

DIGEST

ISSUE 009 / SUMMER 2024



image: Water Head in the square, by Tamar

PLANNING

One of the important tasks for the Society is scrutiny in Planning matters.

When and where necessary, we can then seek to influence Broxtowe Borough Council decisions through the planning process and consultations.

WRITTEN BY
KAREN STAINER

RIVERSIDE FLATS 23/00447/FUL

The applicant has reapplied for permission to build the unsightly and impractical block of flats on the site by the lock with amended plans. The only change appears to be that they have had consultants provide a flood risk assessment.

The assessment seems to overlook the considerable case made by the Environment Agency (EA) in their previous objection to the proposals – not least in the mandatory 8m from the line of the waterway.

We will be confirming that our objections still stands and is unchanged from before (you can download our previous response via our website by clicking [here](#)).

In the meantime, we have been encouraging everyone with objections to make their views known to BrBC by sending a email to pabc@broxtowe.gov.uk or responding online to planning application 23/00447/FUL, where you can see the plans and application in full, including the response from the EA.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

There is a flurry of student accommodation development cropping up. The sale of the Station Road site has gone through (to Cassidy) and it looks as though work will be starting soon. Local media reports that the appeal for this awful proposal cost the Council £20k. We think this was worthwhile spend fighting something Beeston neither wants no needs.

Cassidy's claim that 419 student apartments will remedy the HMO situation in Beeston is myopic, not least because this continues apace – and it's highly unlikely landlords will ever 'flip' HMOs back to family homes.

SYCAMORE COURT, BROADGATE

24/00219/FUL (see visuals over)

Demolish existing apartment buildings and construct two student accommodation buildings of 4 storey and 6 storey height to accommodate 3 studios and 50 cluster units.

1. Demolition should only be allowed as a last resort. The Society supports the Retrofirst campaign of adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Planners should prioritise proposals to retrofit existing buildings over demolition and rebuild. Demolishing existing apartments to build new ones is an incredible wasteful economic model, it is also damaging to the environment. Retrofit makes sense because of the substantial energy savings made in repurposing existing buildings, compared with the ultra-high embodied energy costs of demolition and rebuild. "The greenest building is the one that already exists."

2. the buildings are 'monoblocks' – with no detailing or relief. Opinion maybe poor of existing building – but this should be an improvement, no look like barracks. Design is poor.

3. PBSA will NOT resolve HMOs in Article 4 areas, or the areas now cropping up outside Art.4, as students greatly prefer house sharing to studio accommodation – as is even referred to by the *Statement of Community Consultation and Engagement* PBSA can create feelings of isolation and have negative impact mental health.

4. We have no idea of the numbers or demographic of the people spoken to and questioned in their survey. But to suggest that landlords will flip their property stock BACK to family homes in event of this PBSA being built (or any other) is incredibly misleading. These flats are not only let to students. This will represent a net loss in rented accommodation for other sectors of the community. The density of students in Beeston is reaching a point where character and diversity of communities is being lost.

HMOs

The Society is collaborating with grassroots activists and the local community neighbouring HMO clusters to populating better data on the number of HMOs in our town.

THE PLANNING SITE

Members of our Planning watchdog have noted some anomalies when viewing applications by week – with some applications not showing up, perhaps due to delay between the date they're 'received' and actually uploaded.

If you have any experiences or difficulties with the Planning portal, please do get in touch so we can pool these together to feedback to Broxtowe.

[Look out for submission of Planning Application to Broxtowe Borough Council.](#)



NW Elevation - Block 2



SW Elevation - Block 2



SE Elevation - Block 2



NE Elevation - Block 2

Project: Sycamore Court, Beeston

Drawing title: Proposed Elevations - Block 2

scale: 1:200

by: SS

date: 20.12.2023

status: FP

drawing number: 23030-A-4200

revision: P02

cbp

NOTE: This drawing is indicative only

reproduction subject to copyright original sheet size A3



Figure 06 - Existing Street View from High Road



Figure 07 - Existing Street View from Lower Court



Figure 15 - Proposed Street View - From High Road North



images: (clockwise from top) elevations of Sycamore Court new build; streetscenes of new build; existing buildings - which should be repurposed. 24/00219/FUL

LADY PLAQUES

CONTENT BY
TAMAR

International Women's Day 2023 (our 50th year) saw us launch a campaign to have notable women of our township acknowledged with a plaque, to add to the 35 men currently recognised. We'll be installing our first plaque, to Eleanor Littlewood, this year; we are already progressing with our second plaque, to Nan Green, and have several other recipients 'waiting in the wings' including: Dr WAM Thompson, Jane Roadknight, Marion Bannister, Elizabeth Nutt Harwood, and Beatrice Hart.

What are the costs involved?

Each plaque requires a budget to be set for its completion. All research, administration, and design so far has been done by our volunteers, free of charge. Cost vary, but as standard may include:

£600 plaque manufacture, **up to £600** planning consent (where applicable), and around **£150** for a non-scaffold installation.

For Nan's plaque, we're trying to raise **£900**.



DONATE FOR NAN'S PLAQUE

If you can help us raise money for our next plaque, please consider donating to the fund! You can do this [online here](https://www.beestoncivicsociety.org.uk/ladyplaques) (or scan the code using your smartphone's camera).

Find out more about Nan Green and the project:

BEESTONCIVICSOCIETY.ORG.UK/LADYPLAQUES



A LISTENING COUNCIL

Is there evidence of this, or is it simply platitudes and politeness? Is any progress being made?

CONTENT BY
MERVYN BROWN

There is evidence! Here's some of the interaction that Society representatives are having with Broxtowe Council and our borough's elected officials, on our members' behalf:

Energy Conservation, Insulation and Cooling

This has largely grown out of work done as part of 'Our Beeston – Our Future' and the subsequent Action Group. It's resulted in on-going liaison regarding appraisal of housing types across the entire Borough, and drafting of a Guide for householders and residents, scheduled for publication later 2024.

