

**Lollards** were opposed to the worshipping of images, were against pilgrimages, and believed that church services should be performed in English. The basis of their objections was that the church should be reformed and all its wealth removed. Initially the Lollards were regarded as heretical, but didn't suffer persecution. Then the Act of 1401 *De Heretico Comburendo* changed all that.

Coventry's martyrs burnt at the stake were: **John Grace** who had been a Dominican monk, **Joan Ward** condemned as a relapsed heretic; **Thomas Bond** accused of teaching his children the Lord's Prayer in English, **Master Hawkins** a shoemaker or skinner; **Robert Hockett**, a shoe-maker or leather-dresser; **Thomas Landesdale** was a hosier or tailor; **Master Wrigsham** was a glover; **Joan Smith** was found with a religious document in English hidden in the sleeve of her dress; **Robert Silkeby** had been a librarian to the sect for some 18 years, keeping tracts and English translations of the bible; **Lawrence Saunders** was educated at Eton and Cambridge, and granted a bishop's license to preach; **Robert Glover** was also Eton educated; **Cornelius Bongey**, was a capper from Coventry. Of course, members will know well that their names live on in the naming of thoroughfares around the city.



coventrysociety

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Our treasurer Colin Walker reminds members it's time to renew your subscription. For your convenience a form is included for handing in on March 16 or posted back to Colin. With thanks for your continued support

## Hosking's 'fortitude' Mosaic



**Close-ups:** Three faces from the work of M. Rene Antonietti are pictured left. They contain stones from many countries and the vibrant colours show clearly. Sadly a satisfactory picture of the complete mosaic is virtually impossible to shoot because of the proximity of handrails.

It's just 60 years since monumental work of art was completed in Coventry but sadly it has been forgotten for years, hidden away in a corner of Broadgate. Based on the Byzantine School this remarkable piece of work, a mosaic, was said to be unique in Britain at the time of its completion.

The Martyrs' Mosaic, designed by the Principal of Coventry Art School, Hugh Hosking, commemorates the eleven Coventry martyrs (Lollards) who were burned at the stake between 1510 and 1555. At the time of its completion Mr Hosking was reported as saying: "It was chosen not for religious reasons but to typify the fortitude of Coventrians. How could we turn our backs on the mosaic? How could we erect a modern wheelchair lift right in front of it entirely spoiling its setting,?"

The craftsman-artist commissioned to carry out the work was Italian M. Rene Antonietti. An accident brought M. Antonietti to Coventry. The City Architect Donald Gibson, was on holiday in

Switzerland when he saw some of his work and decided that he was the man for the Coventry mosaic.

The work that covers a wall is 11 feet by 7 ft 6 ins took four months to complete, despite difficulties in the import of stones and enamels. It contains stones from many countries and even Coventry is represented through the work of a local glass company that supplied some 'stones' for a crown and had them specially silvered.

At the time of its completion Coventry Evening Telegraph headlines proclaimed: "Coventry's mosaic may become world famous".

Broadgate House and the 'bridge' were recently listed. Surely now is the time to improve the viewing of the mosaic, located on the ground floor of one entrance to the Hertford Street bridge.

What do you think? Please let us have your views at: [campaigns@coventrysociety.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@coventrysociety.org.uk)

Can urban environments formed in the middle decades of the 20th century really be worthwhile, enjoyable places?

**Michael Taylor** Historic Areas Adviser at English Heritage

provides some pointers in his talk: **'Space and Place before and after 1945'**.

**Monday, March 11 at 7.30pm**

**Shop Front Theatre, City Arcade, Queen Victoria Road**

**Visitors welcome .. £1 at the door Light refreshments**

**Be inspired by medieval wall paintings!**

**Join archaeologist Iain Soden for a tour of Charterhouse then do pastel/charcoal drawings under the guidance of artist Lesley Whelan**

This will be a **friendly, relaxed session** aimed at those who are interested in the preservation of this nationally important building. Please don't feel that you need to be good at art to attend as this event is for those with LITTLE or NO experience!!

