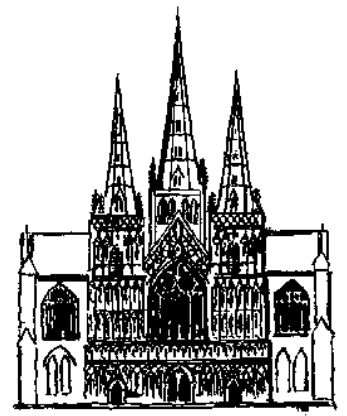


LICHFIELD CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



MAY 2012

President - Roger Hockney
Chairman - John Thompson

COMMITTEE CLIPPINGS

MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 450 HOUSES, A PRIMARY SCHOOL AND 'COMMUNITY HUB' INCLUDING RETAIL FOR LAND SOUTH OF SHORTBUTTS LANE LICHFIELD

Following on from a public exhibition by the developers Persimmon last November a planning application has now been submitted. The Executive Committee reconsidered the proposals and remains convinced that they should not be approved for the following reasons:-

1. **PREMATURITY**.....The Council's revisions to the draft Core Strategy as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) are due to be published for formal consultation in July 2012. Although this site was one of several potential sites identified in the draft document no final decision has yet been made by the Council on preferred locations. Nor has the scale of housing provision required for the District been finalised and this will have a fundamental impact upon the number of sites required. The study that has been commissioned by Lichfield District Council jointly with Tamworth Borough Council and Cannock Chase District Council into the scale of housing likely to be needed within the LDF plan period including the demand for affordable housing has not yet been made public. Until that report has been considered and the Core Strategy progressed to formal adoption following a public inquiry consideration of any potential strategic development sites is clearly premature.
2. **ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE**.....Although the application is in outline (i.e. to establish the principle of development) the issue of access is a full application. A significant length of the Southern By-pass is proposed to be built from a new junction with London Road to the Cross City railway line where it stops. The failure to include construction of the rail line under bridge and the final connection to the already built section of the By-pass is a major flaw. If approved as submitted it will create major difficulties and delay for years the completion of the Southern By-pass for Lichfield. We believe it should be a fundamental requirement that the extension of the Southern By-pass with construction of the rail line under bridge and connection to the recently built roundabout on Birmingham Road precedes the use or occupation of any development. We hope the Staffordshire County Council Highways Service will take a firm line on this issue although submission of the current proposals suggests they may be content with this wholly unsatisfactory approach. The delays in securing the rail under bridge for the Walsall Road/Darwin Park development illustrates that entering into an agreement with the County Council and depositing the monies to undertake works does not avoid years of unacceptable delays which should not be repeated here.

3. **PROTECTION OF THE GREEN BELT**.....We consider that steps must be taken if development is permitted to ensure that the designated Green Belt within the area of the Masterplan or on adjoining land is not at risk of subsequent or associated development of a type not acceptable in the Green Belt. For this reason the ownership of proposed areas of public open space must transfer to the local authority with sufficient funds for future management to ensure it is preserved for all time as open space.

If you have views on the application please do submit them to the Council in writing or on-line by 21st May. Full details of the proposals are available on the Lichfield District Council's web site at:-

<http://planning.lichfielddc.gov.uk/online->

[applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyval=LZFNE8JE05C00](http://planning.lichfielddc.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyval=LZFNE8JE05C00)

SANDFIELDS PUMPING STATION ENGINE HOUSE

Last year a member of the public contacted the Society about the delays by Persimmon in establishing arrangements for the future management of the Sandfields Pumping Station Engine House and an important 1873 Cornish steam engine. Although Persimmon acquired the building in April 2005 with contractual and planning obligations to make these arrangements they are not in place seven years on. Following our contacts with South Staffordshire Water and planning enforcement at Lichfield District Council some progress is now being made. Meetings have been held by the parties concerned and discussions about establishing appropriate arrangements have commenced. We hope these are resolved without further delays. What is obviously important if a charitable trust is established is that it receives a sufficiently large endowment to ensure the future maintenance of this important historic building and engine.

JT



MAY SPEAKER MEETING

At our May meeting PATRICIA SCAIFE will give a talk to the Society on the subject of LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL IN THE 15TH CENTURY. As a sub text to her subject matter Patricia has described the Cathedral as 'THE VERY MODEL OF A MEDIEVAL MINSTER'.

The talk will be at St Mary's Centre on Tuesday 15 May commencing at 7.45 pm.visitors are welcome at a charge of £3.....Society members are, of course, free.