Improved Communications

We are exploring ways that should ensure more people get to find out about more stuff that's going on across the Borough – a Big-Screen perhaps in the town centre?

Town Centre Development

Members of the Society attended a recent consultation event at the council offices. The specialist report stated, *"Convening all those that want to talk about Beeston's future is a good opportunity to identify those that might want to be more closely involved in the process. This should build on the Civic Society's 2020 work, rather than attempt to replicate it."*



Carbon Neutral Policy, Biodiversity and Greening We have continued to lobby the council to ensure minimum policy standards for Biodiversity Net Gain, greening issues, and tree planting together with planning making mandatory provision for wildlife, including bees, bats, birds, and bugs.

Where to from here?

Much of what we would like to see happen locally could be trialled in Beeston and subsequently rolled-out across the Borough. Correspondingly, our townships could 'learn from each other' – selecting ideas, for instance, from what is happening in Stapleford and transposing this elsewhere.

At the core of what we do, and the way Beeston is perceived, relies upon how we 'sell' ourselves: how we showcase what we do, and what we have, and how we celebrate our successes and learn from past mistakes.



Collaborative progress

Progress relies heavily upon **you**, our members – together with other individuals and groups in our communities – getting behind the ideas that Civic Society is developing with the council. **

Our outreach activities, along with what I call our 'ethos of co-operation, collaboration and conviviality' sets the scene for further engagement, with the potential for meaningful progress.

**To get involved or just to find out more contact us via the website or by email:
beestoncivicsociety@gmail.com

images: top left courtesy of Broxtowe Borough Council, top right courtesy of Gary Smerdon-White.

INTRODUCE A FRIEND



**BE
CIVIC**

**Bring a friend along to our
events this year, for free!**

As a charity, we rely on our membership + the generous donations we receive to keep doing the work we do. If you know someone who isn't a member but you think *might* like to join, why not invite them along to an event?

They'll be sure of a friendly welcome.

TALKS

March's Talk was well attended with over 30 people on a very cold night at Beeston Royal British Legion.

CONTENT BY
MERVYN BROWN

Heritage: Worth Saving?

Beeston Civic Society were delighted to welcome Toby Ebbs, Broxtowe Borough Council's Conservation Officer, as their main presenter at the 13 March evening event. Toby is working in collaboration with Society members to draw up a Local Heritage List (LHL).

We've long campaigned to provide protection for heritage buildings and features that are worth saving, but not otherwise protected.

The audience participated enthusiastically as Toby led us through the process of deciding whether a building should be included on the LHL, illustrated by actual examples. A most engaging and interactive evening.

Toby commented: *"It was a pleasure to meet the members of the Beeston Civic Society in person. Civic Societies are essential to the conservation of towns and cities and it is reassuring to know Beeston and the wider area of Broxtowe is in safe hands. I really appreciate the effort of the BCS to take an active role in the formulation of the Broxtowe Local List."*

SPOTLIGHT: *Beeston & Chilwell Garden Trail*

Ian took us through a mesmeric interlude encouraging imagination of an English country garden. He then focused upon the reality of the upcoming garden trail: held in June each year – this year on 8th and 9th.

WINTER TALKS



David Matless
BEESTON LEGACY

11 SEPT 2024, 6:30PM*

Heritage Open Day event

Beeston Local History Society
COTTAGE GROVE REVISITED

18 SEPT 2024, 7:30PM*

Chilwell Memorial Hall, 129 High Road

Stephan Kruczkowski
BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE
16 OCT 2024, 7PM

Spotlight: Canopy 2050, PLUS: Our AGM

Canalside Heritage managers
TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK
13 NOV 2024, 7PM

Spotlight: *Listing Realities*

Steve Simms
SAME HIGH ST, NEW VITALITY
11 DEC 2024, 7PM

Spotlight: Plane Tree

Alan Simpson
GREEN FUTURES?
15 JAN 2024, 7PM

Spotlight: Greening Beeston / NG9 Eco-trail

TBC
BOBBY POSITIVE
12 FEB 2024, 7PM

Spotlight: *Improving Young Lives*

Ruth Hyde / Zulf Daar
/ Greg Marshall
GETTING GOOD COUNCIL?
12 MARCH 2024, 7PM

ENTRY

MEMBERS GO FREE – and If the event is for [Heritage Open Days](#)

entry is FREE for everyone!

Not a member? Please just give any **DONATION YOU CAN**

EVERYONE WELCOME.

No booking required –
just turn up!

VENUE

All events ***EXCEPT 18 September** (see individual listing):

Royal British Legion (RBL), Hall Croft, Beeston, NG9 1EL

Refreshments are
available throughout
via RBL's licensed bar.

GETTING THERE

What3Words location of RBL: [///inner.hoot.moved](#)

beestoncivicsociety.org.uk/talks

STUMPED

The often controversial, 'Stump' sculpture must be relocated. Society trustees have been approached to join consultations with Broxtowe Council regarding its suitable new location.

CONTENT BY
MERVYN BROWN



Image: 'The Stump', Beeston Square (Tamar)

Created by award-winning, sculptor Paul Mason, 'Water Head' (as it is actually titled) is a lifesize, modernist piece carved in white marble. It depicts a tree trunk, and was originally a water feature, this function was turned off for testing in the '90s and simply never reinstated. The reason for the relocation is to create more space to be able to improve the range, quality, and number of activities in the Square – particularly markets and all-weather entertainment events.

The Society has helped inform criteria for relocation of the piece:

- positioned so as to relate to its theme
- ideally Council-owned land
- visible to townsfolk and visitors
- display information about the piece.

