

# Truro Civic Society

## Chairman's Report

The most important news is that the Regional Spatial Strategy is dead! A letter arrived at the Council last week announcing this, and suggesting that former Structure Plans should provide interim guidance. Work is now going forward quickly to develop new housing figures, with the responsibility firmly fixed with the Council. A new opportunity to try and ensure that common sense prevails.

Then, today, Mr Pickles announced that the designation of gardens as brown land is to end. This will stop the over development of gardens in built areas which has so disfigured many streets in our towns.

Unfortunately, a bid that could have assisted the kick-start of the Millpool Bridge competition has failed. It is deferred pending further information. This is of some concern as the bid was to undertake work to contribute towards considering Truro's resilience to flooding. The publication of the updated Shoreline Management Plan raised some eyebrows when it was published in the West Briton recently that it was suggesting that Tesco's would have to be demolished. I have been subsequently reassured that this is not the case – that it was a scenario being suggested if works were not undertaken. As Tesco's is the best-placed supermarket in Cornwall to be supplied by sea, if and when that eventuality arises, this assurance is a relief.

I inspected Agriculture House this month. Internally, the building is a wreck, with dry rot and water damage caused by a ruptured header tank. This damage occurred before it was purchased by its present owner, who wants to demolish the building and to replace it with a group of well-designed, semi-detached houses. It is possible that the law-change described above might affect these plans. The exterior fabric of the building looks in good condition. If it is decided to demolish then I have strongly suggested that there should be a rigorous reclamation policy applied. There is much which could be re-used to support various parts of the Conservation Area.

I have written to the developer of 15/16 St Clements' Street suggesting that the new cottages should be named Tapps' Row. I have, as yet, heard nothing back, or been told a start date.

The Conservation Committee has stood its ground over 57 Falmouth Road, which is a very controversial development. We must await outcomes now.

I remain very concerned about Lemon Street and the future. I have raised the matter of a planning brief on a number of occasions and still we see no tangible progress.

I have circulated various Civic (type) Societies in Cornwall and, with your agreement, I think we can pull together an informal meeting to discuss matters of mutual interest. I suggest that this should be in September, to enable us to get a good lead-in time to ensure as many as possible can attend. I'm in contact with Heather Rowe in Penzance who is very helpful.

Regarding the Conservation Area we have been informed that two new officers have been appointed, including Nick Cahill. Nick is very experienced and worked for Carrick some years ago. Amongst other things he will be focusing on implementation of the CA Management Plan and we

will be able to ask his assistance in getting the work under way to gather suggestions for the Local List, which we are intending to bring forward for the Mayor's Charity Day.

I have been admiring the new house erected in Carvoza Road which, whilst modern, fits into the general vista and I think offers a contemporary contribution of merit to this suburban street that contains a number of good houses of varying types and period, from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

I also note the very good refurbishment of the old St John's Ambulance Hall in Charles Street, other than the quite mundane patio of engineering brick!

Indeed, we see Charles Street now boasting some very good new buildings, although I regret the loss of the vice-Chairman's offices!

We still await the outcome of the Higher Newham appeal. The Chief Planning Officer has written to the Inspector pointing out the demise of the RSS. Mr Pickles' letter said that this should be treated as a material consideration and he is therefore hopeful that this will affect the decision, which will ultimately be made by the Secretary of State.

BB

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