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Our next "Any Questions?" discussion on topical local issues will be held in St. James Centre on Nov 3rd at 7:30 p.m. Our last was held almost two years ago, in November 2019.

Since then we have seen:

- A new operator for Alnwick Market (twice)
- Approval for conversion of the Duke's School
- Birth of around 120 Alnwick babies
- Bondgate tower struck by a vehicle (several times)
- Families moving into new houses on Willowburn Park & Peter's Mill
- Hotels approved on Willowburn and Bailiffgate
- Narrowgate pedestrianised
- New faces on our Town and County Councils
- Northumberland climate action plan signed off
- Opening of Aln Valley Greenway
- Radical proposals to reform the planning system
- Scaffolding over General Lambert's House
- The 10th series of Vera broadcast
- A global pandemic

...and more.

Any Questions?



Alnwick's Top tree

Our trees are at their best, and some are quite spectacular. 'Team tree' of the Civic Society invited members to send in pictures of notable trees in and around Alnwick. You submitted trees that you considered notable for their size, colour, situation, history or their significance to you or the town. We then invited members to vote on their choice of the top three, and to give their reasons.

These are the results.

- 1) Copper Beech on Column Field for its colour, and stand-out location.
- 2) Hope House for amazing presence
- 3) Allerburn Lea
- 4=) Giant Redwood at Allerburn House
- 4=) Clayport Bank
- 6) Barter Books
- 7) Bondgate Without
- 8) Hulne Park Entrance
- 9=) Hulne Park Yellow Walk
- 9=) Bailiffgate, Barbican

Our thanks to everyone who has contributed, for reminding us of the important part that trees play in our enjoyment of Alnwick.

Team tree is a sub-group of Civic Society members who take a particular interest in tree protection, and work with other groups in the town that have complementary interests. If you can help or would like to know more then please get in touch.



Top tree: the copper beech on Column Field:

A fine specimen in a prime location. It sits well with the war memorial and completes a magnificent entrance to the town from Denwick bridge.

Hope House: It's magnificent, and perfectly frames a key part of the conservation area.



Allerburn Lee: This comes out before the others and really stands out for a few weeks before others catch up.



Giant Redwood at Allerburn House. Big and soft, so if you are still a child you can punch it. Allerburn House was built 1862 so it would be planted not long after that.



Clayport Bank: The first tree we see on arriving in Alnwick from the Moor



Barter Books: a fine specimen in a prime location relative to the War Memorial, Flagpole and Barter Books / Station building.



South end of Bondgate Without: Forms an important terminal element marking where the continuous street frontage is first broken as one leaves the town southwards.



Hulne Park: Of all the trees you see as you enter Hulne Park this one makes the most powerful statement of what is to come.



Hulne Park Yellow Walk: The interplay of light and dark, sun and shadow and the vertical trunks and the hint of green moorland beyond.



Bailiffgate outside the Barbican: a good example of ensuring that a tree is replaced when it becomes necessary.



25 years ago: A controversial development on the edge of town

Twenty-five years ago the biggest planning issue that faced the town was an application by Safeway to build a new store on Willowburn Lane. The Secretary of State had over-ruled permission given by the District Council in 1993. Safeway appealed, and in our last newsletter we left the story in June 1997, as the public inquiry was about to begin.

- Who would step forward to defend Alnwick's high street?
- Would the Inspector back the Secretary of State, over-rule the outline planning permission, and refuse to let the development proceed?
- How would Safeway react?
- Would the financial penalties bankrupt Alnwick District Council?
- Would Alnwick's independent retailers be able to fight the competition?

The issue in front of the public inquiry was whether the District Council had made the initial decision correctly. The District Council and Safeway had legal representation. Alnwick Civic Society, the Town Council and the Chamber of Trade presented a co-ordinated case, without legal representation, based on concerns over the well-being of trade in the town centre.

After five days of hearings the inspector concluded that the council had misinterpreted what was applied for, and was wrong to grant permission when there was clear evidence that this would adversely affect the vitality of the town centre, not accord with the need for retail space, and be contrary to national planning guidance and local planning policies.

The Secretary of State accepted that conclusion. Safeway had appealed against permission being revoked, and as permission should not have been granted in the first place, their appeal failed. It took some time for the compensation claims to be settled, because the council's insurers wanted to test the decision in the high court. Eventually, though, a settlement was agreed.

At the time, the Civic Society drew several lessons from the experience. These still resonate today:

- Organising a high-profile campaign was demanding for the committee, but it also gave the society a renewed sense of purpose and increased members' determination to work for the conservation of what makes Alnwick special.
- The point of principle was that the value of the conservation area would be greatly diminished if its commercial viability was undermined. Different voluntary bodies had disagreed in the past, but here they discovered complementary interests and worked together to construct their case.
- Effective arguments had to be presented in a logical manner, address issues directly, avoid straying into peripheral matters. There was little value in arguing points that were beyond the competence of lay advocates.

Over the last 25 years there have been developments in the retail landscape that nobody at the 1997 inquiry could have foreseen. Today neither national retailers operating on the edge of town, nor independent retailers on Alnwick's high street are immune from the challenges of a fast-changing business environment.

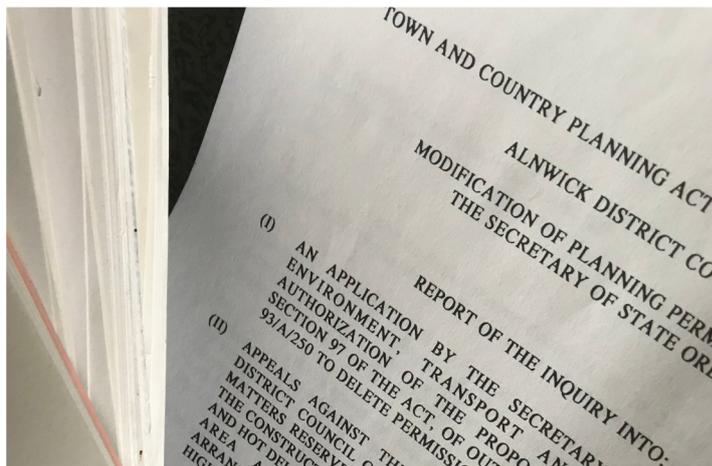
Twenty-five years later, with the benefit of hindsight, we can see that one of the reasons this issue became so difficult was that too few people were involved in taking key decisions at an early stage.

It is notoriously difficult for any community to engage effectively with strategic planning issues. But perhaps the lesson from 1997 that resonates most strongly for us today is how badly things can go if no effort is made to keep the community informed, and engaged in debate about the town's future.

Feelings ran high back in 1997. There must have been times when relationships became difficult, if not acrimonious. Thankfully, the different groups never got beyond the point where they were able to work together. Over the next couple of years they set up a forum to encourage informed debate, and working groups reported on selected areas of concern. Topics included retailing, tourism, sports and leisure facilities, environment, young people, and those with special needs.

Alnwick is a different place now. In twenty-five years time Alnwick will be different again. So...

- Decisions are being taken now that will shape the future of our town. Do we all understand the likely effects of those decisions?
- Is the voice of the community being heard when key decisions are taken? Do you feel involved yourself?
- Over the last twenty-five years we have seen changes in the structure of Local Government, reforms of the Planning System, and advances in Technology. All should have made it easier for us all to participate. Have they?
- What role should the Civic Society be playing? How would you complete the sentence "Civic Society members should...."



Planning matters

There are two applications in the pipeline that will affect traffic volumes on the junction between the Shilbottle Road and the A1 Slip road. Construction of six business units on Lionheart Enterprise Park and ten office units on Cawledge Business Park will generate additional traffic at a junction where there have been safety concerns for at least seven years. We think the safety issues need to be resolved before further development takes place.

The Aln Valley Greenway is proving increasingly popular and we hope the junction improvements will take account of the need to ensure that cyclists can safely negotiate this busy junction, and encourage sustainable travel between Alnwick, Alnmouth Station, and the National Cycle Network.

On Phase-2 of the Windy Edge development we raised no objection. However, we did draw attention to the Section 106 agreement which dates from October 2018.

Since then, we have all experienced the impact of a pandemic on our schools, the NHS, and our roads. The local housing market is buoyant, so we hope the second phase of this development provides an opportunity for the authorities and the developer to revisit the terms of the Section 106 agreement to ensure that it reflects what has been learned about the health, education and transport infrastructure that Alnwick will need in future. Since we commented, planners have received a response from Northumbrian Water that raises concerns about the proximity of the sewage treatment works and the odour, noise and general amenity nuisance impacting on future residents of the development (see right).

South of Greensfield Farm an application for a significant development was approved in 2016. Changes have now been proposed and we have objected on the basis that the new design should not be considered a variation of condition, and takes insufficient account of the location in a group of designated heritage assets. Approval

Shilbottle Road Junction

McDonalds was granted planning permission in 2014 for the erection of their restaurant on Cawledge Business Park. Permission was granted on condition that, within 18 months of opening, a scheme would be implemented to improve the intersection of the A1 slip road and the Shilbottle Road. The restaurant opened in September 2015. However, in October 2016 permission was sought, and granted, to extend the time allowed for junction improvements by six months: so that traffic surveys could be undertaken and further discussion take place. We have not seen the results of that survey or those discussions, but in 2018, the Northumberland Local Plan Transport Assessment Report identified that this junction will require improvements to enable Local Plan traffic to be accommodated.

evidence of the value of a local list. We should be informing developers and planners where an application affects a building that the community regards as being of note.

There is an application to convert the former Jobson Fish & Chip shop on Paikie's Lane to flats and a takeaway. We decided not to comment on the application, but this corner would benefit from some T.L.C. We hope that the result will match the quality of some nearby retail investments.

"This current planning application shows the detailed layout and positioning of the houses on the site layout and suggests that those closest to the boundary of our operational treatment works will be approximately 90-100m away from the inlet works, which consist of screening and solids removal, and the 4 main secondary settlement tanks. The generally accepted cordon sanitaire distance for development near to sewage treatment works is 400m, though this can vary depending on the type and size of the works. Other wastewater companies around the UK do impose larger cordon sanitaire zones of up to 800m".



"We feel that odour, in particular, may become a concern to future residents of the development, particularly those residing closest to the boundary of the treatment works. The sewage treatment works operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The tanks are regularly stirred and sludge settlement is removed and mechanically pumped away. The pumps themselves generate noise by stopping and starting at intervals".

"Odours from the sewage treatment works can vary depending on the volumes of effluent being held and the weather, wind and other atmospheric conditions".

of the original scheme was subject to conditions designed to ensure that works were carried out in a manner consistent with the character of the building and surrounding area. For this new design the impact on the group value of the designated heritage assets and landscape setting needs to be re-assessed.

The Conservation Officer has since objected.

Swansfield Lodge is not listed, and outside the conservation area, but it was associated with Swansfield House, which was built in 1823 to a design by John Dobson. We saw no reason to comment on the proposed extension, but this is further

There is an application to convert the former Royal Air Force Association Club to two houses. We welcome the fact that a sustainable use has been found for this building. However, we are concerned that without appropriate protection, the insertion of a second door in the frontage could irretrievably harm the historic character of a listed building at a prominent location in the Conservation Area. The character of the planned Howick Street suburb is nationally recognised. Historic England judge that it is easy to overlook the significance of a humble early ragged school such as this. It is therefore important to ensure that any works are carried out in a manner consistent with the character of the building and the surrounding area.

We also noted the growing pressure on street parking in the area, and welcome the assessment that Highways made of the impact.



Historical Railways Estate

The new railway

Yesterday there was opened, without ceremony, a new line of railway, but a line which runs through a romantic and interesting country. For four years the North-Eastern Railway Company has been engaged in the formation of a line of railway from Alnwick to Cornhill, and it has spent, on rather less than thirty-six miles of line, over £125,000 in one of the years. In all, in bridging the gulf between Alnwick and the Tweed, more than £420,000 has been spent, and the expenditure is not yet quite complete. That large sum must be as a solid proof of the desire of the North-Eastern Railway to serve its district, for, from the sparse population it can scarcely be expected that the line will be very remunerative in the present position of agriculture. The expenditure must have greatly aided the district since the contract was first let in 1883; and other benefits will follow as substantial, if more generally distributed. The farmer will have a better and cheaper outlet for his produce, an easier and quicker visit to the markets, and will have coal, lime, and implements carried to him cheaper than of yore. Let us remember these facts when we hear the monopolist railway of the North spoken harshly of. The need of central Northumberland for a railway was pressed upon it; it applied to Parliament and obtained powers to make the railway; it has made it at a cost that will approach half-a-million sterling; it has placed that great artery of trade at the service of the public without blowing of trumpets; and it is not likely to receive any adequate return on its capital just yet. The North-Eastern Railway is a great monopoly, but it is subject to the will of its owners, and the latter are influenced by that greater

public of which they form a part.

The Alnwick and Cornhill branch winds through a locality rich in romance, and teeming with treasures for the antiquary, the historian, the lover of old castles, battlefields, fine farming, and splendid scenery. Yesterday, those who left Tweedside early found "a freshening western blast" sweep away the mists just as in the day of Flodden; but now the sun shone neither on "England's arrow flight" nor on "western mountaineers" rushing bare-bosomed on spears. The days of Flodden and Redrigs are passed; the cattle reivers are only names now; and the border Peels were yesterday seen in decay, or put to uses more generally advantageous than of old. From Cornhill to Alnwick yesterday the course along the rails of Cleveland steel was one in which the "inconstant race of light and shade" was on peaceful fields where the gleaner stood like Rute, "breast high amid the alien corn" where the cattle were startled by the unaccustomed shriek of an iron horse from the Gateshead works; where long fields of turnips spoke of good culture; and where in the southern part "the muirmen" tardily make their hay as in the olden ballad. No trace of industry came on the scene, except that of the olden one pursued "when Adam delved", and thus, through truly rural sights, the locomotive yesterday bore its burden for the first time up steep inclines and down descents as sharp, until the devious course of the line ended at the ducal town. This railway will open out to the tourist and the traveller a new and generally untrodden path; it will benefit both by giving some wealth to Glendale for the health it yields in return; but it will be when agriculture is more prosperous that the line will yield a fitting return to its owners. For both it is the best wish that trade and spade may soon advance in prosperity.

Newcastle Daily Chronicle -
6th September 1887



County Council of its intention to infill two bridges at Rugley and Mossyford. These span the former Cornhill railway to the south-west of Alnwick. The Town Council and Alnwick

Alnwick Greenway

The Historical Railways Estate is a collection of around 3,200 structures, owned by the Department for Transport and managed on its behalf by Highways England. In January 2021, Highways England revealed that they intended to infill 115 bridges and tunnels, and demolish a further 15 over the next five years. This programme would thwart the development of active travel routes, railway re-openings and extensions to heritage lines.

The HRE Group is an alliance of walking, cycling and heritage campaigners, civil engineers and greenway developers who see the Historic Railway Estate as valuable for future transport provision. They are running a high profile campaign to oppose loss of these assets.

Members will want to know how this affects Alnwick. In April 2020, Highways England notified Northumberland

Civic Society objected, and in response Highways England threatened to infill the bridges under Permitted Development powers. Both structures are in good condition.

Much of the railway trackbed has been used informally by walkers for many years. There are now plans to develop a recreational foot and cycle path across Alnwick Moor. It will be known as the Alnwick Greenway. The first phase will head west for 2½ miles, from the edge of Alnwick to the Rothbury Road at Mossyford. Subsequently it could extend to Edlingham and beyond.

A dialogue is taking place with the landowners; some preparatory drainage and vegetation clearance work has been undertaken, and Northumberland County Council is investigating the viability of taking ownership of the bridges.

For details of the national campaign see:

<http://isengard.co.uk/HRE-SecuringItsPotential.pdf>

'A' is for Agger Flatt

Tate says that the name was originally Anger flatt, after Anglo Saxon eng, or German ang, meaning meadow. Was he right?

The field appears as Agger Flatts on Isaac Thomson's map of 1760 (below left), and Thomas Wilkin's map of 1773 (below right). It was mapped as gardens in 1788. By 1820 it was owned by the Duke of Northumberland, who also owned the adjoining fields to the West and South. William Newton and John Newton were the Duke's tenants. At the time John Lambert owned the adjoining field to the East. This was where Belvedere Terrace would be built between 1827 and 1847. In another neighbouring field, Ravenslaw was built in 1896 for William Hardy. William was one of the two brothers who established the famous fishing tackle company.

The railway had cut through Agger Flats by 1850, dividing it into two. The part of the field north of the line became a nursery, which was named Agger Flat. In 1889 the three houses in Aydon Gardens were built at the north end of this plot.

West of the railway the neighbouring fields developed first. Duke Street and Bridge street were built in 1884 as workmen's terraced cottages with small front-gardens and back yards. The same type of terraced development then filled the field between Agger Flats and Wagonway Road. This was where the Duke of Northumberland set up a housing association in 1897 to provide homes for "bona fide" workmen and their families on Queen Street.

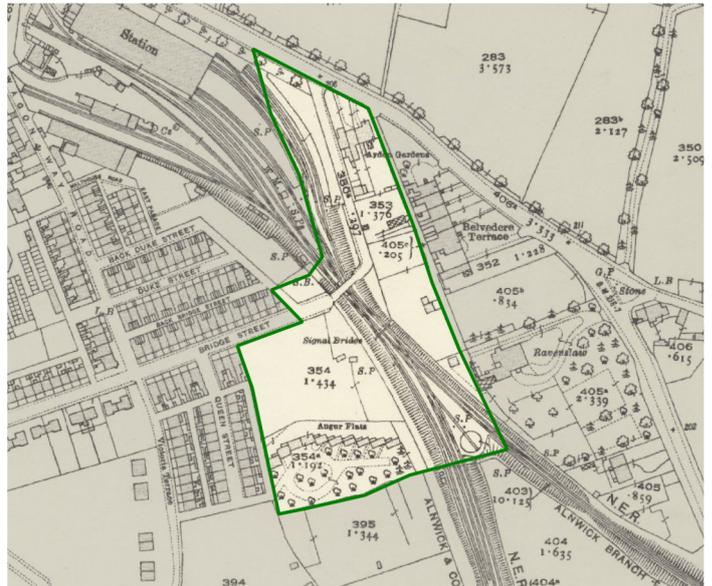
It was 1912 before the western part of Agger Flatt was developed. Ten cottages were built and named Augur Place to provide "suitable accommodation at a reasonable rent for deserving members of the working classes in receipt of Old Age Pensions". They were said to offer "ample accommodation for old couples". The remaining part of this field west of the railway wasn't developed until 1936, when Aydon Crescent was built.

Alan Mann has looked at some potential etymologies. Such research often challenges pre-conceptions, and takes unexpected turns. While it may not result in any definitive answer, it can offer up various lines of future research. The name Agger Flatt ticks all of these boxes.

In both the Thompson and Wilkin maps the neighbouring field is called 'furlong'. A furlong was the length of a furrow that a team of oxen or horses could plough before tiring, with space to turn around for the return furrow. This corresponds to roughly 220 yards. A flat(t) was a mediaeval land division for a series of associated fields: synonymous with furlong. There are numerous 'flatts' locally

e.g. Alisaundflatt; Halflatt; Stanley Flatts, and others. Both maps show that the Anger/ Agger Flatts are some 220 yards long, so an alternative name like 'Anger/ Agger Furlong' would also be appropriate.

Agger suggests interesting possibilities. It



is the standard Roman word for an earthen embankment. This can form the foundation of Roman roads, and of earthen ramparts around camps, or form defensive walls with a palisade and accompanying ditch/ fosse (e.g., the Antonine Wall). We have the name Agger Hill on Hadrian's Wall in Newcastle. No Roman structures have been uncovered in Alnwick, but later English usage continued and agger could also be used for any earthen heap/ mound. So agger suggested possible roadway/ rampart or even an ancient barrow/ earth work on the eastern approaches to Alnwick.

The Thompson and Wilkin maps show the variation as 'Agger' and there was a nursery south of the town called Aggerflat in 1868/9. However, the oldest variations we have from Tate in 1569, is 'Angerflatt/ Angerflat'. The Percy Balliffs Rolls for 1472 gives 'Angre Flatte'. So, the original first element is likely to be 'anger/ angre', with 'agger' a modern corruption. Both 'anger' and 'angre' are meaningful.

Tate's explanation is a strong possibility. Angar (Old German) or Anger (modern german) = pasture, grass land or meadow. German villages are often called Angerdorf – with a lens of houses clustered around a central village green. Within England, names like Ongar and Chipping Ongar (Essex), previous versions = Hangra (1086); Angre (1086); Aungre 1285) can be explained as Grass land and Market on the pasture. Closer to home the hamlets of High and Low Angerton, 6 - 7 miles west of Morpeth, may have a similar origin, as may Ingram in the Breamish Valley, which had the forms amongst others of Angreham (1255); Angerham (1324); Ayngrame (1507) and Yngram (1507).

A related word may be Old Norse Angr = a bay. The head of a bay was associated with machar/ grass land. But no Northumberland example is on a bay. Given the Anglian and Norse origins of Northumberland, 'angar' = grassland pasture meadow seems more likely.



Thomson, 1760



Wilkin, 1773

Agger flat (continued)

Northumberland and Alnwick also had considerable Norman involvement from De Vesci, to De Umfraville to Percy. There are numerous place names of Angerville, especially in Normandy. The large city of Angers in the Loire may also be cited. They may have a wide range of different etymologies. So, the first element 'anger/ angré' may reflect a personal name, with the surname Angier or De Angerville = Dangerfield not uncommon in Britain. Another related Norman name associated with this area is that of Tankerville. The second son of Sir Thomas Grey (1359 – 1400), of Berwick and Chillingham castle, became the first Earl of Tankerville in 1418, his efforts in the Hundred Years war resulting in him becoming the Comte of Tancarville in Normandy. The name Tancarville in English would likely become Tankerfield and just lose the 'T', but this is special pleading and unlikely.

