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PROGRAMME FOR 2014***Rediscover Hertford Priory lecture, 26 February 2014***

In the words of our first speaker, Chris Holdys: 'Re-live Hertford's glorious past, exploring the site of the long-lost Hertford Priory. Learn about the life of a Benedictine Monk and the subsequent story of the Priory Fields.' To bring to life the importance of Hertford Priory for the town in the Middle Ages, Chris Holdys has created a wonderful 3D scale model of the priory, which he will be showing at the meeting. The priory was in the same area of Hertford as the Roman Catholic church and its hall in which we meet.

Debate on the District Plan 19 March 2014

With the District Plan expected to be starting its three months of consultation in mid February, this event will be a special opportunity for members to learn about and engage in discussion and debate about the District Plan, particularly the proposals for additional housing in and around Hertford. We already know that areas to the west of Hertford are being suggested for hundreds of new houses. What do we think of these ideas? We are expecting an official from the District Council to give a brief summary, though that person would then depart, as this is an event primarily for members, to help shape the Society's response to the District Plan.

AGM followed by talk: What's happening at Panshanger? 30 April 2014

After the formal business of the AGM, Richard Threlfall, who is involved on behalf of the Society with the Friends of Panshanger, will talk about ongoing efforts to ensure that it becomes the accessible Country Park that has long been promised and for which we have waited so long. Indeed, progress is already being made, as you will hear.

Visit to Faversham in Kent 21 May 2014

We can look forward to a fabulous visit to Faversham, as pretty and as historic a place as any, in Kent. Sir Nicholas Pevsner talks fondly of Faversham as "one of the most rewarding towns in the county", commending it especially for its many delightful details. Anyone who watched 'Southcliffe' on Channel 4 in the autumn of 2013 is likely to have developed a taste for the place. The key pub - the Shipwright's Arms in real life - is well worth a visit. We will however start off with a full walking tour, arranged for us through the local civic society, which is a very flourishing concern. Faversham was recommended to us in 2014 by one of our regulars: many thanks, Sally Miles. There's an abbey and other churches of interest, besides an historic creek and port area, and a well-known brewery (Shepherd Neame). Something for everyone, including a delightful market square fringed with cafes.

Summer party 25 June 2014

Courtesy of Jeremy and Linda Secker, our annual summer party will be in the garden of Amores, on one of the longest evenings of the year. Amores is the prominent half-timbered building close to the church in Hertingfordbury, with a triangular garden bounded on all three sides by minor roads. We hope to say a little more in a future Newsletter.

The Has-Beane? The disappearing River Beane lecture, 15 October 2014

Dave Stimpson, Chairman of the River Beane Preservation Association, will talk about the plight of perhaps the most endangered of Hertford's four rivers. Once a revered trout stream, the World Wildlife Fund now sees this precious chalk stream as endangered. Dave Stimpson will outline efforts to save the Beane.

Commemorating Alfred Russel Wallace: the value of public art commissions lecture, 19 November 2014

Our final speaker is Rodney Munday, the local sculptor who won the recent competition to create a sculpture of Wallace, destined for an exterior wall of Hertford Theatre. He will initially reflect on different ways of commissioning of the arts, before talking about his own preferred approach, and how this has helped him in making successful sculpture for different settings around the world. In case anyone needs a reminder, Wallace, who grew up in

Hertford, was, alongside Darwin, a key figure in articulating the concept of evolution. The sculpture competition was a joint initiative of Hertford Civic Society and East Herts Council, with additional financial support from the Town Council.

Our venue

This remains the church hall in St John's Street. If you have comments about this or any other aspect of the programme, please do not hesitate to contact Malcolm Ramsay (01992 500002). For further details of our activities, please see the printed annual programme, which also provides additional contact details for Malcolm, as does this newsletter.

