



Hartford Civic Society Newsletter

"Cherish the Past - Protect the Future"

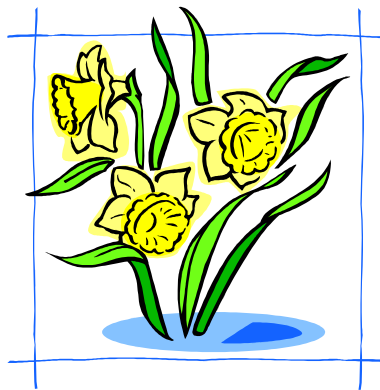
Hartford Civic Society is a registered charity in England and Wales No 1099390 and is registered with The Civic Trust

Spring is Coming

The Society has planted two very large bags of daffodils on the grass verges at the end of School Lane (by the new traffic lights) and at the bottom of Burrows Hill.

This is an investment that will literally grow year on year and will brighten up the approaches to the village during those dark months at the start of the year. We hope that they will bring a smile to your face and, perhaps, a little inner glow from knowing that they wouldn't be there without your support of the Society.

Bulbs used to be available "free" from the Council but this is no longer the case. We hope to extend the plantings gradually each year.



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Sandiway Cottage

You may be aware that, after a long fight to preserve one of the oldest buildings in Hartford, Vale Royal Borough Council have finally granted planning permission for houses to be built at Sandiway Cottage. It was originally built around 1780 and was probably a hunting lodge for an owner who wished to ride with the Cheshire Forest hunt (whose stables were at Sandiway) - however, this is not certain.

The original plans involved the demolition of this historic house and its replacement with blocks of flats and modern houses. This was vigorously opposed by the Society in conjunction with the Parish Council, our elected officials and VRBC. This resulted in the application being refused and a subsequent appeal by the developer against the VRBC decision. Despite total opposition from all the local bodies the Central Government Inspector granted permission for the development to take place.

However during this process important concessions were achieved that ensured the survival of the main house and preserved a large number of the trees on the site.

Subsequently the original developer sold on

the site to Hillcrest Homes who have taken a much more sympathetic approach to the development.

They met with the Society and the Parish Council on site and took on board various suggestions with regard to the landscaping of the site and the preservation of the masses of spring bulbs at the front of the house. It is good to see a developer that is willing to engage with the local community.

Hillcrest will be preserving the majority of Sandiway Cottage. Some later extensions to the rear of the property will be removed and replaced by a modern extension in the style of the original building. This will house a number of flats. The frontage of the building will be preserved and the view from the road will remain substantially unchanged. The outbuildings at the rear of the house will be demolished as the older ones are in a dangerous condition and the modern ones of no intrinsic value.

There will be a block of flats and modern semi-detached and detached houses built behind the Cottage and screened by the main house and landscaping. A third of the 36 houses and flats will be affordable

housing.

This approach will preserve the character and amenity value of Sandiway Cottage as seen from Chester Road as there will be no parking for cars in front of the Cottage and the spring bulbs and the landscaping in front of the house will be retained. Indeed, Hillcrest intend to replace the front fencing with Cheshire railings so that the house will be more visible.

The ongoing viability of these older properties is a difficult area. They must be used in order to sustain their existence or they will be lost to future generations. Too many properties are allowed to fall into disrepair and fall prey to persistent vandalism - eventually being demolished "because they are dangerous".

It still can not be said that there is a need for additional housing in Hartford but the proposed Hillcrest development represents the best solution for the village given that central government have insisted that it can take place.

It is also a creditable result for the Society in influencing the debate and the final outcome in order to preserve the best of the village.



Your Village needs YOU!

With apologies to Lord Kitchener in the famous poster from the First World War - Your Village Needs You!

Could you contribute to the running of the Civic Society?

We are looking for members who would like to help with the Society's day to day running and decision making.

There are vacancies on the Executive Committee and we would love to hear from anybody who feels that they could spare some of their time to help us pursue the aims of the society.

We desperately need more active members on the committee so that we can expand both our activities and our membership during the forthcoming year. The work that we currently undertake is limited by the amount of time that the existing members can afford to dedicate to the Society.

The full Committee is elected annually at the Annual General Meeting and this is a somewhat formal process as required by the



constitution of the Society. However, the elected committee have the power to appoint a number of replacement or additional members to the committee on a much more informal basis.

For instance, we are looking for a new Secretary to take the minutes of the meetings (nine meetings per year) and deal with the small amount of correspondence that the Society receives.

If you would like to discuss possible roles or your greater involvement please feel free to give the Chairman (Colin) a call on 01606 888792.

