



Wilmslow Civic Trust

Newsletter & Members Consultation

August 2021

The Civic Trust has been busy since the last newsletter in December

Recent meetings

On 6 January Tom Evans, Neighbourhood Planning Manager at Cheshire East, spoke to us about Cheshire East's reaction to **the Government's White Paper on planning**, following which we are expecting the Government to publish a Planning Bill sometime this autumn. This will make the biggest changes in planning since 1947.

As drafted, Cheshire East will be told by the Government to produce a local plan every 5 years to build a certain number of houses. Everyone agrees that we need more houses but no-one wants them at the bottom of his or her garden! Residents will dispute the number but will either they or Cheshire East be able to influence the figure?

Once a local plan has been adopted there will be no real public scrutiny. The Civic Trust (& others) will in practice only be able to have an influence at the local plan stage. Local decision making & discretion will be taken away. Civic Voice has flagged up its concern about this with the Government but will it listen? This is going to be a real political hot potato. Former Conservative Leader William Hague has pointed out that it has the potential, like the poll tax, to lose the Conservatives the next general election.

The (fairly recent) community infrastructure levy & section 106 (requiring the developer to provide some specific community benefit in return for the grant of planning permission) will be replaced by a single infrastructure levy but there will be a temptation to use this for non-infrastructure, & will it in any case produce enough money?

There are other issues that might be of concern to our members:

There are currently no penalties for failure to build planning permissions already granted.

Young people in Wilmslow can't get on the housing ladder because there aren't enough small properties.

Neighbourhood plans will be retained but what influence will they have, except perhaps in relation to design?

The changes won't come in until 2022 at the earliest and there may well be significant changes before the new policy is enacted. The Chairman & I had a helpful preliminary meeting with our MP, Esther McVey, & she has indicated her willingness to talk to the Trust when the shape of the proposed legislation becomes clear.

Have your own say at our Planning Forum meeting - *see below*

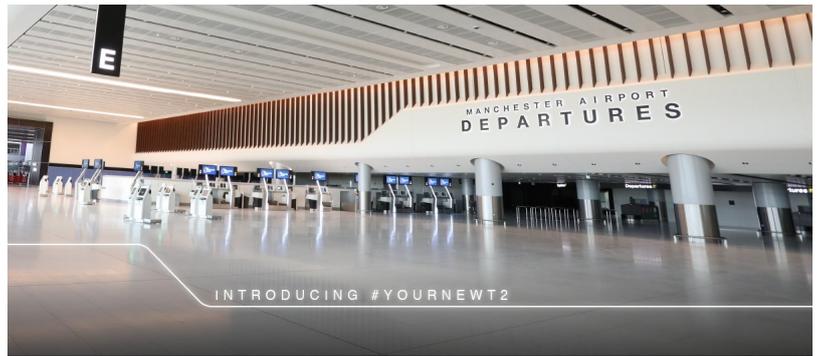
On 10 February we had a fascinating illustrated talk from David Gosling, of **The Peak and Northern Footpath Society**. Members enjoyed a very lively & informative Q&A session.

When the Footpath Assoc. was founded the population of G.B. at the 1901 census was around 32 million, less than half our current number, combined with the fact that leisure time was a novel notion - Sundays and possibly Saturday afternoons were newly established free time. Also, most working people had little spare cash left over at the end of the week to spend on regular outings or leisure pursuits.

A doubling in the size of the population, as well as an increase in free time and spare cash, has resulted in much greater pressure being put on the countryside, as well as the farmers who tend it.



On 3 March we had an interesting talk from the Planning Management team at **Manchester Airport**. The airport was at the time running at only 5 – 10% of normal business & think it will be 2023 or 2024 before they are back to their pre-Covid level, when there were 29.5M passengers per annum. The Manchester Airport team think this could increase to 45M in future. The new Terminal 2 opened in May.



We were informed of other developments, such as The Hut Group (online adverts & cosmetics) having taken a lot of space at Airport City and building a new HQ there. Importantly, flight paths below 7,000 feet will change but there will be an opportunity for local comment. They offered to talk to us again when more details are known.

At the AGM on 7 April Peter Stubbs & Hugh Cannings stood down from the committee, in Peter's case after particularly long service. We thank them both for their extremely valuable contributions to the Trust. Two members were elected to the committee: Mike Redfern (who has joined the review team) & Audrey Sibthorpe (Membership secretary & organiser of the distribution of this newsletter to those who still receive hard copies). were elected.

After the meeting Tony Collier told us about **the recent revival of Altrincham**. Business ratepayers in the town voted to create a business improvement district & to pay a 1.5% levy to help increase footfall & make Altrincham a busy, vibrant town again. The market has been rebuilt around local produce & arts & crafts, 500 new residential units have been created, some above shops, & cafes etc are attracting people into the town. Where there is wealth & leisure retail will follow. Can Wilmslow do the same?



On 20 July we had a fascinating **walk around Alderley Park**, led by Nick Hines of Alderley Park Ltd (managed by Bruntwood properties) who bought the site from AstraZeneca after the announcement of their move to Cambridge & have made a large investment in it. AZ had about 4,500 people on the site; present management expects there to be about 6,000 at the end of this year. There will also be a total of 300 houses in the Park. As an indication of Bruntwood's commitment, when they received a financially attractive offer from a well known builder for part of the site they asked to see the houses the builder planned to build. These were the builder's standard designs; Bruntwood asked them to design something better before they accepted their offer! Some houses have been designed by one of Prince Charles' favourite architects who rejoices in the name Robert Adam!



The site includes a pub called The Churchill Tree (after a sweet chestnut which Churchill planted during a visit to the Stanley Estate, the forerunner of Alderley Park), a "green wall" which hides a multi-storey car park, & one of the 3 best gyms in the UK (which is open to any of us to join).



