



Atherstone Civic Society

'TOWN AND VILLAGE'
ATHERSTONE CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Number 96 Spring 2019

To preserve the best and improve the rest

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2019. I write at the beginning of February, with the forecast for tonight as one of the coldest nights for about seven years! Outside, the frost is glistening, pigeons sitting forlorn in the bare magnolia tree, and the bird bath has been de-iced. Fortunately, there are signs of Spring..... - snowdrops are out, and primroses peeping through.

During the winter months I've been reading *The History of Atherstone*, published in 1988.

G.K.Chesterton is quoted at the beginning: "*The disadvantage of men not knowing the past is that they do not know the present. History is a hill or high point of vantage, from which alone men see the town in which they live or the age in which they are living*"

I moved to Atherstone with my family over 50 years ago. A love of the history that this area has to offer is now deeply ingrained in me. I have undergone a complete learning curve regarding the heritage that we have inherited, and learned a sadness at some of the wonderful and interesting buildings and sites we have lost. The Convent that was in Convent Lane, the Bluebell Inn where the ball was thrown out from the balcony for the Shrove Tuesday ball game, Bracebridge Hall to name but a few.

**I want us all to be vigilant to preserve what we have, remembering our slogan
TO PRESERVE THE BEST AND IMPROVE THE REST.**

The Local Listing Initiative is, importantly, one of our next projects: to work along with NWBC in helping to compile a list of our heritage assets, in line with the national initiative. Briefly: we are all charged with nominating those buildings, structures, historic or special features in the landscape, gardens, memorials or sunken lanes that should be placed on the Local List of significant local heritage assets that belong to North Warwickshire. There are criteria to help each and every one of us to recognise the assets that qualify for this protection. Please look to pages 2 & 3 for more about how we, Atherstone Civic Society, can be influential in this vital task.

What other initiatives are we nursing?

- **The Roman Mancetter & Boudica project** is taking its initial steps. See Page 3.
- **The Programme of Events**, as ever, continues to bind us all together, as embodied last year in a successful, varied and enjoyable programme that spanned the Romans in Mancetter to the Atherstonians in Australia. The visit to the Jewellery Quarter Museums was well attended, as was the highly regarded Garden Party. Judging by other outings of this nature I don't know how Pauline manages to keep the prices so low, keeping in mind that our society is non-profit-making and relies on our membership. This year's programme, which you will already have received by now, also appears on Page 4, compiled by Pauline and Rita after a lot of organisation and many telephone calls. There is something of interest for everyone. The outing to Owlpen Manor should be on everyone's must-do list. Set deep in a Cotswold Valley, it has been described as "the most beautiful place in England". It is an 800 year old Tudor Manor House with Arts and Crafts furniture, magical gardens and woodland walks.
- At the AGM our own Roy Taylor gives the talk, on "Athelstan, first King of all England"
Please check Just a bit of house-keeping: please could you check that you have changed your standing order to meet the new price of membership from October 2018? (see back page)
There are a few outstanding payments.

I look forward to seeing you all at future events. *Kath Johnstone ACS Chairperson*

What is the Local Listing Initiative?

The National Planning Policy for England provides a Framework (NPPF) as the guide to local planning authorities in their decisions on local plans for housing and other development. The most recent revision of the Framework was in 2018.

It advises local Planning Authorities to “set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment”.

A most important contribution to that, of course, is to have drawn up a Local Heritage Listing.

What is a Local Heritage Listing?

The NPPF recommends the production of a list of specific local heritage assets, to sit alongside and complement other existing records such as conservation area maps, Historic Environment Records and officially Listed Buildings.

It advises local people and local councils to work together in partnership on their Local Heritage Listing to jointly identify the heritage assets of their area.

These listed assets will not be designated under any statutory regime but should be taken into account as having significance in planning decisions.

What’s meant by a Heritage Asset?

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest”

Our own NWBC have clarified their definition of that as including “structures, historic or special features in the landscape, gardens, memorials, or sunken lanes that are not of sufficient merit to be statutorily listed but are seen to be of local historic importance or architectural significance.”. To that, Historic England also adds views, vision lines, and places of communal significance.

