



# Pickering & District Civic Society

Reg. Charity 502630

## Newsletter

Issue No.32  
April 2013

**The Annual General Meeting will soon be here again- please make the effort to attend on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Memorial Hall 2pm**

### Membership Subscription Renewals

As a result of losing the valuable services of some of our committee members, we have taken the decision to reduce our administrative workload by moving all annual membership renewals to a set date of 1 April, in line with the society's financial year. This will replace the current system of individual due dates reflecting the date you joined the society.

No renewal reminders have been sent for several months, so annual subscriptions are therefore now due, held at the current rate of £10, or £17 for joint household membership. Payable to PDCS c/o Stuart Harrison, Vivers Mill House, Mill Lane, Pickering YO18 8DJ.

If these new arrangements cause you any concern, please feel free to contact any committee member. We hope that you consider your membership subscription to the society a worthwhile contribution to the administrative cost of the considerable time invested by PDCS to preserve and improve the town and district we are proud to be associated with. **MP**

### New Developments in Pickering-

#### 'Oldie' Development 1- McCarthy & Stone

We are concerned about the amount of new accommodation for elderly people being proposed in Pickering, when there are already numerous empty 'oldie' properties in Mill House, Spire View, Willow Court etc and we already have more over 60s than the national average. Observation over the years seems to indicate that older people locally are reluctant to buy into such 'oldie' specific developments.

McCarthy & Stone have acquired the old North Riding Garage site on Eastgate, which has existing planning permission for about 48 units. In response to their local consultation, we arranged a meeting with the developers to discuss proposals for the site. It was pleasing to learn that they intend to reduce the density to about 42 units and increase car parking provision (two of our reasons for opposing the original 'Golden Living' scheme about four years ago). The average age of residents is expected to be about 78. Most units will have one bedroom, but some will have two. With regard to design and materials, they were informed that stone and brick are both

appropriate for Pickering, but embellishment is generally kept simple in Yorkshire market towns, with the notable exception of modern 'toy town' estates. It was pointed out that more elderly residents could find the distance to the town centre a difficulty, particularly with two major road crossings. Consideration was also needed for the provision of medical facilities - which appear to be close to capacity - and the proposal by Methodist Homes (see below) to build 168 units on Malton Rd, which could seriously affect the viability of the Eastgate site. It was suggested that this would be an ideal location for installation of solar energy panels on the roof as part of the build process. We can but hope they take serious note of our suggestions. **MP**

#### 'Oldie' Development 2- Methodist Homes

Anyone who drives down Malton Road cannot have failed to see a series of protest signs along the grass verge near Crossgates Lane. I don't know who erected them but they obviously feel strongly about the proposal to built 78 houses and 90 sheltered in house units by Methodist Homes. The development is designed specifically for the retired and will effectively create a large 'oldie ghetto'. This is a large development for Pickering and because of its location will be visible on one of the main approaches to the town. Our Society has already submitted an objection to the scheme to Ryedale District Council. We had a whole list of objections- the proposed access into Malton Road seems daft when it could be better placed into Crossgates Lane which could easily be widened. The siting of the three-storey high main 90 unit accommodation block close to Malton Road, instead of the far corner of the site, will inevitably create a blot on the landscape. For many years the council planning policy has been to restrict developments on the town approaches in order to avoid urban sprawl along the main roads and retain the character of Pickering. To allow this development would also mean that it would be nigh on impossible to refuse a second application to build a large housing estate, also extending south to Haygate Lane, on the other side of Malton Road. We are certain that such an application will be forthcoming because that site was put into the Local Planning Strategy as possible development land.

