

Wigstons' Voice

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY
REPRESENTING WIGSTON MAGNA, SOUTH WIGSTON
& KILBY BRIDGE
SPRING 2017**



**On Moat Street, one of Wigston's "Significant Buildings"
that is to be included in the review of Wigston and South Wigston to be published in May 2017**

**www.wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Founded in 1978**

***"we strive to make the
Wigstons a better
place in which to live,
work and shop"***



EDITORIAL

Spring 2017, where has the last 6 months gone since the last issue of the Voice? Thanks again to all the article contributors. If you have any local issues you would like to publicise please let me have them. This issue contains details of several upcoming events for this year.

Peter Cousins

WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY COMMITTEE AS ELECTED AT THE AGM JUNE 2016

Chairman	Peter Cousins	chairman@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Vice Chair	Maureen Waugh	vicechair@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Secretary	Colin Towell	secretary@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk 07813 782 899
Treasurer	Val Beesley	treasurer@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Val Beesley	membership@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Website Administrator	Peter Cousins	webadmin@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Publicity/Events	Nicola Alexander	publicity@ wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Peter Cousins	news@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk 13 Langton Road, Wigston, Leicester LE18 2HT

Committee meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston Magna, starting at 7.15pm. All Members Welcome

**THE WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017**

WILL BE HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 3 MAY 2017 AT 7PM

AT AGE UK PADDOCK STREET,
WIGSTON LE18 2AN

THE PROGRAMME WILL INCLUDE:
A PRESENTATION OF COMMENDATIONS
FOR BUILDINGS AT:

- OLDERSHAW'S YARD IN CANAL STREET
- THE EUROPA BUILDING IN NEWTON LANE
- TWO STEEPLES MEDICAL CENTRE
- THE LAUNCH OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS IN WIGSTON AND SOUTH WIGSTON
- A PRESENTATION ON CONSERVATION AREAS

**ALL MEMBERS AND THE
PUBLIC ARE WELCOME**

**COME AND HEAR ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING TO
MAKE WIGSTON A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE,
WORK AND SHOP**

ADMISSION FREE (NO BOOKING NEEDED)

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017
CHANGES TO BE PROPOSED AT THE AGM**

At the AGM in 2016, it was agreed that the Civic Society members annual subscription rate would be increased from £7.50 to £8.00 with effect from 1 May 2017, with a junior rate of £4.00.

A proposal at this year's AGM will be to change the Financial Year End of the Society to 31 March each year. Currently it is 30 April which is too close to the AGM in May. We need a two thirds majority of those present at an AGM to make this change.



DIARY DATES

Please make a note in your diaries of the following events:

**Saturday, 8 April 10.00am until 5.00pm at
Cross Street Methodist Church
WIGSTON HISTORY
AND HERITAGE SHOW**

**Thursday, 25 May at 12.30pm
Civic Society lunch at the Horse and Trumpet
Booking on 2880449**

**Thursday, 14 September at 7.30pm at
Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston
Civic Society Annual Lecture
THE SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS OF WIGSTON
and South Wigston
Booking essential on 07813 782999
£3.00 per person**

CONSERVATION AREAS by Colin Towell

The principle of a conservation area was established in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and so 2017 is the 50th anniversary of their establishment. The 1967 Act has since been superseded by the Planning (listed buildings and conservation areas) Act 1990.

The 1990 Act defines a conservation area as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance'. The local authority has a duty to preserve and enhance a conservation area while it undertakes its planning duties. Today there are approximately 9,300 conservation areas in England and many others in the rest of the UK.

Conservation area designation essentially controls the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees, restricts permitted development rights on dwelling houses and tightens regulation on advertising. It also places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to preserve and enhance conservation areas while undertaking their planning duties.

There are ten conservation areas within the area covered by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, six of which are in Wigston Magna, South Wigston and Kilby Bridge. These are (dates established in brackets):

All Saints	1977	The Lanes	1981
South Wigston	1989	Spa Lane	1989
Midland Cottages	1989	Grand Union Canal*	2000

The latter area* is a linear strip each side of the canal and was established by the County Council as it lies within the boundaries of several District/Borough Councils.

There are several listed buildings in the Borough and the Local plan contains a list of other important (significant) buildings (The Local List) which the Council will seek to enhance. The amended Local List will be launched at the AGM on 3 May (see advert in this newsletter).