**Booking is essential; all materials are provided.**

**Date:** Saturday March 16, 2013

**Where:** The Charterhouse, Coventry

**Times:** 1 – 4pm (tea, coffee and refreshments provided)

**Cost:** FREE

**Numbers:** Maximum of 10 (aged 16 and over. Sorry no children)

**TO BOOK A PLACE:** email [info@lesleywhelan.co.uk](mailto:info@lesleywhelan.co.uk)

or call/text 07762 139438 asap

*This project has been funded by Coventry City Council Small Arts Grant Award*



Members of the Coventry Society

recently attended a civic leadership course run by Civic Voice, the national charity for the civic movement in England. The course was designed to bring together volunteers from societies across the country to discuss ways in which groups and the wider civic movement could be improved.

Over the course of two weekends at the offices of Made in Birmingham, the group discussed ideas and strategies for effective networking, improving membership and effective campaigning. These discussions helped to generate some interesting ideas that the committee will be looking to implement over the coming months.

There were presentations from two civic leaders. The first was by Sue Griffith of Birmingham Trees for Life (<http://www.btfl.org.uk>). This is a project devoted to promoting awareness and understanding of the value and importance of trees, to raise money to enable more trees to be planted, and to encourage the involvement of everyone, especially young people, in planting trees in Birmingham.

The second talk was by Tiva Montalbano of Camden Civic Society (<http://www.camdencivicsociety.org.uk>) who gave a whirlwind tour of the society's work and their current efforts to resurrect the group from the verge of closure. Tiva also talked about the groups very successful annual letter writing campaign where school children are invited to write to the council to express their personal likes and dislikes about the areas where they live. This was appreciated by all as an excellent idea and similar campaigns are sure to be appearing in different parts of the country; and perhaps in Coventry too.

The civic leadership course was greatly enjoyed by the representatives of the Coventry Society and we hope that the ideas generated will help our group to improve its work in the city.

*Adam Mottershead*

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If Twitter is your thing, you can follow us at <https://twitter.com/#!/CovSoc>

We also have our own page on Facebook.

You can also follow us there at

<http://www.facebook.com/CoventrySociety>

# Smart Growth

COVENTRY'S plan to protect the green belt by building just 12,000 new homes has been thrown out by a government inspector after neighbouring councils complained that Coventry's housing target would force more homes to be built

within their boundaries. The City Council will now have to present a new core strategy plan to the planning inspector with a delay in the process by up to yet another year.

At the beginning of March an important campaign emerged that could be a pointer for Coventry. It's an alliance of civic, environmental and transport bodies including the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE),

Campaign for Better Transport, and Civic Voice. It calls for a radically new 'Smart Growth' approach that they want to see adopted for any new large scale developments. They are backed by respected figures from all three main political parties, including Tory grandee and former Environment Secretary Lord Deben.

The alliance believes that the low-density, car orientated suburban schemes of the 1970s or 1980s, like Milton Keynes or Bradley Stoke in Bristol, are not the way forward. Instead, for example, new development should blend the well-designed family terraced housing with gardens of a typical British Edwardian suburb, with cutting edge practice from across the world, such as recently developed 'eco-suburbs' in Freiburg (Germany) and Stockholm. These developments:

- provide energy-efficient housing at high residential densities;
- reuse brownfield land as much as possible;
- are easily linked to town and city centres by public transport; and
- are designed so that walking or cycling are the norm for everyday travel.

The call comes as the Government prepares to publish a long-awaited prospectus for major new development. According to a little-noticed recent report, developers are formulating proposals for a new generation of 'garden cities' in south east England, involving up to 250,000 homes on greenfield land, with 170,000 of these to be located either along the M11 and A14 corridors, or between Oxford and Cambridge. Such an approach threatens to take us in precisely the opposite direction to smart growth, increasing congestion on those roads and forcing people to rely on cars.

**Lord Deben said: "Let's concentrate recycling already-used land. There are more than sufficient sites for the housing we need. It only requires imagination, energy, and Government drive to unlock them. Building on green fields is the lazy way to sacrifice our future."**

*from Civic Voice*



More news and views on our website: [www.coventrysociety.org.uk](http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk)