



ITPAS NEWSLETTER

Volume 16, Issue 2- Nov 2014

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Daffodil planting



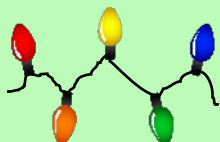
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'A Host of Golden Daffodils'



Alison, Jason and Roy planted out at the T junction

1899 when it was registered with the Royal Horticultural Society. It is believed that our modern trumpet daffodils owe their origins to this daffodil.

The daffodils have been planted at the following locations.

- Thurstaston Road bus stop opposite Greenheys Road
- Corner of Sandy Lane
- Irby Mill Hill lay-by
- Irby Mill Hill roundabout
- Verge outside Brosters wood yard
- Irby Village Copse
- Thingwall verge at junction of Thingwall Road & Pensby Road
- Pensby verge outside the Community centre
- Grass verge adjacent to the "ITPAS Sycamore tree next to The Anchor
- Verge around Irby sign Thingwall Road

Our success in the latest round of funding applications has resulted in the committee members and willing helpers reaching for the embrocation.

We recently submitted a bid to the Wirral Borough Council 'Love Wirral' funding initiative which encourages people to take greater responsibility and pride in their own local environment, a sentiment that is at the very heart of the ITPAS constitution.

The aim of our bid was to enhance the grass verges with a Spring daffodil display. The grant of £298 awarded by the Council has enabled us to purchase and plant 4500 bulbs in our neighbourhood.

The sight of the golden daffodil is truly a herald of Spring and brings a sense of renewed hope and optimism for the coming year.

We selected the variety 'King Alfred', a classic trumpet variety developed in the late 19th century by John Kendall, an English lawyer and hobbyist plant breeder. Daffodil breeders had been developing trumpet daffodils for years but none had the most desired qualities of a huge trumpet and very large flowers. Kendall died in 1890 and sadly never saw the first bloom of the flower that was named for Alfred The Great, the medieval English king. The first official record of King Alfred was in

We are hoping to build on the success of this application in future funding opportunities to continue Daffodil planting on as many grass verges in the neighbourhood as possible.

As a registered charity, we are also considering looking to private individuals and local businesses to sponsor a grass verge for future planting schemes.

If you wish to sponsor a grass verge or to join our planting team or then please contact me on 0151 648 6780



40 Years of ITPAS

Grant News

ITPAS celebrated its 40th anniversary on 2nd July in Irby Village Hall.

For this special evening, our Vice Chairman, Roy Fisher, provided an illustrated visual presentation of ITPAS' achievements over the years. We also invited colleagues from associated organisations who provided interesting information stalls. They were, Friends of Irby Library, Wirral and Cheshire Badger Group, The National Trust, Wirral's Footpaths and Rights of Way Officer, Irby and Thurstaston Women's Institute and Irby Gardening Club.

A popular addition was a wine tasting quiz. This was accompanied by a selection of cheeses provided by our chairman, and cheese guru, Melanie Walker.

In a brief welcome speech, Melanie also paid tribute to the many office bearers who have served ITPAS over the years, some of whom are no longer with us, and who kept the vision for our community minded society going throughout.

Over the past few years we have tried to make the ITPAS Annual General Meeting more interesting for members so we used the 40 years event in an attempt to attract more of members through the doors. We had copies of the annual accounts available and members were able to formally vote the society's committee into office for a further year. However, we received several comments from members who have requested a more traditional AGM next year. We will heed these requests and revert back to the previous model, that is, review of the year, presentation of accounts, officer voting and a question and answer session.

Despite, these slight concerns about the AGM format this year, the 40th celebration was deemed a success – we attracted at least another ten new member households.

P PARKING **P**

Following some concerns about reports of lack of parking in Irby, the ITPAS committee undertook to seek the views of ITPAS members via email.

Initial responses indicate that members would like to see a time limit for parking both on the streets of the village and in the car park itself. There were complaints about business owners blocking the lay-by spaces and commuters/walking groups blocking the car park all day. The committee will discuss these concerns and report back in the next issue.

We are pleased to announce the success of a further grant application.

ITPAS applied for £500 to refurbish the notice board outside the Warren's Medical Centre, in Thingwall Road East under Wirral Borough Council's "Your Wirral" fund.

The notice board was donated to ITPAS by the Thingwall Allotments Group and is very conveniently sited to keep our Thingwall members (and passing patients) informed about local events.

We are currently preparing a new bid for a grant for a sandstone sign for Thurstaston village. It is planned to purchase a large sandstone block with "Thurstaston" carved on the front. To be sited on the verge adjacent to the Telegraph Road/Station Road junction by Thurstaston roundabout.

IRBY COPSE

Our March newsletter reported on ITPAS' successful grant application for funding to improve the copse. To date we can report that our requests for a delineating rail to be installed (to prevent parking on the grassy area), removal of dead trees, introduction of new topsoil and strimming have all been completed. An ITPAS team has also planted 450 King Edward daffodil bulbs and will continue with our efforts to improve this green space.

Foden Showmans Road Locomotive 2104



This wonderful vehicle, built in 1910 and called 'Prospector' will travel through Irby and be a centre-piece of the Christmas lights switch-on on December 5th. Don't miss this opportunity to see it.

Irby Christmas Lights

Members will be aware that the ITPAS area is much, much, larger than Irby Village itself so it is not surprising that now and again, we are asked why ITPAS cannot also provide Christmas lighting in Pensby or Thingwall.

The simple answer is that the lighting columns in Irby village have, for many years, been wired up for Christmas illuminations, whereas the lighting columns in our other local areas do not have this facility. It would be costly to convert the columns and even so, some columns are not suitable.

The more complicated answer is that providing Irby's Christmas lighting alone is a complicated and regulated process involving many hours of committee time. We have to complete the licensing process each year, deal with Wirral Borough Council's street lighting team, instruct the lighting contractor, attend liaison meetings (with representatives from Irby Village Hall, the Shippons Inn, The Irby Club, the Shippons Bikers motor cycle club and Irby Evangelical Church) and keep businesses, churches, schools and other local organisations updated. We also have to coordinate the fundraising efforts as it costs £900 for the lights to be erected, repaired and taken down.

This year we were concerned when we were advised by the council that due to the severe financial cutbacks, the electricity costs for all Christmas lighting across the borough would not be met by the council this year. We asked the council for the estimated costs for the Irby lights back in July but up until early October, we were still awaiting their reply. ITPAS member, and Shippons Bikers representative on the organising team, Mike Ireland, felt so strongly about the late notice that he complained to Council Officers. The result is that we will not be asked to pay for the electricity this year. In the meantime the Council has provided ITPAS with an estimate of the electricity costs for 2015 - £800. We are currently working with the lighting contractor, NE Access, to explore light sensors to ensure the lights remain off during daylight hours.

If you feel strongly that the council should meet the electricity costs in 2015, please lobby your local councillors.

The Big Switch On

The Irby Christmas lights will be officially switched by Santa himself on at 6pm on Friday 5th December.

Prior to Santa's arrival, children and families will be invited to gather from 5 pm. There will be seasonal music by a joint schools choir and a big band. The scale model traction engine will be here again for rides as will the sale of raffle tickets and the distribution of glow sticks and mince pies.

At 6pm, Santa will arrive in the village, by motorcycle, to switch on the Christmas lights. This year, the motor cycles

will be approaching from the direction of Irby Village Hall, proceeding slowly past the shops, and into the Shippons car park. The Shippons Bikers will provide Santa and his escort.

There will be no road closures this year and the switch-on countdown will be led by Santa from inside the perimeter of the Shippons Inn.

After the lights have been turned on, children will be able to clamber on the motorcycles for photographs and the traction engine rides will continue. The Irby Village Hall management team will organise a charity raffle.

The difference this year is that rather than the street festival of past years, for safety reasons, the main event will take place totally within the curtilage of the Shippons car park. However, we understand there will be other attractions around the village to coincide with the switch on event:

- Irby Library - The Friends of Irby Library (FOIL) again hope to provide visitors with seasonal refreshments and a calm, relaxing, environment.
- The Irby Club - will provide the fabulous Santa's grotto from 6 pm, free to children, and later there will be live entertainment, open to non-members.
- The Evangelical Church - will provide refreshments at the front of the church and four tables for charity stalls in the rear hall. For table reservations, please contact Pastor Cliff Beckett bikercliff@yahoo.com
- At the time of writing Aroma is planning to provide their mouth watering outdoor barbeque under their canopy.
- Irby Methodist Church will be opening their Christmas fair on the Friday evening.
- In previous years, some businesses have chosen to remain open so that families can be made aware of what Irby has to offer

Christmas lights – appeal for an ITPAS representative

For the past four years, our ITPAS Secretary, Ian Chalmers, has represented the society as an active member of the collaborative group who organise the Christmas lights and the switch on evening. As well as ITPAS, the group has representatives from the Shippons Inn, The Irby Club, Irby Village Hall, the Shippons Bikers and the Irby Evangelical Church.