'Anger' may also reflect a personal name. The parish of Fisherton Anger near Salisbury in Wiltshire, was known as Fisherton, until it was taken over by Richard son of Aucher in 1242, and held by the family until the early 13th century. After that, the manor was called 'Fisherton Aucher', until the common 'n for u miscopy' gave us Fisherton Anger. So, Anger Flatt could easily be for an older Auger/ Aucher Flatt. This suggests a link to the present names of Augur Place and Augur Terrace, but Conzen states that the name 'Augur' in 1912 was derived from the older field name Agger Flatt. So here we have the latest corruption with the variations going from the oldest Angre (1472), then Anger (1569), then Agger (1760, 1773, 1868/9) then Augur (1912).

So far, so good, but this is where the research takes an unexpected turn. The oldest form we have of 'Angre Flatte' (1472), surprisingly perhaps, is not unique. One of the main streets in the Scottish border town of Kelso is called Angraflat, and older sources give the name as Angreflatt and Angreflat. Angraflat in Kelso has been connected with the lost world of Scottish Mediaeval hermits and anchorites. These two terms are not identical – hermits lived in seclusion out of religious conviction, and may have a role in the wider society, performing tasks such as maintaining roads, fords and bridges etc. The presence of hermits is often indicated by names such as Dysart (Fife); Dyserth (Denbigh) or Bodermid (Gwynedd) or Hermit's Well (Fife).

Anchorites have a different role. They live a life of individual solitude and religious devotion, either in remote locations in small cells, or close to the church and society where they can be given food/ alms and religious communion. The door of their cell was often bricked up by the local bishop. The presence of an anchorite is often indicated by the old Saxon 'ancor/ ancer/ ancra'; by the old Irish 'an-chara/ ancaire'; old Welsh 'ancr/ ances' etc. The North East is home to many hermits and anchorites. The most famous being St. Cuthbert, who lived the solitary life on Farne for 9 years. Warkworth has its hermitage on the River Coquet, and St. Lawrence's Church in Warkworth has a 15th century vestry that may have been an anchorite dwelling. There's the legend of St. Henry, Hermit of Coquet Island. One somewhat gruesome mediaeval story connects Alnwick with a hermit.

'When the eyre of 1256 visited Newcastle, for example, the men of the vill of Alnwick recounted an incident in which a hermit, assaulted and robbed by the 'foreigner' Gilbert de Nithsdale was himself obliged to behead the offender. The coroner and the sheriff patiently explained to the bewildered justices 'that it is the custom in this county that whenever a man is taken in possession of stolen goods he is immediately beheaded, and the man who charges him is allowed to keep the thief's chattels if it is he who beheads him'.*

(Neville, Scottish Historical Review Vol. 81). The same tale appears in 'The Hermits and Anchorites of England' Rotha Mary Clay. *'But friction did not always end in fellowship, as is shown by another Northumbrian tale. A certain Gilbert de Niddendale associated with a hermit called Seman de Botelesham. The latter was attacked by his companion, who beat him and left him on the moor for dead, taking away his clothes and a penny. Gilbert fled, but was seized by an official and taken prisoner for the robbery. In the meantime, the hermit had recovered, and the King's servant caused him to behead with his own hands his former comrade, such being the custom in that wild border country when a man was caught red-handed.'*

It is undeniable that the religious life of hermits and anchorites was widespread during many periods of mediaeval life, and they leave their presence in place names throughout the British isles and Ireland. In Scotland, we may have Ankerlaw (Midlothian) and Angreflat (Kelso); In Wales Ancre Hill (Monmouth) and Hafod yr Ancr (Summer pasture of the anchorite, Brecon); in Ireland Ballyanchor – settlement of the anchorite, a position of tenure within Lismore Abbey), Rath Ancair/Anker (The anchorites enclosure, Co. Cork); and especially in England with Ankerdine Hill (Worcs.), Anchor Church (caves near Ingleby, Derbyshire), the Ankerwyke Yew (Ancient tree near Wraysbury Berkshire), Ancarig (early name for Thorney Abbey, an island of anchorites in the fens of Cambridgeshire), and many others.

So, it is not entirely unreasonable to suggest 'Anker/Anger Flatt' in Alnwick as the 'Anchorite's Furlong', as an option. On both maps the enclosure to the west and south of Anger/ Agger Flatt, the 'Furlong' would appear to be in identical position to the recorded 'Knights Furlong', which is shown on the earlier Norton map of 1624. As the specific here is an occupation i.e., knight, then a similar usage of 'Anchorite's Furlong' may be reasonable.

So, there we have it. Angre/ Anger/ Agger flatt is an interesting field name and could mean:

- The Meadow / Pasture Flat / Furlong
- The Flat/ Furlong of Anger/ Agger/ Aucher
- The Flat/ Furlong of the Norman from Ancerville or even Tancarville.
- The flat/ furlong of the Anchorite
- or none of these!

You pays your money. We await any further evidence from the archives.

