



Member John Payne, has been creating a web page of Coventry war memorials as a tribute to those who gave their lives during the Great War. It already provides a fascinating commentary on the architects who designed them and the materials they used, those who provided the funds to make these historic features a reality and the dedication ceremonies themselves. So far the main memorials covered include the War Memorial Park, Walsgrave War Memorial, Foleshill War Memorial, memorials in London Road Cemetery, Coventry Cathedral, the Dunlop factory and Coventry Chain. Details of other plaques are being added and members are invited to make their own contribution by contacting us through the website.

<http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/heritage-and-history/coventry-war-memorials.html>



coventrysociety

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Griff on the BBC Politics show

Appearing on the Daily Politics Show, Griff Rhys Jones, President of Civic Voice, has spoken out about the ambiguity of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Griff said “To have a presumption in favour of brownfield sites is not the same as having a policy that brownfield sites should be built on first. It is obvious that housing on ‘greenfield sites’ generate much more profit for developers, but planning policy should not be about helping developers to profiteer. But to the man in the street, this is exactly what the National Planning Policy Framework is doing”.



Griff made his comments while appearing on the BBC Daily Politics as part of a debate on the planning system with Conservative, John Howells MP, the author of Open Source Planning.

Griff added “Given the widely varying interpretation that different parties in the planning system can give to the word ‘presumption’ it is making it much harder for local authorities to be able to refuse an application. The ambiguity is causing great uncertainty and is removing localism from planning.”

Civic Voice have said all along that there is no conclusive research that planning policy is a particular constraint on economic development and that 80% of planning applications are granted and less than 1% take more than a year to

decide - the planning system is key to informed discussion about the kind of society we want to live in and the places we inhabit

Freddie Gick, Chair of Civic Voice finished by saying “Our members have been informing us about situations where the NPPF is, in fact, undermining localism so we are pleased that the DCLG Select Committee will soon be undertaking a review. We will be submitting evidence to the review and meeting the committee. Communities who want to inform the civic movement response should share their experiences of the NPPF in their local area”.



The Staffordshire Hoard

A great chance to hear about this unique local discovery from expert

Dr Chris Upton
on Monday, March 10

7.30pm

in the **Shop Front Theatre**

City Arcade

Visitors welcome at £2

Refreshments



Designing ecological rich urban environments

At our February lecture Ian Lanchbury encouraged our Society to embrace the concept of Nature in cities as it provides multi-functional benefits for people, the economy and the environment - from city scale to individual streets. He said: “Its value is not just aesthetic. This ‘green infrastructure’ should be viewed as an equal to other city infrastructure such as roads, drainage, communication and energy. Coventry Society can be an advocate of this approach through its work with new developments and the retrofit of existing streets and places, and influence positive change in Coventry.”

► We asked members for comment and Harry Teather writes: I would like the Society to adopt these ideas by proposing a few ‘Nature in Coventry’ projects in the same way that it has done for our historic buildings. This could attract new members from the disparate organisations already caring for parks and green spaces, and also nature lovers.

Clearly the River Sherbourne project is already underway and is complex.

May I suggest a few simple projects for the City Centre that could have enormous visual impact and show a way forward. ‘Green Walls’ for the IKEA Building; A Canopy of Trees for Pool Meadow car-park dividing back-to-back parking spaces to provide a

complete canopy; the same for Salt Lane, Cheylesmore and other surface car-parks: trees and other surface treatments could create a feeling of small city parks instead of car-parks.

The sort of benefits outlined

by Ian could be used to overcome resistance and justify the maintenance costs.



lan is offering a unique artwork he has produced and will give £5 for each one sold in the next two months.

Details at <https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/180785838/map-of-coventrys-buildings-urban-city>

Charterhouse

The Coventry Charterhouse Association (a Friends organisation) now has around 100 members many from the Coventry Society. We encourage other members to become supporters of this flagship project at only £4 per year. Members get invited to all the forthcoming events and activities and importantly have a say in what happens on this historic site as the association has close contact with the Trustees of Charterhouse.

Here are a couple of dates: For those who haven't visited previously the Charterhouse will be open on Saturday, March 22 and for a special Mothering Sunday event on March 30, with special teas and cakes. It's a real opportunity to take advantage of a pleasant afternoon event. Both days from 12 noon to 4pm.

HIMOS

Coventry Action for Neighbourhoods (CAN) has been formed to campaign for better communities in Coventry. The organisation came about after claims of adverse effects that houses in multiple occupation (HIMOs) are having on certain areas of the city. In some areas the residential profile has dramatically altered with reports of property neglect and owner-occupiers being disadvantaged.

Still controversial after 37 years



Love it or hate it, one thing is certain, the elephant-shaped building at Coventry Sports Centre is as controversial today as it was in 1977 when it opened. After the council announced plans to build a brand new £36 million sports centre in New Union Street *The Elephant* is now threatened with demolition. Designed by former city architect Harry Noble to reflect the city's emblem, it is attached to the 50 metre swimming pool on Fairfax

Street, the other building that would become redundant. This was designed by Arthur Ling at Coventry City Council's architecture department to fit an important site in Cope Street within sight of Coventry's new cathedral. It opened in 1966.

Apparently there have been maintenance problems with the complex for years and according to reports the existing site is costing taxpayers around £2,000 a day to keep open.

The new venue is expected to be built on the site of Spire House that will be vacated as part of the council move to Friargate.

Despite being much smaller, at 6,500sq m, the new centre is expected to use space more efficiently and would include a water park with slides, a gym, a 25-metre swimming pool, climbing wall, squash courts and a spa.

Frazer Bufton, course director for architecture at Coventry University is

quoted in the Architects' Journal: 'It would be a shame to see the loss of one of Coventry's most iconic buildings and although I am sure all of the necessary due diligence has been done, it seems difficult to reconcile the demolition and rebuilding of this building against the cultural cost of its loss to Coventry's post war architectural heritage.'

The swimming pool is Grade II listed and David Nuttall, the city council's service manager for sports, said the council would consult people about the future of the old building.

He said: "We will invite English Heritage to come and have a chat with us about what the value of the building might be, because it certainly isn't fit for purpose as a sports facility."

Members are invited to write in with their views and they will be published in the next newsletter.

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?ID=81>

Going underground



ground level with bedrooms above to create an improved façade to Tamworth Road. To greatly reduce the impact on the Green Belt a subterranean development will contain a large function room, 40 bedrooms and a spa. The new accommodation would be arranged around two sunken courtyards. The location of the underground features have been chosen to avoid any adverse impact on the protected trees in the grounds. The former kitchen garden is re-instated to provide an interesting walled garden with glass pyramid structures providing natural light to the function room below.

Members of a sub group were impressed by the proposals to create a banqueting facility, restaurant, hotel and spa at the Old Hall, Keresley. Architect Phil Howl, described how the listed main hall and courtyard will be retained and restored after previous owners had altered internal floor levels. Buildings added in the 1990s will be demolished to make way for a contemporary two-storey accommodation for offices and toilets at

Tidy-ups

Spring cleaning days at London Road Cemetery will take place on March 16, April 13, and May 18, all Sundays. Each tidy-up will start at 10am at the Paxton Memorial and last 2-3 hours. There's also a walk and talk tour of the cemetery on Sunday, March 23 at 2pm. Further information Derek 07868472441

Contacts

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If Twitter is your thing, you can follow us at <https://twitter.com/#!/CovSoc>
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You can also follow us there at <http://www.facebook.com/CoventrySociety>

More news and views on our website: www.coventrysociety.org.uk