



Spring/Summer Newsletter 2026

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CIVIC SOCIETY ENSURES A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THE CONSERVATION AREA



Back in the early 1970's when the Bolsover Urban District Council established the conservation area, under the direction of Surveyor **Charles Margerrison** they designed lighting within Castle Street, High Street and the Market Place which reflected the age of the buildings they helped to illuminate.

Many of these lamps have been neglected over the years and are badly in need of refurbishment. With this in mind committee member **Andy Page** undertook a professional survey which the Civic Society submitted to Derbyshire County Council. They were grateful for the report and undertook to produce a short-medium and long-term asset plan for the lights. Society Committee members **Bernard Haigh**, **Andy Page** and **Janet Woodhead** and street lighting officers held a site meeting in February, resulting in the County Council agreeing to replace all the broken or modern replacements with lamps more fitting to the conservation area.

A brighter future all round!

New lamp design to replace worn and damaged lighting in parts of the conservation area.



200 YEARS OF METHODISM IN BOLSOVER

As part of the celebration by the Methodist Church this March of its 200 year history in the town the Civic Society displayed its large collection of photos and documents relating to the various Bolsover chapels, dating back to the first record of Methodist preaching in the town on May 1819 when Jeremiah Gilbert, a Primitive Methodist attempted to preach in the Market Place, where he addressed a large crowd. For his pains he was arrested and imprisoned overnight in the local lock up!

The display featured all our Methodist buildings over the years;

Town End, Hill Top, Cotton Street, the first Preaching Room in Castle Street, New Bolsover, Hillstown, Shuttlewood and the 1826 chapel on the 'Castle Breck' Events celebrated included 'Messiah in Costume' at Town End, chapel anniversaries, teas and bazaars and the foundation stone laying for Hill Top in 1896. As Abel Sykes and his wife Florence were so instrumental in providing land and money to build the present Methodist Church we also included photos of Sherwood Lodge in its heyday. At the Celebratory Service in March Bernard gave a talk on the growth of Methodism in Bolsover.

If you missed the display it will feature again as part of the Civic Society local history exhibition to be held at the Library later this year.



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49 HIGH STREET



Charles Margerrison (left) at work on the restoration. No. 49 decorated for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002, complete with original biunting dating from the 1953 Coronation.



The house in February 2026.

This house, listed Grade 2 and regarded as one of the most important domestic buildings in the town has now gone on the market, four years after the last owner died.

Built in the late 17th Century, extensively remodelled in the Georgian period and the early 19th Century it is built of coursed squared limestone with limestone dressings and quoins. The interior has an impressive 18th Century open stringed staircase. The separate 'orangery' to the rear boasts features saved from local collieries.

Bought by **Charles Margerrison** and his wife **Bunty** in the late 1950's when it was due for demolition, as the tenants who lived in what by then was a multi occupied house were rehoused. Charles, Engineer and Surveyor to Bolsover Urban District Council, appreciated the importance of the buildings in our town centre centre, and realised that the house was worth saving. They bought it and for the next fifty years brought it back to life, where it was central to so many activities within the town. Bunty and Charles were active supporters of most of the organisations Bolsover; RNLI, Civic Society, WRVS, Cancer Research and number 49 High Street hosted meetings, coffee mornings, refreshment venue for Civic Society Town Trail Tours to visiting groups and any Bolsover committees going. The building was 'open house' to all.

As the house has deteriorated over the past four years, **with no blame attached to the owner, Charles and Bunty's grandson**, Bernard has consulted with BDC's Conservation Manager and the council's Enforcement Officer to ensure deterioration didn't go too far.

At long last this important contribution to Bolsover's townscape is to be restored. We are delighted.

CIVIC SOCIETY ANGELS



We entered the Methodist Church 'Angel's exhibition in December alongside the majority of local retailers who were part of the '**Angels Trail**' and organisations like ours whose designs were based in the chapel. Our design was executed by **Kieran Buck** as a focal point for displaying Society wares to promote what we do in the town through Town Trails, Newsletters and Annual Programme.