Malcolm Ramsay

PLANNING MATTERS

Tudor Way and Hutton Close:

This application, which involves building 3 three-storey blocks of flats in the space between the Welwyn Road (opposite Sele School) and the existing flats in Hutton Close, has still not been decided. Discussions between the applicants (Riversmead) and Council officers have resulted in substantial changes to the layout: the amount of land taken for access roads and parking has been reduced, the flats have been redesigned to minimise overlooking and the proposed blocks are now lower than originally planned. These are all improvements, but our 'in principle' objection to the loss

of this important green space stands.

Scott House, Hagsdell Road:

Scott House stands in extensive grounds on the south side of Hagsdell Road. Used as offices until recently, it is now vacant and an application was made to convert the house and adjoining stables into flats. In addition, there would have been three new houses, two of them on the rising ground behind the house, which overlooks the neighbouring houses in Valley Close and includes a large number of mature trees. The site is in the conservation area so it is particularly important that any new development should respect its surroundings, but it was not possible to tell from the plans published on the Council's website whether or not the loss of trees and the relationship between the new houses and their neighbours would be acceptable. We urged the Council not to grant permission without clearer information. In the event, officers wrote a report recommending refusal, mainly because so many trees would have been lost, and this recommendation prompted the developer to withdraw the application.

Lafarge Depot, Sacombe Road:

Waterford Lafarge Tarmac have some redundant maintenance buildings on Sacombe Road near its junction with Vicarage Lane. They were previously associated with the former quarry which is now Waterford Heath nature

reserve. For some years the owners have been seeking to replace the redundant buildings with a small number of houses, but we have supported the Council's stance that any new building would be unacceptable because the site is in the Green Belt. Following lengthy negotiations between the landowners and an ad hoc committee representing local residents, interest groups and neighbouring parish councils (the site is on the very edge of Hertford), a revised proposal for just 8 houses has been put forward, with the support of that committee, as part of a package including a management scheme for the heath and the demolition of some other derelict barns.

Lafarge have pointed out that the maintenance buildings have a permanent planning permission for employment use which was granted in the 1960s with no conditions to control, for example, hours of work. This means they could be let out or sold on for various kinds of industrial or storage activity. Neighbouring residents and wildlife groups are concerned that this could have a far more serious impact on the Green Belt and the nature reserve than a small housing development. Normally we would support the Council's policy to retain existing employment uses, but in this case there would be no way of safeguarding the amenity of the surrounding area by regulating the way the land was used. We therefore decided not to object to the proposal, provided conditions are imposed to make sure that it is implemented in accordance with the consensus reached between the landowners

and the ad hoc committee. The decision is awaited.

Sovereign House:

This prominent 1960s office block on the south side of Gascoyne Way has been vacant for some time. The owners have made two applications for permission – one to convert the existing building into 63 flats, and the other to demolish the building and replace it with 90 flats, arranged in two smaller blocks. Following a recent change in the law, the Council now have very limited powers to stop an office block being converted into flats, though they could prevent the change if they could show there would be adverse transport or highways impacts. We argued that there would be an adverse impact in this case because, according to the Council's own parking standards, the 60 parking spaces available would be insufficient for the 63 proposed flats, so increasing the pressure on parking space in nearby streets. We asked that permission should not be granted unless additional parking spaces are made available in part of the basement of the building.

The applicants have made no secret of the fact that their preference would be to replace the existing structure entirely and there are probably few people in Hertford who would regret the loss of this ugly building. The new legislation restricting the Council's powers does not apply to an application for a new building, so all aspects of the proposal can be considered in detail before deciding whether or not to grant

permission. We have raised three issues: the lack of sufficient parking (83 spaces for 90 flats, with none for visitors), the lack of clarity about who would maintain and control a proposed 'pocket park' and, perhaps most important, the fact that none of the proposed flats would be "affordable" units available to local people in housing need. But the "affordable housing" question poses the Council with a dilemma: if they require the developers to provide a number of affordable units which they think will make the scheme non-viable they may opt to convert the existing building instead or, worse still, leave it to rot. At the time of writing neither of the applications on Sovereign House had been decided.

District Plan

The draft plan is expected to be published for consultation in February. Although Hertford is likely to have to absorb less new development than other towns in East Herts, there will almost certainly be controversial proposals for house building on land which is at present in the Green Belt. A meeting will be arranged at which members can give their views on the proposals.