The tenth anniversary of the local Blue Plaques scheme also falls in 2017. In 2007 the Society, along with the Greater Wigston Historical Society, researched and placed, with the aid of a Lottery Grant, 13 blue plaques to commemorate local people and the places where they lived. These are spread over South Wigston and Wigston Magna.

TO CELEBRATE THESE ANNIVERSARIES AND CIVIC DAY 2017

Wigston Civic Society will be holding a Heritage Walk around the Wigston Magna conservation areas, pointing out the Blue Plaques in the area on Sunday 30 April.

See details and route in the centre of this newsletter

TREE PLANTING

The Society was successful in bidding for £400 from Wigston Residents Forum to purchase and plant four trees on the approach walkway to Willow Park from Central Avenue. This work was undertaken on 23 January by three Society members with the help of the recently appointed Council Arboricultural Officer Henry Pearson, and his team. The trees were purchased from Coles Nurseries of Thurnby.

The photographs show the planting team and the finished result.



**THE FIRST WIGSTON
HISTORY AND HERITAGE SHOW**

**SATURDAY 8 APRIL 2017
AT CROSS STREET METHODIST CHURCH,
WIGSTON LE18 2HE**

**10.00am until 5.00am ADMISSION *JUST £1*
*Under 12's Free Admission***

**Sponsored by The Leicestershire & Rutland
Family History Society**

EXHIBITORS INCLUDE:

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
Help Desk & Search Service**

GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY

**RECORD OFFICE FOR LEICESTER,
LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND**

MILITARY AND MEDAL EXPERTS

**TALKS THROUGHOUT THE DAY
INCLUDED IN THE ENTRANCE FEE**

Main Talk:

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL WIGSTON MAGNA
AND SOUTH WIGSTON**

**Given by Mike Forryan, Chairman of the
Greater Wigston Historical Society
*Tea/Coffee & Food Available All Day***

FULL DETAILS AT www.lrfhs.org.uk/wigstonhandh.html

**HERITAGE WALK 2017
SUNDAY 30 APRIL 2017**

**TO CELEBRATE
CIVIC DAY 2017 and WIGSTON'S**

- **BLUE PLAQUES**
- **SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS**
- **CONSERVATION AREAS**

Start at 10.30am

Approximately 1½ Hours

Start in Paddock Street Outside AGE UK

Finish at

The Framework Knitters Museum

Bushloe End

For Tea/Coffee

(Route on the page opposite)

