

## The vital importance of trees

**N**ew national planning guidance places much greater emphasis on the importance of trees to the character and quality of our environment. It even goes as far as stating that planning decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments. This is particularly crucial to enhancing the special character of Harrogate.

That is why we support groups like the Pinewoods Conservation Group and why we press not only for the protection of existing trees (see Henry Pankhurst's planning piece on page 5) but also why we demand that all new developments feature significant numbers of tree planting.

## Station Gateway: serious concerns

After lengthy discussion, the society has submitted its response to the consultation on the latest proposals for the Station Gateway project. A summary of this response is given on page 6.

### In this issue ...

- Pinewoods Conservation Group
- A walk around Pannal
- Christmas Social
- Planning report
- Harrogate Station Gateway
- Down your Street
- Next events

*Autumn in the Pinewoods. On page 2 we feature an article on the work of the Pinewoods Conservation Group.*

*Photo: Julia Poulton*

**As this is the last newsletter of 2021 may we wish all our members a safe and happy Christmas. We hope to see many of you at our Christmas social on 12 December in St Wilfrid's Church hall. See page 4.**



# Pinewoods Conservation Group

*We are grateful to Neil Hind, Chairman of the Pinewoods Conservation Group, for providing this article.*

**2** 021 was another very busy year for the Pinewoods and the Pinewoods Conservation Group. As we suspect many HCS members know, the Pinewoods is almost 100 acres of woodland between Valley Gardens and RHS Harlow Carr supported by the charity Pinewoods Conservation Group. But what have we been up to?

**The Lockdown Effect:** The continuation of the pandemic and lockdowns has seen a massive increase in usage of the Pinewoods with many residents discovering what has always been on their doorstep. We know from feedback the woods became an important asset for many as part of their outdoor activity. Following our 1<sup>st</sup> virtual AGM we were able to hold some face to face events with a tree walk and a number of work sessions with our supporters and volunteers. Hopefully more of these in 2022!

**Climate Agenda:** With increased awareness of the benefits of trees to counter climate change we have been fortunate to attend several events promoting our work, most recently the Harrogate Climate Festival as part of COP26.

Working with Harrogate Council we've reduced the cutting of Irongate Field. Recent biodiversity work is now paying dividends with a massive increase in wild orchids in that area and the neighbouring Rotary Wood section.

**Volunteering Support:** Being entirely volunteer based we rely on our committee members and supporters for everything we do. A lot of this work happens behind the scenes, but we know it makes a massive difference.

Continuing from the lockdown we have a group of litter pickers who can often be seen out in the woods. Unfortunately, with increased use of the Pinewoods comes increased litter that remains a concern, so we are



*Above: A stunning 360 degree aerial photograph with RHS Harlow Carr at the top*

*Below: looking south over Harrogate Spring Water*

*Photos: courtesy of Caught Light Photography Ltd*

always pleased to be joined by local schools, youth groups and businesses. We also have a new Bird Feeding group ensuring our many bird feeders are kept clean and topped up.

**Harrogate Spring Water Development:** Following the successful rejection in Jan 2021 of an application to increase the size of the planned expansion of the bottling plant into Rotary Wood we are disappointed to confirm that a new application is due shortly. We are still waiting for confirmation as to the scale and detail of these new plans but understand they could be submitted over the next few months. As a reminder, an historic outline permission remains for a smaller extension.

As always, the continued support of Harrogate residents is appreciated, from signing up as members, joining us on work days, and to the inevitable objection to planning applications. You could also support us at Christmas with the purchase of our limited Pinewoods Gin via [pinewoodsconservationgroup.org.uk/gin](https://pinewoodsconservationgroup.org.uk/gin). Cheers!



## A walk round Pannal: 26 September

A report by Angela Fahy



Society members assembled in glorious sunshine for a guided walk around Pannal. Our luck with the weather continues, as our York Gate Gardens visit was a similarly good day. Our group of 15 included our guide Anne (former Chair of HCS, among her many roles), one founder member of the Society, one of our newest members (who cycled from Harrogate to join us) and an honorary 4 legged member.

Starting in the graveyard of historic St Robert's of Knaresborough Church, parts of which date from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, we were introduced to some of the oldest, long gone, residents and saw the coffin stones installed to deter body snatchers. We progressed up Church Lane noting the few surviving older houses engulfed by housing development from the 1960s onwards. In the case of Rosehurst (built in 1833) the house was

demolished and the gardens developed as the housing area know as Rosedale. Fortunately Anne secured Pannal's first ever Tree Preservation Order in 1969, saving one of its finest trees.

Other points of interest were the Parochial Hall (1887) strangely distant from the Church, the quarry (which closed in 1927), the many former shops (now private homes) such as the one on Pannal Bridge. One of our group recalled buying sherbet some decades ago from a shop which stood on what is now grass verge by the church car park. This was just one of what were once 13 shops in the village.

