



Newsletter **March 2016**

Spring Edition

Sometimes the Society needs to be critical, such as about the plans for Lime Street. Nevertheless, we should also celebrate the city's wonderful streetscape, old and new. Who could have foreseen the numbers of tourists coming here to enjoy our city?

The other day, the brightest of daffodils were in glorious bloom in St John's Gardens. The 40,000 snowdrops in St James' Gardens were a wonderful sight to be seen. Liverpool is indeed a place we can be proud of!

Southport Development Strategy

The MCS has commented on a draft report on the future of Southport town centre prepared by a consortium of consultants for Sefton Council.

The study is very important given the problems of vacant premises, concerns about the condition of some sites and buildings and the future of trade in the resort.

MCS has criticised some of the conclusions reached and has concerns about the approach used in compiling the study. However, parts of the report are welcomed and suggestions have been put forward as to how the final report might be improved. In particular, the Society has identified improvements to the heritage and conservation of the resort as critical to its future.

The MCS is very aware of the importance of Southport town centre to the residents and economy of the sub region.

A copy of the fully response can viewed on the MCS website. It is understood that the final report is due later this year.

Lime Street

MCS members will be aware that the society strongly objects to plans to tear down all the buildings on Lime Street between "The Crown" and "The Grapes" pubs, including the Futurist cinema, and replace them with a wholly unsympathetic development, having rejected suggestions to at least preserve the facades and maintain building heights consistent with neighbouring structures.

MCS and its members who have contributed to the fighting fund, which has raised £3,000 in 3 weeks towards the cost of the appeal, have received thanks from SAVE. This public commitment and consideration of the legal grounds have encouraged SAVE's trustees to apply to the Court of Appeal in the Lime Street case, which has great significance for the city and its World Heritage Site protections.

On 5 February 2016 SAVE applied to the Court Of Appeal to save Liverpool Lime Street and the Futurist Cinema, all of which are in the World Heritage Site Buffer Zone. SAVE considers it too important a site to be demolished for student housing and a shopping mall.

SAVE is applying for Permission to Appeal on three grounds that can be broken down into several points. These include:



- There is no evidence that LCC's officers considered whether the development may affect the Outstanding Universal Value ('OUV') of the World Heritage Site ('WHS') nor whether they needed to notify the Department for Culture Media and Sport ('DCMS') of the proposals.
- LCC did not consult with DCMS before the decision was taken, but informed them only afterwards, even though the guidance makes clear that it would be very helpful for DCMS to be consulted at an early stage for the purpose of enabling the World Heritage Committee ('WHC') to be consulted.
- The concerns of the WHC about development in Liverpool are known, their views on this application are not. It cannot be assumed that the WHC would not be concerned about the Lime Street scheme.

Welsh Streets - Success

Since the last update in the December issue the MCS can report that on 5th February, Liverpool City Council accepted defeat of its long-standing plans to clear the district of established terraced streets, and agreed a partnership with a Manchester-based investor, 'PlaceFirst', with a view to renovating the area for private rent.

This follows the successful Public Inquiry result for SAVE Britain's Heritage last January, when the Secretary of State refused landlord Plus Dane's application for compulsory purchase and demolition of some 470 Victorian homes. The Government also cancelled long-standing guidance favouring

clearance, insisting instead on retention and refurbishment of older houses.

Jonathan Brown (MCS Council), who played a leading campaign role supporting local residents and national charities SAVE and Empty Homes, offers a cautious welcome to the new approach:

“Although there are questions about the PlaceFirst model and its reliance on monopoly private renting rather than a mix of ownerships, their track record of rescuing empty homes from failed regeneration projects in Morecambe and Accrington appears good, and we look forward to meeting and working with them.”

This 'new approach' on the Welsh Streets comes just weeks after the Turner Prize was awarded to the nearby Granby Four Streets Community Land Trust (CLT). This represents another victory for MCS and SAVE, who introduced the CLT to social investors Steinbeck Studio, who in turn brought in award-winning architects Assemble.

NWACTS - (AGM and "Buildings at Risk 2016" nominations and award)

The MCS has been notified by North West Association of Civic Trusts and Societies (NWACTS) about their forthcoming AGM on Saturday 19th March 2016 at County Hall, Preston, starting at 2.00pm. Further details at www.nwacts.org.uk

It is understood that this will also be the occasion at which it is proposed to announce the Association's 2016 "Building at Risk" in the North West. This is an annual feature of the NWACTS programme.



