



potteries

# townscape

Issue 71

Stoke-on-Trent's Civic Society

Winter 2009-2010

## Chair's report 2009

Last year was a productive one for PHS. The society successfully bid for around £10,000 from English Heritage to run a heritage project, in partnership with the City Council. The project involves developing a web-based information resource for people living in and around conservation areas and a series of workshops and walks for local people, taking place in January and February 2010. These are aimed at raising awareness and understanding of heritage, planning and local character.



PHS participated in the heritage open days in the autumn, leading a series of guided walks in the City's town centres. These followed on from our 'Understanding Places' walks that took place at the end of 2008 and it is hoped to continue the series of guided walks this year.

A leaflet has been developed and a publicity campaign is being planned to promote PHS and recruit new members.

We introduced new procedures for dealing with planning consultations. A planning sub-group has been established, which generally meets every 2-3 weeks to discuss current planning applications, draft masterplans

and other policy documents. The planning group comprises Andy Perkin, Steve Wood, Stacey Sykes and myself. We have responded to numerous applications during the year.

One of our responses was to a consultation on a masterplan for the Middleport area, including the land for the Burslem Port project. We were unhappy with the format of consultation, which put forward a choice of three masterplans. In conjunction with other local groups, a fourth option was produced, including the Burslem Port canal arm. I am pleased to report that the emerging masterplan now includes the restoration and redevelopment of the former Burslem canal branch.

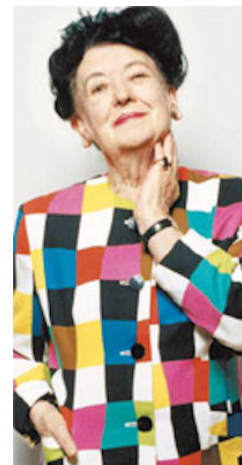
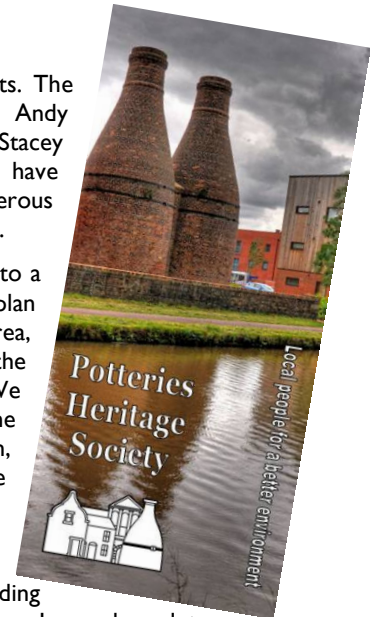
I had extensive involvement in the draft PPS15, the Government's main policy statement on heritage. This included involvement in the national stakeholder group arranged by English Heritage and providing material for the joint response of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

I responded to surveys regarding the new civic societies initiative, following the demise of the Civic Trust for England. PHS has expressed support for the new initiative.

On a sad note, we were very sorry to hear of the death of Betty Smithers. Betty, and her husband, Alick (a past Chair of PHS), contributed much to the society. Our thoughts are with Alick.

Finally, I would like to express my general thanks to the officers and other members of PHS who have given up their time to support the society's work over the past year.

Dave Chetwyn



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## Treasurer's report

2009's balance sheet shows a significant surplus of income relative to expenditure of £232, compared to a surplus of £197.38 for last year. Our expenditure this year has reduced to a small amount for room hire. There are a number of reasons for this: the charges for room hire at Stoke Town Hall had increased again and we had decided to make alternative arrangements; we had (fortunately) not paid our subscription to the Civic Trust when the organisation collapsed; and Urban Vision covered the costs of leaflets that were given out at the HODS events.

Our finances will be very different over the coming year as our accounts will include around £10,000 of

grant from English Heritage which will be paid into our account and out to consultants and for project costs. We will also be spending a significant amount on publicity as our new leaflet has now been printed.

Membership has fallen a little, partly due to me not chasing people with reminders, and we failed to pick up new members following Heritage Open Days, but our financial situation remains healthy and membership subscriptions have been kept at their current level.

*Andy Perkin*

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## Heritage empowerment project

PHS is running a project with Stoke-on-Trent City Council to raise awareness and understanding of local heritage. The £10,000 project is funded by English Heritage West Midlands and includes the development of web pages on conservation areas, a series of three heritage workshops and two walks.



The workshops are being held in Stoke, Burslem and Hartshill. They look at how our perceptions of what constitutes heritage are changing, how heritage is protected by the planning system, and how to understand and analyse local character.



Delegates have included PHS members, local residents and representatives from local groups. Feedback from workshop delegates has been very positive so far.

The two walks will focus on how to understand local places. They are planned for Tunstall (Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February) and Hanley (Saturday 13 March). Both will begin at 10.00. The meeting place for the Tunstall walk will be in the Boulevard Gardens. The meeting place for the Hanley walk will be in Bethesda Gardens, to the rear of the Chapel. All are welcome to attend.