Set back from the main road are the remains of the Pannal Corn Mill, dating from 1765, though there had been a mill there since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was a working mill until 1947 and the mill wheel can still be seen, as well as a number of mill stones (now acting as garden ornaments). The mill pond survives, owned by the adjoining houses and managed through the Pannal Mill Dam Association.

After more than an hour we had only scratched the surface of the village's long history. The settlement is much older than Harrogate, with records of a market here in 1305. Much more can be learned about both Pannal and Burn Bridge from Anne's latest book (see photo left) which is available from Pannal Post Office.

Anne Smith



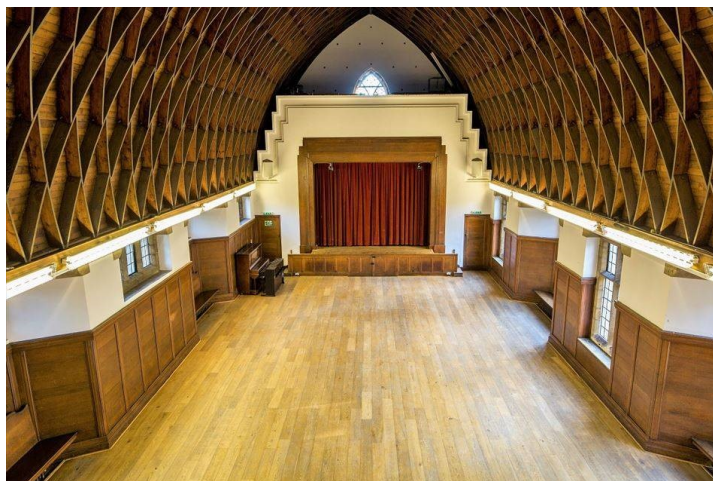
Anne Smith can be contacted at [annesmith.pannal@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:annesmith.pannal@yahoo.co.uk)

# The Civic Society Christmas Social

St Wilfrid's hall (pictured right) is very spacious, with high ceilings and doors at either end for cross ventilation. We are sure that even with social distancing and mask wearing (if required, advised or your choice) it will be a very convivial event.



If the lure of tea, coffee, wine and mince pies is not enough we are also offering the opportunity to do some Christmas shopping!

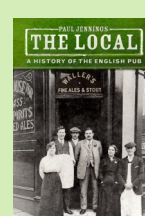
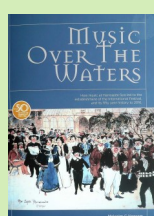
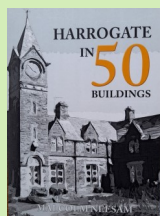
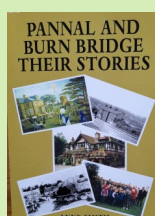
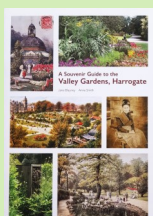


There will also be a short talk by Dr Paul Jennings entitled 'Winter's tales in Harrogate'.

**Books** on local history, quite a few by Society members, will be on sale. (cash or cheques please)

Bill Williams: *Bilton Through the Ages* (£4)  
Terry Williams: *New Park Heritage Trail* (£2)  
Jane Blayney and Anne Smith: *A Souvenir Guide to the Valley Gardens* (£5)

Anne Smith: *Pannal and Burn Bridge Their Stories* (£10)  
Paul Jennings : *The Local: The History of the British Pub* (£12.99)  
Paul Jennings: *Working Class Lives in Edwardian Harrogate* (£14.99)



Malcolm Neesam will be making available a number of out of print/hard to find books:

Ackrill Press: *Old Harrogate* 1935. This very rare title contains hundreds of old Harrogate photographs from the now destroyed photographic archive of the former Ackrill Press. Antiquarian copies now sell for around £80 to £100 each. A small number of unused, perfect copies recently came to light and may be purchased for £50 each.

Neesam, Malcolm : *A-Z of Harrogate*. Amberley Books. 2019. Retails at £14.99. Special offer of £10.

Neesam, Malcolm: *Harrogate in fifty buildings*. Amberley Books. 2018. Retails at £14.99. Special offer of £10.

Neesam, Malcolm: *Music Over the Waters*. Manor Place Press. 2018. Written to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Harrogate International Festivals, "Music Over the Waters" is a detailed history of music making - of every variety - in Harrogate. With nearly 500 pages of text, plus 262 illustrative

plates, and a published price of £25, a limited number of copies have been made available at £10 each, with all proceeds going to Harrogate International Festivals.

Newby, George: *Behind the Firedoors - Samson Fox's Corrugate Boiler Flu*. 1979. Long out of print paperback, this rare monograph is available for sale at £5.