Peter Norman, for the Planning Subcommittee

CELEBRATING WALLACE AT HIS CENTENARY

Sculpture competition: final outcome

Thanks to an initiative by Hertford Civic Society, East Herts Council and Hertford Town Council, Hertford will now be getting its own sculpture celebrating Wallace. The sculpture will adorn a bare brick wall at Hertford Theatre. It will not be far from the statue of another Hertford hero, Samuel Stone, founder of the much larger Hartford in the United States.

A full open competition was held this summer, starting in June, when details were publicised on the website of East Herts Council. A prize or fee of up to ten thousand pounds was offered. At the end of August, the public were invited to inspect the rival designs, on exhibition in the foyer of Hertford Theatre. More than 80 people completed a feedback form designed to highlight their top two designs, and their underlying reasons. This helped the Selection Group with the final decision-making process: it showed that designs which included animals or birds were preferred by the public.

Winner: Rodney Munday

The final winner is a local sculptor, Rodney Munday. He is based in Much Hadham, though some of his work is abroad (www.rodney-munday-sculptor.co.uk). He went to the same Hertford school as Wallace. The sculpture will show Wallace

reaching up to a bird of paradise, a key species in his collection. The finished work will be two metres tall, and will be cast in bronze resin, a medium of choice for modern sculptors - durable, light, though not attractive to thieves, unlike pure bronze. It will take until spring 2014 for the work to be completed and installed on the exterior wall of Hertford Theatre. Watch that space.

Malcolm Ramsay

Letter to the Editor

Wallace and Darwin in the context of the time

The wish to celebrate the achievements of Alfred Russel Wallace as one of the greatest C19th naturalists ought to take place with an account of the climate of the period.

By the beginning of the C18th there had been a rapid progress in science. Evidence was beginning to support materialist ideas that life had evolved over a huge time scale. Wallace was one of the scientists involved in a long process which would lead to the support of theories on transmutation or evolution.

Prominent people, including scientists, were hostile to the emergence of such ideas. There was a notable uproar in 1844 following the publication of "Vestiges of Creation - (subtitled) Natural Laws of Development in the Universe" with the author deciding to remain anonymous.

In a letter by Rev. Adam Sedgwick, Professor of Geology, Cambridge, to Darwin Nov 24 1859, following his reading of

"The Origin of Species", the professor declared that "There is a moral or metaphysical part of nature as well as physical. A man who denies this is deep in the mire of folly. 'Tis the glory of organic science that it *does* through *final cause* link material to moral. Were it possible (thank God it is not) to break it, humanity would suffer a damage that might brutalize it - and sink the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history".

Wallace, who worked abroad for long periods as an observer and collector, would have been relatively distant from the fiercest criticism.

But Darwin was not in this position, and expressed fear of the hostile climate. As well as his theory being deeply heretical to many of his scientific colleagues, it was also troubling at a domestic level. It caused his wife to write "that his religious doubts would mean that he might not be saved and join her in the after life". "His opinions cannot be a sin but a painful void between us."

Although by 1844 he had prepared a manuscript with the message that evolution was a reality, Darwin felt he had to reinforce his theory before publication. He needed to make a convincing case for his "one long argument", so he immersed in further detailed scientific work at his home and garden at Down House.

Publication of his work was precipitated when in 1858 Darwin records that "Mr Wallace

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sent me an essay on 'The Tendency of Varieties to Depart from the Original Type' - an essay with exactly the same theory as mine."

Described as a bombshell, Lyell and Hooker were contacted and they arranged to have both papers read at a meeting of the Linnaean Society, an event which caused relatively little interest.

"On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life" appeared in 1859. It was later acknowledged by Wallace as a book "articulating the idea more completely than he had." They had both gathered evidence on evolution in the strikingly different areas of S.E Asia and Kent.

In 1871 Darwin's "The Descent of Man" tackled the most contentious issue of all, the evolution of humans. This title, along with that of his final publication "The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms" (1881) could suggest his scope, at opposite ends of the scientific spectrum, has some connection with his privileged and wealthy background, in contrast to that of Wallace.

