



Coal Aston Chapel Garden
Bequest Funding Projects

**Issue 57
September 2025**

*Can you help
Dronfield Civic Society
by stepping up to join
the Committee?*

*We are a small team
of individuals with
interests in planning,
heritage, conservation
and environmental
enhancement with a
desire to help make
the town a more
pleasant place to live,
work in and visit.*

*We invite you to
join us.*

Dronfield Civic Society

Caring for our local environment since 1989

Web: www.dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk

Email: enquiries@dronfieldcivicsociety.org.uk

Welcome to the September newsletter

We are very pleased to welcome Phil Shaddock to our committee. Phil joined us at the meeting following the AGM in May. He will be helping us with social media posts and he has a keen interest in local matters including planning and he brings ideas for improving the street scene in Coal Aston.

There has been quite a lot of news since our last issue, particularly on the planning front, so we will update you on the latest Local Plan consultation which ran until 14th August and the public meetings organised by Ward Councillors held in Dronfield, Unstone and Apperknowle which enabled residents to tackle what was a lengthy, technically challenging consultation document.

You may remember from previous newsletters that the Society received a bequest last year from Mr and Mrs G.M. Rodgers formerly of Coal Aston. We have now begun apportioning those funds to meet the requirements outlined in the bequest. The Coal Aston Methodist Chapel garden has had funds for improvements and the garden volunteers at the Village Hall have plans underway for a pond, orchard and meadow area, all of which will receive some funding. A planting plan has been put together identifying other areas in Coal Aston which would benefit from additional planting or improvement.

At the end of July, the Burns Rise planning application by Redmiles went to Appeal. Several members of the committee attended the Informal Hearing. Committee member Martin Hanrahan raised a number of important issues with the Planning Inspector. The decision may come before we go to print. If later, it is likely local social media will be bringing that news.

DCS Management Committee

New Local Plan 2024-2044

North East Derbyshire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

19th June - 14th August 2025

The Issues and Options Consultation which ran from June 19th to August 14th was a lengthy document aimed at gathering the views of residents about where housing and employment should be sited over the next 20 years. It followed a 'Call for Sites' where landowners and developers could put forward land for consideration by the Council with a view to having it allocated following a Green Belt Review.

Because of new government targets to increase the number of homes built, NEDDC has to find land for 12,100 houses over the plan period, which is around 605 houses per year.

This is a huge ask of any Council, but far worse for one that is essentially rural with a large percentage of Green Belt, Peak Fringe and Areas of Multiple Sensitivity (AMES). We should give the Council some credit this time for what appears to be a more collaborative approach at the very early stages of the new Local Plan development. It is also pleasing to note that the approach to use a rigid spatial strategy where more than 50% of development had to be in the 4 main towns, heavily criticised by the Planning Inspector last time, is no longer in evidence. This time residents are being asked to consider 7 options including development around the edges of Chesterfield and Sheffield, in the 4 main towns of Dronfield, Eckington, Killamarsh and Clay Cross, around larger villages such as Holmewood, Wingerworth and North Wingfield or around smaller villages such as Arkwright Town and Barlow. Consideration is also being given to large Strategic sites at Duckmanton and Eckington or whether the Duckmanton site could be extended further to form a new settlement. The 7 options have been tested through a Sustainability Appraisal with some options causing significant harm to the unique landscape character of the district. The Civic Society submitted responses to the consultation. Our key focus is the protection of the Green Belt which surrounds the town and the prioritisation of brownfield land. We do not support the continued approach to using town edge sites, building further and further into the surrounding countryside. See next page for more on this important issue.



**YOUR CIVIC SOCIETY RELIES ON VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP TO KEEP OUR TOWN AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE.
HELP US TO KEEP THIS SHARED SPACE BEAUTIFUL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. JOIN US!**

It helps us to save on postage and printing costs if you can receive this newsletter by email, so please let us have your current email address.

