
Banbury Civic Society

News and Views

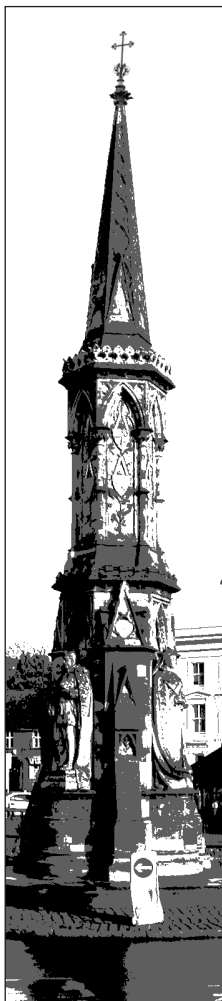
Issue No. 24

October 2014

Welcome

to the new style Banbury Civic Society Newsletter. As you will have noticed, we have restyled the mast head – ‘News & Views’, a succinct way of conveying the twin aims of the newsletter. We hope to deliver articles about recent or ongoing developments in Banbury, whilst also airing opinions from the Executive and hopefully, increasingly, the membership.

If you have any thoughts regarding Banbury’s heritage or infrastructure, or any current developments, please do let us know. This is vitally important since **News & Views** is an important means of projecting Banbury Civic Society’s main purpose: to encourage a sustainable future for the town and to safeguard its historic past. Your views and contributions are key to our Society’s influence with the authorities who make and implement local policy.



Banbury Civic Society: Our Mission Statement

The Executive Committee has recently reviewed and revised our Mission Statement, which now reads as follows:

Banbury Civic Society What we do

Banbury is a fine country town and a delightful place in which to live and work. The aim of the Civic Society is to encourage a sustainable future for the town and to safeguard its historic past.

- The Society is consulted on critical planning applications, both for modern developments and in the Conservation Areas.

- Issues such as town planning, public transport, new roads and housing developments as well as preserving our architectural heritage are all covered as part of our activities.

- The Society makes representations to Public Inquiries, responds to planning applications when necessary and represents members’ views on local issues to the County, District and Town councils.

- The Society is represented on the Banbury Traffic Advisory Committee, The Banbury Town Centre Partnership, Banbury Built Heritage Working Party and other locally-organised forums.

- The Society produces a Newsletter which is distributed to members, key Councillors, local decision

makers and other relevant groups.

- The Society is a member of the Civic Voice, the national body of the civic movement in England.

Do you agree?

Does this inspire you?

Does this make you want to join us and get involved?

Let us have your views! Banbury Civic Society plays an important and valuable role, but we are a voluntary group and need your help. We are looking for more members and active members. If you have any suggestions, we will be happy to hear from you.

To contact the Banbury Civic Society, see page 4 or visit:
www.banburycivicsociety.org

The Local Plan is suspended

– Housing targets go through the roof!

This is probably the most important current issue for citizens of Banbury right now.

Back in November 2013, Cherwell District Council’s (CDC) submitted the Local Plan for Examination in Public in June 2014. The EIP Inquiry was suspended in its second day, as the Local Plan was not in conformity with the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), published in April.

The council has thus had to go back to the drawing board to accommodate a significant numbers of new homes which the SHMA says the District must accommodate in order to allow for Oxford City’s expanding population and economic growth in ‘Science Vale’ (Culham, Harwell etc). The Inspector in charge of the Examination instructed CDC to aim for a target of 22,800 new homes across the district by 2031 – an additional 6050 homes over those already allocated in the Local Plan.

The Local Plan has now been modified, to incorporate the SHMA targets and is currently undergoing public consultation until Friday 3rd October.

The modified Local Plan proposes the same overall strategy as previously, with all development targeted at brownfield sites and sites in Banbury and Bicester, with almost no development at all in the countryside and villages. Including sites already consented and ‘windfalls’, no less than 7,319 new homes are proposed for Banbury and 1700 additional homes at the former RAF Upper Heyford.

The major new development sites which had already been earmarked in Banbury have been revised to take additional homes. Four completely new sites are also proposed as a result of the SHMA:

Major development sites proposed in the Local Plan		
Canalside	700	
Bankside Phase Two	600	
North Hanwell Fields	544	
Bolton Road	200	
Salt Way West	150	New proposal
Salt Way East	1,345	New proposal
Drayton Lodge Farm	250	New proposal
Higham Way	150	New proposal
TOTAL	3,939	

Of the new target of 22,800, some 1,100 homes have already been built, and permission already granted for a further 6,500. The new target is over a shorter time period than in the original plan (2011 – 2031). The Executive of the Banbury Civic Society is shocked by the latest turn of events, which will require Banbury to grow by more than 33% in fifteen years, with no additional infrastructure. Further, we are far from convinced that the private sector has the appetite to deliver a new ‘Bankside’ in

If you would like to make any comments on the modified Local Plan, please contact us urgently Tel: 07818 091862, E-mail Kinchin-smithr@rpsgroup.com – and do of course submit your views directly to CDC, if possible using the Local Plan Representation Form (see http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/e/m/Representation_Form.doc and http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/c/q/Representation_Guidance_Notes_August_2014.pdf. Alternatively, comments may be emailed to planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Banbury every year for the next 15 years. If the house-builders fail to deliver at the proscribed rate, the entire District will be plunged back to ‘planning by appeal’, with obvious ramifications for the Bloxhams, Adderburys and Hook Nortons.