* Eyre = circuit of an itinerant justice

Plan your Heritage Open Day on September 11th

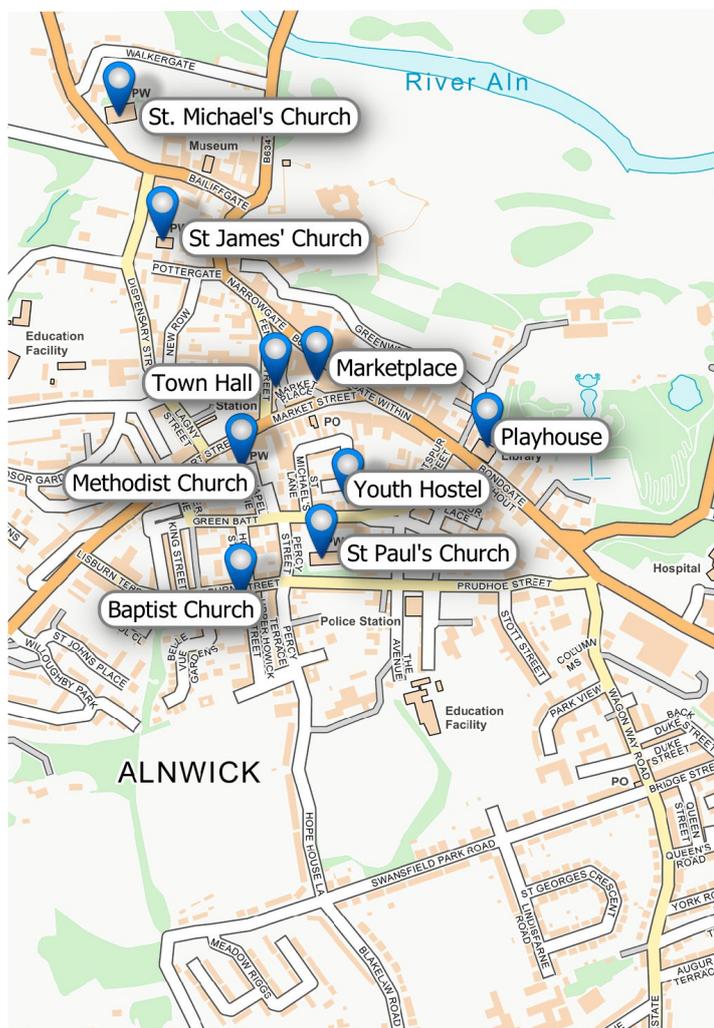
By opening heritage sites that are not normally open to the public, and laying on activities that are not normally available, Heritage Open Days provides an opportunity for us to:

- Raise awareness of Alnwick's heritage among residents, businesses and local organisations.
- Showcase Alnwick's heritage beyond Alnwick: attract visitors and encourage them to spend time in the town.
- Bring Alnwick's heritage groups together, facilitate mutual support, raise our profile, and build local capacity.
- Lay the groundwork for similar events in future.

Which of these will you visit?

Begin in the **Market Place** for the latest information. Our friendly volunteers will help you to plan your day. And (my lords, ladies and gentlemen) you can lend your ears to Alnwick's Town Crier. *Oyez, oyez, oyez!*

- The **Parish Church of St. Michael** has a story that spans the history of Alnwick and the Dukes of Northumberland.



See the medieval bells, which are giving way to a new ring of ten bells.

- **St. James's Centre:** the home of Alnwick's United Reformed Church was built in 1894 by well known church architects Hicks and Charlewood in the revived Free Perpendicular style of the time.
- **Town Hall:** built for the Alnwick Freemen in 1736, with clock tower added in 1767. Information panels record the different companies: Cordwainers, Tanners, Black Smiths, White Smiths, Merchants, Skinners & Glovers, Butchers and Carpenters & Joiners.
- **Alnwick Playhouse:** staff & volunteers will lead backstage tours. See behind the scenes of the newly renovated small scale theatre in a prominent historic building. Book through Playhouse Web site - www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk
- **Alnwick Methodist Church** spans over 200 years of Methodist Heritage. The church still displays the John Wesley 18th Century pulpit.
- **Youth Hostel:** Once Alnwick's 19th Century House of Correction where Alnwick's wrongdoers were imprisoned. Enjoy **Folk Music sessions** in the former Exercise Yard, with original wall, windows and bars (still in use for hostel guests - who may come and go as they please).
- **Alnwick Baptist Church** was built in the 1830s as a Presbyterian Chapel and has been a vital home of worship for over 180 years.

• **St. Paul's Church** was designed in the Decorated Gothic style by the renowned architect Anthony Salvin. Opened as an Anglican church in 1846, it has served as Alnwick's Roman Catholic church since 1982. The East Window is one of only three of its kind in Europe.

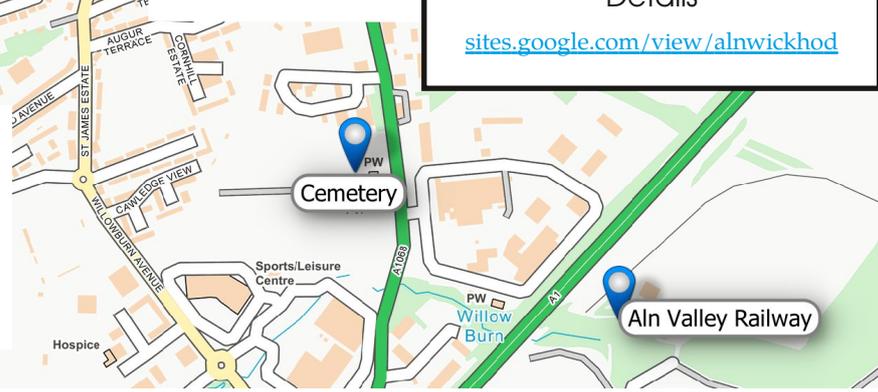
• **Alnwick Cemetery:** a guided tour with the history of the cemetery, and stories of some of Alnwick's most eminent and notorious residents. We hope to include access to memorials inside one of the two chapels. [Book first]

• **Aln Valley Railway:** guided tours which will include visits to the engine shed, workshops and signal box, all of which are normally closed to the public.

• **Heritage guided tour:** join Civic Society members on a walk that explores Alnwick's built heritage, starting and ending in the marketplace. [Book first]

In addition, look out for details of the **Masonic Lodge** and a rare opportunity to see the famous Chevy Chase carved sideboard.

Details
sites.google.com/view/alnwickhod



News in Brief

Do you own a listed building?



A new Historic England Advice Note provides advice for owners about Listed Building consent, and how to make an informed application. It gives advice on where listed building consent is needed, where it is not needed, and where it may depend on how the work is carried out.