Residents and the Planning Process

Civic Society Committee Members have engaged at every opportunity with what has been the first stage of the new Local Plan development process. This has taken the form of initial drop-in sessions run by NEDDC at various locations including Dronfield Hall Barn and the Peel Centre. There then followed a series of meetings for residents organised by local Ward Councillors—both district and town.

The public meeting at Unstone Village Hall was very well-attended and so were the subsequent meetings held at Dronfield Civic Hall and the EPC in Apperknowle. The meetings demonstrated a keen interest by many residents seeking information about the potential sites across the town which have been offered for housing, employment and biodiversity improvement.

What came across from the lengthy Q&A at the Dronfield meeting was the number of residents who raised concerns about what is happening on their roads, their streets and in other parts of the town. Issues such as the lack of capacity of the sewage network, localised flooding occurrences, traffic congestion, poor water pressure, concerns about air quality and a general feeling that the town is struggling because of the strain on infrastructure which hasn't kept up with increased development in the town and with the cumulative impact of large estates nearby such as the Boatyard south of Unstone Green.

Residents expressed a strong desire to protect the current Green Belt boundaries and many residents had concerns about the potential loss of unique landscape qualities and the impact on the biodiversity of the area.

At two of the three meetings, a keen local naturalist, Richard Agar, spoke about a project he has been undertaking over the last three years to map the biodiversity across the Drone Valley. Many areas of the Drone Valley have protected status in terms of habitat areas including woodland and fields which are wildlife corridors for a number of protected species including red list birds.

Richard contacted the Civic Society to see whether we could support his work with a small funding grant to help specifically with the monitoring of bats.

Having seen Richard at the planning meetings and some of his excellent work which has drawn together all the relevant planning acts about protected habitats and species, we were pleased to send a contribution towards a Bat Baton which is a simple bat detector which allows a reduction of frequencies so that they are audible to humans. It can then be used with software to analyse bat calls.

Richard has thanked the Civic Society in an article written for The Eye.



Richard logs his monitoring work on the iNaturalist website where a special Drone Valley page has been set up. He will also add your sightings including photographs and recordings, including those using the Merlin App. Each sighting must be time and date stamped together with a detailed location.

The information below is from Richard's work which was circulated to residents who supplied their email addresses following the public meetings in Unstone and Apperknowle. It is designed to help residents understand what the Council must consider when allocating sites which will be the next stage of the Local Plan process. Consultation on those selected sites is expected in early 2026.

Legal Requirements the Council Must Consider When Allocating Sites

1. NPPF Paragraph 192 - Wildlife Corridor & Habitat Protection

2. Biodiversity Duty - Sections 40 & 41 NERC Act 2006

- Section 40 (strengthened by Environment Act 2021): Councils must actively conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Section 41: Lists priority habitats and species requiring special consideration
- **13 Section 41 priority species confirmed so far**, including several Red/Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern
- **Multiple Section 41 Priority Habitats** throughout the valley

Example objection: "Allocating sites in Central Drone Valley would breach the council's statutory biodiversity duty under Section 40 NERC Act, given the combination of thirteen documented Section 41 priority species AND extensive priority habitats including Ancient Woodland."

3. Sustainability Appraisal - Legal Requirement

Section 19, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 mandates proper biodiversity assessment during plan-making.

The Sustainability Appraisal was part of the Issues and Options Consultation. It made a number of recommendations to the Council for consideration during

Green Belt & Grey Belt Considerations

Green Belt Purpose: Central Drone Valley forms the crucial green corridor preventing merger between Sheffield, Dronfield and Chesterfield - strongly contributing to NPPF Para 143 purposes (a) and (b).