For those of you who have been following the recent changes in the planning laws- the National Planning Policy Framework- NPPF it will not be news that those local authorities that haven't got a Local Planning Strategy in place are at a distinct disadvantage when dealing with planning

applications. See-

<http://www.lgiu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Localism-at-Risk-2.pdf>

Ryedale is in just such a position having been trying to complete its LPS for years. It has been through the scrutiny process by the Planning Inspectorate at Public Enquiry but is not yet finalized. Until it is and preferred sites identified then developers have a much better chance of pushing through schemes on any site they choose and the NPPF legislation bends over backwards to encourage them. Even if Ryedale refuse the Methodist Homes application it is likely that they will succeed on appeal. That will inevitably mean not one but two large developments on Malton Road that will substantially change the appearance of that approach to Pickering. The much-vaunted Localism Act in which we were all encouraged to develop Local Community Plans is a toothless tiger- the courts have recently overruled it in favour of the NPPF. We are about to see the new planning legislation in action and as we predicted it will turn into a free for all for the developers. Long term Pickering will inevitably be a much poorer place because of it. Finally if we add the proposed two 'oldie' developments together they will soon offer around 210 new housing units for older people in Pickering- who will buy them? We think they will largely stand under populated for years. **SH**

### **Tree planting**

Having won North Yorkshire's Green Neighbourhood Challenge (over a year ago), we thought it would be a lovely idea to spend the money offering to plant some trees around the centre of Pickering. This proved rather more difficult than expected! We had several suggestions from people that for one reason or another – services underground, beds belonging to different local departments who couldn't give permission etc thwarted the ideas and delayed things. We had rather a frustrating time trying to get permission to do any planting.

We are now coming to the end of this years planting season but have managed to make some progress. Uniting with Pickering in Bloom has been a most fruitful arrangement and we were delighted to plant a couple of Hawthorns for the residents of Willow Court recently. We will be adding some shrubs to the beds on Smiddy Hill where, with them, we established a Herb bed last year for people to use. We look forward to further planting projects from this collaboration, the aims of both our groups being to enhance our local environment.

Please keep ideas coming if you think there may be suitable places for ornamental trees and shrubs and we can look at them for planting in the Autumn.

We are grateful to the Co-op Community funding that matched our funds and to Rogers Nursery for their contribution. **SS**

### **Pickering Flood Scheme**

First the bad news; Simon Marrington, Slowing the Flow Manager, has left the Forestry Commission to pursue a

career locally in the private sector with UPM Tilhill. Ongoing Forestry Commission representation for the project will be agreed at the STF Programme Board meeting on 18th March. Simon has done an excellent job over the past 3 years, as have FC generally. As a community rep on the scheme, I sent my thanks to Simon and his management.

STF held a public event on 25 Jan in Pickering, where detailed plans of the proposed bund were on display, along with photos and videos of the other measures already installed. It is heartening to see and hear the people genuinely dedicated to the whole ethos of this scheme being a success, including Nick Odoni, one of the academics involved in the original Ryedale Flood Research Group (RFRG) project, who travelled up from Bristol and attended in his own time. With Pickering and Sinnington narrowly avoiding flooding on several occasions throughout the winter, there is a belief round the town that the measures already in place are having a positive effect, although this can only be conclusively proven over time by accurate analysis of flow gauges in conjunction with rainfall data. It does, however, show that there is no room for complacency or undue delay, as the bund will give about 90% of the protection from a 1 in 25 year flood event.

The bund plans were submitted in late February for formal planning authority consent to both NYCC and the National Park, along with the usual environmental and archaeological impact reports. This will take at least 8 weeks. We have now advanced back to where we were in summer 2011. Apparently, the bund plan is sufficiently different to the previous version to need full consent again, rather than just being a modification. The plans can be viewed on the NYCC and NYMNP websites.

Another change from last time round is that the bund construction work has now been put out to competitive tender, which it is hoped will push costs down. Notices have been published for a public right of way closure on the track up Blansby Park Lane to Low Hunters Bridge from 7 Mar to 7 Sep for transporting clay.

The overall cost has been yo-yoing considerably for quite a while. RDC has committed £950k, NYCC £300k, with another £400k from flood levy money. Once the tendering process is complete, there will be a better idea of any funding gap. The noises I've been hearing have been positive in all quarters, but given the state of the country's finances, there is again no room for complacency or delay. It is still hoped that construction will begin in late spring/early summer, dependent on ground conditions. It's been wet!