Whilst it would be futile to object to the housing targets emanating from the SHMA, we are dismayed that Cherwell’s response to providing more housing for Oxford City overspill and for ‘Science Vale’ is to continue to pile up housing in those areas where house prices would indicate that demand is weakest: Banbury and Bicester (and now RAF Upper Heyford), rather than in the south of the District, where demand is strongest. The failure to respond to the SHMA with any substantial site allocations in the south of the District, in or near Kidlington, is

frankly astonishing, given that Kidlington has historically been one of the District’s three ‘sustainable centres for growth’.

Clearly Banbury will need to consider the infrastructure required for the growth that it is being required to accommodate. The Civic Society is thus preparing a document to

revive the ‘south-to-east link road’ proposal, for submission to OCC and CDC prior to the 3rd October deadline. Ian Hudspeth, the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, has also agreed to visit Banbury to look at potential routes for the link road. The view of the BCS Executive Committee is that this proposal is not only a realistic and viable proposal in the medium term, but that it is absolutely essential if the town really has to grow by over a third in the next fifteen years.

Castle Quay extension: CQ2

In January we outlined in some detail the proposals of the new proposed shopping centre / hotel / carpark etc generally referred to as Castle Quay 2 or CQ2, which is a major extension of Castle Quay. In February 2014, Cherwell District Council (CDC) granted outline permission for the proposal, subject to detailed planning and various outstanding matters. The proposal is also subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for Department for Communities and Local Government.

Following a significant number of objections to various aspects of the proposal, not least by the GF Sports & Social Club, but also by the Banbury Civic Society, the Canal & River Trust, the Inland Waterways Association and



Revised Casle Quay extention plan as submitted

the Banbury Canal Partnership, the plans have been radically revised.

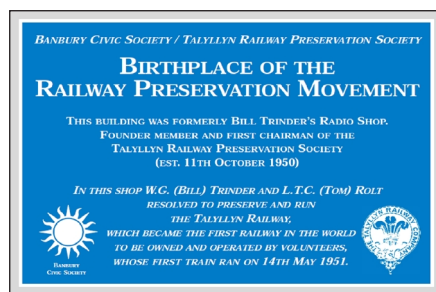
Scottish Widows Investment Partnership announced that the following changes have been proposed:

- GF Sports and Social Club remaining in its current location
- Several changes to the canal environment, such as the glass canopy being omitted
- New broader bridge over canal reoriented to serve the north of the canal and GF Social Club
- North end of the food store car park rearranged to accommodate existing footbridge to Spiceball Leisure Centre
- Existing canal bridge to be replaced with pedestrian bridge adjacent to Tom Rolt Road Bridge

Whilst the retention of GF Social Club is the most significant change, leaving a long section of the tow path unaffected and largely open in aspect, there are others. Perhaps the most significant for the boating community is the deletion of the canopy and the change to the bridges, there now being only one significant new bridge within the development, this now being both covered and wide enough to provide a small public open space.

Did you know? The Railway Preservation Movement started in Banbury

Banbury Civic Society has submitted a Listed Building Consent application for a Blue Plaque at 84A High Street, formerly Bill Trinder's Radio Shop. The plaque is in honour of Bill Trinder's role in saving the Talyllyn Railway in mid-Wales. Together with Tom Rolt and others, Bill ran the railway with the help of volunteers and initiated the worldwide volunteer railway preservation movement. The design and wording of the plaque is slightly different to the standard Oxfordshire Blue Plaque, as it commemorates an historical event/location, rather than a person or people. The Civic Society is now looking for an appropriate celebrity to unveil the plaque in due course.



Banbury at the heart of the war effort: WW1 Munitions site

MP Dr Andrew Murrison, the Prime Minister's Special Representative for

the Centenary Commemorations of The Great War, officially opened 'Feeding the Front Line' an exhibition at the Banbury Museum in July.

The exhibition explores the role Banbury played during the war and was researched by Stephen Barker of the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust. The museum received £9,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund's First World War: Then and Now programme for the project, which has a strong focus on mainly focuses on Banbury's munitions filling factory near Overthorpe, recently awarded Scheduled Monument status following an application by the Civic Society.