Grange Footpath

You may have noticed that the landowner has recently blocked off, at both ends, the footpath that runs across the Grange farmland.

Although this is not currently a public right of way it has been in use by the public for many years as a shortcut to the shops and by people taking their dogs for a walk. This usage by "custom and practice" means that the path could be eligible to be upgraded to a public right of way.

The path is the subject of a County Council report to be considered by the Rights of Way Committee at the beginning of April.

If they decide to add the path to the Definitive Map a Modification Order will be issued and a public consultation process will take place. If there are objections then a public inquiry could be required to determine the outcome.

If, after due process, the path is added to the Definitive Map, Cheshire County Council will be able to insist that the path is kept open to the public at all times.

Diary Date

2006 Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 4th October
Hartford Village Hall

Woodland Trust Presentation

Jane Reddaway of the Woodland Trust will be giving a talk about the Trust's activities and the practical conservation of woodlands. Trees were highly valued by the majority of people who took part in the village questionnaire and add tremendously to the character of the village.

We are fortunate to have Thorn Wood within the parish—a new planting by the Trust that is open to the public.

The talk will be held in the Village Hall at 7:30 pm.

Admission is free for members (non-members are welcome - admission £1).



"The Woodland Trust"

A talk by Jane Reddaway
on
Wednesday 22nd March
7:30 pm
Hartford Village Hall.





Village Lottery

As you know the Civic Society restarted the Village Lottery in October last year. Thank you to the many members who have agreed to take part and congratulations to those who have already won.

Using the National Lottery Draw makes administration of the lottery easier and ensures the draw is seen to be totally fair. However, this also means that we can only run the lottery in groups of 49 players. At present we are still short of players to complete our second group and this means disappointing some members who have already signed up to take part.

It's all in a good cause - looking after your village - so why not take part and have the fun of checking to see whether you've won each month (or just wait for that surprise phone call to tell you that you are the winner - wouldn't that brighten up your day?)

Can't we convince you to take part? If you would like to please ring Hilary on 01606 76400

We can't offer you the chance of £1 million but you can be sure that the proceeds are used locally to support your community!



Gift Aid

Many thanks to all the members who responded to our appeal to register for Gift Aid.

This has allowed us to reclaim £800 in tax from the Inland Revenue, representing contribution going back to the start of the Society.

This is money that will be spent on the village instead of going into the central government coffers and it hasn't cost members a penny!

If you are a taxpayer and haven't filled in a form yet please consider doing so. Forms are available on the website or from any committee member.

New Screen

As part of our programme to put money back into the village and benefit the wider community the Society has purchased a large professional quality projector screen and donated it to the village hall.

The Society needed to use one for its talks and found it difficult to find a large enough screen to use. Rather than rely on borrowing one from different sources it was decided to buy one that could be used by any group needing one in the village hall, or indeed other venues by arrangement with the Parish Council.

Members who attended the Northwich Mines talk will already have seen it in action.

Membership Renewals

The Society's membership year runs from the 1st April each year and so renewal time is almost upon us.

This year you will have received an individual letter that shows your method of payment.

If you pay by Standing Order there will be no need for you to take any action. If not, please consider changing to this method as it saves the Society a considerable amount of time in processing the renewals but if this is not for you then please return your renewal as usual.

Thank you for your continued support of the Society.

Hartford History - The 1881 Census

The census information gives us a unique snapshot of history every ten years.

Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the census data is an analysis of how people made their living - their trades and professions.

In the case of Hartford it shows the influence of the local salt trade, the railway and the River Weaver together with a clear view of how different society was then - particularly the number of people employed as domestic servants (31% of the working population). It is also interesting to note that there were at least 72 people directly involved with the care or use of horses.

In the 1881 census there were 1455 people in Hartford on the night of the census (including 10 visitors) - a small fraction of today's population of approximately 5800. Of these 208 were shown as wives, 372 were scholars, 116 infants and 24 adults without an occupation (usually part of the extended family - old widowed parents or young dependants over school age) - although obviously some wives would have worked with their husbands e.g. a publican's wife.

It should be borne in mind that the village boundaries were not exactly the same as they are today.

There were 225 domestic servants, 14 persons employed on the Railway, 40 on the River Weaver, 46 in the salt trade and 400 other varied occupations.

A full breakdown of the occupations is available on the Society's website for those with access to the internet.

www.hartfordcivicsociety.org.uk

The Society is a member of The Civic Trust which is the umbrella organisation for over 850 civic societies and influences national government policy on important issues.

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