Fine distinctions and concentration on side issues make fertile ground for determined opponents. My sources give me the picture above - centred round a struggle to withstand establishment pressures of that time. These are still present.

M. Booker

Further information at the Darwin Correspondence Project, based at the University of Cambridge, at:

<http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/entry-2548>.

PREVIOUS TALKS TO MEMBERS

Rights of Way in and around Hertford

When Lord Cowper accosted a walker in late C19th and demanded to know "what are you doing on my estate?" he triggered an exchange that would provide a vital piece of evidence for developments today.

Further inquiries revealed that the man was entitled to walk through Panshanger estate and so Lord Cowper apologised in a letter acknowledging the public right of way. That letter still exists and provided a vital piece of evidence which Lafarge Tarmac, the current owners, accepted in ongoing negotiations with the local authority for public access to Panshanger Park with the ending of gravel extraction.

For Richard Cuthbert, head of access and rights of way for Hertfordshire County Council, this is more than a quirk of history; it symbolises how testimonies of everyday people, the residents of Hertford and the villages past and present, provide the evidence his team needs to get the best out of negotiations with planners and developers for public access.

“You are the eyes and ears out there,” he said in a talk to HCS about how and on what paths we can access the country estates (such as Panshanger, Goldings and Balls Park) and other places in and around Hertford. There was a formidable workload and much to win, but, with little likelihood of significant new resources in the near future given the austerity, public support was vital.

Nevertheless, in terms of government priorities, Hertfordshire was in a strong position, he said. “The Government is looking strategically nationwide for things that give improvement. We have one of only 15 government-designated Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) in the country. The focus for our nature improvement area is the Lea Valley and includes wildlife and public areas.”

Planning agreements also offer opportunities, he said. “Balls Park has been keeping one or two officers busy for the past couple of years,” he said. “As a result of planning permission conditions we can get a foot in the door and gain a Rights of Way (RoW) agreement using Section 106 funding (money developers pay to reduce their impact on the environment). To satisfy objections, we can upgrade footpaths and bridle ways and get new footpaths created; or better road crossings as we are with Foxholes.” The aim for Balls Park is to negotiate agreement on a bridleway round the north perimeter from Mangrove Road to London Road and also a footpath providing a loop around the development,

including a canal which was part of the early landscaping of the estate.

Since the RoW improvement regulations came in 10 years ago, the HCC team has achieved much. “Cycling clubs, walkers, riding groups and other user groups come to us. It is only when a development such as Balls Park comes along that we can capitalise on it and get new walks. Panshanger is also a great example of what we can do given the opportunity. Otherwise it depends on the landowner being philanthropic.”

The process can be very time-consuming however. In 1987, Hertford was promised a country park in Panshanger within ten years; “almost 30 years later we have still not got it”, he said, outlining in some detail the continuing negotiations, the trade-offs discussed and levers the public and professionals provide through planning objections and environmental considerations.

Developers themselves often did restorative work to be admired, he said. “They (Lafarge) are proud of the osprey lake, dragonfly reed beds and what they have done to protect the landscape and put it back to agricultural quality land. With the views of Repton landscape, Grade 2 listed, we give Lafarge credit that they have done a good job.” Current negotiations are trying to open up a more central east-west route through the park.

Nevertheless, Rights of Way can provoke resentment and need vigilant oversight, which is where a watchful public was essential,

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website at
www.hertfordcivicsociety.org.uk

he said, citing the new network of agreed definitive paths in Goldings. “The walks are now way-marked and you can walk the linking paths around Goldings. The trouble is someone is pulling down the way-mark signs. Within a week some are damaged, removed and stolen, and we have had a job getting them back again. We strongly suspect we know who it is. If we catch them they will be prosecuted because it’s a criminal offence.”

