

May 2016

## Contents

Notice Board.....	1
Annual General Meeting.....	1
Review of 2015.....	1
Correction House Lane.....	2
Civic Society Awards.....	4
Sustainable Transport.....	5
Library.....	5
News in brief.....	6
Scaffolding Quiz.....	6
Planning matters.....	7
ADNP Examiner's Report.....	7
Tree Conservation.....	7
About Alnwick Civic Society.....	8
Who's Who?.....	8
Diary dates.....	8
Quiz answers.....	8
Did you know?.....	8

## Notice board

12<sup>th</sup> May, 7:30 p.m. The History of Alnwick Garden with Trevor Jones, the Head Gardener. St James Centre, Pottergate.

Can you help with a traffic survey on May 17<sup>th</sup>? See News in Brief on page 6.

Summer Outing: 25<sup>th</sup> June: Compare and contrast the different styles of three handsome local churches representing different styles and different periods. Led by David Lovie.

The next newsletter is planned for early August. All contributions and suggestions are welcome.

A warm welcome from us all to several new members who have joined in Spring 2016.



## Annual General Meeting

*Our AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, at Bailiffgate Museum. Unfortunately Peter Ennor was indisposed and could not chair the meeting, but Philip Deakin and Peter Reed stood in.*

Peter Ennor's review of the year was read out in his absence, and special tribute paid to long standing member of the Society, Carnegie Brown, who had passed away earlier in the year. Along with his wife, Marjorie, Carnegie had been an active member and contributor to the Society over the years. Condolences were given to Marjorie and family on their loss.

Gill Parker presented the financial statement. Income had exceeded expenditure, and membership had increased.

Peter Ennor, Gill Parker and Sue Smith were willing to stand again as

Chairman, Treasurer and Honorary Secretary respectively, and were re-elected.

Unfortunately, two committee members stood down. Trish Jones had joined in 2013 and taken an active part in discussions and arranging events. With Gill Parker she continues to undertake a regular clean-up in Column field. Caroline Stewart had taken on the task of secretary of the Planning Committee in 2003, and had long made a major contribution to the work of the Committee. Her presence and input would be missed.

Elizabeth Jones, David Lovie, Peter Reed and Brian Lamb agreed to stand again as members of the committee and two other members had volunteered to join – John Hipwell and Mary McIlroy Hipwell. All were duly elected.



The AGM was followed by presentation of the Civic Society Awards for 2015 / 2016. Our thanks to Peter Carter,

author of 'Telling the Story of Alnwick and District', who presented the certificates. See page 4 for more details.

## Review of 2015

A planned trip to the Literary and Philosophical Society and Castle Keep in Newcastle attracted little interest from members, and had to be cancelled, but a later visit to Lord and Lady Vinson's new house at Roddam Rigg had been well supported and members remember a warm welcome, and a fascinating visit.

In the Autumn, the annual 'Any Questions' panel provoked the usual lively but good-natured discussion on a wide range of topics.

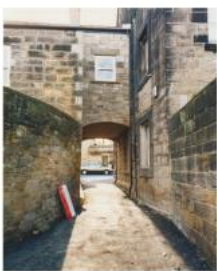
David Lovie, as topic lead on Heritage & Culture, led the Society's involvement in preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. As things stand, the plan has been praised by the independent examiner, but his proposed changes are still the subject of negotiation. (Page 7).

Planning applications had been monitored through the year, including proposals for the new high school, where the transport implications are the major concern (Page 5).

# Lane survey: Correction House Lane (Kitty Lane)

*In 1995 the Civic Society made a study of the public lanes that link Green Batt to the centre of the town. The society wanted to draw attention to the importance of the lanes, and the need to make them attractive and safe, in a manner compatible with best conservation practice.*

The lane, running today with its head end between St Michael's Square and Market Street and the remnant of its tail end from the Square to Green Batt, follows the line of an ancient burgage strip plot with the head end facing the Horse Market. What is now the Copperfield Restaurant would have been a



shop with residence above and workshop behind. A four-foot wide archway gave access to the buildings and facilities behind, built within the confines of the narrow strip, e.g. a

yard, a pig-sty, a hen run and garth (garden). The Lane originally ended at Green Batt (which would then have been common grazing land), but since 1960 it has been interrupted by the construction of St Michael's Square, as shown in Figure 5.1. It is indicated on maps prior to 1774, and is clearly shown on maps from 1827 and 1851.

A Correction House was built near the tail end, extending over two burgage strip widths in 1807. There were nine cells, a workroom for picking oakum and other punishment tasks, two yards (one for each sex) and a large court room where the magistrates met every two weeks. The penal complex is shown in some detail in the 1866 OS Map. The alternative name for the Lane, Kitty, was North Country slang for a jail, prison or House of Correction.

On the east side of the tail end a workhouse was built across two burgage strips in 1810, faced with plain ashlar stone, with evidence of an archway where the second burgage strip would have been. A new workhouse replaced it in Wagonway Road in 1841 and in 1995 was used as the Council's Rating Office. It is currently being converted to residential use.