Informed applications are based on an understanding of where the special interest of a listed building lies. A staged approach, professional advice, and experienced contractors will help owners to maximise the chance of success. You can find the guide most easily via "Guidance for owners" on the Civic Society web site.

<https://alwickcivicsociety.org.uk/guidance/>

We have submitted an application to the Charity Commission to change the status of the society to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This relatively new form of corporate structure gives the society its own legal personality, without imposing an additional bureaucratic burden. It will enable the

Correction: White Hart

In the previous newsletter we stated that The White Hart was absorbed into the Queen's Head before 1914. This came as a surprise to readers who can recall drinking at the White Hart in their youth. We are always grateful when such errors are drawn to our attention, and very happy to put the record straight.

society to undertake larger projects while offering a degree of protection to the trustees and members. Charitable Incorporated Organisations are regulated by the Charity Commission. Members will see no change in our charitable purposes.

A public consultation on the proposed main modifications to the Local Plan commenced on Wednesday 9th June 2021 and is taking place over a period of 8 weeks until 5 p.m. on Wednesday 4th August 2021. Comments are also being invited on a number of supporting documents and additional evidence documents. The development of the Local Plan is now approaching a conclusion and we decided that we had nothing to add at this stage.

Our new councillors:

County Councillors for Alnwick:

- Gordon Castle
- Martin Swinbank



Alnwick: Castle Ward:

- Sue Allcroft
- Pete Burns
- Martin Harrington
- John Humphries
- Alan Symmonds
- Geoff Watson
- Lynda Wearn

Alnwick: Clayport Ward

- Peter Edge
- Julia Lyford
- Martin Swinbank
- Lynda Wood-Mitchell

Alnwick: Hotspur Ward

- Peter Broom
- Gordon Castle
- Beth Gascoigne-Owens
- John Richard Parker
- Diane Watson

A new operator has taken over the running of Alnwick Markets.

Marketplace (Europe) positions itself

as one of the largest and most respected specialist market operators in the UK. They run a variety of markets and events that differ in both size and duration.



The market is a vital part of the life of our town, and over the last year, despite Covid, under Groupe Geraud, the level of activity has been transformed. Members will be keen to see the market continuing to succeed. That success, in turn, depends on the level of support that market traders receive from the town.



Regular Markets take place on Thursday and Saturday from 9a.m. - 4p.m. Farmer's markets take place on the last Friday of the month. We hope members will do everything they can to support them.

Congratulations to Alnwick in Bloom on their 40th Anniversary this year. We wish them continued success.



Vera Mallon

Vera died peacefully in hospital on the 26th May, at the age of 87 years. She had an extensive knowledge of the history of Alnwick, which she shared generously. It was always a pleasure to talk with Vera, and she will be sadly missed: not only by her extended family and many friends, but by all who shared her interest in the story of our town.

Alnwick Shopfront Design Guide

It is now more than twenty-five years since the Civic Society was asked to develop Alnwick's first Shopfront Design Guide by the Alnwick District Council. That guide was well-received and earned the support of local business and their advisers. As a result it had a positive impact on the appearance of our town.

Almost all of Alnwick's high street falls within the Conservation Area and many of our town-centre businesses are based in listed buildings. The visual appeal of the town centre is critical to attracting visitors and retaining a vibrant business community. Achieving a high standard of design helps to underpin commercial success and thus contributes to both our enjoyment of the town centre, and its economic viability.

The Civic Society was proud of that first Shopfront Design Guide, and we are proud to be associated with the development of the new guide. It is in line with current national policy and it provides the Town Council and the Planning Authority with a set of clear criteria for assessing and determining applications for planning permission and listed building consent.

This new guide imposes no additional burdens or new restrictions on Alnwick's retailers or on the owners of property. On the contrary it simplifies, clarifies and modernizes existing guidance.

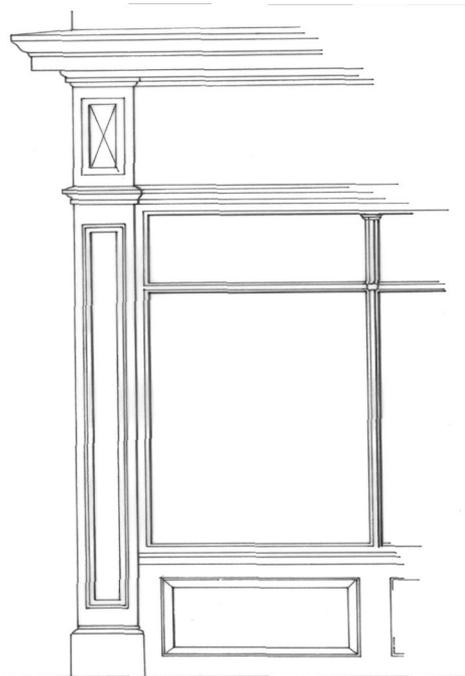
- The new guide is aimed first at helping a new independent business to make the most of the location, navigate the system, and avoid expensive mistakes. We hope it will make life easier for a new business and so help the recovery of Alnwick's high street.
- Most of Alnwick's townscape is already of high quality. We hope this guide will also help established retailers who have taken care with design, and who set a high standard. It is important that we protect their investment from thoughtless development next door.



For the general reader, who wants to understand why our shops have taken on the form we see today, the guide also includes some background on the history of shops and shopfronts in Alnwick: from the medieval market stall to 20th century Arts and Crafts.

We are helping to get the new guide into the hands of our local high street businesses, but it will only make an impact where people recognise that it helps and where they are willing to use it. So please give this guide your support, and help to spread the word.