Newly appointed Interim Town Centre Initiatives Manager, Vicky McCourt, has been in consultation with Tamar (Trustee) and myself about the proposal.

Works are scheduled for completion by March 2025 and negotiations with site owners about location of the work are ongoing.

Representatives of the Society are also engaged with council officers and councillors at several levels including: regular meetings with Councillor Portfolio holders and lead officers, informal meetings with elected representatives, and input on some publications currently in draft.

WALKS



It was a beautiful sunny morning for the first walk of our season, **Birdsong Walk at Attenborough Nature Reserve**, on Sunday 19 May. The birds were competing charmingly with the church bells as we set off. Mike and Sue Spencer generously shared their knowledge of the birds and other wildlife and of the history and development of the Nature Reserve. We were a lovely group of 25, a good mix of ages (including children), members and non-members, bird watchers and the clueless (me!).

The Nature Reserve does fantastic work conserving and providing habitats to home many species of bird and wildlife, including otters. Sadly, site management also involves dealing with problems such as bird 'flu, water pollution, effects of pesticides and climate change (which is already changing which species visit Attenborough).

CONTENT BY
KAREN STAINER

Up next...

July's walk is a return of the ever-popular Ghost House, given by Alan Dance. Be sure to turn up for that one. All welcome.

See our [page 14](#) full for details.



June's walk took us on a tour of local Blue Plaques.

CONTENT BY
MERVYN BROWN

Our main competition on Sunday 23 June was the sunshine – folk who might have come along were firing up their Bar-B-Qs. None the less around 20+ people did share the new tour around some of Beeston's Blue Plaques: celebrating notable local folk, events, and places – featuring bike manufacture, bombmaking scientists through to a court jester and a visit by Ghandi.

Starting, as usual at the square our stroll took us to Broadgate Park along Humber Road and Queens Road to the Station via Linden Grove, returning to the square via Nether Street. We were guided by former chair of the South Broxtowe Blue Plaque Group, Peter Robinson, along with celebrated local historian and author; Alan Dance. This double-act certainly play off each other, expounding their expertise in a convivial manner, interacting with the audience, a mix of Society members and guests from near and far – who were able to share their personal experiences and information. Beeston born former chair of English Heritage Sir Neil Cossons is quoted on the Blue Plaque Guide: *"Throughout my boyhood in Beeston I had little idea of the extraordinary diversity of distinguished people who are part of the area's history. These Blue Plaques changed all that. They are there for everybody to seek out"*. You too can find out more about Blue Plaques in our on our website.

WALK WITH AN EXPERT

2024



- MAY** **BIRDSONG WALK** by Mike Spencer
19/05/24 10am
@ **ATTENBOROUGH NATURE RESERVE CAR PARK**
- JUN** **BLUE PLAQUES II** by Alan Dance and Peter Robinson
23/06/24 2pm
@ **BEESTON SQUARE BANDSTAND**
- JUL** **BACK TO THE GHOST HOUSE** by Alan Dance
14/07/24 2pm
@ **ESKDALE DRIVE TRAM STOP**
- AUG** **ATTENBOROUGH LEGACY** by Gary Smerdon-White
17/08/24 10am
@ **THE STRAND, ATTENBOROUGH (NEAR CRICKET NETS)**
- SEP** **TOWN AND PLACE** by Prof John Beckett
08/09/24 2pm
@ **BEESTON SQUARE BANDSTAND**
- COTTAGE GROVE ESTATE**** by Prof John Beckett
15/09/24 2pm
@ **JUNCTION OF PARK ROAD/HIGH ROAD, CHILWELL**
- OCT** **TREES: WHAT LIVES HERE?** by Helene Laanest
13/10/24 2pm
@ **BEESTON SQUARE BANDSTAND**

**MORE WALKS
INFO & TO JOIN:**



BEESTONCIVICSOCIETY.ORG.UK

****In collaboration with Beeston Local History Society.**

HONOUR FOR OUR LONGEST-SERVING MEMBER

CONTENT BY
MERVYN BROWN

With over 30 years of continuous service as a member of the Executive Committee, Caroline Penn is believed to be the longest serving committee member in our history.

As a trained planner her commentaries and critiques about local developments, input to planning policy, HMOs and Heritage Listing have been invaluable.

In 1984 Caroline chaired an Action Group of parents and residents fighting the first planning application to build houses on Roundhill School playing fields. Subsequently Beeston Civic founder and then chair, Marion Wallwork, invited Caroline to join the committee.

The current committee conferred Honorary Life Membership: *"As a mark of gratitude in recognition of more than 30 years stalwart service to our Society"*.

In accepting the honour Caroline commented: *"I'm flattered, surprised and obviously pleased to accept the kind offer. I suppose I'm one of the few very long-time serving committee members still alive who were at least as active as me!"*

We all wish her well in her well-deserved 'retirement'.

STONE SETTING

CONTENT BY

TAMAR

Over a decade ago, I was writing a piece for *The Beestonian* on 'The Stump' because I love it and wanted it to be placed somewhere else as part of the then Phase 2 works for the Square. I believed then (as I do now) that if people knew more about it, they would stop calling it names and love it too. I contacted Professor David Morley, a long-time friend and colleague of the artist, who has written much about his work, to talk to him about the piece and its maker,

