

Human Warehouses

Committee members of Harlow Civic Society have been appalled by recent coverage of this story in local and national media. There are two main reasons for condemning the actions of these London boroughs: the first is the plight of homeless people shipped out of their localities and dumped into hastily refurbished industrial sites and office blocks, without local amenities of any kind. The second is that this sudden large influx has led to increases in crime and anti-social behaviour by some of those so transported. As it is not illegal to carry out these population shifts, there seems very little we can do about it, except let the Council know that we disapprove very strongly.

John Curry writes: We did warn them. Whilst it is not a legal requirement for developers to obtain planning permission to convert commercial premises to residential use, most of the conversions in Harlow did come before the Development Management Committee at some time.

Harlow Civic Society took it upon itself to raise objections to the proposals even though we knew that the Council could not stop them. In each case that we challenged we explained to the committee that such schemes were alien to the Master Plan for Harlow. This plan ensured that residents of the town, regardless of status or income, lived within walking distance of all those civilising services that the town provides. The provision of such is what makes Harlow special.

Little did we know at the time that our unheeded warnings would result in the human misery now revealed in the local and national media. Who could not feel sympathy for a single parent of two children stuck in a tiny apartment just big enough for single person? The family having to eat meals – do homework – watch TV, all sitting together on a bed as there is not enough room for chairs. Families that

would be otherwise homeless do not complain.

It is hard to imagine the feelings of those sent to live on an industrial estate far from shops, schools, doctors etc, where every essential journey will take at least 40 minutes' walking – each way. There is no bus service. The isolation must be difficult to bear.



Terminus House

We could not have known the scale of the problem, and our warnings were more of an attempt to remind the Council of our principles. We could not have known that criminal activity in these dormitories would become prevalent. However, I suspect that the authorities who sent these unfortunate folk to Harlow should have known.

A New Future for New Towns Town and Country Planning Conference

This conference (12 March 2019) was aimed at exploring what lessons we can learn from the original New Towns to inform a new generation of Garden Towns. I was there on behalf of Harlow Civic Society, the only voluntary organisation represented. Representatives from Harlow Council: Councillors Mark Ingall and Danny Purton, and Brian Keene, Managing Director also attended.

With significant developments proposed in and around Harlow, currently branded as the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, this was a timely opportunity to reflect on the experience of the earlier New Towns and how they can influence current plans and their delivery.

The day was chaired by Mary Parsons, the Chair of the TCPA and Group Director for Placemaking and Regeneration at Places for People; they are key players in the Gilston developments and are also launch sponsors for our own Architectural Design Awards. It was pleasing to note that Harlow's sculptures were highlighted as an example of community assets generating civic pride and pictures of them were shown in several sessions.

There were presentations covering:

- The current common challenges and the key lessons from the original New Towns
- the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on New Towns
- the new programme for 24 communities and Garden Towns ranging from 1500 to 40,000 homes in size
- the development of Milton Keynes, the regeneration and growth of Hertfordshire's New Towns, the growth and renewal of Cwmbran and The Breakthrough Basildon Commission.

Hugh Ellis, TCPA Director of Policy, summarised the day, calling the New Towns the greatest achievement of the 20th century in planning and delivery. He emphasised that we must do better than the shoddy places currently being built under Permitted Development and with add-on estates to towns. He ended by saying 'this is where the future begins'.

I would summarise the key points of the day as follows:

- need for Master planning and strong design principles
- need for Community-led Development Corporations with significant powers to deliver at scale, pace and quality – requiring new public investment
- place-making as key, not just building homes
- land values based on current not future value to make purchase affordable
- collaboration of local authorities (especially with the ending of regional planning)
- more assertive Local Planning Authorities, especially in their expectations of developers
- generation of Civic Pride as an important part of renewal and development
- community stewardship of assets.

Tony Evans

If you would like a copy of my notes of the day, which have summaries of all the talks, you can download them from our web site:

<http://www.harlowcivicsociety.org.uk/documents/> .

A new plaque

On Friday 5th April a crowd of 50 or so people, including members of Harlow Civic Society, past and present employees of Hayter's, and members of the Hayter family, gathered outside Granary Cottage in Mulberry Green in memory of Douglas Hayter, founder of Hayter's Ltd in Spellbrook, a thriving company. He is best known for the Hayter lawnmower as well as numerous other industrial devices.