In February, myself and Nick Odoni represented the STF scheme (again at our own time and expense) at a Natural Flood Management workshop in Edinburgh, along with a raft of academics, consultants, civil engineers and govt departments – DeFRA, EA, SEPA etc. We didn't sit there quietly! It was interesting to hear from similar schemes around the UK, generally all running into the same

challenges with funding, bureaucracy, landowner attitudes, Reservoirs Act uncertainty etc. Hopefully the shared experiences of knowledge gained will be useful for the future. In addition to providing potential flood relief for rural areas denied any chance of funding by current cost-benefit analysis, this kind of work in upper catchments could have major repercussions by reducing the scale and cost of more traditional flood defences around urban areas downstream by SLOWING THE FLOW at source (and addressing sediment supply of course).

### **Wells Walk**

Many of you will be aware of access problems around Wells Walk dating back about 5-6 years now. P&DCS has been working quietly with various authorities for much of this time, trying to reach a sensible solution. The latest dispute revolves around a short section of footpath that joins the Porters Headland path to Wells Walk not being on the Definitive Map and therefore not a legal right of way. This route was blocked by a large earth mound for about a year, until a voluntary agreement between NYCC and landowners allowed a kissing gate to be installed. The process to make the path a legal right of way (Definitive Map Modification Order - DMMO) continues, but may take another few months. Until that time, the path is only a 'permissive path' i.e. passable only by permission of the relevant landowners.

Adjacent to the kissing gate is a wall, which has been regularly dismantled by person or persons unknown. If this continues, there is a strong possibility that the path will once again be blocked until the DMMO is formally made, at which time the path becomes a right of way that cannot legally be blocked.

If anyone is aware of anti-social behaviour of ANY description in the vicinity of Wells Walk and this section of path, please report it to the police, preferably with recorded, photographic or witness evidence. Please explain politely to anyone seen damaging the wall that it may result in the path being blocked once more.

Work by NYCC to scrape the surface off the adjacent quagmire and put a firm surface of lime chippings along this section of Wells Walk and remove numerous piles of debris has now been completed. The finished surface and kissing gate should have been extensively photographed and recorded to set a baseline by which future damage by any party can be judged.

The same contractor has now completed remedial work to the badly eroded footpath alongside Pickering Beck between the Scout Hut and Rookers. It's rather nice to see the tangible results of a lot of time and effort. The speed of progress is invariably most frustrating! **MP**

### **Town Walks**

The town walks continue to be popular, thanks to our dedicated team of P&DCS voluntary guides. They start again for the new summer (?) season, every Monday from May to the end of October, 10.30am from the TIC. The cost is a very reasonable £1.50, to cover the cost to the society of 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance.

It has been suggested that a self guided town walk could be put together for visitors and residents alike. To this end, a meeting of Pickering Town Team was convened in March. The initial thoughts were that money remaining in the Town Team account could be used to finance the plan to produce a booklet and associated web pages containing information about various places of interest. These would be marked with numbered plaques, similar to those just installed around the station for NYMR's railway walks. Initially, there would be a basic town walk, but this could be developed to include different routes and subjects; geology, industrial, pubs etc, if funding was available. Most of the P&DCS committee have already volunteered to get the first phase under way, but people from other organisation around the town are welcome to get involved.

**MP**

### **Two Hundred Years Ago.....**

Jane Austin had just published her second novel "Pride and Prejudice" and was delighted with the sales. She attended the "Exhibition of Painters in Watercolours" in Spring Gardens in London. This year the rival society to the Royal Academy had decided in the Presidential Year of Francis Nicholson to include oils, portraits and sculptures as people were not buying art works as freely as in previous years due to the economic decline during the Napoleonic Wars. It was billed as the Ninth Exhibition although the constitution had changed several times since the society was founded in 1805. Jane wrote to her sister Cassandra in her usual witty style that she had looked for portraits (of characters from her books) she had found a small one of Mrs Bingley but had failed to find Mrs Darcy so she supposed that Mr Darcy had kept them at home- prizing them and not wanting them to be in the public eye.

