

We are appealing for your help to make this coming Heritage Weekend a real success for the Society. This year we shall take our promotion stand to St Mark's Church, near to the Swanswell Pool, so providing another rare opportunity to see the remarkable Hans Feibusch Mural. It takes place on Saturday and Sunday, September 14-15. If you can help please contact the Chairman on 024 7640 2030 or Email: campaigns@coventrysociety.org.uk

What a summer of external meetings it's been with such a varied series of visits to places of interest. Already your committee has started to plan the summer programme for 2014. As you can imagine finding the really interesting places isn't the easiest of tasks and we appeal to members to come up with an idea or two. Please contact the Chairman on 024 76640 2030 or Email: campaigns@coventrysociety.org.uk



August 2013

The paint comes off!

It was something of a shock when the sandstone frontage to an important building in the Hill Top Conservation Area was painted black overnight. According to the owners, African Village, the City Council had given them permission to carry out the work although the person was never traced. From the outset we were pretty sure it's not possible to change the appearance of buildings in Conservation Areas without permission. It now appears that the owner, believed to be one of the major banks, was never consulted. When it came to know about the sensitive issue there was a quick response, and now at last we see the paint being stripped off.

It took a fair bit of research, overseen by the Council's Conservation Officer, to identify the best method of restoring the sandstone. The method used, high pressure steam cleaning, appears to be producing a good result.

There was never any question of anyone being opposed to ethnic minority food outlets.



July ends: High pressure steam cleaning, appears to be producing a good result.

The Coventry Society in point of fact much appreciates this diversity whether it be in a conservation area or any area of the city. The issue is clear cut. Those of us concerned for the future of the area around the Cathedral are absolutely sure this historic quarter should be protected against unnecessary change to its frontages.

Fortunately a management plan for the Hill Top Conservation Area will soon be published and property owners in the area will need to have a copy.

That should prevent this sort of problem arising in the future.

Next meeting, a tour of
CHARTERHOUSE

A short presentation & tour of the house and gardens

**Monday, August 12
Meet at 7pm**

All welcome

£1 for non-members



Princethorpe - a highlight of our summer

In July about 40 members and guests visited the Catholic Secondary School, Princethorpe College in Warwickshire. It was originally founded by French nuns in the early C19th fleeing from the aftermath of the French Revolution. After some years leading a peripatetic existence, they bought the estate in the village of Princethorpe and set about building the convent [though called a monastery] modelled on their original premises in Montargis. The most prominent early architect was Hansom [he of cab fame and the architect of St. Osburg's Church in Coventry].

However, the man who transformed the convent was Peter Paul Pugin, son of the more famous Augustus Welby Pugin. The younger Pugin's greatest addition to the

convent was the church. He oversaw all aspects of its building including statues, stained glass windows and sculptures. Its most magnificent aspect is the impressive baldachin framing the altar. However, the



Tour: Members in the magnificent first chapel now converted into a library

stress of his work led to an early death while the financial burden caused by the expansion of the convent in the late C19th was a factor in finally persuading the nuns to leave. The site was then acquired by St. Bede's College in Leamington, subsequently being transformed into the school we know today.

An introductory talk by Alex Darkes, assistant Head at the school, on the history and development of the site enhanced the succeeding tour which encompassed the original cloisters, including the first chapel [now converted into library and theatre] with its magnificent fresco, stained glass and elaborate ceiling.

The visit was a highlight of our Summer programme.

Terry Kenny

Bishopsgate - latest plans

An application for the former Corporation Depot site off Foleshill Road has just been posted as we go to press. Produced by Barratt Homes with a mixture of the firm's standard developer house types and a smattering of timber cladding that is claimed to reflect Electric Wharf on the other side of the canal. Several years ago Coventry Society ran a



Building types: One of the designs submitted for 2, 2½ and 3 storey living

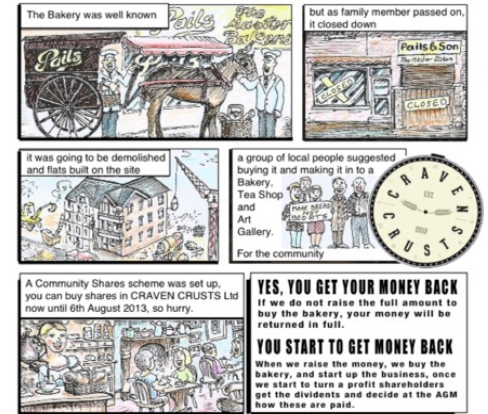
workshop that looked at possible designs for this important site. We were clear then as we are now, that the Depot site should embrace the historic setting—the canal itself, and the industrial nature of Electric Wharf.