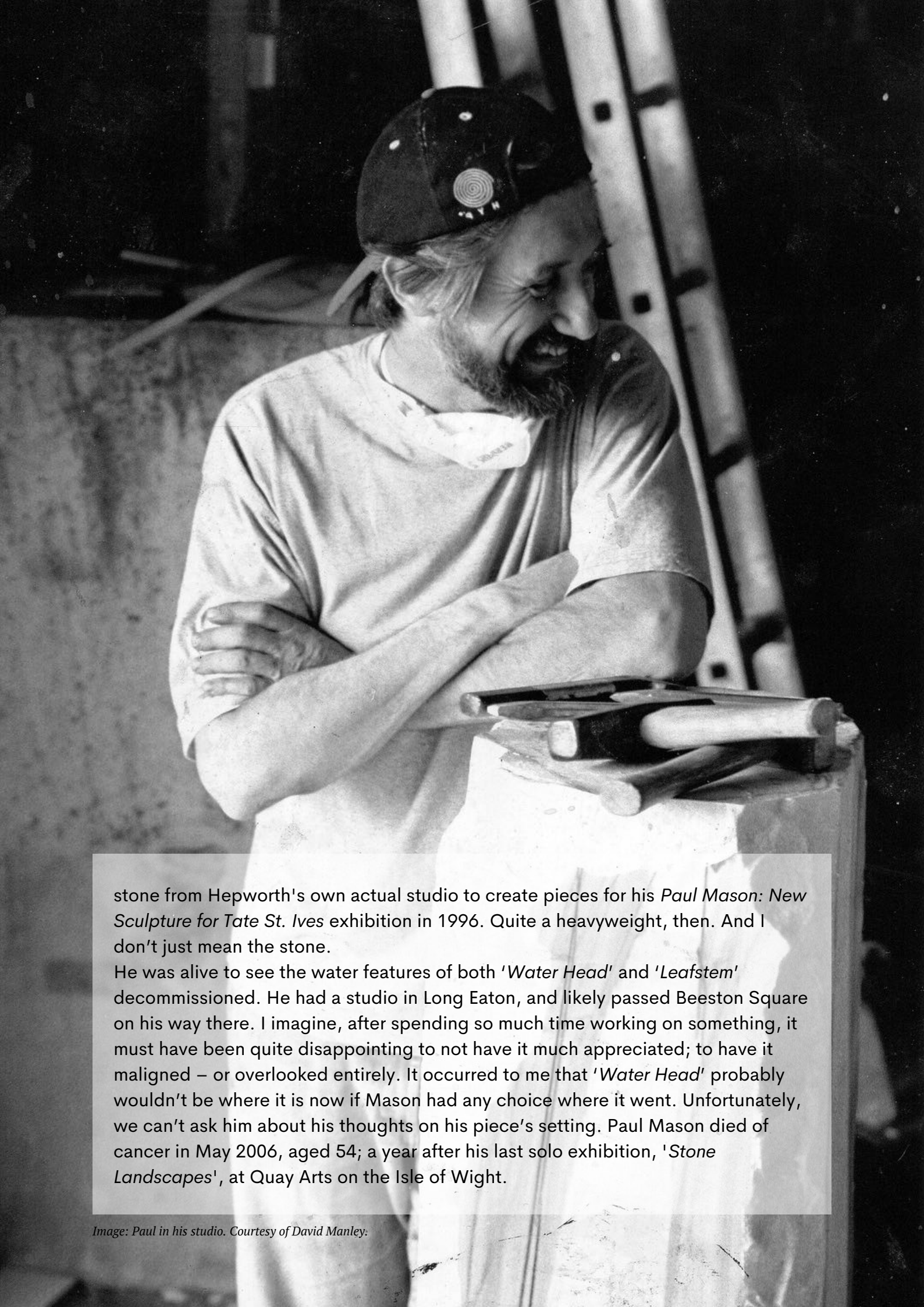
"[he] is probably the most important sculptor of his generation in the Midlands ... he lived locally, first in Loughborough then Long Eaton for several years before moving to Derby in the last years of his life, when he was made Professor of Sculpture there,"

"He was very much a traditionalist; obsessed with carving stone, like Moore – and was the kind of artist who liked to look at others' work, work of all styles and form. He was very generous in that regard."

'Water Head' was sculpted by award-winning sculptor, Paul Mason. He's known for his large scale stone carvings; much inspired by natural forms. Awarded a Royal Academy Gold Medal in 1976, Mason went on to win several awards for his work which exhibited around the UK and Europe, including Tate St. Ives and Bauhaus in Berlin. He taught at Loughborough, Staffordshire, and Northumbria before becoming Professor of Sculpture at Derby University in 2004. In addition to his academic career, Mason was also Artist in Residence at Gloucester Cathedral and Tate St. Ives, and received commissions for public art for towns and cities up and down the country including Aberdeen, London... and little ol' Beeston. 'Water Head' has a pedigree we should be more proud of, and I'm delighted Broxtowe is moving it somewhere more appropriate.

Commissioned in 1989 by Barry Protheroe (then of Broxtowe Borough Council), it cost a whopping £25k and originally (as its name suggests) featured a cascade of gently flowing water. You may recall 'Leaf Stem' sculpture outside St Peter's Church in Nottingham had the same feature? That was by Mason too. Both sculptures were subject to water testing due to Health & Safety concerns in the early '90s and their water features were just never reinstated.

Mason work is in the tradition of Henry Moore, and is often compared with that of Moore's and Barbara Hepworth's. These are big names in modern sculpture. These comparisons are clearly well-founded, for Mason's tutor was himself a student of Moore's. During his residency at Tate St. Ives, Mason was commissioned to use



stone from Hepworth's own actual studio to create pieces for his *Paul Mason: New Sculpture for Tate St. Ives* exhibition in 1996. Quite a heavyweight, then. And I don't just mean the stone.

He was alive to see the water features of both '*Water Head*' and '*Leafstem*' decommissioned. He had a studio in Long Eaton, and likely passed Beeston Square on his way there. I imagine, after spending so much time working on something, it must have been quite disappointing to not have it much appreciated; to have it maligned – or overlooked entirely. It occurred to me that '*Water Head*' probably wouldn't be where it is now if Mason had any choice where it went. Unfortunately, we can't ask him about his thoughts on his piece's setting. Paul Mason died of cancer in May 2006, aged 54; a year after his last solo exhibition, '*Stone Landscapes*', at Quay Arts on the Isle of Wight.

