

OTHER ISSUES

♦ Roman Bridge Blackpill

We aim to protect the bridge and bring it back into use and are most disappointed that a solid bridge has been built in front of it which obscures it. Some suggestions have been put forward by Irene Mann of 'Tidy Towns' to clean up the surrounding ground and create a picnic area, which would enhance Mumbles Road and Blackpill

♦ Capel Henrietta y Llannerch – Uplands

We supported a local residents group who want Cadw to list the front of this building as it has historical associations with Dylan Thomas

♦ Mumbles Pier

Swansea Civic Society supports a quality development that protects the Victorian Pier and does not alter the silhouette of the famous landmark.

♦ Swansea Station

Swansea Station is to undergo a total redevelopment. This should greatly improve facilities for users and alter the common perception of the High Street as an area to avoid. A visitor's first impression of Swansea should be one of anticipated enjoyment of a city by the sea on a wonderful coastline, not one of apprehension and a visual impact of a shabby environment. It is a disappointing decision by the Coalition Government to postpone the electrifying of the line between London and Swansea. Swansea's economy would be enhanced with a first class public transport system.

♦ Recreation Ground, Oystermouth Road

Swansea Civic Society has received concerns from residents of Brynmill regarding the present use of the Recreation Ground at St. Helens and we have written to the Chief Executive to the Council voicing our concerns.

♦ The landscaping of the City Centre

We asked the Council department responsible for landscaping to consider their policy on landscaping to ensure that indigenous trees are planted so as to encourage city wild life. They explained what needed to be taken into account when city landscaping and tree replacement took place. First and foremost was the quality of the streetscape: from north to south, and all year round attraction, easy maintenance, lean and defined parameters, no spread or leaning of branches onto buildings or roads, regularity and definition to create an attractive urban design. They favour planting field maple, plane trees, mountain ash, maple and white birch. However, this is an issue we shall monitor.

ANNUAL WALKABOUT

Our annual city walkabout in the summer was a great success which ended with high tea at the Coastal Gallery. The fine weather, the fascinating historical details of the docks which Nigel Jenkins and Robin Campbell outlined, and the tea at the Coastal Gallery ensured an enjoyable afternoon. Details of our 2011 Walkabout will be circulated in the New Year.

SWANSEA CIVIC SOCIETY

Newsletter Autumn 2010



CYMDEITHAS DDINESIG ABERTAWE SWANSEA CIVIC SOCIETY

MEETINGS 2011

Executive meeting

Mon. 17th January 7pm at the Guildhall

AGM

Thursday 3rd March 7pm at the Guildhall

At our last Executive meeting in November it was decided that it would be beneficial to the good working of the committee and the Society to establish the post of Vice-Chair. Tony Lamb was elected to this position with immediate effect.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome anyone who wishes to join the Civic Society. The Society's financial year begins in January. A subscription form, with details of payment, for 2011, is included with this newsletter.

**The annual subscription is £8 per person or
£15 for couples.**

Mrs Audrey Tribe, membership secretary, will be pleased to accept subscriptions. Cheques made payable to 'Swansea Civic Society' can be handed to her at meetings or sent to her at:

8, Wimmerfield Drive
Killay
Swansea
SA2 7BR

Tel: 01792 426591

President

Professor Prys Morgan

Vice President & Chair of the Executive

Professor David Herbert

Hon. Secretaries

Philippa Watkins &
Eileen Walton

Hon. Treasurer & Vice Chair of the Executive

Tony Lamb

Membership Secretary

Audrey Tribe

Newsletter Editor

Margaret Lamb

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We shall be submitting our ideas for some improvement of local areas:

- ♦ retaining land in front and alongside the Civic Centre Oystermouth Road for leisure purposes
- ♦ retaining the square adjacent to Dylan Thomas Centre and Sail Bridge
- ♦ creating a walled garden and tearoom in Singleton Park with the possible future inclusion of the Plantasia
- ♦ We would like to see Swansea Castle brought back into public use as it is in such a key situation in our city centre and could contribute much history and character were it brought back life. CADW and Swansea City Council are currently in negotiation on the redevelopment of the castle and its surrounding green area.

APPEAL UPDATES

The Biomass Plant

We have been involved in the appeal against the approval of a biomass plant intended to be ¼ mile long and up to 15 stories high, with a stack as high as the new tower on the waterfront.

Our main objection is that it is totally inappropriate adjacent to the upmarket residential and mixed use area of SA1. The evidence that it is sustainable is also very unconvincing.

We are expecting a decision on 17th December 2010

Part of our final statement included that we objected to the planning application for a Biomass Plant on the King's Dock from the outset. However, if we had initial misgivings our attendance at this Appeal has not only strengthened our objections but also made us aware of some of the absurdities of statements which were taken seriously.

For example:

For air quality assessment of the whole of Swansea only 4 people were assessed. Dr Ireland questioned the validity of this evidence.

It was said that the Visual Impact on Swansea and the surrounding areas would be negligible as Swansea was a coastal region and therefore subject to sea haze, which meant that the plant for most of the time would not be seen. Therefore a highly visible plant, adjacent to the leisure activities of SA1, would be perfectly acceptable.

We objected to the statement that Swansea was like Port Talbot and heavily industrialised.

We were strongly of the opinion that those who would suffer most and whose health would be compromised were people living in Swansea East, and the Plant would in all probability tip the critical load of localised pollutants. We felt that we needed to protect our heritage and to be proud of our achievements, and not return to our polluted past when other investments to our city were possible and ones which would enhance our wonderful coastline

We felt that if green sustainable energy is on the agenda then we should do it properly with a properly constructed debate on the future of sustainable energy and waste disposal.

Mynydd-y-Gwair Windfarm

We support SOCME (Save our Common Mountain Environment) against this development on the basis that it will destroy the wilderness of the mountain which is under application for inclusion within the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It will have a deleterious affect on tourism as new roads will cut into the wild landscape.

There will be a loss of amenity for the people of Swansea – the visual impact is large and the amount of energy produced very small indeed when measured against the destruction of the landscape.

We are awaiting a decision on the appeal.

URBAN VILLAGE HIGH STREET/STRAND

This is a large development which will link High Street with the Strand. It is an imaginative concept which will revitalise High Street and the Strand whilst redeveloping one of Swansea's oldest warehouses, with the aim of bringing it back into public use. Affordable housing is the central focus of the development while the warehouse is to be transformed into a new creative arts sector.

This project could become a springboard for other bold initiatives in the area and transform one of the City Centre's most ugly and unattractive areas into a modern, progressive, friendly and inviting place to visit and walk through.

However, we are concerned that the lack of activity on the Strand could undermine this aim and retain the area as a place to avoid as it could remain a perceived hostile environment. An enclosed car park with no active frontage will create an inhospitable environment at the rear of the Urban Village on the Strand. We envisage the Strand forming an important link between the city centre and the new riverside developments.

Whilst the development has full planning consent and is underway, we are hoping to meet Coastal Housing to discuss how they could improve the Strand elevation. We have requested a meeting with them in the New Year.