DESIGN GUIDE FOR SHOP FRONTS WITHIN THE TOWN



To ensure the new frontages reflect what the town was like in the past they have borrowed photos for the Design Guide from the Civic Society's collection.

We now have an opportunity to air our views on these and other initiatives as part of the improvements through the **Engagement Hub** in Cotton Street. An opportunity to share your views on public investment, local priorities and town centre renewal. If you haven't yet done so pay it a visit. The Hub is open Tuesday and Thursday 10am-2pm plus on Artisan Market Saturdays.

Bernard and **Les** have been invited to sit on the working group implementing the scheme to represent the Civic Society



AGM 2025



We attracted a capacity audience of around ninety members and friends at the 2025 AGM and Wine and Buffet Social Evening. This year members were spoilt for choice with not one Guest Speaker but two...rather like buses when you want one..! **Claire Ward**, Mayor for the East Midlands and **Natalie Fleet** MP for Bolsover shared the honours.

MP Natalie Fleet Addresses the AGM



BRENDA PEGGE



Brenda and Sue line up the bottles for the AGM raffle

Brenda, for years a stalwart member of the Society since 1998 and a committee member for more years than she cares to remember has decided to step down. Brenda was born in Sheffield in 1935 so her earliest memories are tied up with the war. The day before war broke out in 1939 she was evacuated with her nursery class to Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. As she was under five years of age mum went too, under this **'Operation Pied Piper'** scheme.

They were allowed one suitcase between them plus a gas mask in a box and billeted with a local family. As this was still the time of the 'phony war' the evacuees soon returned to Sheffield, to a home with nightly blacked out windows and a local air raid shelter.

Her father was an ARP warden and as the house was near the centre of the city it suffered incendiary bomb damage, her father helping to put his own house fires out! The family were then evacuated further out of the city to Nether Edge. Brenda remembers having her own siren suit and when Sheffield Museums ran an exhibition to commemorate the city's war time experiences during the Blitz her memories were recorded, together with an enormous photo of her, complete in siren suit which graced the museum walls. The recording was available to listen to as part of the exhibition and on the opening day Brenda was asked to perform the honours and open it by cutting the ribbon!

She studied politics, geography and history at Leeds University and on graduation worked for the Family Services Unit. When she married she moved back to Sheffield and started a family before studying for a teaching certificate in Nottingham. Brenda worked in Sheffield as a special needs teacher, later promoted to Head at Woolly Wood Special Educational Needs School for youngsters with hearing and physical impairments. She followed this with the post of Advisor for Special Needs. Recognising her expertise she was asked by HMI to write a Research Paper on children with special needs in Derbyshire and Sheffield.

When she married John Pegge she moved to Eckington and became involved with Eckington Civic Society and on an exchange visit with Bolsover Civic Society remembers a guided Town Trail, visiting the parish church and finishing with refreshments at Charles and Bunty Margerrisons at 49 High Street.

Following John's death in 1995 Brenda moved to Bolsover and joined the Society. She remembers with affection some fantastic visits, such as the one to Welbeck Abbey with a conducted tour of the building when it was still a pre Sandhurst Army College, Eyam village with its plague history, the Evening with MP Dennis Skinner, a tour of Welbeck Brewery and meals such as the one to celebrate the opening of the Pump.

Brenda's work on the committee has been invaluable. For many years she suffered Bernard's hand writing when she typed up the minutes of meetings and could always be relied on to help sell raffle tickets where her cheerful personality guaranteed to charm everyone to dig deep into their pockets! Brenda will be very much missed on the committee but she retains her membership and enthusiasm for keeping involved in Society activities.

If you would like to join the Civic Society and help improve your town, annual membership is £10.00.

This offers you reduced ticket prices at our Events.

See the Annual Programme for more details of these.

In addition, you can get a copy of our Blue Plaque Town Trail. These are free and available from Bolsover Library or at the Town Council Offices.