Walker, H H: *History of Harrogate Under the Improvement Commissioners, 1841-1883*. Manor Place Press. 1985. The standard work on Harrogate's Improvement Commissioner administration. Long out of print, this is sometimes available in second hand format on ABE Books at between £20-£34. A few mint copies are now offered at £15 each.

Walker, H H: *History of the Stray*. 1975. Long out of print paper back, and sometimes available second hand on ABE Books for between £7.50 and £15, this is offered at £5.

## Planning Report: Tree Works

Trees are increasingly important to the cause of carbon reduction. Their role in the planning system is the focus of this month's planning report by Henry Pankhurst.

It is the time of year when thoughts turn to pruning, reducing or felling. There are two categories of tree work applications – works to trees with tree preservation orders (TPO) and trees in a conservation area (TCON). Trees outside of a conservation area only have protection if a TPO has been placed upon them. Works to TPO trees and TCON trees may involve only minor operations, such as removing a single branch or reducing the length of branches if they are very close to buildings.

An application has to be made to fell a tree in a conservation area that has a stem more than 75mm in diameter, 1m above ground. The Council has 6 weeks to respond to TCON applications. If no response is made (this is unlikely) the applicant is allowed to go ahead with the work. The decision on TCON applications could be that the proposal is allowed, allowed in part or refused. Refusal would occur if the tree is of significant amenity value, in which case a provisional TPO could be placed on the tree which would come into force immediately. The TPO would need to be confirmed within 6 months by the planning committee. TPO and TCON applications do not attract a fee.

There is a complicated evaluation procedure to be gone through before a TPO is placed that includes a scoring system under various headings. Having been satisfactorily scored under Amenity Assessment any threats to the tree are judged and scored. If a zero score is given on any part of the amenity section or it is a very low score the tree will fail the test. Otherwise, factors including special

***There are two categories of tree work applications – works to trees with tree preservation orders (TPO) and trees in a conservation area (TCON).***



*Belford Place*

historic interest, rarity and group value plus an assessment of any threats to the tree will be judged and scored. TPOs can cover individual trees, groups of trees, woodlands or trees in a defined area. Even if a tree or a branch of a tree with a TPO is in a dangerous condition the Council must still be given 5 days notice before work is carried out.

There is a very beautiful weeping willow tree in Belford Place (near Rogers Almshouses and St. Peters School) that developed a large crack in a substantial branch recently. This was cut off under the 5 day rule but I am pleased that the tree was not allowed to be felled. Many applications to fell a tree with a TPO are refused because the evidence of damage to buildings or potential danger is not strong enough. I have seen requests to fell for such reasons as 'the leaves fall off' or 'bits fall on the car' or 'there is a crack in the garden wall'. Proof of damage or danger that cannot be solved by means other than felling can be difficult. If felling is allowed replacement planting will usually be required. Trees are powerful in planning terms!

*Henry Pankhurst*

# Station Gateway: What does the Civic Society make of it?

Around 35 members, including the committee, attended a meeting held in St Paul's church hall (*pictured below*) on the evening of 26 October to discuss the latest proposals by Harrogate Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council for the Station Gateway project.

The meeting consisted of several separate group discussions and the feedback from these groups has been assembled in order to present a comprehensive Civic Society response back to the councils by the closing date of 12 November.

A summary of our response is given below.



## Our Major Objections

As indicated in the Society's response to the first consultation exercise, in the absence of wider strategic thinking to address traffic flow through the town (including the possibility of re-introducing two-way traffic along West Park and Parliament Street, and the potential for Park and Ride), the proposal will result in **traffic congestion** throughout the town centre and a consequential increase in air pollution.

- The proposal does not adequately consider the needs and safety of **pedestrians**, particularly the elderly, the disabled, and young families. It is considered that the proposal will result in a worse environment for pedestrians than the present layout.
- Traffic **safety** issues will arise with potential conflicts and confusion over the flow of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, particularly at some of the junctions.
- The design proposals for Station Square are poor and do not reflect **Harrogate's distinctive character** as a floral town.
- The statement that the one-lane proposal for Station Parade was the preferred option after the first consultation is **misleading**, as the combined numbers

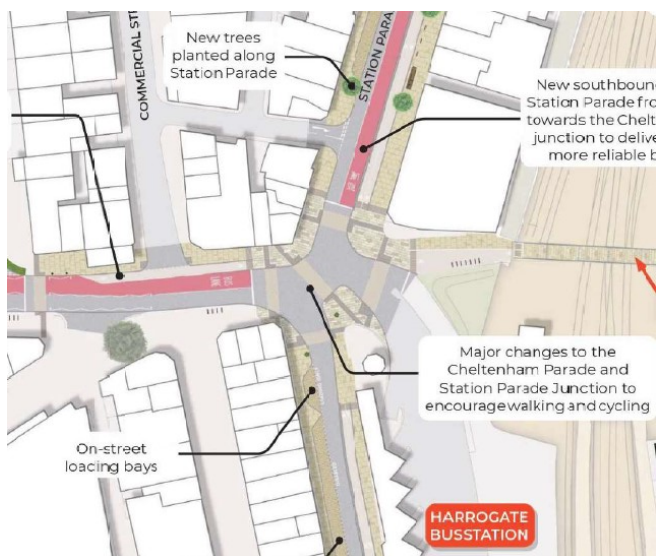
supporting those options that showed two lanes being retained was greater than those supporting the one-lane option. This undermines the basis of the present proposal.