The following year there was founded "The General Benevolent Fund for decaying artists, their widows and orphans". Francis Nicholson had himself no need of this fund as he had found a benefactor in Sir Richard Hoare (through his sister Henrietta Acland/ Fortesque) with commissions to paint the Stourhead Gardens (now NT Wiltshire) in watercolours. The Stourhead landscapes are in store in the Print Room at the British Museum along with many lithographs (ring to book a time to view). Lithography next became Nicholson's passion as he explored this new process until in the 1820's (in his 70's) he produced a stream of prints, how to draw and paint books, making an extremely lucrative living. In his 80's becoming less active, he returned to oil paints, with self portraits for friends and family and to painting in oils some of his favourite water colour scenes – shipwrecks!

If you missed the exhibitions in 2012 at the Ryedale Folk Museum and in Whitby Pannett Art Gallery, you can view some of his works on [www.francisnicholsonowcs.co.uk](http://www.francisnicholsonowcs.co.uk) or in the gallery of [www.pickeringcivicsociety.btck.co.uk](http://www.pickeringcivicsociety.btck.co.uk), see small display at Beck Isle Museum. Next year in May 2014 there will be a "Francis Nicholson in Yorkshire" exhibition at Danby Moors Centre Gallery. **JD**

## Your Committee

**AGM Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May Memorial Hall 2pm**

Yes, it is approaching that time of year again! We hope that you will come to the AGM and support **Your Society** as it is important that we have enough members present to have a legitimate election of officers. This year we lost Bill Breakell from the committee and have recently co-opted Eden Blyth as a new member. Eden has a great interest in Green issues and sustainability including the provision of new cycle paths etc. He is currently addressing the subject of changing parking enforcement on behalf of the society. Following the election of officers, our speaker will be Margaret Atherden of PLACE.

**Forthcoming Members Events**

April 7 Lime and lime burning, Mark Sissons. PMH 2pm

April 20 YHACS (Yorkshire CS) meeting 1pm at the Guildhall York –speaker Gary Verity of Yorkshire Tourism with optional Guided walk tba in the morning.

Sep 22 'Seeing and believing: the wall paintings of Pickering church' by Dr. Kate Giles, Dept. of Archaeology University of York. PMH 2pm

**WEA**

April 13 Sat 10 – 4pm Richard Myerscough The Stones of Malton £20 Book 01751 476118

March 25 Sat 10 – 4.30 R Myerscough Geology exploration on /off NYMR - £20 plus rail ticket. Book David Clark 01751 476118

**Walks**

Pickering Walking Weekend – Programme in Tourist Centre 19 – 21 April, 9 Walks from 2 m to 15m

Includes **Mark Sissons ( PCS) leading W9 Old**

**Railways** Sunday 21 10.30 – 12.30 £2 (book at TIC)

Pickering Town Guided Walks (PCS) start Monday May 6 10.30am at TIC

**Heritage Group** (PDCS events in the Castle) to be confirmed. Offers to help to Hilda Sissons.

May 6 Bank Holiday Monday “Flowers in May”

June 16 ? Sunday “ Painting Day “

July 14 Sunday “Fun with Fabrics “

August 18 Sunday “Games for All”

October 20 Sunday “Winter Treasures”

**Heritage Weekend (national) 5 -8 September** countrywide, with London a week later.

**Community Events**

**Community Events Day in the Recreation Club**

**Sunday June 23** all day Civic Society expect to have a stall- can you help to plan or be there on the day?

**Give or Take Day Saturday November 2 8 -1pm** Memorial Hall (with the Lions & P&DCS)

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**The closing date for  
letters, notes or articles for  
the next newsletter is 20<sup>th</sup>  
June**

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