Town Centre co-ordinators

Two new town team coordinators will drive a project focusing on boosting footfall, reducing empty shops, and bringing pop up and community shop concepts to Banbury.

Cherwell District Council has appointed Neil Wild and Iain Nicholson on a 12-month, part time contract to work with existing town centre partners including the Old Town Association, the Chamber of Commerce, Castle Quay, Banbury Town Council, the market operator, existing businesses and other town centre stakeholders. Their brief includes identifying gaps in the town's retail and leisure offer, promoting Banbury to would-be new businesses, and helping to develop initiatives that reduce the leakage of spending power by people shopping elsewhere. The £15,000 contract has been funded from the government's High Street Innovation Fund. Members of the Society are currently in discussions with the Town Centre Coordinators for a joint HLF Townscape Heritage Initiative grant application for a scheme to improve the environment at Bolton Road and to provide better pedestrian links to Parsons Street and the canal at Castle Quay.

For your diary Forthcoming events 2014/2015

Friday 3rd October 2014

Local Plan consultation closes

Sunday 5th October 2014

Canal Day – Wild West

“Cowboys and Indians” Theme

2nd Sat in June

Banbury and District Show

Early November 2014

Charity Bazaar

Early December

Town Mayor’s Sunday

June 2015 Civic Society AGM

The Entertainer – a major new employer in town

The Entertainer, a national toy retailer, is poised to establish its new National Distribution Centre in Banbury. They have selected the former Sapa/Alcan site as the preferred location for this. It will bring many new jobs and also secure a first phase of the re-development site. The application is now with the planning authority and is expected to be determined during October.

In an unrelated move, Prodrive will not now be moving to the adjacent Hella site. Prodrive have opted to move instead to the ‘greenfield’ Central M40 site, south of Junction 11. Members may have noticed site works already underway on the site.

Banbury Civic Society AGM Report

Rob Kinchin Smith chaired a very successful AGM in June – attendance was strong and Rob presented a comprehensive review of the past year, supported by slides and photos of various development sites around Banbury.

During 2013/2014, Banbury Civic

Society maintained an active profile in terms of planning issues and developments in the town. Members of the Society were treated to a trip to Swindon in September and others attended a talk by Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning at CDC, at the Thai Orchid in December.

During the year a significant number of applications have been subject to the Society’s scrutiny, and commented on the following applications, amongst others:

- New station car park,
- Pubs: (notably The Jolly Weavers)
- No.1 West Street
- Former Primitive Methodist chapel, Church Lane) (now 2 shops and 6 residential flats)
- Central M40 employment park
- Castle Quay 2
- Former Sapa site – (the Entertainer)

The Society also assisted the Town Council in securing the removal of trees from Banbury’s medieval bridge.

Rob also outlines other major changes and developments in Banbury. Most importantly however, Rob discussed the Local Plan which has been suspended, pending acceptance of new, higher targets for new houses (see article above). The AGM also heard from Adrienne Rees-Browne, who reported on Finance, and officers and members of the Executive Committee were voted in. The Executive Committee is back to almost full strength with some 13 members, and attendance at meetings during 2014 has been high, with usually 8 – 10 members at each meeting.

The AGM concluded with a lively and extended debate on the objectives of the Banbury Civic Society and there were numerous suggestions from the floor as to how the BCS should seek raise its profile and recruit new membership.

The Executive Team Officers

Chairman – Rob Kinchin-Smith

Vice Chairman – Mo Mant

Hon Treasurer – Adrienne Rees Brown

Hon Secretary - (Vacant)

Committee members

John Batts

John Bell

Laurence Carey

David Finlay

Steven Malloy

Peter Monk

Nick Poole

Robert Richwood

Jill East

The new, revitalised ‘Admin Group’

Following the AGM, a new ‘Admin Group’ has been convened which is meeting once a month just prior to each Executive meeting and is grappling with the various issues raised at AGM. Members of the Admin Group are: John Batts, Adrienne Rees Brown, Laurence Carey, Mo Mant, Michael Passmore, Nick Poole,

Great progress has been made in updating the Membership database, production of new membership leaflets/forms, and we will again be present at Canal Day on Sunday 5th October.

All comments to Laurence Carey
design@h-and-p.demon.co.uk

Banbury Civic Society Membership

Help us recruit new members.

More members = more action. More members = a louder voice.

Help us help Banbury. Membership forms can be obtained from the Treasurer

Please write to:

Adrienne Rees Brown – Treasurer

Banbury Civic Society

The Corner Close, Epwell, Banbury

Oxon. OX15 6LH

(01295) 780334 or email:

adrienne.brown@btopenworld.com

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