Apart from the prestigious projects such as Panshanger, Richard’s department must manage a huge range of work ranging from bridleways and dog-walker paths, to work resurfacing and clearly signposting paths, such as that by St Joseph’s school. “St Joseph’s was a dark path and is now a wider path, resurfaced and clearly signposted with a

clear signal of how far it goes and all the information you need on view. It involved local people, townspeople and the school and was a good partnership project.” (See picture p9)

The other side of the access picture is also delivered by the Countryside Access Service - woodland, grassland and pond management, attending to chalk rivers, where there are problems of conservation and management, and discouraging development around “honey pot” sites. Work currently includes promising routes in the Beane valley, linking Stapleford and Waterford, with a restored water course creating habitats for wildlife. Restoration and improvement work includes a sculpture trail in Broxbourne Wood (itself an SSSI) and restoration of the coppice in Bencroft Wood.

However, Rights of Way are not only about pretty routes; they promote health and welfare of a community. With an estimated 30% of adults inactive to the point of damaging their health, “there is an urgent need to encourage health walk areas,” he said. Starting with 20-minute stints and building up to more taxing walks, they were proving very successful. Walkers range from mums with pushchairs to people on health walks referred to them by GPs.

Despite looming local authority cuts, work done over the past ten years will last due to what Richard calls “the ‘bicycling’ effect; we are freewheeling for a while before the winters deteriorate them. We have not felt the full effect of budget cuts yet, but they are coming.” Essential cost-cutting already started includes a move from a five to three-year survey of needs, together with the work of the walkers and evidence from the general public. Route maps are also online only (with print-out options at the library) to save paper.

Richard’s aim is to maintain Hertford and its environs as a pleasant place to live, and there will soon be available an up-to-date map of all rights of way “It’s about you and me being able to go for a pleasant walk from outside our front door.” As plans for wider consideration emerge, he promised a full range of options. “What I hope the plan shows is a spider’s web of ‘desire’ lines - everything we’ve been told about by the public, routes here and there all charted on one map.” To make that sustainable, however, he needs

Improved path by St Joseph’s School



constant feedback from the public and so had one final message to the Civic Society meeting: "Keep sending the letters."

Ian Nash

Rights of way information available at

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/envplan/countrysideaccess/row/defmap/>

GREEN BELT REVIEW

This is a response to the Green Belt Review, especially as it relates to the area west of Hertford. Basically 300 homes are proposed for the area north of the B1000 and 250 south of it, making a total of 550. I shall omit any discussion of the methodology which has probably been modified to help achieve the main goals which is to provide more land for housing in the area.

The main points are as follows:

1. A Strategic Gap is needed between the County Town of Hertford and its two large neighbours, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. The belt of land in between is very narrow and just happens to have superb landscape and ecological value and is much needed for recreation and wildlife protection. This includes the area around the lakes at Panshanger where work has been carried out to try to attract

osprey to the area. The area also has historical importance because of the works of Repton and others. Any erosion of the edges of this buffer is going to do damage and that is what is proposed by changing this Green Belt boundary.

provide more food for owls and other birds of prey. Waterford Heath and Archers Spring are examples of such areas and the former is now an interesting nature reserve. Clearly, such areas should be included in the Green belt.

3. The areas considered for releasing from Green Belt designation include or abut ancient woodland, Wildlife Sites and areas with Tree Preservation Orders (Lady Hughes Wood). Ancient Woodland is a designation of the Nature Conservancy Council which became English Nature, then Natural England and has statutory recognition. Wildlife Sites are a more local designation and include Long Wood (north of the B1000) and Blakemore and Lady Hughes Wood to its south. We have increasing numbers of red kite, buzzard and sparrowhawk using this area but with the loss of high quality habitat in the area west of Hertford this is likely to decline. When housing is built up to the edge of ancient woodland and many other types of woodland as proposed in

this document dog-fouling, litter, trespass, dumping of garden rubbish occur which are recognised as being seriously damaging to its ecological values.

4. There is currently a natural edge to the west side of Hertford which is Thieves Lane South and the back fences of Bentley Road and the Ridgeway. There is a 'step' along the B1000, Welwyn



2. Land which has been damaged and is out of agricultural production is sometimes considered to be of low value for Green Belt purposes. This is far from the truth as such areas often have more plant species, better height structure, more insects (aphids, spiders, caterpillars.etc) and seeds and consequently more birds and small mammals and thereby

Road but any development or building to the west of this line would be damaging to the landscape and ecological interest of the area.