Speakers introduced by Stan Newens, Chair of Harlow Civic Society, included Cllr Maggie Hulcoop, Chair of Harlow District Council, Douglas Hayter's daughter, Janet, and Raghu Das, Managing Director of Hayter's Ltd. Robert Halfon MP then unveiled the plaque.

Harlow Civic Society has a policy of erecting plaques to significant contributors to the community. In the past these have included Sir Frederick Gibberd, two world-famous scientists and other notable men and women.

A Walk in the Wood

(with apologies to Bill Bryson)



The first in this year's series of walks & talks took place on Thursday 25 April. On a lovely Spring evening about 20 people gathered at the new Lister House Medical Centre. The only treatment available at this time of day being exercise, in the form of a walk. Prior to setting off Jenny Lushington regaled us, chapter and verse, the story of the new sculpture in the forecourt of the medical centre – Magic Jumping Bean, by Tim Shutter.

Spurred on by this we walked via the adjacent cycle paths to Brockles Mead. A brief discussion about the architectural merits of this typical Harlow housing area ensued; it's the first area to have a garage for each dwelling. Brockles Mead was designed by Leonard Manasseh & Partners, who went on to design some significant buildings such as the National Motor Museum. Leonard Manasseh died in 2017 at the age of 101!

Walking on via Morningtons and Brockles House – another of Harlow's hidden treasures – we arrived at our destination – Parndon Wood Nature Reserve (PWNR) – just after 6.30pm, meeting more of our party, who had elected to drive straight there.

We were greeted by a member of the staff at PWNR and advised that refreshments were available and suggesting that those of us with enough energy undertake the signed, circular walk in the wood before taking tea. The majority agreed to this and set off on the tour.

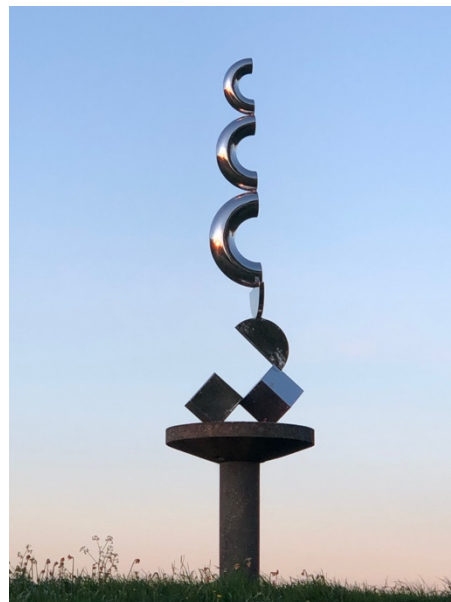
We were not disappointed; our timing was perfect. Bright evening sunlight lit up the fresh, spring green of the wood. It was dry underfoot, despite earlier rain. The temperature was just right for a walk – “Goldilocks weather” – not too hot, nor too cold. The birds were singing their evening chorus - all was well with the world. Half an hour later we were indulging in the offerings from the cafe in the wood – most enjoyable. By this time the temperature was dropping as the sun moved towards the horizon.

The group set off to walk back via Press Lane – the cycle track from Paringdon Road – Third Avenue. Turning right by Moorfield along the “green tunnel” footpath that runs between St James’ School and Stewards Academy to Peterswood. The tunnel and woodland are yet another Harlow surprise. We walked past Longbanks, then stopped at our second sculpture on the walk – Echo by Antanas Brazdys. This sculpture was relocated to its current position when the original Staple Tye shopping centre was demolished. Its new location has not diminished its charm.

Crossing Southern Way we walked via another cycle track, lined with ornamental cherry trees, but a few days too late for the wonderful display of white blossom. We were soon back at Lister House and the Magic Jumping Bean.

I think that everyone enjoyed the outing – will you be doing another one soon was the question – some saw parts of the town that they had not seen, or not known about, before. PWNR was an absolute picture with its Spring foliage, and is surely one Harlow’s gems, it richly deserves its Green Flag status.