In the January planning meeting members accepted that the submitted design brief was not acceptable and required a better layout and community engagement at the detailed stage. Now we have detailed plans produced by Barratt Homes that are clearly unacceptable.

The Society will be making representations in the hope that councillors appreciate how important this conservation area site is. While the modern units are one thing the canalside layout is worse and we shall be pushing for the scheme to go to a MADE review. The potential for a visionary scheme linking with the canal basin, Drapers' Fields and Electric Wharf is as strong as ever.

Once upon a time...

there was a family Bakers, Pails in Craven Street, Coventry



Craven Crusts is still marketing its community shares to secure the former Pails Bakery in Chapelfields. It's a project well worth supporting and Paul Maddocks has designed a comic style leaflet that explains the history of the site and the essence of the community share scheme. If you can help email: ellie@cravencrusts.com or tel: 07825 250574

HS2: Shall we start again?



Our previous article about HS2 generalised about some of the factors that affect Coventry. Since it was written the "estimated cost" has risen by a mere £10bn. Such wild figures only prove one thing: no-one knows how much it will cost. Let's go back to basics. Firstly, do we need a new railway? HS2 Ltd forecast that passenger numbers would be 276% of the 2008 level by some time in the 2020's. They later revised this to 216%. It doesn't mean they were wrong, just that they changed their guess. A forecast is just a guess. So we may not need new tracks. On the other hand, it takes many years to plan and build a new railway. We are most likely to need it so the government is right to plan for that possibility.

This is a dilemma. We have to plan for something that may not be needed. How can we minimise the doubt? Should we plan for a segregated railway with no connection with the existing network for over 100 miles and no scope to revise the plan as the pattern of demand becomes clearer? Or should we plan new tracks interlinked with the network at more frequent intervals, coming into use incrementally as construction proceeds northwards, and capable of amendment to suit the demand? If we adopt the Japanese Shinkansen pattern we would have stations at Euston, north London, Watford, Milton Keynes, Rugby and Coventry. The plan for a segregated railway has more to do with a desire for extreme speed and to insulate it from the 101 problems that arise on the existing network such as leaves on the line, points failure, vandalism, cable theft, the wrong kind of snow, overhead cable collapse. But HS2 would be subject to all these snags just like any other railway. A case of "Don't spoil my shiny new railway with practicalities." In fact, with the planned 18 trains per hour in each direction, HS2 would fall down every time there is the slightest disruption. The original 2010 HS2 Command paper proposed four tracks but the 2011 HS2 document quietly dropped that idea. Instead it suggests another HS line north from London in the distant future. Would we go through all the pain and expense again after HS2 has creamed off the major flow? We must get it right first time.

Les Fawcett

Next time: What do we really need?

What are Community Shares?

It's when a group of people collectively put money into a project By purchasing shares to take on running a local business or service that is a benefit to the community.

What does buying a share do?

- *You have a slice of the Bakery.
- *It will provide new jobs and apprenticeships.
- *Craven Crusts is committed to the Coventry pound and paying a minimum wage of £7.45 p/h - the Coventry Living Wage.

I have never heard of it before

Many communities around the country have taken on Community Share Projects like village Post offices, pubs and shops. To be run by the people of the community for the people of the community all having a share in its development and profit. In cities and towns communities have taken shares in Theatres and Cinemas. One large community has even taken on a farm at Fordhall Organic Farm, Market Drayton, Shropshire. One farmer, & 8,000 landlords/shareholders

How can I help?

Become a Craven Crusts Champion - contact us and be part of the team!

YES, YOU GET YOUR MONEY BACK
If we do not raise the full amount to buy the bakery, your money will be returned in full.

YOU START TO GET MONEY BACK
When we raise the money, we buy the bakery, and start up the business, once we start to turn a profit shareholders get the dividends and decide at the AGM how these are paid.

EVERY 150 SHARE COUNTS - WE WANT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE TO BE SHAREHOLDERS AND EVERY SHAREHOLDER HAS AN EQUAL VOTE

Contacts

Postal address:
77 Craven Street, Coventry CV5 8DT
Chairman's tel: 024 7640 2030
Email: campaigns@coventrysociety.org.uk
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>

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