Protected Species Constraints for Site Allocations

Barn Owl, European Badger, Bats, Great Crested Newts

Biodiversity Net Gain - Making Sites Unviable

Legal requirements:

- Minimum 10% gain mandatory (20% proposed locally)
- Developers must follow mitigation hierarchy: Avoid → Mitigate → Compensate
- **BNG trading rules prohibit habitat downgrades**
- Ancient woodland = absolute prohibition on development
- Section 41 Priority woodland = prohibitively expensive to compensate (e.g. Hanger Wood)
- Sites within 10m of watercourses need river unit gains (very difficult to source)

Action: Support council's 20% BNG proposal - protects high-value sites through economic reality

Evidence Collection Standards

Recording Requirements:

- Location, date and time are essential
- Submit to iNaturalist – can add observations to the "Central Drone Valley Green Belt Observations - Curated" project
- Use Merlin app to record and ID bird calls – recordings can be shared directly to iNaturalist
- All observations valuable - we're documenting a complete ecosystem

Call to Action

We need YOUR help documenting this ecosystem:

- Survey coverage needed across entire valley
- Plant, insect, amphibian records particularly valuable
- Report bat roosts and activity
- Identify ponds for potential newt surveys

Contact: Rich on raconservation@pjm.me or Whatsapp 07360 037678 for help with iNaturalist, Merlin, recording and surveying

Remember: Strong evidence now = no allocation = no future planning applications

The law is on our side - Ancient Woodland, Priority Habitats, Protected Species, and Green Belt policy create multiple barriers to development. We just need to document it properly.

Funding Apportioned for Coal Aston Improvements—Rodgers Bequest

Funds have now been allocated to three projects in Coal Aston and we have a planting plan which identifies eleven other areas for improvement.

The first area to receive funding has been the Coal Aston Methodist Chapel garden. A request for a replacement arch, bulbs and items towards further planting and the maintenance of plants in this well-established garden has been co-ordinated by Mrs Sylvia Thompstone who is a long-standing volunteer at the Chapel. The arch which is a support for a clematis creates a focal point near the top entrance of the garden. We very much hope that a plaque to remember Mr and Mrs Rodgers can be attached to it or nearby. This garden is valued locally in particular by the residents of the nearby flats. It is also a colourful pedestrian route from Eckington Road through to Birches Fold.

The Coal Aston Village Hall Wildlife Gardeners are a small group of volunteers who meet once a fortnight to maintain the areas around the hall. Some excellent work has been done already including bee-friendly planting at the front, tree planting and a meadow area at the rear.

The Bequest will be used to fund a small pond liner and plants and a beautifully hand-crafted pond cover made by Dave Howarth Creative Pond Covers. At the rear fruit trees will be purchased to create a small community orchard. We fully expect to be able to fund extra bulb planting on the bank at the side of the hall and one or two benches where again a plaque will remember Mr and Mrs Rodgers.

A number of other sites in Coal Aston have been identified by the wildlife gardening group. Some sites will require collaboration with those who maintain verges and we anticipate some assistance from the Town Council Outside Services and volunteers. The potential sites are shown on this map.



The sites mapped include the junction of Firthwood Road and Eckington Road, adjacent to Barnard Avenue shops, The Ridgeway Prospect Road, junction of Bents Lane and Cross Lane, the Wesleyan Reform Chapel front garden, the junction of Brown Lane and Green Lane, opposite The Chequers Inn, Dyche Lane near the mini roundabout, Eckington Road opposite the old school, Birches Fold and opposite The Royal Oak. A mixture of trees, bulbs and shrubs would be appropriate and fulfil the wording of the Bequest.

If you would be prepared to help out with the planting of bulbs, shrubs and trees in Coal Aston, please drop us a line and we can pass your details on to those who will be co-ordinating this work. Most of the planting is likely to take place in the autumn which is the best time to plant bare-rooted fruit trees for the community orchard and bulbs for springtime flowering.

New Committee Member Phil Shaddock brought to our attention the area to the front of St Philip's Church where funding is being sought to re-invent the garden area to include paving, planting and bench seating. Work has already begun to secure quotations for the necessary work which would clearly improve the local street scene. The image right shows the area in need of improvement.

St Philip's is well-used by community groups. We have agreed to allocate Bequest funds for two benches, their secure installation and paving. The benches are manufactured from recyclable HDPE with no need for annual treatments such as staining or painting. They will not rot, splinter or corrode and come with a three year guarantee. A plaque with appropriate wording to the Rodgers will be attached.