There was agreement between all of those involved that traffic (especially through traffic) and congestion is a problem in the town, that the environment for both pedestrians and cyclists must be improved, that businesses in the town centre should be supported through infrastructure improvement, and that the town centre should be a better place for those living in it but this scheme, in its present form, does not achieve this.

**Given these major objections, the Society would prefer to see the whole proposal reconsidered, even though this may mean that Harrogate would lose the opportunity for improvement though this particular source of funding (Transforming Cities Fund).**

Members will have received a copy of the full text of the Civic Society's comments, and have been encouraged to make their own individual representations on the consultation portal.

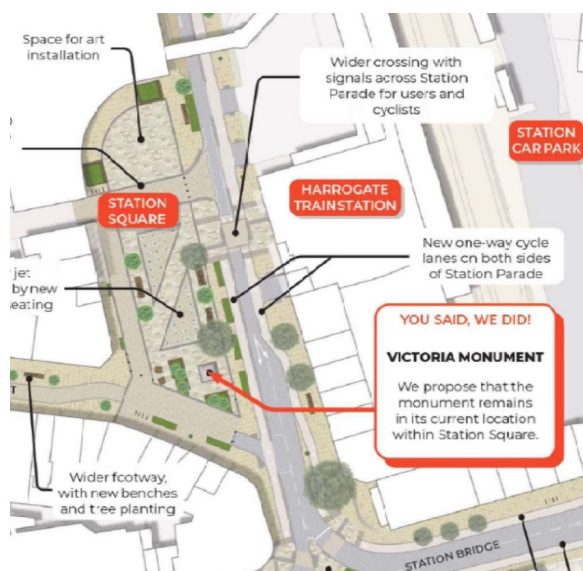
*Extracts from the Gateway Plans are shown on the next page*



Two extracts from the Gateway plans

Left: Cheltenham Parade / Station Parade junction

Right: Station Square



## Our next talk: Tuesday 18 January 7.30 pm at the Library

2019 was the 100th anniversary of the death of Andrew Carnegie, one of the greatest philanthropists in history. He helped fund over 2800 libraries throughout the world, including two in North Yorkshire: Harrogate and Skipton.

This talk will be a personal reflection by Councillor Jim Clark, a fellow Scot, on the impact that Andrew Carnegie had on Harrogate, North Yorkshire and the wider world.

Please book by email to [events@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:events@harrogatecivicsociety.org)



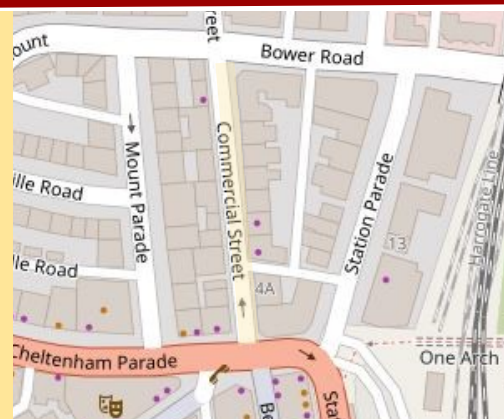
## Future events

We are working to finalise a full programme of talks and events for next year and plan to publish a list in the next issue of the newsletter which will be in January 2022.

Information on all 2022 events will be on the website where you will be able to find up-to-date details.

## 'Down Your Street' - continuing the series

Dr Paul Jennings, who has written many articles for our history group, has produced a new 'Down Your Street' article for our website - this time the street in question is **Commercial Street**, the well-known town centre shopping street. Take a look to see the great number and diversity of businesses that have traded there over the years.



<b>Contact us:</b>	General matters .. ..	<a href="mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org">info@harrogatecivicsociety.org</a>
	Membership queries .. ..	<a href="mailto:membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org">membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org</a>
	Event bookings .. ..	<a href="mailto:events@harrogatecivicsociety.org">events@harrogatecivicsociety.org</a>

Published by Harrogate Civic Society

Website: [www.harrogatecivicsociety.org](http://www.harrogatecivicsociety.org)

Registered Charity no. 501055

Plaques website: [www.harrogateplaques.org](http://www.harrogateplaques.org)