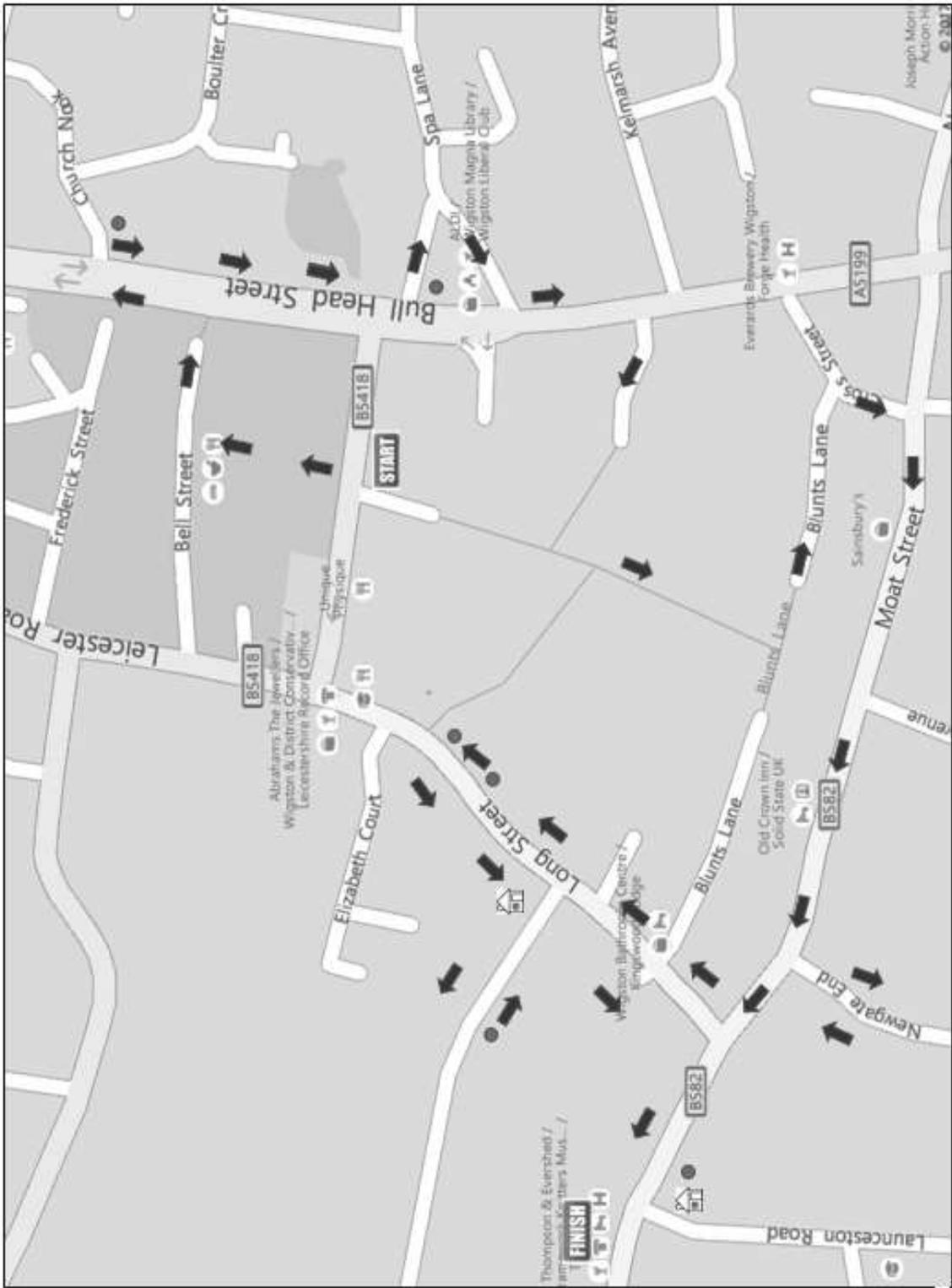
PRICE £4.00 Per Person

Including Tea/Coffee

www.wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk

To Book a Place

Telephone (0116) 2884638



PLANNING BRIEFS by Colin Towell

As reported in the last edition there are relatively few planning applications in the Wigston area that are significant and of interest to the Society, most being for additions to domestic dwelling houses on the large estates. However, where these represent over development of the site the Society submits an objection.

Old and new applications to note are:

Local development Orders for Wigston and South Wigston; so far there is no information in the public domain about any developments in the Town Centres.

Meadow Hill off Cooks Lane; an application for the demolition of the first bungalow in Cooks Lane and the construction of 53 dwellings on the site and the adjacent field was approved in November 2016. There were strong objections from local residents and the Society submitted several comments. No start on site has been made to date.

Newton Lane; full planning approval was given for this development of 450 dwellings on 19 January 2017. There was very little that could be amended from the outline permission previously given. It can be seen on Newton Lane that hedgerows have recently been taken out in preparation for a start on site although the date for this is not known.

Hat and Cap Factory, Canal Street; there is currently no information about the redevelopment of this very derelict factory which, it is understood, the Council has recently acquired under compulsory purchase powers.

Premier Drum site; an application has been submitted for a Lidl and a Wickes store to be constructed on this site after demolition of the existing former Premier Drum building. This application has not yet been determined and it is understood that the applicants are reconsidering the entrance arrangements to the site.

Glen Parva Young Offenders Institution; although this site lies in Blaby District the entrance is in O&WBC area, however access is by a private road. It is understood that demolition of the existing buildings will commence very soon and rebuilding of the larger capacity Category C prison will then commence immediately.

Long Street sites; The fire damaged Admiral Sportswear factory was recently sold with planning permission for 27 flats, the new developer is not known (despite enquiries being made) and no work has yet been done. An application for the demolition of the former WMC and the erection of a block of flats with terraced houses to the rear was refused in November 2016. Both these sites need sensitive redevelopment as soon as possible to improve the street scene in Long Street.

Fire Station; it is understood that the fire station is to be altered and in the meantime fire officers will use the modern house opposite as sleeping accommodation.