Planting Plans—Coal Aston—Room for Improvement

Eleven areas have been identified by the Village Hall Wildlife Gardeners for potential improvement. There will need to be an agreement with the authorities regarding positioning of any trees and in terms of verge cutting arrangements, together with any future maintenance that may be required. At this stage, the locations are merely suggestions.



Climate Action NED & the Don Catchment Rivers Trust



These two organisations are coming together in Dronfield at Mill Lane and the Nature Park on Thursday October 30th to extend their work along the course of the River Drone. Volunteers have been monitoring the health of the waterway through monthly river fly surveys. The work in the autumn will include a litter pick at both sites and further work in the spring of 2026 to remove the highly invasive Himalayan Balsam which seems to have radically increased its spread along the banks of the Drone in the last few years. We hope to provide further details nearer the time of the October event should anyone wish to volunteer.

It is now five years since the Civic Society and the Don Catchment Rivers Trust tackled a huge clearance operation along the Drone at Mill Lane. It was probably the biggest single volunteering event which we helped to co-ordinate. Many volunteers including young children came with their parents to remove large quantities of rubbish from the river channel.

Ten years ago, in 2015, several work parties helped to clear Himalayan Balsam from sections of Unstone Line. Such were the efforts that the plant is only recently re-establishing itself. Removal has to be done before the Balsam starts producing seeds as when the seed pods pop open, they disperse over a wide area. Rivers like the Drone help to spread Himalayan Balsam as seeds move through the water and are washed up on stream edges and banks. We will provide more details about how you can get involved with the Balsam Bash nearer the time.



Hot Topic - InPost Lockers - InAppropriate and InConsistent



We feel that the application for the InPost locker at the Co-op should have been 'called in' to the Planning Committee and we question why it wasn't. The Chair of the Civic Society has written to the Assistant Director of Planning (David Thompson) to flag up these retrospective applications and what appears to be a granting of conditional approval without due scrutiny or simply based on 'no concerns raised' by Highways.

In an earlier newsletter, when these lockers first made an appearance in the town, a former Chair of the Society, John Harvey, brought to our attention one that had been located in the Conservation Area adjacent to the Library. The locker and the bright yellow side panel and posts in front detrimentally impacted the setting of the Listed building. That particular locker was swiftly removed when the Conservation Officer heard about it.



Image: John Harvey

You may have noticed the recent spate of parcel lockers appearing in various places across our town. It may be true to say that the town is becoming quite saturated with them. They have come about largely in response to online shopping. Defined as automated, self-service storage units, they are often located in convenient, easily accessible spots like supermarket car parks or near public transport. They offer a secure and flexible way to send, collect and return parcels, providing a 24/7 alternative to traditional delivery methods.

Over recent weeks the Civic Society has noticed more than 16 retrospective planning applications for these lockers across the district. The fact that they are all retrospective rings alarm bells anyway. Retrospective usually means the lockers have been in place for several weeks or months before InPost apply for planning permission.

One such retrospective application was for a parcel locker outside the Co-op on Hartington Road. We responded raising concerns firstly about the lack of consideration of the aesthetics of the building where the locker completely destroys the symmetry of it but perhaps more importantly from a safety perspective. It is on the pavement, close to a busy junction and there is no parking (unlike Greendale) apart from on the road side. Potentially it could involve vehicles pulling onto the narrow pavement to collect or drop off a parcel. The area outside the Co-op has a relatively high footfall including students from nearby Henry Fanshawe School and residents from the Snape Hill area. Add in the number of vehicle movements from Dunham's builders merchants, the narrow cul-de-sac opposite the Co-op that is Edgerton Road and the junction of Cecil Road where it meets Snape Hill Lane and at certain times of the day, it is a really busy area.

As part of the planning application, Highways as a consultee, commented that they had no issue with the location of the locker from a traffic perspective. No evidence was supplied in terms of a traffic impact assessment by the appellant. The application wasn't picked up by the Town Council and it therefore wasn't 'called in' to NEDDC Planning Committee.