After the 2014 switch on, Ian has decided to retire from the collaborative group so we are inviting interest from any ITPAS member who would like to represent the society for 2015. The duties involve:

- Attending five, bi-monthly planning meetings of around 45 minutes.
- Liaising with the lighting contractor, NE Access, to arrange testing, installation, maintenance and dismantling of the lighting features.
- Applying to Wirral Borough Council for the permit to erect seasonal decorations on the lighting columns
- Contributing to the organising group with ad hoc tasks

Anyone wishing to know more may telephone Ian on 648 5619.

VIKINGS ENTER THE BASSETT HOUND!

Many readers will be familiar with the significance of Thingwall's Cross Hill – the site of an early Viking “Thing”, or meeting place, and probable venue for an early Viking parliament.

Our Vice Chairman, Roy Fisher, has been working alongside Viking expert, Professor Stephen Harding, in the preparation of an information board to provide Thingwall's annual influx of interested visitors, (some from Norway) with a brief history of the area. It is planned to site the board on the periphery of the Bassett Hound pub car park – the nearest point to Cross Hill with parking and with a view of the hill. Permissions have been agreed with the brewery, Greene King and should be in place before Christmas.



Co-incidentally, during the summer, ITPAS received an enquiry from Greene King who were refurbishing the pub. The request was to use Roy and Stephen's text and images for a full sized Viking mural within the pub's dining area. Both ITPAS and Professor Harding agreed and the result can be seen in the photograph below. Do go and have a look. All in all, this is a great example of collaborative working between ITPAS, Nottingham University and the brewery.



Shots taken of the Autumn Walk, expertly researched and led by our own Planning Officer, John Heath.



For some time now the subject of the need for new committee members has been a regular feature of our monthly committee meeting. The current committee has a wonderful working relationship, each with their own individual strengths and collectively taking on many issues on behalf of our members and the residents of Irby Thurstaston and Pensby. We work on a voluntary basis and we feel passionately about conserving and enhancing our natural and built environment.

We have worked hard to gain charitable status and to utilize the government funding opportunities that are available to organizations such as ITPAS. If we do not make applications for this funding then the opportunity to utilize the money is lost. This is money which makes a difference to where you live by allowing us to enhance the environment whether by providing notice boards, planting flowers and trees, fighting inappropriate planning applications and library closures and countless other schemes over the past 40 years.

To put it bluntly, the committee is not getting any younger. We need an injection of new blood. We are seeking like-minded individuals willing to spare a few hours each month to assist in issues relating to funding, planning and conservation in Irby Thurstaston and Pensby. Without new committee members and indeed new members then ITPAS cannot survive and a priceless opportunity to have a say in local matters, to influence local government and to enhance the local environment will be lost by the entire community.

If you think you might be interested in assisting the committee, please telephone me on 0151 648 6780 for an informal chat.

Planning Matters

This year has been relatively quiet on the Planning front. Fears about the relaxation of Planning Rules have been largely unfounded with many small scale domestic Applications benefitting from a clearer statement of what could be approvable without requiring the full process that is more applicable and essential for larger proposals. This said, both WBC Planning Department and ITPAS continue to have an overview of all applications, checking for any 'special circumstances' which would necessitate fuller consideration.

The Committee is ever watchful, too, for applications within Green Belt and there have been a few recently. ITPAS found three to be unacceptable and, after investigation and consultation locally, lodged formal and detailed Objections. In each case the Council agreed with our concerns and the Applications were refused. In one case ('Carlton House Nursery School' in Irby) an Appeal was lodged. A decision is awaited.

In addition to the Application at 'Carlton House' (demolition of outbuildings and construction of 3 dormer bungalows and garages), an Application at 'Top House Farm', Thingwall, was for 2 dwellings and demolition of a rusting barn. The third, at 'Red Stone Farm' was to convert a stable block into a dwelling with a domestic garden.