5. Development in the zones listed above would generate increased traffic as was argued in the Archers Spring public enquiry. Witnesses established that the key points were on Welwyn Hill at busy times morning and evening, around Hertford North Station, Beane Road and the Bengo rat-run (Byde Street). Since then we have a new rat-run from the north to County Hall via Bentley Road, Thieves Lane South and St Marys Lane, Hertingfordbury. With 550 extra homes and similar numbers in neighbouring towns even the A414 dual carriageway is likely to become overloaded at certain times and so affect a much wider area than the west side of Hertford.

I therefore appeal to everyone to oppose these proposals as vigorously as possible. Of course people want to live in Hertford as it is an attractive and conveniently located town but that is no reason to spoil it. I am happy to be accused of nimbyism but there are also lack-of-infrastructure (roads, schools) and strong landscape and ecological arguments to be made here.

Barrie Goldsmith

Further information at <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=28168> and <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=5488>

FRIENDS OF PANSHANGER PARK

Discussions with the Site Manager for Lafarge Tarmac have continued to set out the need for more footpaths across the land, improvements to the car park off Thieves Lane and the end of rough shooting across the Park. During early December Committee members gave a day to clearing the footpath into the Park from Hertingfordbury. This uses the underpass alongside the cattle creep. Requirements for routes from North and South for walkers and cyclists as well the East to West provision were outlined during visits to work in progress.

Lafarge Tarmac are continuing negotiations with the councillors and planning officers of the County Council and East Herts. This work has included proposals for enabling work to renovate the Orangery and Conservatory, where work is progressing to stabilise and secure the structure of the Conservatory. New timetables are proposed for completion of gravel workings and renovation for public access, and we may soon see new applications for planning permission for development adjacent to The Stables.

Around the Park the reviews of the District Plans for East Herts and Welwyn Hatfield have required strong representations by Civic Societies to Councillors about proposals to release Green Belt land for development to East and West of the Park. Beside threats to ancient woodland, these raise the

spectre of even more excavations for gravel.

Much of the input to these efforts to hasten work of developers to complete and open the Public Park comes from residents of Hertingfordbury and the Greens as well as Welwyn Garden. Barrie Goldsmith and I will be very pleased to have and discuss comments and requirements from members of Hertford Civic Society. Our contact details are in this magazine.

Richard Threlfall

ANTAS UPDATE

The Association of North Thames Amenity Societies was set up in the early 1990s to provide a forum for civic societies in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, particularly those based in market towns. Membership has gradually grown to twenty-three societies. The principal role was to enable members to share views and experience, mainly on planning matters, and to represent those views to central and local governments.

Early this year the Committee decided to conduct an exercise to establish whether the Association should continue and, if so, what its role should now be given the changes in the intervening years. The major example of change is the way government conducts public consultations. In the early days government would send copies to organisations such as ANTAS inviting comment but not to its

member societies who would have to apply to the issuing ministry for their own copies. The Committee would then try to develop a consensus view on behalf of its member societies after seeking input and the circulation of a draft. Now public consultations are readily available to everyone on the internet and comments can be submitted on-line.

The Spring Meeting was used to conduct a workshop to consider the future with members split into working groups to address the major aspects of the way the Association works. The principal conclusions were that ANTAS still has a useful role, but in future representations to government should be made by member societies allowing them to reflect their particular concerns, leaving the Association solely as a forum for exchange of views, experience and advice. There will still be two meetings a year, with the option of a third themed meeting, and members will continue to submit reports on their activities and concerns.

To support this change of role an electronic means of informing members of 'best practice' derived from members' experience will be investigated and a database of members' campaigns and useful contacts set up. In future, extracts from society reports will be included in the on-line newsletter. This means of communication will continue as it enables member societies to distribute it more easily among their own members and to use it in local lobbying. However, the Association will retain the role of providing a link

between members and Civic Voice.