John Curry



Some thoughts on the Local Plan

The proposed 1100 dwellings at Latton Priory Farm in the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Development Plan was mentioned by my former section leader Elizabeth Fitzgerald (sitting by a House Builders Federation director who would welcome 1400 dwellings there, notwithstanding the resulting creeping over the Rye Hill ridge line, an Open Background feature of FG's Master Plan of 1952 with the new town designed to 'sit in the landscape'). Very little reference was made to the West Sumners garden village proposal which would include a travellers' site opposite Jacks Hatch garage. That EFDC satellite would have huge implications for traffic flow in Southern Way for much of its 5 miles length and for Katherines Way. Housing by the latter road would involve an incursion into Green Wedge and the loss of the former football pitch. The Master Plan of 1952 complied with the national standard of providing 4 acres of public open and recreational space per 1000 head of population which Harlow Council adhered to until 1990. The said land west of Deer Park is subject to a 1973 covenant requiring its use to remain recreational in perpetuity.

Paul MacBride, Forward Planning Manager, confirmed that the Harlow Development Plan would indicate that all informal open space was to be 'white land' without notation, which accounts for several of the 21 housing sites chosen from an initial list of 350 sites. I addressed the Inspector, David Reed, as a local resident objecting to the last HS2 site for 23 houses within the former Fennells play area, adopted by

Council members as a wildflower meadow. I confirmed that Fennells at its T junction with Parndon Wood Road has flooded four times in 20 years and that the thatched Apple Tree Cottage was flooded twice in ten years of Harlow Council ownership from c.1995 to 2005 (the flooded road sign remains there after the massive washout of Parrington Road in October 2018). These episodes have left residents' cars fit only to be written off and with the whole area accessible only on foot via Kingsmoor Community Church (the local polling station).

Since the Local Plan Examination, I have also given a 3 minute 'sermonette' at the 17th April Development Management Committee, with critical observations on the proposed 98 flats including eleven live-work units with just 49%r parking provision at The Stow Service Bays. I headed my plea: 'Great is the darkness that covers the Earth' to emphasise the loss of daylight to the prayer chapel and vestry of St. Andrew's Church and loss of the memorial tree planting area. The latter informal open space includes a Swedish Whitebeam planted in December 1995 to honour the memory of Mark Phillips, who joined Harlow Council in 1988 and, after assisting me as a Development Control planner, supplied judgments in Public Inquiries and in written representation appeals, for example, regarding the proposed church hall design for St.James and St.Luke's Local Ecumenical Project, which we both felt would have better reflected Gerard Goalen's original church design with an octagonal plan layout.

Peter Mountsteven

Harlow Architectural Design Awards

For the fourth year we're asking Harlow residents to look around and nominate the most beautifully designed new buildings of the year.

Harlow Architectural Design Awards, organised by Harlow Civic Society, aims to encourage architects, developers and property owners to make Harlow an even better and more beautiful place in which to live. The winners receive prestigious trophies at a presentation event in the Autumn.



*2018 residential winner
4 Forebury Lane, Newhall*



*2018 non-residential winner
Gates Ford*

Our foundation sponsor is Places for People and our annual sponsor is Architecture and Design Services. They help us both financially and by sharing their specialist knowledge in architecture and planning.

This year we have a new award - Environmental - to add to our existing Residential and Non-Residential categories.

The new environmental category is about the open, green nature of Harlow's design, and highlights the importance of a sustainable and ecological response to climate change effects in towns and cities. We're looking for nominations for projects where trees and shrubs have been planted, ponds and water have been restored and improved and/or green areas have been reinstated. Also of interest are building developments which have thoughtfully used environmentally friendly features and materials and older buildings that have been regenerated or re-instated rather than demolished.

Nominations are open until the end of June.

Please submit your nominations for all three categories on the Awards web site here:

<https://www.harlowarchitecturaldesignawards.org.uk/nominations/>

Tony Evans

The Open Open, a new twist on a traditional concept

This new version of the Popular Harlow Open art exhibition at the Gibberd Gallery asked local residents to interact with our unique sculpture collection by placing objects on or around them and sending photographs of their intervention to the Gallery. The display of these photographs opened on 24th April, and will close on 20th July. Prizes will be awarded for the best entries. During the exhibition there will be a programme of free cycle tours of the sculptures, using and celebrating the new and improved sculpture map. Next year the Harlow Open will return in its usual format. For more information contact the Gallery at 01279 446404

Here are a selection of images from the exhibition, with the artist's name below. With thanks to the Gibberd Gallery.