In 1856 a more imposing Courthouse was built to replace the Wesleyan Chapel, facing onto Green Batt in front of the Correction House. The local ashlar stone and the treatment of windows and doors suggest a Georgian influence. In 1995 the



Correction Lane Courthouse and Workhouse buildings were used by Northumberland County Council. More recently they were converted to a Youth Hostel, which was opened by the Queen in 2011.

Most of the burgage strips became grossly overcrowded by the end of the 19th Century, because little building had taken place beyond the line of the 15th Century Town wall. This overcrowding resulted in severe slum conditions with inadequate water and sewerage, a situation which still existed in Correction House Lane until as late as 1947. One of the authors of the 1995 Civic Society survey recalled being called at about that time, as a young doctor, to a home confinement in a very poor house without water or sanitation in Correction House Lane. The worst dwellings were gradually removed from that date until St Michael's Square was developed, leaving only the head end of the Lane and a narrow footpath at the tail end intact.

Copperfield Restaurant was on the East Side in 1995, with owner's flat above, and on the West side was Reavell's hardware shop (now Proudlock), the frontage covering two burgage strips, with a dental surgery on the first floor (Wilson and Wilkinson), and a flat on the second floor; both shared a doorway in the Lane.

## Physical Description

**Floorscape:** At the head end, the first 13ft are still paved with concrete patterned flags. The Lane continues for about 200ft with a cracked concrete floor. In 1995 it had been worn away in parts to expose flat-topped whinstone cobbles. Those gaps have since been patched. In 1995 cobbles could be seen in the yard of Windsor Place, suggesting that they were the original flooring material.

The Lane rises steeply in the mid-section from North to South. The sole drainage is, however, an open gutter on the west side to channel rainwater for the last 60ft into Market Street.

**Walls:** At the head end, on the east side within the passageway, the Copperfield Restaurant wall is painted brick, followed by a section faced in cement render and then there is a wall of well-weathered ashlar stone, some 7-10ft high. This yard wall is interrupted by the entrance into





Windsor Place, and ends by butting up to the brickwork garages (recently built in 1995) which open onto St Michael's Square.

On the west side, in 1995 what was Reavell's shop-front (now Proudlock) at ground level was faced with "horrendous" brown tiles, with ashlar, local stone above, with two narrow, projecting courses. In the Lane passageway, there is one section of painted brickwork, followed by one of exposed brick which is part of a one-storey fill-in against the stone wall of the warehouse.

**Overhead:** The warehouse has the remains of two timber beams for hoists at eaves level, below which some original openings have been bricked up. The St Michael's Square end of the head end of the Lane is lit by a single street light.

Special interest lies in the iron framework of an old gas-light situated at the corner of the south aspect of Proudlock at second storey level. This is said to be one of eight such gas-lights installed when gas first became available in the town. There is another old gas-light frame in the Youth Hostel yard.

#### Windows and Doors:

On the east side within the passage there are still four large windows covered with a rusty security iron mesh, and beyond is a door leading into the Restaurant. On the

west side, a door in the passage leads up stairs to the dental surgery and flat.

In the south elevation of Proudlock are several windows serving the dental surgery and flat above. One of these windows has an interesting carving used now as a lintel (photo right); this is thought to have originated in Alnwick Abbey. According to Tate, after the Reformation, the King ordered the Abbey buildings to be "cast down", and its stone used for building houses in the town.



In addition to these, there are numerous three-paned, hinged windows with wooden frames on the warehouse wall. The most southerly 20ft of the warehouse is set back; here, the lower windows, which are a pair, are protected by vertical iron bars.

Above these at the next level are two three-paned windows, and at the top level are two narrow, horizontal, fixed-pane windows.

**Roofs:** All seem to be in satisfactory condition with slate roof tiles. All chimney stacks are in well-pointed brickwork. Some vegetation can be seen in roof guttering. In 1995 downcomers were reported as being in cast iron, in reasonable condition. They have deteriorated since.

**The Tail End:** The vestigial Lane divides the ex-Workhouse building from the ex-Courthouse at ground level. The buildings are connected at first floor level by a roofed bridge spanning the Lane. Most of the original door and window openings onto the Lane have been infilled with stone to match the weathered walling.

The Lane here is 7ft wide, is surfaced in tarmac and runs for a length of about 80ft between the buildings. At the time of the 1995 survey it was closed off for renovation work.

Several protective stone bollards are set against the yard walls.

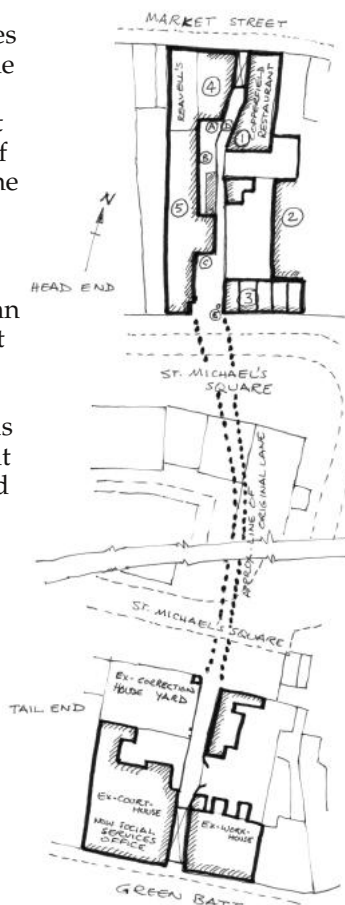
## Proposals

Changes to the shopfront at Proudlock and at Windsor Place have enhanced the head end of the lane since 1995.

The Youth Hostel has enhanced the southern end of the lane. Presumably it has also resulted in more traffic by visitors to the town.

A well-used pedestrian link, and direct line from the Youth Hostel to the centre, should receive more attention.

We would particularly welcome some effort to address the cracked and broken floorscape and poor lighting at the head end. That would improve conditions in what is still a "narrow and rather menacing passage". Elsewhere more control over litter would help.



## Alnwick: The House of Correction

(State of the Prisons in England, Scotland and Wales, James Neild Esq, 1812)

**Gaoler:** David Cousins. Salary £25.

**Fee:** for Felons, 13s 4d paid by the County; and 13s 4d. For Assaults and Bastardy, paid by themselves.

**No religious attentions.**

**Surgeon:** Mr Haswell; who makes a bill.

**Number of prisoners:** 19th Sept 1809, Two.

**Allowance:** 4d a day, paid to the keeper for their support.

**Remarks:** This prison, first inhabited in October 1807 has, on the ground-floor, two of the Keepers rooms in front. These are divided by a passage 4 feet 6 inches wide, leading to the Gaol door, and entrance into a lobby 24 feet long, and 4 feet 6 inches wide; with an iron-grated and glazed easement at the end of it, 19 inches by 16; and into this lobby five sleeping cells open.

The smallest cell is 9 feet 5 by 7 feet 8, and 8 feet 4 inches to the crown of the arch; the whole of

stone, fitted up with wooden bedsteads for two persons, loose straw, two blankets, and a coverlet; a small uncovered tub for a sewer, emptied every morning; and a wooden stool to sit on. Every cell-door has an inspecting wicket 8 1/2 inches square.

On the North side is a courtyard for Men, who are allowed to be out for one hour in the day, accompanied by the keeper: it is 42 feet square, and, in the centre has a sewer and a pig-sty; and part of it is planted with cabbages.

The women's court is on the South side, 63 feet by 36, with a detached sewer in it. The area forms the Keeper's garden and is planted with vegetables. Females have the use of the garden one hour in the day.

Above stairs are three sleeping-cells for Women, of the same size with those below, and opening into a lobby of like dimensions. Their cells contain two wooden bedsteads for two persons each, and are fitted up like those assigned for the men.

There is also a large work-room on this floor, of 22 feet by 12, with two large grated and glazed

lift-up sash windows, and a large fire-place; for which coals are allowed during the six winter months. For the rest of the year the prisoners work in their sleeping-cells, which having no grate, are frequently very cold.

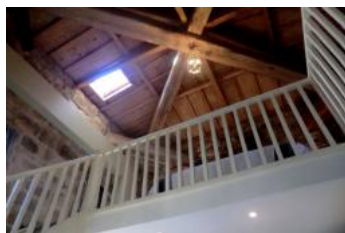
The magistrates hold their Petty sessions every fortnight in a convenient room above stairs. No rules, however, or regulations are printed and stuck up. Here are no rooms for the sick: No day-room allotted: No bath or oven to purify foul or infected clothes: no water accessible: even the Keeper, for his own use, fetches it from a pump 300 yards distant! The Act for preserving the Health of Prisoners, and Clauses against Spirituous Liquors, are not hung up.

The employment of the prisoners consists in bathing hemp, picking oakum, winding cotton, cutting candle-sticks, spinning and knotting of rope. The average of earnings is 3d. per day, which the keeper has, in aid of maintenance. The Prisoners have no share; neither do they receive any money on being discharged, to carry them home.

# Civic Society Awards 2015

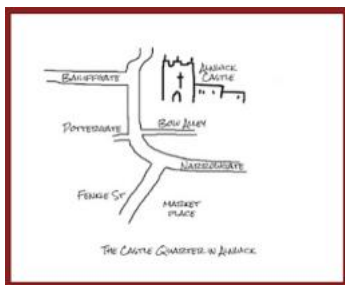
## Pottergate Tower: Historic Building Conservation (Clive Mattison)

Pottergate Tower is one of Alnwick's most prominent landmarks which, unlike our other Medieval defensive wall tower, enhances not only the local townscape but appears majestically in many of our wider landscape views too. Its lack of use for almost all of its life since the late 18th century, always seemed a great pity. However, this has all changed! Due to our award winner's efforts and careful design, it has been given a future as a holiday let which so far is proving to be as appealing and sustainable as the rest of this well established economic sector in Alnwick.



## Castle Quarter: Area Revitalisation (Castle Quarter traders)

Having been instrumental with Alnwick Town Team in bringing in the recent division of the town into Quarters to reflect different established uses and territories, the Civic Society is delighted that giving an identity to a 'Castle Quarter' has been such an encouragement to the regeneration of this special area. Bari Tea was a recent pioneering outlet which joined the more established retailers such as Granny's in promoting the 'Quarters' concept and thus in building confidence in this off-centre area. Consequently more shops have opened – with attractive quality shop fronts to match – and are now drawing in more shoppers, as well as giving the appearance and maintenance of the townscape of the Castle Quarter a welcome boost.



## Old Manse and Hope Lodge, Percy Terrace: Stonework to Chimneys (Mrs Robertson, Mr & Mrs Biggers, Paul Foster)

Chimneys pots and stone chimney stacks are very significant features of Alnwick's fine stone residential areas around historic Green Batt.

Not only do they still serve their original function in the present

times of wood burning stoves and re-opened coal fireplaces, but give the roof-scapes of this quality suburb their handsome reticulated roof-lines. We need to



keep them and to cherish their traditional materials too – pottery and stone.

## Replacement door at 7 Percy Terrace: Improvement of a non-listed building in the Conservation Area (Sarah Campbell, V. M. Dundas)

In these times of a growing tidal wave of upvc in building, it warms the hearts of the conservationists in the Civic Society to see plastic replicas being replaced with traditional timber panelled doors, much more in keeping with the Percy Street part of the Conservation Area. We are also pleased that our winner so valued the appearance of their non-listed building that they felt sufficiently moved to put in a 'proper door' rather than a modern 'sham-door'!



## Christmas lights at Column Cottage: Brightening the approach to the town centre (Jane Gowland)

Since the A1 by-pass Denwick Lane and South Roads have become the main southern and eastern entrances into Alnwick. So, being at the convergence of both entrances, the Column Cottage site is potentially very visible to many drivers and their passengers. This is why the Council previously placed a decorative floral clock there. However, fashions changed and the clock went and this potential has remained latent again until our winner had a 'light-bulb' moment! The result was a tasteful scattering of predominantly blue and silver illuminated Christmas figures around her front lawn, which at her own expense has delighted Alnwick and its visitors for several winter seasons. The community of Alnwick was finally able to show how much it valued this so strategically placed light display in the donations generously offered after some elements of the show were badly damaged.



## Alnwick Christmas Lights: Community Project (Alnwick Christmas Lights Committee)

This is one Community Project which every winter for about 6 weeks adds startling colour, movement and wit to the historic townscape of Alnwick's town centre. The colour comes from multi-coloured bulbs festooning the building frontages, the movement comes from the clever on/off sequencing of bulbs by which Santa climbs a building, balloons magically ascend and a JCB gently lifts an Christmas tree up and, finally, the audacious wit is demonstrated by matching moving motifs to types of shops. The butcher's shop displays a steaming turkey, a huge snowman takes a camera snap from above the photographer's and an Inuit builds an igloo before your very eyes on the estate agents!

This is all brought to us by a committee of dedicated volunteers who spend much of the rest of the year preparing for the day the Christmas lights go on. They have been doing this on our behalf for years – time the Civic Society recognised their contribution to the enjoyment of Alnwick's wonderful townscape with an award!



# Sustainable Transport

*In the Sustainable Transport Working Group we have been discussing several options for improving sustainable transport in and around Alnwick. This is our position from the perspective of the Civic Society.*

**Aln Valley Railway:** a route beside the track would provide a link between Alnwick and Hipsburn and with the Sustans strategic cycle network. There are some hurdles to overcome, but the lack of such a link must be holding back development of cycle tourism in the town and should be encouraged on the grounds of economic development. To bring the route into town we would like to see a pedestrian and cycle bridge across the A1, but there is an alternative via the A1068. The route is feasible and achievable .

**Shilbottle to Alnwick:** there are several options, and we wouldn't want to rule anything out, but none look particularly promising. The costs of providing a safe route for school pupils are unlikely to be acceptable, and for leisure cyclists there are more appealing alternatives.

**Wagonway Road:** This will be a key route for pupils at the new High School, but the resources that we think are available will fall short of what would be required to provide a safe cycling route. In the long-run we are advocating conversion of the old Cornhill Railway Track Bed to an off-road cycle path as an alternative route between Willowburn Avenue and the town centre. Until that is feasible we see the priority for Wagonway Road as being pedestrian safety.

**South Road:** This will be another key route for pupils at the new High School, but again resources for improvement are likely to be limited. In the short-term the priority will have to be pedestrian safety. There is a need to better separate cycling, pedestrians, and motor traffic; and bypass the most critical intersections. We can't see how this could be addressed in time for the opening of the new school, but we are convinced that it will need to be addressed at some point.

**Routes between High School and Residential areas to the north and west:** given the lack of time and resources, the immediate priority is to address safety issues on the main pedestrian routes. But this is a relatively long walk for High School pupils. In the longer term a safe cycling route would be a better solution. We are urging the County and Town Council to agree a viable route that they can work towards over a period of time. Achieving this will rely on complex negotiations over land, public utilities, etc., and we think a coherent vision will strengthen their negotiating position.

**In summary:** there is too little time, and resources are too limited, to address the need for safe, sustainable transport routes between the new High School and the main residential areas of Alnwick. This is regrettable, and could have been avoided, but it is where we are, and we have to make the best of it. We should not have got into this position in the first place, and we must get beyond it as soon as we can.

## Library

The Library was originally built as a school for 200 poor boys in 1810 by the 2nd Duke of Northumberland, and opened on August 12th, 1811. It commemorated the Golden Jubilee of King George III, so was originally known as the Jubilee School, but soon became known as the Duke's School. When the school transferred to new buildings in 1904 this building was used as an elementary school, which closed in 1921 and this later became the local library.

The appearance of the building was described as "plain and unpretentious". A new classroom, and vestibule was added between 1887 and 1898. Soon after larger windows were inserted into the side walls, and the original leaded windows were replaced with sashes.

The present building consists of two main blocks, at right angles, linked by a vestibule and with a later extension. Both buildings are of one storey, of ashlar sandstone with slate roofs. The original school has a prominent belfry at its east end. The later classroom is plainer. Side walls have original 5-light mullioned windows. The later 6-light mullioned window is contained in a half-dormer. The east gable has a stepped 14-light window and a similar window is partially visible in the west gable where there is also an external chimney stack, partially obscured by a later flat extension. A stone plaque commemorating the foundation and opening of the school is attached to the north face. with a 6-light stepped window in each gable and a modern extension on its east side.

The building was assessed for listing in 2008 following concerns over its future, but because of later extensions and

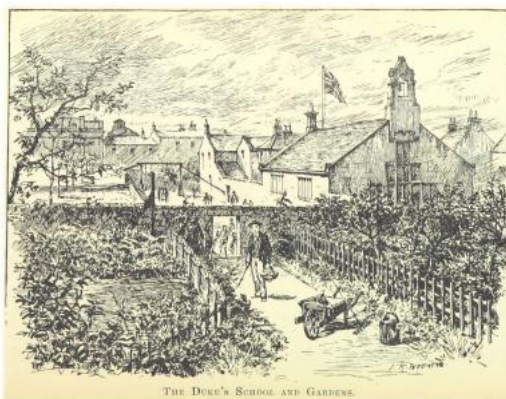
substantial alterations and the removal of all original features it was judged that it did not meet the criteria.

Initially the school ran on the Monitorial System of "mutual instruction", in which able pupils helped the teacher by passing on what they had learned to other students. Tate calls this the "Lancastrian System" after Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker education reformer, whose motto was "Qui docet, discit" (He who teaches, learns). A National Society was set up in 1811 to establish schools using a similar system, based on the teachings of the Church of England. Their National School in Alnwick was established in 1849. With

greater capacity, increased funding, and increased scrutiny, the limitations of the monitorial system became obvious, and it gave way to professional teaching. "the kind of instruction now given is of a higher and more practical character than hitherto". By the 1860s the school had an average attendance of 75 out of 130 pupils (31 boys aged between 9 and 12; 86 aged 12-14; and 13 over 14 years old). They were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry, navigation, grammar, geography, history, chemistry, mechanical drawing, vocal music and occasion-

ally latin, with lectures on natural history, and occasional excursions to the sea-side, woods and fields. Small plots of garden were allotted to meritorious scholars, to encourage industrial habits. "by way of encouragement, prizes are given every year to those who can produce the best fruit and vegetables".

The building is currently on the market, advertised as having potential for redevelopment to residential use, subject to obtaining necessary planning permission.



## News in Brief

The artist Barbara Woodhouse has kindly sent the Society several copies of books from her 1990 Zig-Zag: Alnwick series. Peter Ennor has passed on our thanks, and is now trying to find out who now holds the original plates. He would love to hear from you if you have any information.

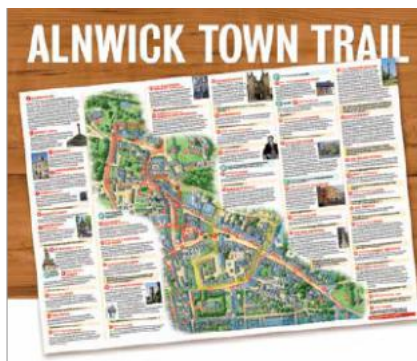
We are planning to carry out a traffic survey on routes to the new High School at 7:45 on the morning of May 17<sup>th</sup>. The aim is to establish a baseline measure during term time, so that we can return after relocation of the High School and assess the impact. Please get in touch if you are able to participate. Everyone is welcome (providing they can spare a couple of hours, and count accurately at that time of the morning).

We tend to have quite a lot of contact with our town councillors, through the various activities of the society. And we recognise and value the commitment that they put into representing the community. It is a matter for regret when hardworking representatives, like Rachael Roberts and David Farrar move on. We wish them well.

By the time this newsletter is published the vacancies in Clayport Ward and Castle Ward will have been filled - either by election or by co-option. But this is a useful reminder that the next full Town Council elections will be held in May 2017: a year away. Members of the Civic Society have already committed to making Alnwick a better place. Perhaps, over the coming

months, some should consider putting their name forward to become a town councillor.

We are looking forward to seeing the updated Town Trail, which we expect to be published shortly. We hope members will be trying it out, and encouraging others to do so too.

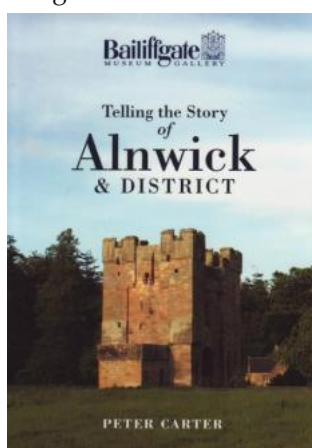


On a related note, last year Historic England updated their guide to Heritage and the Economy. Among other things this estimates that Heritage

tourism represents 2% of UK GDP. For every £1 spent as part of a heritage visit, 32p is spent on site, and 68p in local businesses such as restaurants, cafés, hotels, and shops. Repair and Maintenance of Historic Buildings constitutes 10% of the value of the entire construction industry. Heritage accounts for 12,000 jobs in operation of historic sites; 134,000 jobs in built heritage tourism, and 181,000 jobs in repair and maintenance of the building stock. This doesn't count employment in heritage crafts, or businesses that occupy historic buildings. One in four businesses see historic environment as an important factor in deciding where to locate. See <http://tinyurl.com/jb63rwb>



**Footnote:** The new trees on the cobbles are a welcome enhancement to the centre of town.



### Telling the Story of Alnwick & District, by Peter Carter

Published by Bailiffgate Museum, this is both a celebration of the fascinating history of our town and district; and a guide to the Museum's permanent collection.

Those who are familiar with the museum will recognise how the two themes have been skillfully woven together.

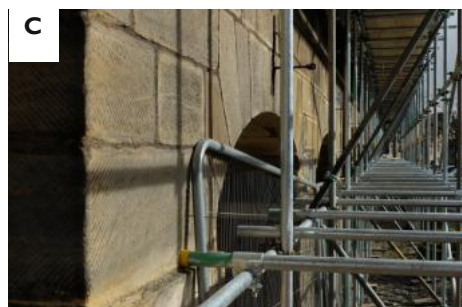
Others will find an accessible introduction to the story of Alnwick.

This is not where our members will turn to discover anything new, but it's just what their summer guests might appreciate: as a preview, or as a memento, of their visit. (£5.95 from Bailiffgate Museum)

## Quiz: Scaffolding

It's time we celebrated the contribution that scaffolders make to the conservation of our historic town. Their work may hold things up, but a lot of conservation would not get done without their support.

Some of these temporary structures have already gone by the time we go to print, but we hope you will still recognise them.





# Planning matters

The number of planning applications in Alnwick and Denwick continues to grow, while the figure for the whole of Northumberland remains flat (see chart below). We seem to have been reviewing a large number of new applications recently, but there have been few surprises, and most proposals need no comment.

The most significant developments relate to the extension of the new High School, growing concern over the travel and transport implications, and continuing failure to address, or even acknowledge, them.

When the original planning application for the new high school was granted in 2014, there were good reasons why NCC planners applied the following condition, which was reaffirmed in an updated application granted as recently as March 18th this year: *"the new school shall not be brought into use until; (i) a study has been submitted to assess the changes to travel patterns across the town centre due to the location of the new school. (ii) a revised School Framework Travel Plan document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The document shall include measures to be implemented, including drop-off / pick-up provision; sixth form parking; school transport arrangements; reports, monitoring and review mechanisms"*.

Now an application has been made for the "4th Finger" extension to accommodate middle school pupils from 2017. Once again the travel plan is inadequate, based on

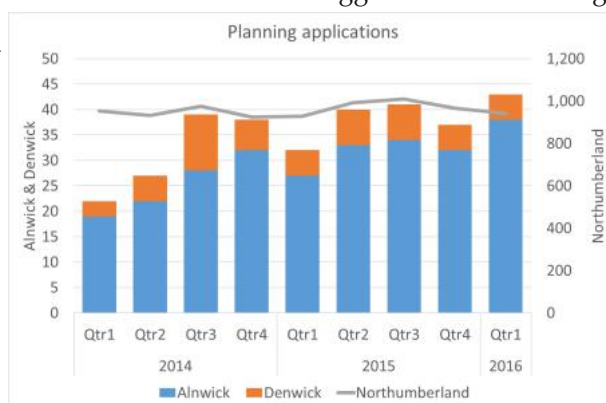
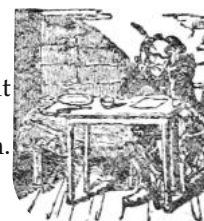
highly questionable assumptions, and built upon the same travel plan which was found to be lacking in the 2014 application. We have objected on this basis.

It is regrettable that there is now insufficient time before the school opens to provide an adequate solution for both cyclists and pedestrians. Questions remain around public transport, parking for staff and pupils, provision for drop off / pick up, and the wider impact on the transport network. All this could have been avoided, but a solution will still be needed at a future date. Further expansion of the school will make this even more imperative. We are continuing to try and raise awareness of the impending problems, and press for a solution.

Meanwhile, Aldi has been relieved of a condition regarding the provision of a light controlled pedestrian crossing on South Road, because a survey of pedestrian movements suggested that a crossing was not justified. Unfortunately,

no account could be taken of any increase in pedestrian activity on South Road when the new high school opens.

Other matters of interest to members will be conversion of the former valuation office / workhouse in Wagonway Road to residential use; and an application to change the use of the Former Ravensmount Care Home (in Alnmouth Road) to a hotel.



## ADNP: Examiner's Report

The Independent Examiner has now reported on the Neighbourhood Plan. He (rightly) recognised that the plan was the result of a great community effort, and that much of the content is of a high standard. However, he felt that an ambitious approach had led to some loss of focus, and not all policies met the basic conditions. He could have recommended that it proceed without change, or referred it back for further work. However, he proposed a number of changes, including some in the section on Heritage and Culture, where the society has been most actively involved.

The counter argument, of course, is that this plan is our opportunity to shape the development of our town for a generation to come. If the Neighbourhood Plan has no teeth, and doesn't reflect the aspirations of the community then the whole exercise will have been pointless.

To say we were initially "disappointed" with the examiner's report would be an under-statement. But on reflection we came to the view that some of his proposed changes were justified, and some were acceptable tweaking of the wording. In other areas we felt that his position risked leaving significant gaps in future planning policy for Alnwick, and had to be challenged.

This was agreed by the Neighbourhood Plan Team and Town Council, and the negotiations are now in the hands of the County Council. At this stage we do not know what the outcome will be. The next stage will be a public referendum. It is important that as many as possible use their vote, but it isn't clear to us when the referendum will happen. Perhaps before our next newsletter in August.

"Watch this space" seems particularly appropriate advice.

## Tree conservation

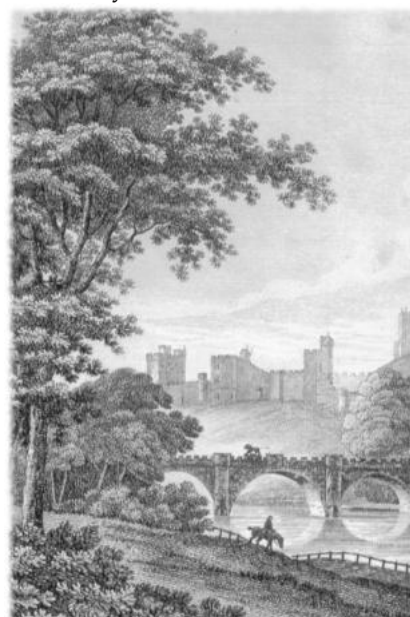
*Alnwick is a beautiful town. So much of our built environment is enhanced by fine trees, and as a community we need to care for them in the same way as we care for our buildings.*

There are many magnificent older trees which will come to the end of their lives within the next twenty years or so.

We do not want to tread on the toes of the other organisations in Alnwick who have contributed so much over the years, but we think it is about time that we look at areas of ground where trees could be planted to fill existing gaps - and also anticipate gaps which may occur in the next twenty or so years.

It is possible to ask for grants from the Tree Council and Woodland Trust even for trees on private land, as long as the trees can be seen by the public. It is sensible to try to gather together owners of land so that we can all apply for one grant. Firstly however we need to establish where trees could be planted, and perhaps what sort of trees.

Could our members please let us have their views on this?



## Diary dates

### Civic Society...

12<sup>th</sup> May, 7:30 p.m. The History of Alnwick Garden with Trevor Jones, the Head Gardener. At St James Centre, in Pottergate

17<sup>th</sup> May 7:30 a.m. Traffic Survey - see News in Brief on Page 6.

Summer Outing: 25<sup>th</sup> June: Compare and contrast the different styles of three handsome local churches representing different styles and different periods. Led by David Lovie. Please contact a member of the committee for details and travel arrangements.

The next ACS Newsletter is planned for early August. As always we welcome suggestions and contributions

### ...and more

14-15<sup>th</sup> May: Celebrate National Mills Weekend, by visiting Heatherslaw Watermill at Etal, or the Waterwheel and turbines at Cragside (or both).