Annual Civic Voice Convention

It has been announced that the Civic Voice's Annual Convention and Annual General Meeting is to be held in Chester on 21 October 2016. Further details are to follow.

War Memorials

As we reach the halfway point of the First World War Centenary; the War Memorials Programme organised by Civic Voice, the national charity for local civic societies, is making strides across the North West. The programme, which aims to repair and conserve the nation's WWI war memorials, could easily see Merseyside become one of the region's leading areas.

Until the conclusion of commemorations (2018) the Merseyside War Memorials Action Group needs your help. Local societies and members in Merseyside were the first to begin an Action Group to offer their time to inspire and support this programme, but more help is still needed. If you would be interested in helping encourage and inspire others in your area, we encourage you to visit: <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/war-memorials/> to learn more or contact ben.murray@civicvoice.org.uk to get involved!

Civic Day - State of the City IV

On Saturday 18 June 2016 the MCS is to hold its fourth State of the City event at Bluecoat Chambers in conjunction and as part of the National Civic Day events. The topic of this year's event is ...

"Tell us about the State of the Region"

Where & What is it? Do you Live and or work in Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St. Helens,

Wirral or Halton? If so you are part of the Liverpool City Region.

How does it affect us? This 'Civic Day State of the City' is looking at what it means to live in such an area.

What are we all doing? This is an opportunity to celebrate what people who live and work are doing throughout the area.

Let's celebrate our 'togetherness': whatever its name and status, we the residents keep doing it ourselves. We know our home, we care for it, and, we need to support each other. Everyone is welcome to this open event to discuss what your local group does and will the city region status affect you?

MCS: Call for Volunteers

The MCS welcomes new members who have a passionate interest in their surroundings and local environment whether built or natural. The Society has a number of vacancies (namely Hon. Secretary, Hon. Membership Secretary and Programme & Events co-ordinator). The Council and is looking for people with skills to be part of the busy team to help take the MCS forward in accordance with its adopted business plan or to simply lend a hand with our activities.

If you are interested please contact the Chairman or Vice Chairman via chair@merseycivic.org

MCS 'David Stewart Award'

The David Stewart Awards were instituted in 2013 to mark the MCS's 75th anniversary and to commemorate the contribution of David Stewart as its long-serving Hon. Treasurer.

The latest David Stewart award went to Han Duijvendak in recognition of his work making a video of the Civic Day "State of the City 3" at The Bluecoat in June 2015. Han was raised in The Netherlands and has worked in Liverpool from 1990. He is creative director/producer with Handstand Productions in Hope Street which specialises in documentaries, information and training films.

The Award's certificate was handed over at the Society's meeting at the Liverpool Central Library on 19 January by Mary Cloake, the Bluecoat's Chief Executive. The citation was read by Peter Brown, MCS Chairman.

50 Word Facts

Within the base of 'Minerva' that sits on top of the dome of Liverpool Town Hall there is a bell. The bell, founded in 1803, was installed as part of the restoration works following the major fire in 1795. The Bell was re-commissioned in 2009 by the Cumbria Clock Company.

Forthcoming Events 2016

Venue: Normally 18.00hrs at Liverpool Central Library, William Brown Street, Liverpool, L3 8EW

(Any variations to be confirmed - see MCS fliers for further details)

MCS Council is current working on and considering a series of monthly meetings over the next 24 months; potential topics being considered for future meetings are listed below in no particular order:

- "Local Plan for Liverpool - an update"
- "Liverpool Parks"

- "Legal aspects of planning procedure"
- "Conservation in Garston"
- "How does RIBA hope to influence urban developments in the decade?"
- "The Herdman story - what we know about old Liverpool"
- "Liverpool's Railway Heritage"
- "An appraisal of council housing in Liverpool since 1818".
- "The work of neighbouring Civic Societies".

Advance notice

National Heritage Week this year is to be held on 8-11 September, a marvellous opportunity to show off to local residents and to the increasing number of visitors from elsewhere the magnificent buildings of yesteryear which survive together with our other cultural gems.

Why this advanced notice? So that those of you who do such splendid work to preserve the heritage of the Liverpool City Region can prepare to show off your heritage achievements, if you are not already doing so. See www.heritageopendays.org.uk

