by the availability of cheap booze in supermarkets. This, in turn, can lead to solitary drinking at home and alcoholism. Pubs help to prevent this!

A lively discussion followed underlying, and agreeing with, Gareth's principal point that pubs are places to meet and socialise. Concern was raised about particular ones but there was huge agreement that the quality of beer now served in most establishments was of a high standard. The efforts of CAMRA were praised, helping to prevent the further decline in the number of pubs but economics are relevant.

A motley crowd repaired to the Black Lion in Bridge Street to enjoy some Wye Valley brews; unfortunately it was not possible to inspect the sixteenth century frescos in the private quarters on the first floor. Whilst not complete, they portray the breaking of the ten commandments, believed to have been commissioned by clergy visiting the cathedral!

Sister Societies

We meet regularly and all societies welcome visitors.

Information on talks and news from:-

Kington History Society - www.kingtonhistorysociety.com

Ledbury Civic Society - www.ledburycivicsociety.org

Leominster Civic Society - www.leominstercivicsociety.co.uk

Ross-on-Wye Civic Society - www.rosscivic.org.uk

Your Opinions



A New Eyesore For Hereford

Is this what you expected? The frontage of the new Debenham's store on the Old Cattle Market development has now been unveiled with some large signs still to come. The result is beyond belief. A huge almost blank brick wall completely dominating the Edgar Street/Newmarket Street junction with a roof that would be more appropriate on a factory. What is emerging along Newmarket Street is not much better and completely overpowers the area. Yes, we were shown the usual architectural elevations at the planning application stage but finding the right drawings in the mass of documents was not that easy. Were the planners not able to recognise what a disaster was in the offing? So, the result is a new eyesore for a city and county which is supposed to be a tourist attraction.

JBLF

Request for Financial Report

This is the last edition before the retail development on the Old Cattle Market opens. HCS Members have accepted the inevitable. As observers and commentators about our built environment we believe the time is right for some open book information. On completion of a development it is usual for the developer to report on its success. As public funds and a large amount of officers' time has been expended, and as we, (HC ratepayers) have a financial interest, including a profit share, we need to see the figures. I've decided, by the extent of the reporting of his comments, that Roger Phillips is the man best able to provide his information. – I'm sending a request today and will share the answer with you in three month's time.

JB

Forth coming events

All meetings at the Kindle Centre, by ASDA Supermarket, Belmont, Hereford, HR2 7JE. 7:00pm refreshments for a 7:30pm start (unless specified otherwise).

Monday 3 February 2014 The Future of the Former Working Boys Home Bath Street?

A Café Pol discussion about the proposal to demolish and replace with a fire station
3.15 for 3.35pm at All Saints' Café, Eign Gate

Thursday 20 February 2014 No more conservation?

Sarah Lowe, Senior Building Conservation Officer, Herefordshire Council
An illustrated lecture on the future of conservation services in these cash-strapped times

Thursday 20 March 2014 Architects and Craftsmen 1700 – 1930

David Whitehead, Historian
A survey of those responsible for creating Hereford

Thursday 17 April 2014 Design Review Panels

Angus Jamieson, Architect
Is there a need for a Design Review Panel in Herefordshire? Illustrated lecture.

Thursday 15 May 2014 Herefordshire's River Bridges

John Faulkner, Civil Engineer
Illustrated lecture from the perspective of a local Civil Engineer

Join us

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Disclaimer

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