The Principal Elements of a Traditional Shopfront

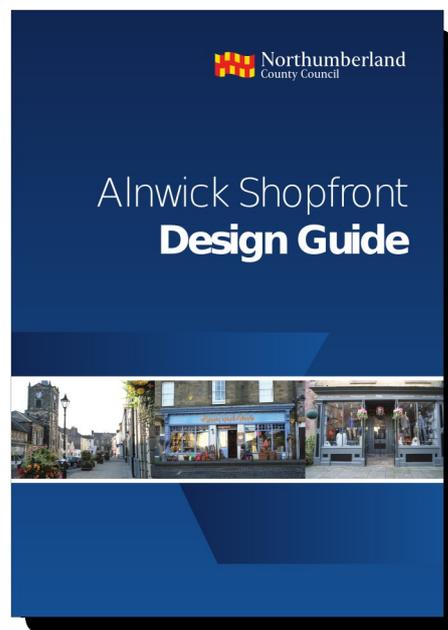


How many of these can you identify?

- Architrave
- Bracket / Corbel
- Cornice
- Fascia / Frieze
- Mullion
- Pilaster
- Plinth
- Stallriser
- Transome

(see the Alnwick Shopfront Design Guide, Page 8 for answers)

The guide can be found here:
<https://tinyurl.com/5p6438tx>



Quiz: Where have we bin?

In the centre of Alnwick we are rarely more than 50 metres from a litter bin. Can you locate these examples and do you recognise the common theme behind them? There are clues on page 8, but you will need check your answers on the back page.

Northumberland County Council is responsible for emptying litter bins, but Alnwick Town Council is responsible for the supply of bins.

- Where a bin needs to be replaced, or a new bin is required you should contact a Town Councillor, or use the contact form on the Town Council web site. <https://alnwick-tc.gov.uk/contact/>
- To report fly tipping, request litter removal, or report dog waste use the NCC web site. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/SelfService/Report.aspx>



A



B



C



D



E



F



Diary dates

Heritage Open Days: 11th September. We have organised a variety of activities. See page 8 for details. This is a good opportunity to meet members, and other like-minded people. We welcome help, so please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Any Questions: our topical debate on local issues will be held on November 3rd at 7:30 p.m. in St James Centre, Pottergate. Please put it in your diary now.

Online Talks: thanks to Phil Huntley and Roger Daniel for their talks on Alnwick's Burns, Town Criers and Strawberry growing in Alnwick. These have been well-received. Would you like more of these? We invite suggestions for future topics.

Vikings, fact or fiction. A major exhibition in association with the Jorvik Group at Bailiffgate Museum until 3rd October.

Museums etc. are opening

Arrangements may change, so please check the latest information on opening hours, booking arrangements, and Covid-19 restrictions before visiting.

Alnwick Castle & Grounds: various opening times.

Alnwick Garden: open 9:00-18:00 every day during English school holidays, then 10:00-5:00.

Bailiffgate Museum: Tues to Sun and Bank Holiday Mondays from 10:00-4:00.

Berwick Museum and Art Gallery: open 10:00-16:00, seven days a week.

Cragside: House normally open 11:00-16:00; Garden and woodland normally open 10:00-17:00.

Dunstanburgh Castle: normally 10:00-17:00.

Howick Hall & Gardens: To 30th Sept daily 10.30-18:00. Then to 14th Nov daily 10.30-16:00.

Morpeth Bagpipe Museum: Mon-Sat, 9.30-17:00.

RNLI Grace Darling Museum, Bamburgh: To Oct. Tue-Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 12:00-16:00. From Nov: Tues-Fri 10:00-16:00

Warkworth Castle: normally 10:00-17:00.

Woodhorn Museum: 10:00-16:00, seven days a week.

About Alnwick Civic Society

Alnwick Civic Society was formed in 1974, following the defeat of proposals to re-develop the town centre with a modern shopping area, and amid growing concerns about the future of our town. Since then, we have sought to influence developments, especially in the town centre and conservation area, to ensure that proposals protect and enhance our heritage.

The Society pursues its objectives through a variety of activities. We provide a voice for members through dialogue with planning and conservation professionals and like-minded organisations. We offer advice, scrutinise and comment on development proposals; recognise excellence; and organise public meetings. Members were heavily involved in development of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, and we work with local partners to influence policy at a county level. We seek to influence national policy by co-operating with other bodies in the civic movement, and the Society was a founding member of Civic Voice.

All who share our aims can support the work of the society: by joining as an individual, family, student, or business member; by participating in activities, sharing ideas, raising areas of concern and pointing out examples of good practice. Or simply by demonstrating pride in our town, and spreading the word about the value of our work.



Who's Who?

President: Peter Ennor

Chair: Peter Reed

Treasurer and Membership: Gill Parker

Honorary Secretary: Sue Smith

Other Executive Committee members:

- Ian Hall
- Mary Carter
- Elizabeth Jones

Web: www.alnwickcivicsociety.org.uk

Email: contact@alnwickcivicsociety.org.uk

Twitter: [@AlnwickCivicSoc](https://twitter.com/AlnwickCivicSoc)

Facebook: [AlnwickCivicSociety](https://www.facebook.com/AlnwickCivicSociety)

Instagram: [alnwickcivicsociety](https://www.instagram.com/alnwickcivicsociety)

Heritage at risk: report your concerns here:

<https://alnwickcivicsociety.org.uk/heritage-at-risk/>

- Quiz Answers**
- A) Green Batt: outside the Youth Hostel
 - B) South Road: opposite the Cemetery
 - C) Bondgate Without: opposite Playhouse
 - D) Bailiffgate: Gates to St Michael's Church
 - E) Pottergate: Opposite St James's Church
 - F) Fenkle Street: opposite Town Hall
- Finally: the Marketplace
- The common theme is that most backgrounds show a location that will be opened on Heritage Open Day, Sept 11th. See Page-8.