For more about the categories we should be looking to protect, go to

historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles





How can we contribute to this Local Listing?

NWBC's Heritage and Conservation Officer, Fiona Wallace, has produced an easy-to-use form which not only gives you more detail but also provides the means to submit your specific suggestions for Heritage Assets you know to be of worthy of protection.

Contact her at fionawallace@northwarks.gov.uk or on 01827 719475 or by post at Heritage & Conservation Officer, North Warwickshire Borough Council, The Council House, South Street, Atherstone, CV9 1DE

The ACS evening talk on Tuesday March 19th at Trinity Church is by Ben Wallace of Warwickshire HER, on *The Historic Environment Record and its Influence on Planning*. The Local Listing Initiative is sure to crop up! The evening will provide opportunity for further discussion.

ROMAN MANCETTER PROJECT

The Autumn newsletter ended our news on the progress of this project with the promise: "alternative venues are being considered". And so indeed they are, with hopes now growing of a very positive partnership with St. Peter's Church to create a permanent display there. Discussions are in their early stages, but this fledgling idea is nurtured by thoughtful input and creative thinking from both sides of this willing relationship. At a recent meeting the A.C.S executive committee made a decision to submit a formal Expression of Interest in bidding for heritage funding, in conjunction with similar intent from St Peter's PCC. In this we are together receiving strong, practical support from Angela Baines, manager of the project for NWBC and Hinckley & Bosworth BC: *Delivering the Destination Heritage*. We can't all keep our fingers crossed, or we'd never get anything done; nevertheless.....fingers crossed, eh?

A.G.M.
Tuesday April 16th at 7.00
Trinity Church

Your opportunity to hear a review of how the Society has fared over the last year. Your views will be welcomed.

Not only your views, but also your votes on the Society's Executive Committee. It comprises four Officers, currently Chairperson Kath Johnston, Vice-chairperson Rita Poulson, Honorary Secretary Stuart Jones, Honorary Treasurer Carl Gurney.

In addition to the four officers, the Committee at present comprises Roy Atkins, Pauline Gurney, Margaret Hughes, Malcolm Lockett, Martin Saunders, Roy Taylor and Patrick Woodcock. All committee members must relinquish their posts every year and can be eligible for re-election at the AGM. Our constitution allows up to twelve committee members in addition to the four officers. As a Society member, you can nominate ACS members for any of these positions. Nominations should be made in writing (email is fine) to the Society's administrators at least 14 days before the AGM. They must have a seconder, and the nominee must have given their consent. Send any nominations to the contact details below right.



After the A.G.M., we'll hear from Roy Taylor on the life and deeds of the Mercian king who became the first king of all England: Athelstan

WHO ARE WE?

Atherstone Civic Society was formed in 1990 to stimulate interest in, and action for, the improvement of the local environment.

Website:

www.atherstonecivicsociety.co

ACS Publications at
timholmes@hotmail.co.uk



Newsletter editor: Margaret Hughes

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

7.30 at Trinity Church, Coleshill Rd, unless otherwise stated.

Usually on Tuesdays

March 19th : Ben Wallace
The Historic Environment Record & its influence on Local Planning

April 16th : A.G.M. & Roy Taylor on Athelstan 7 p.m.

May 21st : David Paterson
George Eliot and North Warwickshire

June 18th Dr Andrew Watkins *Guided Tour of Coleshill Church* **NOTE 7 pm**

July 11th THURSDAY 7 p.m.

Annual Garden Party
 Dordon Hall, courtesy Mr & Mrs Ridley £10 members, £15 non-members

August 20th : Visit by coach to Owlpen Manor
 Details later

September 17th : Guided tour of Atherstone town centre, and St Mary's Church

October 15th : Roy Smart
Wallis Simpson & the Abdication Crisis

November 19th : Bob Meanley
Heritage Steam Locomotives

HOW DO I JOIN?

Contact us on
 01827 713976

or

admin@atherstonecivicsociety.co.uk
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

<i>Adults</i>	£10
<i>Students</i>	£5
<i>Corporate</i>	£25
<i>Visitors, per event</i>	£3