PAVEMENT PARKING



Do you have problems in your area with pavement parking? This problem seems to be widespread in the borough, with many cars parking close to walls or fences making it difficult or impossible to pass with a pushchair or wheelchair. There is actually no law nationally about parking on the pavement. The Civic Society contacted the County Council on the issue of restricted access and received the following reply:

“Thank you for your email dated 2nd February 2017. On speaking to our Parking Management Team, they have advised the County Council do not have any recommendations or guidelines regarding the width of pavement which is left to allow pedestrians, mobility scooters or pushchairs safe access.

If there was a vehicle parked on the pavement which was obstructing access or if the vehicle is parked on the pavement or verge alongside double yellow lines, we can contact the relevant District Council who are able to send out their Parking Wardens to attend and issue a penalty notice if necessary.

However, if there are no parking restrictions alongside the pavement, this would be a matter for the Police to deal with. They can be contacted on the non-emergency 101 number but this would be dependent on their resources”.

Peter Cousins

UNFORTUNATELY by Colin Hames

Behind a ten-foot brick wall along Long Street once stood Wigston Hall where now stands Elizabeth Court flats. From the road, little could be seen of the Hall. The Hall, in the 1950s, was the residence of a Madam Parroy where she ran a "Finishing School" for young ladies. These ladies came from all over the world, Iceland, Scandinavia and the USA for example.

Except for going to church on Sunday mornings the ladies were rarely seen. (Today they would be called girls.) Madam Parroy was friendly with the Vicar of All Saints Church, Rev Basil Tudor Davies. At that time many events were being held for the benefit of the Church and Madam Parroy threw herself into such events with much enthusiasm.

One of her ladies came from California whose father was well up in the film industry. As a gesture of goodwill, he sent his daughter a brand-new film for it to have its preview to support the Church in Wigston. Now Madam Parroy had many contacts across the County and beyond. So, an evening was arranged for this film to be shown in the local church room. Dignitaries were invited and they came in their numbers. The church room was full to overflowing.

Unfortunately, the projector was not compatible with the film. No problem, or in today's language, a challenge. One of the audience had a suitable projector at home so off he went to fetch it. After some time, yes it was some time, he came back with the appropriate projector.

Alas, the projector produced a picture far too big for the size of the screen, but all was not lost in spite of the wall having been recently painted lilac and the room not darkened the film was projected onto the wall.

Unfortunately, as soon as the film was projected it was realised that it needed rewinding. In the hall there was no means of rewinding.

So the distinguished audience sat through the film shown backwards on to a lilac coloured wall in daylight.

Of course the film was now rewound and could have been shown forward. By this time no one had the courage to dare to make such a suggestion. The room emptied very quickly.

To say the least, yes it was most unfortunate!

HAVE YOU GOT YOUR PRIDE OF THE BOROUGH DISCOUNT CARD?



Pride of the Borough Oadby & Wigston

Pride of the Borough Membership Card Scheme 2017.

Pride of the Borough is made up of individuals, neighbourhood groups and voluntary organisations whose aim is to improve the borough of Oadby & Wigston.

Our volunteers carry out a range of environmentally based projects, such as maintaining neighbourhood greens, tree and bulb planting, litter picking etc.

We also organise an annual Floral Display Competition and work with Oadby & Wigston Borough Council to prepare for East Midlands in Bloom, in which we have achieved the prestigious Gold Award and in 2017 are entered into **Britain in Bloom**

We are all volunteers who need you to help us with our aim. You can support our work by becoming a member.

Memberships costs £5.00 per calendar year



Money saved by members in 2016:

Several people have saved more than £30 at Henry Smith & Hamylton Ltd.

Ken Bailey at Wistow have had many customers who save their membership money in just one visit.

Grange Farm is used by a lot of our members most of whom save between £10/£20 a visit.

Groups of friends meeting at Brocks Hill Visitor Centre and Parklands cafes have saved several pounds during the year.

The Cuisine of India say they can have several PotB Members every evening saving at least £10 per couple.

An Oadby couple went to Lords in South Wigston and saved over £20 on electrical goods.

Some people have bought their card to support Pride of the Borough including a man from Wigston who has then found himself saving over £30 in six months.

See over for full details of latest offers, or please visit our website:

www.prideoftheborough.org

www.prideoftheborough.org

CARDS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE OADBY AND WIGSTON COUNCIL CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE IN BELL STREET, WIGSTON.

PRICE £5

OVERHANGING HEDGES



On several roads in the Borough residents have reported to us that the pavements near to them are blocked by overhanging hedges and trees. In some places the pavement is so restricted that pedestrians have had to walk on to the road, which can be dangerous especially for mothers with young children and elderly with walkers or wheelchairs.