WATER HEAD: A RELOCATION PROJECT

My understanding is that part of the aim of Beeston's regeneration was to showcase Beeston's cultural and historical identity; be more aesthetically pleasing an aspect than it is now, and to be able to host more open-air events and community activities in the Square.

There's was a gentle genius to sculpting a tree in stone for a town square. It brings to mind what we're increasingly missing: we have lost, and continue to lose trees and hedgerow habitat in Beeston in the name of 'progress' and development. That the Society lobbies, fundraises for, and actually plants trees in and around our townships is one of the main reasons I joined. Somehow, being involved in the relocation of this sculpture, ten years on, feels quite poignant.

In my piece, I had suggested a space where a very mature tree stood in the grounds of St John's Parish Church, where crocus come up in spring in a ring around where its trunk once was. The modern, calm form of Mason's carving could be appreciated at last, and may come to be called, fondly, 'Water Headstone' instead.

Alas, I believe there's a preference for Council-owned land, for expediency and ease of commissioning the works – but I hoped the Council might pursue this as a possibility, so have suggested it again when we met the Council representatives leading the project.

Where will 'Water Head end up? We shall see... and when we do, of course we'll let you know.



Visualisations of the St John's Church setting. (Tamar)

SKILL FEST

The Society was awarded a Shared Prosperity Funding grant from the UK Government to host a two-day cultural event for young people. Gary shares his report of the event.

CONTENT BY
GARY SMERDON-WHITE

As part of our work to undertake, promote and support activities that may enhance community wellbeing we successfully applied for funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, managed by Broxtowe Borough Council. This project provided two days of skills workshops for skateboarding and wall art for young people at Inham Nook Recreation Ground.

The event was all put together over two months from confirmation of funds from BBC to meet the late spring bank holiday deadline.

Despite the weather being unreliable and very wet at times, 86 young people and their families participated in the workshops and we had over a hundred spectators. In fact the wall art classes became a spectator sport, attracting lots of doers and watchers, including some members of the local Hong Kong community. Everyone had a great time whether they were a person coaching at the workshop, attending to improve their skills or just watching everyone having fun.

Police attended on the first day of the Skills Fest and interacted with participants, volunteers and people in the park. It was a valuable opportunity for them to be seen in a supportive role in the area.



Two local Councillors attended and were pleased with the community engagement and benefits – they provided positive feedback in person and by posts on social media. The tenant at the Recreation Ground, Phoenix FC, was able to point out children who had particularly benefited from the free workshops.

Feedback from Councillors, Workshop Providers, the recreation ground tenants, participants and families was excellent and they judged the event as successful for the community and the individual participants.

There is an intention to provide similar workshops as part of a wider community event at Inham Nook and the Wall artist and park tenant are keen to continue with wall art at the park.

The Inham Nook Pavilion looks like a very different place with Wall Art instead of many plain unwelcoming brick walls.

The real benefit of the event was that

- the events involved young people and their supporters who do not, as a norm, engage with institutions nor with organisations. This is a major meaningful development and new 'foundation' upon which to build.
- involvement and engagement brought about 'feelings of belonging' and potential for a 'sense of ownership' of facilities.

These factors are essential elements of cohesive communities.

Our members from the Hong Kong community turned out in force to the Street Art Workshop on the first morning – social cohesion was excellent.

Feedback from... Stakeholders and Participants

*Phoenix FC – more was posted on their Facebook pages
'Thank you to the volunteers from the Beeston and District Civic Society for putting on a great 2 day Skate and Street art event at Inham nook.*

'It was great to see so many children and adults engage in the event at the nook'.

'I had so many people personally message thanking us – one states you managed to get my autistic daughter focused and gave us an insight to how we can use art to help calm her when distressed'.

'a fantastic session, it gave us a different view on graffiti art'.

Labour Councillors (more was posted on their Facebook pages)

'Absolutely fabulous event – thanks to Beeston and District Civic Society for organising, we have had lots of great feedback'.

'Hopefully the start of many such events – well done to all involved'

'It was a great event and I hope we qualify for more'.



Images this page: © Lewis Stainer, Be Seen Photography

A Workshop Providers Response

'It was a wonderful experience for me personally to spread the word of graffiti, exploring its history of where it originated from and the importance it has in society, and how it's now become a recognised ART form. From a basic Tag to a full-scale burner or piece.

I not only became a teacher but learnt many skills myself about to pass on my own knowledge and skillset. Thank you for the opportunity'.



BEESTON + CHILWELL GARDEN TRAIL

The Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail took place over the weekend of 8/9 of June this year, and was generously sponsored by local family-run Trowell Garden Centre.

CONTENT BY
CLYDE DAVIS

We were lucky enough to be hosted by Garden Trail organisers, Ian and Maggie Paul, of the Red House at 102 Cator Lane. Many of the visitors weren't aware of the existence of the Civic Society, let alone what we did for the town and community – so much was made of the opportunity to pitch to them in beautiful surroundings. Once they'd been made aware, they seemed to be very interested in the Walks and Talks we had coming up. Here's hoping to see some new faces at our upcoming events!

The open gardens were bustling, and we were especially lucky with the weather, given how poor this summer has been so far.

One of our Trustees, Tamar, had put her wildlife garden on the Trail for a day this year. Her chosen charity was our **Lady Plaques** project, and the new plaque to Eleanor Littlewood was on show on her shed door, prompting a few quizzical enquiries. The day was a real success – attracting more than 160 visitors. Plant sales made £75 for our blue plaques. In addition to this, all garden-holders receive a share of the pooled ticket sales and sponsorship pot for their charities – of which the Society received £131.



GREENING BEESTON

Dr Janet Poliakoff talks us through saving energy and money with your rainwater

CONTENT BY
JANET POLIAKOFF



Image: our rainwater tank before installation.