Reasons for Refusal included: Presumption against 'inappropriate development'; lack of special circumstances; scale, location and height causing greater visual impact, detrimental to rural character and openness of Green Belt; domestic scale and character being inappropriate in an agricultural setting; insufficient information regarding any harm to an area of biological and historical importance; and being contrary to the Unitary Development Plan Policy.



An issue arose which was not strictly 'Planning' but ITPAS considered could have an adverse effect upon the character of our locality - the cutting down of prominent trees. This followed the shock felling of the large weeping willow beside a pond at the former 'Greenheys Nursery' on Thurstaston Road. Following advice from the Council's Tree Officer, that trees on private land (without a Tree Preservation Order - TPO) may be removed without permission, ITPAS set about identifying trees which have a significant and beneficial effect upon the character of our Area with a view to presenting a list to the Council for consideration of applying TPOs.

Autumn Walk



Following the success of ITPAS's inaugural 'Autumn Walk' last year, some 30+ Members took part in this year's Walk entitled 'Highlights of Thurstaston's Scenery, Buildings & History'. Rather than being a scholastic 'route march', the Walk picked up on the many notable and attractive features of the Area, both man-made and natural, with a series of short stops to view and hear points of interest.

From 'Church Farm', the first stop was St. Bart's Church, the third on the site, dedicated to (and paid for by) Joseph Hegan, a merchant who lived in the original 'Dawpool House' which was replaced with a large Elizabethan style manor house for Thomas Ismay (founder of the White Star Line of 'Titanic' fame) in whose memory the Church Lychgate was dedicated and whose impressive grave stands beneath the tower of the previous Church.

After viewing the ancient and intriguing Thurstaston Hall from the 'safety' of its impressive gates (beyond the reach of the 'White Lady' ghost), we took the footpath towards Oldfield, stopping to take in magnificent views across fields down to the Dee and across to the Welsh Hills. Having descended through the spooky 'wooded dell' called 'The Dungeon', retracing steps taken by smugglers of old, we reached the disused railway line that is the 'Wirral Way', the 12-mile long Wirral Country Park, the first of its kind in the Country.

A welcome half-way stop for refreshment at GJ's Cafe beside the Visitors' Centre, was followed by a descent to the Beach. Once past the former Customs Houses known as 'Shore Cottage' or 'Sally's Cottage', we encountered the 60-foot high eroding cliffs spilling onto the Beach, releasing glacial stones and fossils from up to 500 miles away. We came ashore at the Dee Sailing Club, crossed 'Dawpool Nature Reserve' (former tip), rejoined the Wirral Way, then walked along the arrow-straight Station Road and finished at Dawpool Farm, a Grade II Listed 'Model Farm' built around 1865 for the said Joseph Hegan. We were fortunate to be given a great description of the Farm as a working concern by a former resident.



Where to next year?

ITPAS Committee 2014 -15



Chairman

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Vice Chairman

Roy Fisher - 648-7671
webmaster@itpas.org

Secretary

Ian Chalmers – 648-5619

Treasurer & Membership

Latimah Sinclair - 648-2444

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Roy Fisher – 648-7671
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Beach Officer

Jim McCormac - 604-0376

Committee / Village hall rep

Patricia Kinsey - 648-6716



Please pass this Newsletter on to a friend or neighbour to get them interested. We need more people to join ITPAS at £5.00 per household. In this way we can keep the subscription costs at this rate and continue to do the work we do for the community. The £5.00 is excellent value giving you two Newsletters each year plus four free talks in addition to getting grants, monitoring planning and organising actions on your behalf in our area. If every household got one other to join it would make a huge difference.

DIARY



All talks are 7.00 for 7.30 pm start in Irby Village Hall unless otherwise stated. Free for members.

Christmas Lights Switch-On
Friday December 5th
The Shippons & the Village
 Festivities start at 5.00 pm - Switch-on at 6.00 pm



WINTER TALK



‘Living with a Changing Coastline’

Andrew Brockbank - National Trust

2.15 pm , Wednesday January 21st



Titanic

A Talk by **David Hill**
of the **Titanic Society**

Wednesday, March 25th, 2015 at 7.30 pm

Admittance by pre-booking only - 648-5619

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