Julie Arnall



Michael Brown

James Smith

Jon Clempner



Corey Kitchen



Corrina Dunlea

Sheep in Tuscany

Sculpture Guardians – your chance to volunteer

Harlow Art Trust and the Gibberd Gallery have been successful in recruiting several new volunteer Sculpture Guardians – all keen to get on with their tasks. They have already contributed to the re-installation in the Gallery of Sally Doig's The Wrestlers, supplying photos and material from the Archive to its exhibition.

At present Guardians are acting as Stewards while experts from Plowden and Smith are carrying out repairs to nine of our sculptures – informing the public about the process during two-hour shifts.

Schools across Harlow are signing up to 'Adopt a Sculpture', taking part in these projects during the summer and autumn terms. Guardians are helping to compile fact sheets about the works for teachers.

For more information, or to volunteer as a Guardian, contact Catherine Mummery at catherine@harlowarttrust.org.uk

Barbara Burge

Peace at last for Market Street?

The Marquis of Granby in Old Harlow, at the centre of public disturbances in the Market Street area over the past few months, has closed. Notices on the building state that bailiffs Dorman and Co have sealed up the premises and anyone trying to enter will be prosecuted. Local residents will be hoping that this peaceful state will be continued as long as possible.

Our Updated Website is now Live

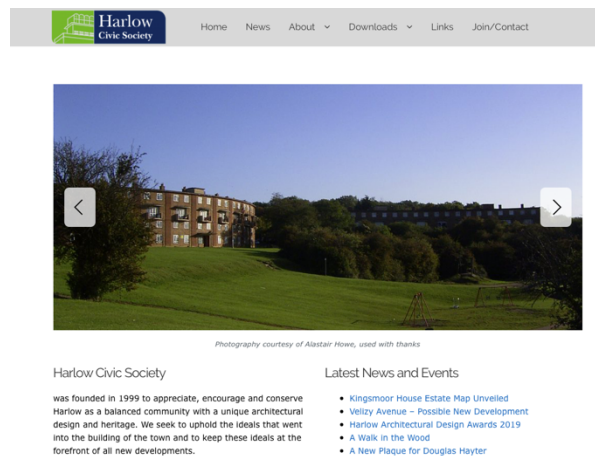
After not having a web presence for several years our updated site is now live at the following address:

<http://www.harlowcivicsociety.org.uk>

We will be posting news and information on events, so do keep a watch on the site. You can download copies of newsletters and other documents of interest.

We will be expanding and improving the content over the coming months and we would welcome your suggestions. You can do this by using the contact form on the site or by emailing harlowcivicsociety@gmail.com.

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter at the addresses given below.



Harlow Civic Society

was founded in 1999 to appreciate, encourage and conserve Harlow as a balanced community with a unique architectural design and heritage. We seek to uphold the ideals that went into the building of the town and to keep these ideals at the forefront of all new developments.

Latest News and Events

- Kingsmoor House Estate Map Unveiled
- Velly Avenue - Possible New Development
- Harlow Architectural Design Awards 2019
- A Walk in the Wood
- A New Plaque for Douglas Hayter

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In the days of the Development Corporation design matters were in the hands of their planners and architects with Sir Frederick Gibberd as consultant. Today, with design now the responsibility of many developers, we strive to ensure that the principles of Gibberd's master plan are safeguarded.

Membership is open to anyone who agrees with the aims of the society, which can be found below. To join, please complete the joining form [here](#).

Our Aims and Objectives:

- To encourage the best in new development
- To appreciate and conserve heritage
- To care for and about the natural and built environments of the town and surrounding areas
- To provide an open forum for discussion
- To act as a pressure group and co-ordinating body with other organisations
- To promote civic values by informing public opinion
- To provide young people in education with learning tools
- To protect the interests of local people and resist the loss of public assets, amenities and open spaces



Unveiling the plaque for Sir Frederick Gibberd

About Harlow Civic Society from our website

Harlow Civic Society is Online

We are at:

<http://www.harlowcivicsociety.org.uk>

Please like us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/HarlowCivicSociety>

and follow us on Twitter:

<https://www.twitter.com/HarlowCivicSoc>

Harlow Civic Society Committee

Stan Newens – Chair

John Curry – Vice-Chair

Tony Evans – Treasurer

Isobel Urquhart – Secretary

Barbara Burge – Press

All contributions to the Newsletter to Barbara Burge, b_a_burge@yahoo.co.uk

Harlow Civic Society welcomes new members. For information about joining contact the Treasurer by email at harlowcivicsociety@gmail.com or use the contact form on our web site.