In the news recently we have heard about the disgraceful behaviour of water companies, discharging huge amounts of sewage into rivers and the sea. I heard that in our area sewage has been discharged into the River Erewash, which then ends up in Attenborough Nature Reserve as well as the River Trent. We need to remember is that there is *always* an energy cost involved in supplying drinking water and taking away sewage, because in both cases the water must be pumped. So, we need to reduce the amount of water as much as possible. One way to do that is to collect rainwater in butts for garden use. If you have a water meter, you will then pay less for mains water. We fill our small pond with rainwater from water butts – it is also much better for wildlife, because, unlike mains water, it is not ‘treated’ for humans to drink.

When we had our drive paved, we had a 2,700-litre tank installed under it to collect rainwater falling on the house, garage and drive. We planned to use it for the garden but then decided to use it for flushing toilets as well. Such water is known as ‘grey water’, because it is unfit for human consumption, and has to be kept separate from the mains water. That meant we needed extra pipes inside the house as well as special top-up tanks to supply water to the toilet cisterns (plus “mains top-up” in case the grey water runs out). There is a small energy cost, but it is less than mains water would need. In addition, we are not paying Severn Trent for it!

BEESTON: A 15-MINUTE TOWN?

Robert Howard asks: 'how far does 15 minutes get you around Beeston?'

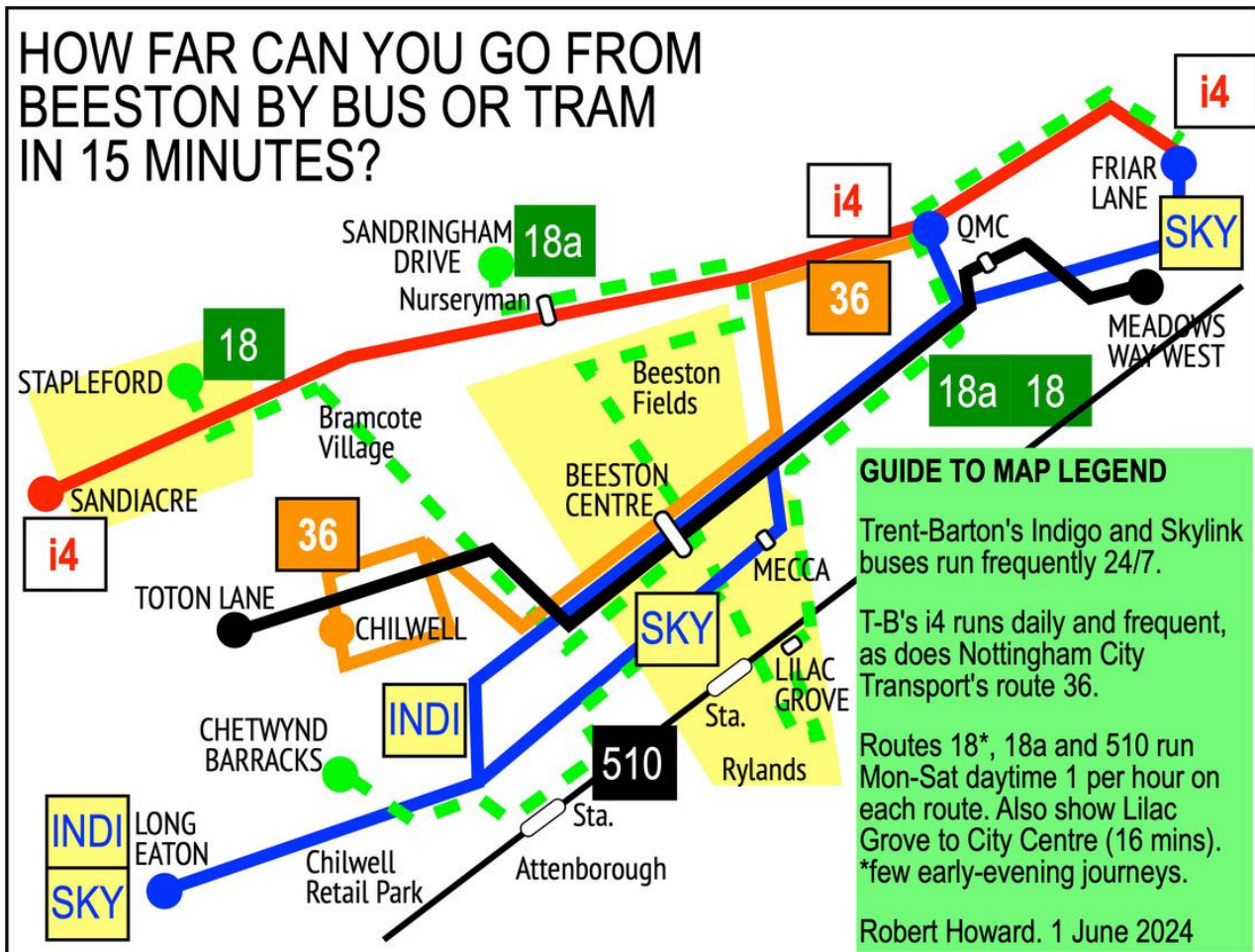
CONTENT BY
ROBERT HOWARD
BEESTONDESTINATIONS.BLOGSPOT.COM

My little piece is prompted by Mervyn Brown asking me the question "*What do you think of Carlos Moreno's '15-Minute City' concept?*". It's a concept which can be linked back to Ebenezer Howard's 'garden city' movement (e.g. Welwyn Garden City) and promotes the benefits of mixed use, inclusive neighbourhoods.

The central idea is that people should not have to walk, or cycle more than 15 minutes from their home in order to find work, shop, or access education and healthcare, whilst recognising some jobs and facilities will only exist in certain places. Even so, the aim of increasing peoples opportunities without requiring them to travel more than '15 minutes' makes a lot of sense.