Are we just making a mountain out of a molehill on this? Well perhaps, until that is, a very similar application was brought to a Planning Committee meeting on July 29th for the retrospective siting of a locker facility in Tupton which had been called in by the Ward Councillor to be assessed by the Planning Committee.

*That meeting can be viewed on the NEDDC YouTube channel from 44 minutes into the recording. The similarities with the Hartington Road locker and the one in Tupton are self-evident. Whilst Planning Officers recommended approval, the Committee, to their credit, were not satisfied by the response from Highways and there was a lack of information about traffic issues from the appellant. A unanimous vote to defer the decision was recorded until a traffic impact assessment can be provided. Meanwhile the locker in Tupton, operating retrospectively since March, is likely to be **InPlace** until well after the summer break.*

Whilst the Civic Society has no objection to lockers positioned where there is car parking like the one outside Morrisons at Greendale, we are concerned about their impact on the aesthetics of the building they are next to, the local street scene and where public safety may be compromised.

We would like to know your views on the topic of parcel lockers.

Are there too many in town or not enough? Do you feel they are a problem in terms of the street scene? Do they offer a greener approach to parcel delivery and collection? Is convenience a price worth paying in terms of the matters discussed in this piece?

Burns Rise Appeal

When the current Local Plan was adopted in 2021, two sites in the town were allocated for development. The site at Stubley which was allocated for about 40 houses is quite steeply sloping and access to it is poor, so it is hardly surprising that it hasn't been built out. The other site, which started off much larger than what was eventually allocated, finally went to Appeal at the end of July. NEDDC Planning Officers did not support the application mainly but not exclusively on design grounds. The Planning Committee unanimously supported their Officers and rejected the application, hence the Appeal to be decided by a Planning Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State.



The application had several amendments since it was first submitted in 2023, but the design changed little based on the technicalities associated with the gradient of the spine road which had to meet DCC requirements.

The Appeal Hearing began at 10:00 a.m. and finished at 17:05 p.m with 15 members of the public in attendance including 5 main speakers objecting to the application.

The main issues for discussion included: Design, Character and Appearance, whether the underground storage tank was appropriate in the Green Belt, Green Belt compensatory measures, Living conditions, Affordable housing including mix, tenure, percentage and size.

Other matters included Heritage and whether the proposed development would preserve the special interest of nearby Unstone Manor (Grade II* listed) and its setting.

On the day prior to the Hearing, the Inspector K. Stevens, visited the application site. She walked around Southfield and Burns Drive, crossed the B6057 several times, walked down Half Acre Lane to Metapic Wood and from the lay-by down towards Unstone where she went up the PRoW towards Unstone Manor.

After the Hearing the Inspector expressed a view that she would like another site visit to include visiting the back garden of one of the residents of Southfield Mount. There would be no further discussion, it was purely for observation purposes.

The Inspector allowed the speakers to speak first across a range of issues. She then gave equal time and questions to the Council to justify their reasons for refusal and for the appellant to respond. A wide range of matters were covered including why the Carlow tank had to be in the Green Belt and outside the development site itself, where the connective link was onto the cycle path, why the affordable housing was altogether in one corner and only offered as flats and where the outdoor amenity space was for residents of the flats. There was an interesting discussion with the Tree Officer about ancient hedgerows, how building work impacts trees and their root systems, green buffer zone provision and links into the PRoWs. Speakers made very clear the shortcomings of the scheme including an inappropriate location for a play area for children adjacent to the main road, the poor urban-rural transition including the 'Gateway' flats and what appeared to be an industrial incursion into the Green Belt. The main reason for refusal was on design grounds and whilst at the time of writing, we do not know the outcome of this Appeal, when the Inspector does deliver her verdict, it will be an interesting test case for the Local Planning Authority to see whether design does matter. We very much hope it does.

The recent consultation on the Local Plan has highlighted that the whole site, before the previous Inspector removed part of it in 2018, has reappeared in the 'Call for Sites' this time. This together with another piece of offered Green Belt in the same ownership which lies high up on the ridge near Highgate Lane would, if allowed, extend development down to and behind Unstone Farm, closing the visual and spatial gap we now have between two settlements of very different character types.