.....Sounds intriguing so make sure you're there.....TC

SECTION 106 PROJECTS

Members will recollect that some 18 months ago the Civic Society was approached by the District Council and asked whether the Society would be prepared to promote two Section 106 Projects. The sites were the Birmingham Road/John St. junction adjacent to the Co-op Funeral Service building and the parcel of land outside Thrales between Backcester Lane and Tamworth Street. The Society prepared sketch schemes that were accepted by the Council, funds were allocated but since then, for various reasons, no substantial progress has been made. At a recent meeting with Council officers, however, the Society was advised that the projects were still live and the allocated funds still in place and further a meeting to discuss the two projects would be held in June/July.....I hope that this is not yet another false dawn and progress will be made.....I will report progress or lack of in due course!

Not surprisingly the passing of the Olympic flame through Lichfield has spurred the Council into action and a "tidy up" programme appears to be under way. In respect of the above sites the Council intends to carry out minor soft landscaping works, ie. planting seasonal bedding plants and replacing an existing damaged bench. The cost of this work will be covered by the available funds for the sites referred to above. As sponsors of the original schemes the Society was asked by the Council to formally give its support to the proposed minor work to which the Society has confirmed its agreement.

Members may have read in the press that the Council were inviting bids from the public for currently available Section 106 monies to fund local projects. The Executive Committee agreed to make a bid for funds to re-furbish/repair/replace signage within the Conservation area. eg. historical signs in the market place, signs identifying the location of the gates, etc. 32 signs in all. Existing signs were surveyed, repair work costed, forms completed and boxes ticked - unfortunately the Council deemed our application was submitted late and therefore, could not be considered. Who knows, someone in the Council might hear of our survey and might agree that the City's signage is in a poor state and might decide to find some money to carry out the necessary work...one can but dream.

DD

ARTHUR PRICE BY SIMON PRICE

Simon Price, head of Lichfield's well known cutlery firm, gave a lively talk to members and visitors at our April meeting.

Great grandfather Arthur established the company in 1902 as A Price & Co Ltd in premises on Gem Street, Aston, in Birmingham, after leaving school at 14 and working for various cutlery companies. Amongst the company's many "firsts" was the manufacture of chromium plate spoons and forks, the forerunner of today's stainless steel. 1911 saw the company make the first of a number of moves to larger premises, this time to Conybere Street, Birmingham. A further move took place as World War I began to Vauxhall Street, again in Birmingham. Weathering the inter War Depression, problems confronted the firm in the late thirties with the retirement, then death, of Arthur and the loss of business with the outbreak of World War II.

Arthur's two sons, Frederick and Arthur successfully negotiated a contract to manufacture aircraft parts, thus saving the company from closure, only for Arthur to die at the relatively early age of 50. By 1948, the company was being run by Frederick's son, John. Who renamed it as "Arthur Price of England", a name since abandoned. 1982 saw the company end its long association with Birmingham, relocating its head office and warehousing/distribution operation to Lichfield. In fact the Britannia Industrial Estate on which the company is based, is so named because of a request from John Price at the time of relocation. At the same time, manufacturing operations were moved to Sheffield, where today Simon has a staff of 45 skilled workers. By 1994, when Simon took over the reins, the company had also acquired one of its competitors, George Butler & Co.

In today's competitive world, innovation is the key. Simon has led the company successfully, by providing products which are of high quality throughout the price range and branching out into designing and marketing other gifts. Predictably, Arthur Price Diamond Jubilee mugs, jointly designed with Lawrence Llewellyn Bowen are about to reach the shops. You'll also find Arthur Price cutlery at the renovated Savoy Hotel in London, aboard cruise liners, on Prince William's dining table (the firm hold two royal warrants) and....at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean in the wreck of the Titanic. Arthur Price & Co designed special dining services for the ill fated ship, some of which have been recovered. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the disaster, the cutlery used in first class has been recreated. Five of the sets will be taken down in a diving submersible to the wreck this year, prior to distribution to museums. Two sets will be sold: the proceeds of one going to a national charity, the other to a local one.

Simon finished with some little known information. Cutlery includes knife handled pieces; flatware means spoons and forks. These are pieces that are flat and then beaten or pressed into shape. Birmingham concentrated on the latter, whilst Sheffield was the premier location for knife production. Also, please note that a hunting knife is pointed, but a table knife is rounded! The fork was slow to gain favour in Britain. Originating in the 7th century in the Middle East, it was not until the 17th century that it was in use by wealthy persons in England and even then was regarded as a somewhat effeminate article. The earliest reference in England to a spoon was in a will of 1259.

Simon is a wholehearted supporter of, as he puts it "the beautiful City of Lichfield". He takes pride in having been invited to be the 456th Sheriff of Lichfield and as many members will know, plays a prominent part in supporting other local initiatives. Currently he is very much involved in giving financial aid to small community groups through the We Love Lichfield Fund.

Simon's talk was both informative and highly entertaining. Audience involvement was mandatory and we were close to getting the answer correct to the question "what are the origins of the phrase "wooden spoon?" Members who attended now know the answer....those who read this article will have to guess!

RH