But I would add public transport into the 15-minute mix and my map (over) takes the liberty of including the local railway stations and the i4 Trent-Barton bus along Derby Road, simply because it does run along Beeston's northern edge and is, for many residents like me, as accessible as Beeston Centre. As places go, Beeston passes the 15-minute test with flying colours. We have it all: an A&E hospital; a university; more than one shopping centre we can visit, including Nottingham city centre if you can catch

HOW FAR CAN YOU GO FROM BEESTON BY BUS OR TRAM IN 15 MINUTES?



Trent-Barton's Skylink bus as it goes along Queens Drive (13 minutes from Mecca to Friar Lane) or a train from Beeston Station (6/7 minutes to Nottingham Station up to 4 per hour Monday-Friday daytime). Then there are the open spaces, the arts and heritage. However, I have to tell you my promotion of Beeston as a '15-minute town' does come with caveats...

North-South Links

Beeston's north-south bus links are terrible. Long Eaton has far better daily bus links with Stapleford than Beeston has, and large tracts of the surrounding area are made inaccessible after 6pm and all-day Sunday.

Add to this the possibility for: a) a new ('Garden City') town development in a north-south corridor along the Erewash Valley (which makes perfect sense to me), and b) planned Thane Road housing development between Rylands and Clifton Bridge, and you have an **overwhelming argument** for a network of daily high-frequency north-south bus routes between Beeston and Stapleford; Toton and Stapleford, and Beeston and Wollaton – all travelling south through the Rylands via the railway station and on to Queens Drive. Ideally, too, I would like to see buses from Beeston to Kimberley, Eastwood and Ilkeston.

Cost-effective Model

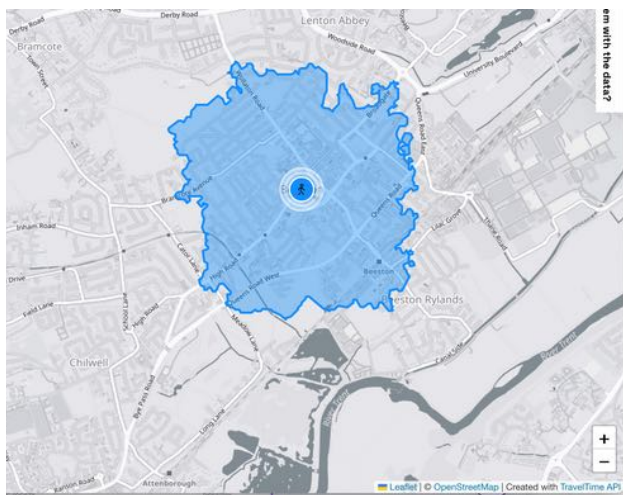
You notice that I talk of buses. This is because The Tram may be romantic but, with the exception of using existing railway corridors, it is expensive, whereas modern electric buses match it for comfort and out-perform it on reliability. As the trams and their infrastructure age, replacing them will involve spending a lot of money!

My parents lived in Welwyn Garden City during the 1960s and '70s, and I had relatives in Harlow New Town. They are wonderful places still, and mainly low rise. I look around Beeston and I see a town centre destined to become high-rise high-density and even more of a '15 minute town' than it already is.

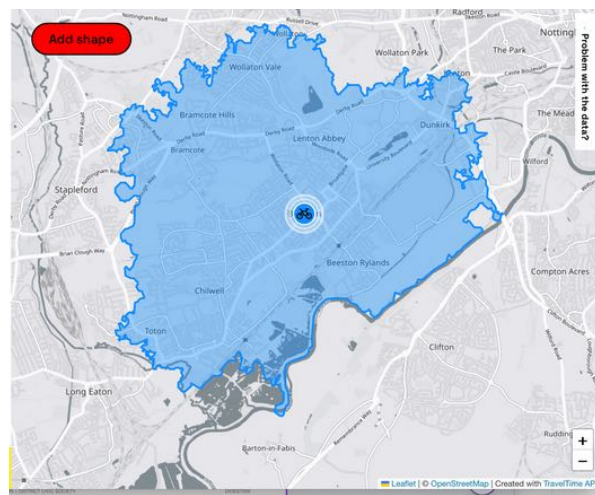
Editor's Note

What do you think? Could Beeston become a 15-Minute Town? Should public Transport be included, and improved?

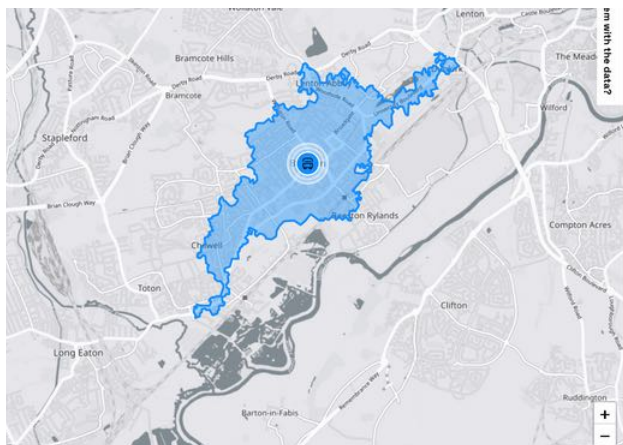
For a fascinating data into how far we can travel from the centre of Beeston (by foot, cycle or public Transport) go online to <https://app.traveltime.com>. The screen shots below show that the current picture, for walking, cycling, and public transport:



Walking



Cycling



Public Transport

BEESTON: BE MORE CIVIC

CONTENT BY
CHRIS SILKSTONE

Students from NTU School of Journalism and Media have collaborated with Society volunteers to create a brand new film for us. Chris Silkstone, gives his take on the experience.