We have taken up this issue with the Oadby and Wigston Council, who have referred us to the Leicestershire County Council who are responsible for this issue. We have reported several sites in the Borough, which have subsequently been dealt with by the property owners. If the owners do not comply the hedges are cut back by the Council and the owners of the property are sent an invoice for the work.

If you have an issue in your area or you see overhanging hedges or trees anywhere in the Borough, you can report this directly to the county council at:

E-Mail: customerservices@leics.gov.uk

Or contact:

**Customer Service Centre,
Leicestershire County Council,
County Hall, Glenfield,
LE3 8ST.**

Telephone: 0116 3050001

Peter Cousins

THE STREET SCENE AND FRONT GARDENS

“LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE”

Planning Officers regularly refer to the effect on the ‘street scene’ of a planned development. However, there is something equally important which affects what we see when we walk down our own street of any street of domestic dwellings in the area. That is what is in the front gardens. In the past, as a civic society, we have expressed our concerns about the paving over of front gardens. There are two main concerns, drainage and leaving some greenery. The need to block pave a front garden is not disputed as occupiers often need to provide more off road parking space and wish to reduce garden maintenance tasks. New houses usually have the area to the front of the garden finished in block paving anyway and why shouldn’t those who own older houses do the same?

BUT there are rules. If the area is less than five square metres, planning permission is not needed. If the area is more than five square metres and slopes toward the pathway, then approval must be obtained from the local authority and it must have a drainage channel inserted so that rainwater does not run over the public footpath or onto the road. In addition, householders are urged by the Society to retain or create a small area of greenery/planting, this not only looks good but provides more possibility for drainage and the soaking up of carbon dioxide.

There is another detrimental effect on our visual concept of the street scene. That is the number of items of waste of one sort or another which occupiers leave in front of their houses. These can include builders waste skips (there are even shipping containers placed in front gardens these days); local council rubbish bags that are not collected for one reason or another; scrap iron and domestic white goods awaiting collection, traffic signs still in place after the work that they are warning about being completed and we may experience hedges, trees and bushes overgrowing the footpath.

Waste skips are sometimes left for weeks on end, are occupiers able to ignore them, do we as their neighbours want to see their old settee or WC bowl left in them; do not the owners of the skip want them back to relet them and earn more money? If the council bin man will not take the bag, he will label it with the reason, why does the house occupier not take the bag back in to deal with the problem. As far as scrap iron is concerned the local scrap man usually tours the area quite frequently and so these items are not left for long periods.

Road works contractors are usually quite good at clearing up after themselves but if a sign is forgotten then it tends to remain in place for a long time. Could they be made legally responsible in the same that that supermarkets are legally required to collect their trollies when left in the street by unthinking customers.

There is do much residents can do to improve their streets for their neighbours and visitors: ‘love where you live’. **Colin Towell**

**ARE YOU RESEARCHING YOUR WIGSTON
OR OADBY FAMILY HISTORY?**

The Leicestershire and Rutland Family History Society have released their new index CD of Oadby and Wigston baptisms 1700-1921 containing 16,656 records:

WIGSTON MAGNA ALL SAINTS' CHURCH baptism register has been recorded and indexed from 1700 to 1921 – a total of 221 years and 9,711 baptisms.

OADBY ST PETER'S CHURCH baptism register has been recorded and indexed from 1701 to 1921 – a total of 220 years and 4,928 baptisms.

GLEN PARVA & SOUTH WIGSTON ST THOMAS' CHURCH baptism register has been recorded and indexed from 1887 to 1921 – a total of 34 years and 2,017 baptisms.

This CD contains the names of children or adults baptised, their parents (if given) and surname, plus date, year, microfiche reference and register number (if any). It is not a transcription, does not include any birth dates or additional information.

The CD costs £8.50 (£10.50 by post). The CD requires a Windows based computer (including Windows 10) and Internet Explorer/Edge and Microsoft Excel to view the data. (Free Excel Viewer provided on the CD). Available locally from **0116 2884638**.

**Civic Society Annual Lecture 2017
“The Significant Buildings of Wigston
and South Wigston”
by Peter Cousins**

**Thursday 14 September at 7.30pm
at Age UK Paddock Street, Wigston.
Booking essential on 2889638
£3.00 per person**

**See website for details:
www.wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk**