



Milton Conservation Society

Representing Milton and Shorefields Conservation Areas



Newsletter - February 2020

www.miltonconservationsociety.com

Welcome to this Winter edition of our newsletter.

Quiz Night - Friday 28th February.

Once again our Quiz Night is being taken out of its box and dusted down to provide some light relief. Previous years have been successful and fun and with fish & chips included it's a night to enjoy.

This year's event will take place on Friday 28th February at Barons Court School from 7:00 pm onwards - the quiz to start at 7:30.

Why not get some friends together to make up a table or come along as we can match you up on the night. Bring your own drinks and glasses and this year why not bring some cutlery too and see if we can cut down on the amount of rubbish we throw away at the end of the evening.

Once again, tickets cost £10 (£5 for children) which includes Fish and Chips or a vegetarian alternative and are available now from Tony at 15 Park Crescent or Julia at 15 Park Terrace-- contact details below.

Conservation Area Responsibilities - A Regular Reminder.

Despite this regular reminder every year sees several residents having to replace recently fitted windows needlessly because they have not heeded this advice.

Do not fit UPVC windows or doors to your property where they can be seen from the road or side road. As this is a Conservation Area any new windows or doors fitted should be in the style and material as originally fitted when the property was built. In nearly all cases that means timber.



There are many other types of work where additional planning controls apply and permission is normally only given if proposed development preserves or enhances the property's character. Demolition of buildings and work to trees are also controlled.

If in doubt, ask before you commit yourself so you don't have to pay twice. The council offers a simple guide available on its website www.southend.gov.uk - a link is also available from our website.

AGM Report

The 2019 AGM took place on Sunday September 15th with some 40 members in attendance. We were also pleased to welcome Councillors Nevin and George.

Key points from the meeting included

- Upvc windows continue to be installed to the detriment of the area. We continue to press the Council to take action where necessary.
- The coach house to the rear of 62 Avenue Road represents a significant heritage asset that has been put at risk by inappropriate work carried out by the Council itself and which they now wish to demolish because it is deemed to be unsafe. This has been long running case which has now turned into a formal complaint against the Council - stop press - see below!
- Parking - Councillor George reported that the new administration planned additional town centre parking. He also noted that a further and wider consultation would be organised by the Council (this has now taken place - we hope you were able to let the Council know your views on this perennial issue).
- The Society continues to support those helping improve Hamlet Court Road where heritage can help with regeneration and we hope that similar efforts can be made to support the High Street.
- The Conservation Working Party has now reformed as Environment and Planning working party with a wider remit.

Garden Plaques - 2019

The Society was pleased to award 2 garden plaques this year to Dr John Lange for the front gardens of Imperial Court and Imperial Mansion. We judged these fine examples of formal gardens which have improved the street scene in Shorefields. Have a look over the hedge when you are next passing by and be inspired for your own front garden. Who knows you could be the next winner of one of our awards!

Coach House - Rear of 62 Avenue Road

Recently several officers of the Society met with the Council to discuss our formal complaint that the Council had, through its own actions, sought to engineer the demolition of this significant heritage asset within our area.



To our surprise and delight the meeting kicked off with what could be done to find an economically viable use for the building and to that end the Council agreed to commit sufficient funds to repair the structure and to explore with the current lease-holder of 62 Avenue Road what use might be found for it. As one of the few remaining original coach houses in the area that is visible from the street it is an important feature that we have been very keen to retain.

So far, so good and as such represents a great result for the Society and the efforts of our Vice Chairman. However, experience warns us to be wary of empty promises particularly as to date they have not followed up

with information that was promised so this is not the end of the matter and we will need to keep monitoring progress.

Make Southend Sparkle

If you are a member of our Facebook page you may have seen the postings about the *Friends of the Shrubbery* a volunteer group helping to maintain and improve the historic Shrubbery Gardens. This is part of an initiative to Make Southend Sparkle by supporting residents, groups, and businesses who wish to enhance the area where they live or work, to make it a greener and cleaner place. People are encouraged to take pride in the town and help tackle areas plagued with litter and fly tipping, and to get involved in green projects to improve the streetscape and local environment. You can find out about more opportunities to volunteer on the 'Make Southend Sparkle' Facebook page.

Making Milton Sparkle?

A number of years ago the Society sponsored planters and some hanging baskets to brighten up our streets. The planters were often a disappointment as they seemed to be planted as an afterthought by the council's contractors with inadequate soil preparation. Eventually they deteriorated and we lobbied to have them removed.

We also paid for the creation of the raised bed at the junction of St Vincent's Rd and Avenue Road and more recently one at the junction of Park Road and Avenue Road. We are considering what else we can do to improve the area and would invite anyone willing to help maintain and water on occasion to let us know via email, Facebook or call Gill on 07817140067.

Local Plan

Southend Council are now in the middle of the Local Plan review including a review of their heritage policies. We have already made early representations but the next public consultation, later this year, is very important. So this is your chance to tell us of any areas of local conservation that concern you or that you think could be improved. We will then see how these can be put into our consultation back to the Council. For example we are very likely to be calling for more public involvement in local planning and if this concerns you please let us have your views.

Other Local Authorities have a much more expansive approach to heritage than Southend where there is still no post of Conservation Officer, a pretty sad indictment of the Council's perspective on heritage. But we will keep working on putting the right arguments forward and our regular lobbying of Council members and officers. There is evidence that we have had some good affect in the past so we press on...

Hamlet Court Conservation Area

You may have seen in the Evening Echo that Hamlet Court Road is under consideration for designation as a conservation area. This is something that Andy Atkinson, our Vice Chairman, has been working on for the last 3 years with another local group, Hamlet Court Conservation Forum



A remarkable Arts & Crafts building at 35 Preston Road that still exists today. Design by H Fuller Clark, designer of the fantastic 'Black Friar' Pub at Blackfriars London.

A huge amount of lobbying has taken place and a public consultation is about to take place where anyone will be able to comment and support the protection of our wonderful Edwardian, Arts & Crafts and Art Deco heritage. For more information please go to www.hamletcourt.org.

Milton Gardens

Last summer a number of the Executive Committee attended an open day at Milton Gardens hosted by a 'A Better Start' which is a group of garden users who have got together to see what can be done to maintain and improve the gardens. The Society is happy to help with this where we can and perhaps contribute to improvements such as opening the garden up to reduce anti-social activity.

We also have ambitions to be able to re-instate iron railings on the and make use of the Red Telephone box that used to stand adjacent to the park in Milton Road. These ideas were discussed at the AGM with several interesting suggestions coming forward

A History

Our visit to the gardens prompted the question why the garden remains as the only open space in the area? The answer lies over the road in the building now occupied by the Sea Scouts but which was built to supply Southend with water.



Southend Waterworks Milton Road c1870

Originally dwellings in Southend as everywhere rarely had piped water relying instead on springs, shallow wells and ponds. When the Royal Terrace and then the Clifftown estate were built piped water was included as these properties were aimed at well to do customers.

The arrival of the railway in 1856 helped the town to grow and increased visitors who all needed water but the most important driving force was the railway itself as steam engines terminating at Southend needed large amounts of water reliably available.

One of the developers of the Clifftown estate and the railway line was Thomas Brassey who founded Southend Waterworks Company to meet the demand his other interests were creating. By 1864 a borehole 906 feet deep had been sunk into the sands and chalk below the London clay and water was first pumped in 1865. Water extraction continued on this site until 1984.



The Waterworks from the west 1924. The water storage in Milton Gardens can be seen as well as the reservoir in Cambridge Road by the water tower.

A series of storage reservoirs provided water at peak times, when consumption exceeded the flow from the borehole. Storage was originally sited adjacent to the pump house as in this photo, then across the road in what is now Milton Gardens before a larger reservoir holding 300,000

gallons was built in Cambridge Road supplemented with a later water tower for an additional 50,000 gallons.

By the early 1950's the site opposite the waterworks had become redundant for water company use indeed part had been cultivated as allotments for at least 30 years. This site was offered to the Council for £700 to be used as 'an open space in which organised games may be included' with parking only as necessary for such games.

The proposed layout for the garden comprised 2 tennis courts in the eastern half with an area of open grass to the western end that could be converted to a further tennis court if required. The cost of the conversion was £3,575 which included £1032 for the construction of the two tennis courts.

The name Milton Gardens was adopted in March 1953.

Help and Advice

We are often asked to help residents with their queries over fences, parking or their properties. We are happy to do this but we have one qualification - you must be a member of the Society.

To join - email us or see our website. Membership costs £8 per household and runs from 1 June each year.

Contact Us

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|----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------|
| Chairman | Mr Tony Brown | 15 Park Crescent | 394094 |
| Vice-Chairman | Mr Andrew Atkinson | 28 Park Road | 335808 |
| Secretary | Mrs Julia Cannon | 15 Park Terrace | 331941 |
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Other Executive Members: Paul Cavanagh, Jill Freeth (Park Crescent), Neil Lands (Avenue Terrace), Susan Wright, Eddie Cannon (Park Terrace)

Email us - info@miltonconservationsociety.com or find us on Facebook.