It is not clear therefore what the intention of the developer is at this stage, but it is likely they will wait to see if they can get the whole site allocated this time. If they win the Appeal, they may still wait for that outcome. It is probably safe to say that development in the short term is unlikely and we may still see cows grazing on those fields for a bit longer. The decision on the potential allocations won't come until well into next year following a Green Belt Review. The proposed allocations will then have to go through another consultation and further stages including being submitted to a Planning Inspector before the Publication Version can be adopted.

Your Civic Society will be following the whole Local Plan process with interest including the outcome of the anticipated Green Belt Review which will scrutinise all the Green Belt sites which have been offered by landowners. We expect a fair and fully transparent process.

We note that the site at Eckington Road, Coal Aston which the Inspector had to remove last time for reasons of its physical location, has been offered again.

We must be vigilant about the erosion of any Green Belt between the north of Dronfield and Sheffield. Both the BESS site which was refused at Appeal and the recent activity by Roots Allotments are a demonstration of the vulnerability of this area of Green Belt.

Decision on the Burns Rise Appeal Expected Imminently

Local Plan—What Comes Next?

If you thought the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation was a bit of a trial to complete, well that was just the beginning! There's much more to come as we go through the various stages to eventual adoption of a new Local Plan.

Following the closure of the consultation on the 14th August, NEDDC will be considering and collating the responses and deciding whether there needs to be Green Belt Review. It is looking likely there will be.

The Green Belt Review will test all the Green Belt land parcels that have been offered in Call for Sites and assess them to see how well they function in terms of the five purposes of Green Belt outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The next stage is where the Council put forward their favoured sites for potential allocation. Early in 2026 there will be another consultation on these specific sites where we can scrutinize the assessment and drill down into the local detail including biodiversity, priority species and habitats, access and suitability across other parameters.

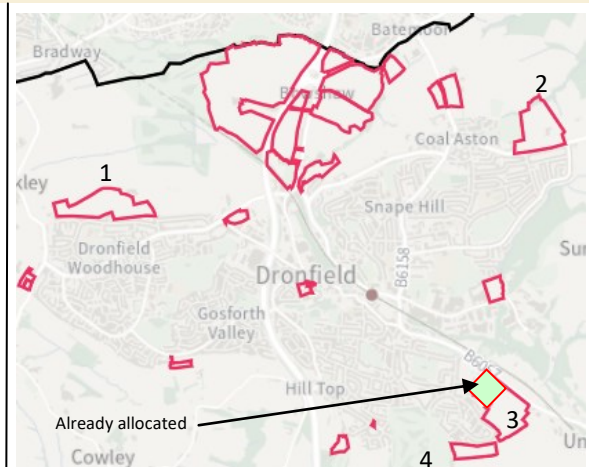
After that the Plan passes from Draft to Publication stage when another consultation is likely in summer 2026. The Local Plan is then submitted to the Secretary of State potentially in November. The current Local Plan reached this stage in 2018, but it was a further three years before it was eventually adopted due in part to a change in administration at NEDDC.

An independent inspector will be appointed to examine the Plan sometime in 2027. This is a formal process of Hearings which last time was over a three week time frame. This is another opportunity for residents to be involved, even at this late stage, particularly if there are potential allocations that are contentious involving the loss of Green Belt protection. After the Hearings, the inspector, with agreement of the Council makes what are known as Main Modifications to the Plan which are necessary for the soundness of the Plan.

The inspector's report is then issued to the Council likely in 2027/28 when they vote to formally adopt the new Plan which concludes the process.