Image: Ali (left) and Chris (right) filming at one of our Talks

'For the past few months, myself and another Nottingham Trent University student Ali have worked alongside the Society for our **Community Engaged Learning** project, to create the *Beeston: Be More Civic* video. The aim for the video is to show the achievements and aims of the Society to shape the town of Beeston, and the determination of its members in working to preserve and develop it for the betterment of the community.

The sense of passion really interested us, and inspired us to think how Beeston could be presented in a way that would give the town the traction for both the local community and wider audiences to appreciate.

'My experience with creating the video has been a fantastic. Everyone involved in the committee has been very friendly and open, and supported the project.

Throughout, all stages worked efficiently with few hiccups in the production and editing – what technical problems and challenges there were were all part of the process of completing any visual media! We were determined and were willing to make sure that the final product met the brief and was completed on time.

Overall, the Society has been very diligent with the progress of the video and have received it very well. I hope that the video reflects the Society and the town, and hope that this gives a good picture for the wider Beeston community.

Chris Silkstone
Media Production student

Editor's note:

You can view the film [on YouTube here!](#)

Thanks go to Lorna Kiamba for her work managing this collaborative project with NTU.

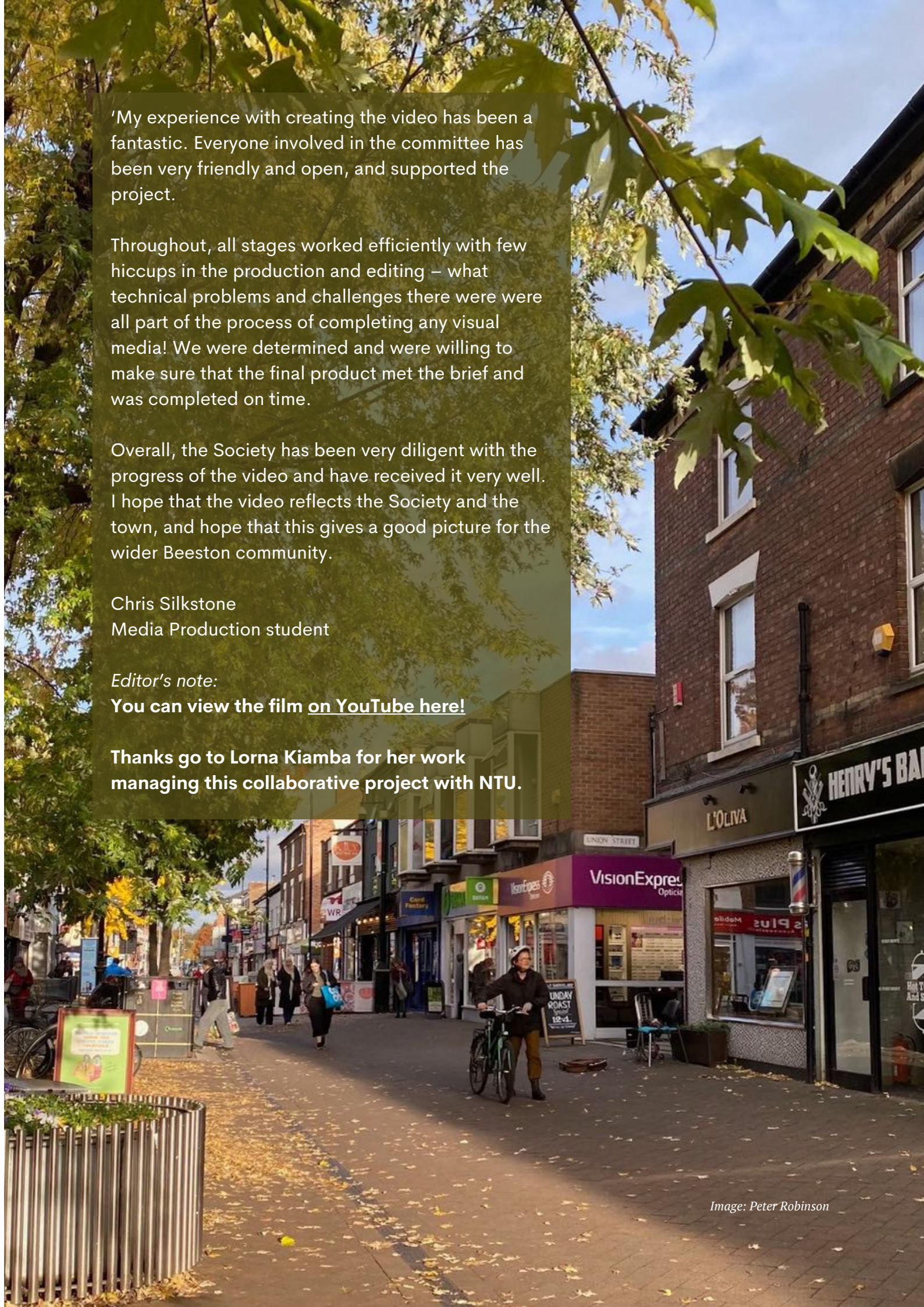


Image: Peter Robinson

UP CLOSE

Can you recognise the location of these from shots of their architectural detailing?

CONTENT BY
MERVYN



CONTRIBUTORS

TAMAR
MERVYN
KAREN
GARY SMERDON-WHITE
CLYDE DAVIS
ROBERT HOWARD

JANET POLIAKOFF
SKATE NOTTINGHAM
LEWIS STAINER
PETER ROBINSON
CHRIS SILKSTONE

Contact us

General inquiries: beestoncivicsociety@gmail.com
LHL enquiries: lhl.beestoncivicsociety@gmail.com
Editorial deadline for next issue 17 October 2024. Contact: designer.beestoncivicsociety@gmail.com
beestoncivicsociety.org.uk