Open Gardens: in aid of Hospicecare North Northumberland. See [www.hospicecare-nn.org](http://www.hospicecare-nn.org)

- Blagdon Hall, Seaton Burn, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Mindrum Hall, Mindrum, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Whitton Grange, Rothbury, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Lilburn Tower, near Wooler, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

30<sup>th</sup> July - 6<sup>th</sup> Aug: Alnwick International Music Festival  
2016 marks the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, the Northumbrian who changed our landscape and our views (his work includes parkland at Alnwick Castle). The Capability Brown Festival brings together a range of events, openings and exhibitions. See [www.capabilitybrown.org](http://www.capabilitybrown.org) for sites and celebrations.

## About Alnwick Civic Society

Alnwick Civic Society was formed in 1974, following the defeat of proposals to re-develop the town centre with a modern shopping area. Since then it has sought to influence development proposals, especially in the town centre and conservation area, to ensure they protect and enhance our heritage.

The society has been involved in successful high profile campaigns. It continues to pursue its objectives and provide a voice for members: through dialogue with planning and conservation professionals, and like-minded organisations; by offering advice, scrutinising and commenting on development proposals; and by recognising excellence, organising public meetings, developing guided trails, and a variety of other activities.

In response to changes in the planning system the society has been heavily involved in development of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, and works with local partners to influence policy at a county level. It seeks to influence national policy in co-operation with other bodies within the civic movement, and was a founding member of Civic Voice.

All who share our aims can support the work of the society: by joining as an individual, family or business member; by participating in activities, sharing ideas, raising areas of concern and pointing out examples of good practice. Or simply by demonstrating pride in our town, and spreading the word about the value of our work.



### Who's Who?

**President:** Philip Deakin

**Chair:** Peter Ennor ([peter.ennor@gmail.com](mailto:peter.ennor@gmail.com))

**Treasurer and Membership:** Gill Parker

**Honorary Secretary:** Sue Smith

**Other Executive Committee members:**

John Hipwell

Mary McIlroy Hipwell

Elizabeth Jones

Brian Lamb

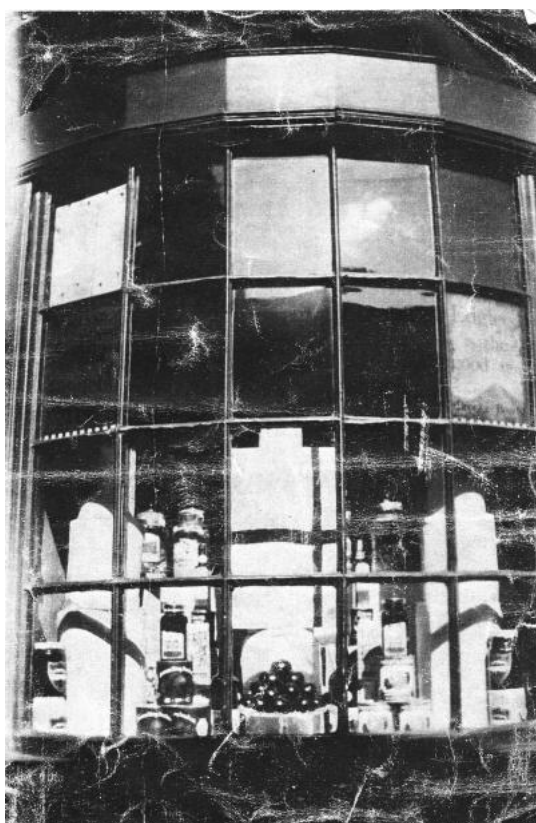
David Lovie ([davidlovie307@btinternet.com](mailto:davidlovie307@btinternet.com))

Peter Reed / Newsletter ([peter.reed@aligre.co.uk](mailto:peter.reed@aligre.co.uk))

**Web:** [www.alnwickcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.alnwickcivicsociety.org.uk)

**Twitter:** @AlnwickCivicSoc

**Facebook:** [AlnwickCivicSociety](https://www.facebook.com/AlnwickCivicSociety)



### Did you know?

"Kitty" as a term for a prison has nothing to do with cats. It is a diminutive form of *kidcote*, which was used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to describe a temporary lock-up where prisoners were held overnight before appearing in front of the magistrate. In other words, housing a young goat (kid + cote, as in dove + cote).

Our thanks to Susan Bell, who has shared this old photograph of the bow window in Dodd's Lane.

The image is thought to date from around 1900. It was attached to a newspaper clipping which describes this as an "absolute gem", "the only window of its kind in Alnwick" and "well worth preserving".

At the time the newspaper article was published the property had recently been vacated by Radio Rentals, and it was reported that "local yobs" were breaking the window panes.

### Quiz answers

- A) Sion Chapel in St. Michael's Lane
- B) Bolam's Mill / Maltings, Dispensary Street
- C) Northumberland Hall
- D) Adam Douglas, Market Place
- E) Bailiffgate Museum