Most of the site, including the woodland, is open to the public. Security is now more refined than in AZ's day. When George Osborne, who was, I believe, instrumental in getting Bruntwood to buy the site, visited as MP & Chancellor of the Exchequer with his security detail he was let in; when he visited later having been sacked as Chancellor by Theresa May he was asked by security "Who are you?"! Nick offered us a further tour in about 2 years time to see the further work which will then have been done & we intend to take this up.

Future meetings: All at 7.30 for 7.45 at the United Reform Church Alderley Road or, if you prefer, hopefully via Zoom.

For each meeting please email the Chairman for the Zoom details chairman@wilmslowcivictrust.org.uk

Wednesday 1 September: talk by Greville Kelly of Groundwork on **Revitalising Wilmslow town centre**

Wednesday 6 October: A **Planning forum**. This will be along the lines of BBC's "Any Questions" (4 panel members, plus Chairman). Members will be invited to submit questions in advance for panel members & then be invited to discuss further after the guests have made their comments.



Wednesday 20 October: open meeting in conjunction with Transition Wilmslow. Speaker: Dr Admos Chimhowu Global Development Unit, University of Manchester; his paper entitled: **"We are all in this together; climate change in low income countries"**.

Zoom meeting details will be available nearer the date: please e-mail your request to secretary @wilmslowcivictrust.org.uk

Wednesday 3 November: talk by Florence Collier on **The home of 2030**

Design awards

You, the members, nominated a total of 6 buildings in Wilmslow which had been completed or altered during 2020 for a design award or commendation. These were carefully considered by our judging panel – Ray Acton, David Cash, Chris Fasciato & Martin Hoyle – and 3 of them were commended :-

Bower's Folly, Greaves Road

31-37 Ladyfield St

The Old Stables, near the Leisure Centre.

Certificates, kindly designed by Rosemary Stubbs, were presented.

If you see any buildings in Wilmslow completed or altered this year which you feel to be worthy of commendation for their design do please send me details for forwarding to the panel.



Presenting the certificate to the owners of Bower's Folly

Lindow Moss

Helen Battilana reports that the Liaison Group which is to monitor the restoration work will not begin to operate until 3 months after restoration starts. Until building work starts on the houses we think there will be no money for the restoration. The Liaison Group clearly has a challenge on its hands!

Alan Turing

In conjunction with Wilmslow Historical Society we are looking into the possibility of creating some more prominent commemoration in Wilmslow of Alan Turing who lived here from 1950 until his death in 1954. Manchester University & Turing's nephew are both supportive of the idea & it is proposed to launch a public consultation in September.

In addition, Wilmslow Historical Society have commissioned a portrait of Turing which is to be hung in a room at Wilmslow Library which will be named "The Turing Room". It is hoped to arrange a joint meeting in the new year to hear a lecture about Turing, including the work he did while living in Wilmslow.

Planning applications

The Trust continues to monitor planning applications in the area and makes submissions to CEC when there are concerns or suggestions to be expressed. Mike Redfern & Beryl Pearce have recently joined the review team. If you are interested in helping with this work, please see the questionnaire, attached.



What do you want from the Trust?

We would like to know what members want from their membership of the Trust to help us to plan future meetings & activities. We shall therefore be most grateful if members can please complete all or part of the attached questionnaire & return it to me at either 17 Carrwood Road Wilmslow SK9 5DJ or via email to: secretary@wilmslowcivictrust.org.uk.

Trustees

There are 3 trustees of the Trust – currently Martin Hoyle, Jean Wearne & myself. Jean has indicated her wish to stand down as a trustee on 30 September. A replacement is being sought.

We look forward to seeing you at our winter meetings.

In the meantime do please complete & return the questionnaire so we know what you think of us!

With very best wishes

Christopher Dodson



From your Committee: Members Consultation August 2021

We would like you to tell us about your ideas for our future programme and activities. Please complete the questionnaire below, save your completed document on your computer and send it as an attachment to: **secretary@wilmslowcivictrust.org.uk** or alternatively print a copy and send the completed questionnaire to: The Secretary, Wilmslow Civic Trust, 17 Carrwood Road, Wilmslow SK9 1AW. You do not have to disclose your name if you wish to reply anonymously. Please tick boxes that apply to respond. Do not feel obliged to answer every question ... it is better that we have some responses than none!

Please tick to advise:-

Name(s) (optional) : Life Member(s) Annual

With regard to WCT meetings: Please rate the following according to your level of interest (1= not interested up to 5 = very interested):-

- 1. Visits to places not open to the general public: Rate
- 2. Visits to places that are open to the general public: Rate
- 3. Illustrated talks on planning: Rate
- 4. Illustrated talks on current, non-planning issues in & around Wilmslow: Rate
- 5. Illustrated talks on Wilmslow's historical development: Rate

Please suggest topics of general interest not covered above:
.....

Please suggest any good speaker (& topic) that you are aware of:
.....

With regard to planning applications made to Cheshire East Council for the Wilmslow Area: Please rate

- Your interest in applications close to your home: Rate . . .
- Your interest in applications affecting other parts of Wilmslow: Rate . . .
- Your willingness to assist in reviewing and commenting on planning applications: Rate . . .

With regard to our budget: Funds stand at approximately £8,300. Average annual expenditure over the last 4 years has averaged almost £2,000. Any overspends have in normal years been small

- 1. Do you agree that Wilmslow Civic Trust should from time to time use funds to employ a consultant where significant planning applications are involved? YES / NO (*delete as appropriate*)
- 2. What level of funding should we hold in reserve? £.....

Thank you for helping us.