Further information at <http://www.antascivic.freeserve.co.uk/>

Andrew Sangster

CIVIC VOICE UPDATE

Civic Voice Manifesto

Civic Voice will launch a Manifesto to influence debate leading up to the General Election in 2015.

The seven themes of the Manifesto were agreed at the AGM in Liverpool last year, but there is still a lot of work to do so the Manifesto Working Group will be consulting members via conferences and web-based submissions.

The themes are:

1. The Planning System
2. Priorities for Growth
3. Town & City Centres
4. Design Quality
5. Heritage
6. The Public Realm
7. Civic Pride & Civic Action

Ideas and case studies will be welcomed. They must be constructive and should take into account the following questions:

*What is your policy idea?
What problem are you trying to solve?
How would your policy idea work in practice?
How much would it cost?
Are there any disadvantages or potential risks that need to be considered?*

A draft document will be discussed at a conference in April this year and the final

Manifesto launched in September ready for the Party Conferences.

Community Right of Appeal

Civic Voice is looking for ways to make Community Right of Appeal against planning permissions into a practical policy that allows a local community to pursue its own interests and concerns while avoiding frivolous or vexatious and time-wasting appeals that clog up the planning process.

Suggestions include a time limit of as little as one month and a participation threshold to ensure that the appeal reflected the views of a substantial proportion of the community. Appeals could also be restricted to instances where the Local Authority had departed from their Local Plan or had contravened the National Planning Policy Framework.

Protecting the Green Belt

Civic Voice Chair Freddie Gick has reiterated the policy of developing brownfield sites first following a debate in Parliament on January 8. "Houses on 'brownfield sites' may be more challenging and expensive to build, but it is evident that a large part of the housing crisis would disappear if existing planning permissions were implemented, and if existing housing stock was used more effectively. The day may come when we have to go into existing Green Belt and countryside to meet the housing need but we're a long way from that at the moment", he said.

More information at www.civicvoice.org.uk

To apply for or renew membership of Hertford Civic Society, please complete and send this form to:
Linda Haysey, Roxford House, St Mary's Lane, Hertingfordbury SG14 2LF
Existing members need submit the form only if their details have changed, e.g. new address

Subscriptions, per annum, are as follows:

Full membership £9.00	Full joint membership at the same address £14.00
Full membership with concessions £5.00	Full joint membership with concessions at the same address £8.00
Joint membership (one full and one concession) at the same address £11.00	
Corporate membership £20.00	Junior membership (under 18 years of age) £5.00

PART A MEMBERSHIP FORM

I/We wish to become/remain members of Hertford Civic Society and
(a) enclose a cheque for the sum of £_____ being my/our subscription for 2012
(b) wish to pay by standing order and enclose my completed standing order form (delete as appropriate)

FULL NAME(S) _____

CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP (please circle) FULL CONCESSION CORPORATE JUNIOR

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Your personal details will be held on a computer and used to help run the Society as a membership organisation, to include the collection of subscriptions and delivery of a newsletter. Your details will be kept secure, in compliance with data protection principles, and will not be given to third parties. The committee may write to or email you from time to time, with news of interest to members, to find out your views, or to ask for participation in Society activities. If you do not want your details to be held on computer, tell us, but be aware that it may then not be practical to provide you with full membership services.

PART B GIFT AID DECLARATION

NAME OF CHARITY - Hertford Civic Society. Registered charity No. 266111. I pay tax at the standard rate and wish the above named charity to treat as a Gift Aid donation all subscriptions I have paid since 6 April 2000 (if applicable) and all subsequent donations until further notice.

FULL NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____

PART C STANDING ORDER FORM

NAME OF YOUR BANK _____

BANK ADDRESS _____

SORT CODE _____ ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

Pay to the account of:
Hertford Civic Society at Barclays Bank, 12 Market Street, Hertford SG14 1BA; sort code 20-20-37; account no 40475807 on receipt of this order and on each 1 January thereafter, the sum of £_____

FULL NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____