*Dave Chetwyn*

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## Heritage policy

In the summer, the Government issued a new draft policy statement (PPS15) on heritage. This was widely criticised by national heritage and planning organisations, which were concerned that it weakened protection of listed buildings and conservation areas.

PHS's Chair has been involved in national stakeholder groups dealing with the policy statement and provided

an input for the responses by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Civic Society Initiative.

It is unclear at this stage whether a revised document will be issued before the general election.

# Architecture and urban design awards

We were pleased to see that the shortlisted schemes for the first annual Architecture and Urban Design Awards, run on behalf of the North Staffs Regeneration Partnership by Urban Vision North Staffordshire (the architecture and urban design centre), included five schemes in the City. Forty-six schemes were submitted and eight were shortlisted. These were: Westport Lake Visitors Centre; Caudon Campus Caring Centre of Excellence; Knutton Terraced Housing; Lock 38 Housing Estate at Etruria; Swan Square, Burslem; The Ashes in Endon; Bridgewater Bridge in Hanley; and Blue Planet eco-warehouse. The winning scheme was the Blue Planet Warehouse. Westport Lake Visitor Centre received a commendation. These schemes demonstrated the vast improvement in the quality of development in the area over the past 5 years.



**Swan Square**



**Bridgewater Bridge**  
...and outside the city



**Westport Lake Visitor Centre - commended**



**Caudon Campus Caring Centre of Excellence**



**Lock 38 Housing Estate**



**winner - Blue Planet eco-warehouse**



**The Ashes**



**Knutton Terraced Housing**

pictures courtesy of Urban Vision North Staffordshire – find more at [www.uvns.org](http://www.uvns.org)

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## The team



**Dave Chetwyn** is the Chair of PHS. For the day job, he is a town planning and regeneration consultant and a CABE Enabler. Dave is also Chair of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, the UK professional body for historic environment specialists, and Chair of Urban Vision North Staffordshire. Before moving to private practice, Dave was Head of Planning Aid England and prior to that spent 17 years with Stoke-on-Trent City Council, including 12 years in the Design and Conservation Team.



**Andy Perkin** is the Society's Secretary and Treasurer. Andy joined the Society in 1994 and was elected Chair 18 months later, a post he held for five years. He has now worked in regeneration and training for 15 years as a consultant and trainer, first with The Civic Trust, then as a Director of R99. He is now supporting community trusts and helping develop community enterprises in his role as Regional Development Officer for the Development Trusts Association with the West Midlands team. Andy lives in Penkhull with his partner Nicola, a planning ecologist, and their four-year-old daughter, Ellen.



**Steve Wood** is a member of our planning team, responding to planning applications on behalf of PHS. Steve is very actively involved with local canal groups, being Planning Officer for the Stoke-on-Trent Branch of the Inland Waterways Association, as well as Chairman of the Uttoxeter Canal Restoration Committee. He is also involved with the Burslem Port and Cheshire Locks restoration projects. Steve is an independent IT Consultant specialising in database and website design, and IT project management. He owns and lives on an historic canal boat.



**Stacy Sykes** is new to the Society and has recently joined our planning team, monitoring and responding to planning applications. She was previously team leader of Barnsley Planning Advisory Committee. Stacey studied for a BA in Architectural Conservation and has since held roles within architectural practices specialising in conservation and historic buildings consultancy. She is currently the Assistant Conservation Officer at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and is an Associate of DJCI Planning Ltd.

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## Forthcoming PHS meetings and events 2010

**PHS Meetings** take place bi-monthly on the third Thursday of the month starting at 7:30 pm.

18 March	Burslem School of Art
20 May	Sea Scout Hall, Penkhull
15 July	Burslem School of Art
16 September	The White Star, Stoke
18 November	Burslem School of Art (including the AGM)

All members are welcome.

**Heritage Empowerment Workshops** (see page 2)  
– last event – Saturday 13 February – call 01782 234749 to book your place.

**Understanding Places** walking seminars explore how places work and the principles of good urban design. The next two events are being held as part of our Conservation Area Empowerment Project (see page 2) and will take place on:

Saturday 27 February – Tunstall – 10am  
(meet at the Boulevard Gardens)

Saturday 13 March – Hanley – 10am  
(meet at Bethesda Gardens, to the rear of the Chapel)

Members and stoke-on-Trent residents welcome.



Potteries Heritage Society

**potteries townscape** is the newsletter of Potteries Heritage Society. It is distributed to all our members, to the local authorities and media and others. Submissions relating to heritage, community and built environment issues are welcomed. We are also seeking sponsorship for this newsletter, and for a variety of other activities of the Society.

For individual or corporate membership, please contact Andy Perkin, on 01782 819067 or via email to: [secretary@potteries.org.uk](mailto:secretary@potteries.org.uk). For other issues please contact our Chair, Dave Chetwyn on 01782 825479 or via email to: [chair@potteries.org.uk](mailto:chair@potteries.org.uk). For further information about Potteries Heritage Society, please visit our web site at: [www.potteries.org.uk](http://www.potteries.org.uk)