Local Plan Wish List— Dronfield

- ◆ A fair, accurate and fully transparent Green Belt Review
- ◆ A Spatial Strategy which adopts the recommendations in the Sustainability Appraisal and protects the unique landscape character surrounding our town
- ◆ Retention of the 330 dwellings per annum target which is achievable, rather than the unrealistic mandatory target of 605 dpa set by the government
- ◆ Prioritisation of brownfield sites for development
- ◆ Protection of the distinctive character of different settlements
- ◆ Retention of all Green Belt boundaries where they currently are
- ◆ Recognition that town edge development in Dronfield is now too far from central shops and services to be sustainable
- ◆ Creative design for new development respecting the local vernacular and protecting the amenity of existing residents
- ◆ A Local Settlement Gap designation to protect the remaining gap between Dronfield and Unstone
- ◆ Retention and improvement of green infrastructure
- ◆ Creative use of Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) on all new development sites
- ◆ Recognition of TPO trees, veteran trees, ancient hedgerows and local biodiversity including priority habitats and species



The map above reveals the areas around Dronfield which were submitted in the Call for Sites. Whilst it is extremely concerning that such a huge area of land has been put forward between Dronfield and the Sheffield boundary, there are four large sites, all of which are on the edges of the town, which would increase Dronfield's suburban sprawl into open countryside which is also Green Belt.

They are: 1. Dronfield Woodhouse, 2. Eckington Road, 3. Chesterfield Road and 4. Highgate.

It is concerning that even before a Green Belt Review has taken place, two of the four sites have scored Amber, meaning more suitable for development than those scoring red. We have challenged why this is so, but as yet there is no satisfactory explanation. Both Amber sites were removed by the inspector during the current Local Plan process for soundness.

Comments on the Improvements to the Civic Centre

The recent improvements to the Civic Centre seem to have been fairly positively received. Certainly the new section of surfaced path from the lower back car park down to Lea Brook Valley is welcomed where it is steep, particularly with the addition of hand rails on either side.

Now that the new scheme has 'settled in', we would be interested to know your views on the improvements to the public realm e.g. the seating, trees and events space near the Sports Centre. What about the car parking layout with additional crossing points? Safer or less so?

Recently we were copied into an email which was sent to the Town Council and we wondered whether anyone else had similar views.



Image and email from Mr David Blackburn

"Dear Councillors,

I'm writing to express my disappointment at one key element of this scheme- namely the loss of the colourful flower bed outside the Sports Centre

Given its prominent and raised location this is one of the most visible aspects of the scheme and now it is well-established we can see how drab and boring it is—and significantly poorer than previous years.

I appreciate that there are probably 2 factors that led to the design; the efforts to reduce annual planting costs and also to create more drought resistant planting . Whilst these objectives have no doubt been achieved, I feel that it is an unsatisfactory outcome for this particular site that could and should be improved for future years .

There are many plants that could provide much more colour and meet the wider objectives including echineaceas, coneflowers, yarrow, cistus and sedums -though this is a far from exhaustive list

I hope you might be able to help bring colour back to our Civic Centre in 2026 ."

Whilst we tend to agree, it should be noted that in many other areas of the town, there have been the usual colourful planted beds appreciated by many residents. Perhaps the decision to select more drought-resistant plants in the Civic Centre was the right one, given the extended dry period we have had since the spring.



An Invitation to Renew Your Membership

From April 1st, Dronfield Civic Society invites you to renew your membership. Annual subscription charges are **£10.00 singles**, **£15.00 couples/families** and £25.00 for small businesses/schools and associations.

Membership Secretary is Josephine Wright who will be pleased to receive the slip below with your payment by cheque to:
Dronfield Civic Society

Please send to: Mrs J Wright DCS Membership Secretary 11 Moorgate Crescent, Dronfield S18 1YF
For any membership queries you can contact Jo on dcsmembership@gmail.com

Please change your Standing Order to the current rates if you have not already done so. Life membership remains at £60.00 single and £100.00 joint. Small business/school/association remains at £25.00.

Did you know you can now pay by BACS? Our sort code is 60-40-09 and account number 09430342.



Please renew my membership of Dronfield Civic Society from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

Name.....

Address.....

Email.....

Membership: (please circle) Single Couple/Family Business/School/Association

I enclose a cheque made payable to Dronfield Civic Society for £.....

Members receive a quarterly e-newsletter or a printed copy.

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