



## PENARTH CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2019

### Celebration and Conservation

#### Interesting things happening in Victoria Square!

Spring arrived in Penarth though sadly, in late April, the strength of "Storm Hannah" brought down the Square's only apple tree whilst she was in full blossom. Local resident and Friend of Victoria Square, Alan Armstrong has been an admirer of the tree and its delicious cooking apple fruit for many years said "I was saddened to see the big, venerable apple tree uprooted - my favourite tree in the Square." Alan would like to see the tree replaced. He added "Its demise adds some urgency to the need for a tree survey and management plan for the trees in the Square." Following Alan's voice of concern local cabinet-maker, Mike Yorke of My Wood Designs Ltd. came forward with an offer to donate a replacement tree.

Earlier in April, Friends of Victoria Square (FOVS) held their first Annual Meeting. They shared details with local residents and friends of their evolving Heritage Lottery Fund Grant Application for funds to undertake Tree and Biodiversity Surveys which will help develop a management plan and set priorities. The application was submitted at the end of May with the outcome expected in July.

On June 1st the early summer sun arrived in good time for the Friends of Victoria Square "Big Lunch" promoted nationally by The Eden



Project. More than 90 local friends and families brought their picnic rugs and hampers to enjoy time with each other. Face-painting and homemade lemonade were both hits and a variety of delicious homemade cakes were on offer in the Gallery of All Saints Church. Secretary of Friends of Victoria Square, Peter Blackburn, was delighted with the response, adding "It's all new and exciting - we're creating community spirit and momentum as a group. We're keen to attract new friends so please do get in touch via our Facebook page or email me direct - blackburn.peter1@sky.com".



#### The Kymin

Like many other residents of Penarth the Civic Society was appalled at the recent developments at our well loved and used Kymin. We await developments and some resolution between the Vale and Penarth Town Councils so that the house and grounds are once more fully open to the public. The barrier across the entrance was an unwelcome intrusion for possible park users. Weeds are now popping up among the flower beds, the grass is growing higher and higher and the Kymin itself now empty of users casts a sad neglected shadow over the rest of the grounds. Walkers can access them however and the removal of the padlock at the side gate was a welcome relief for early walkers. However a strange screw now bolted to the gate means it cannot even be shut so it swings idly back and fore in the wind. A voluntary group called Friends of the Kymin has just started up and we look forward to linking up with them, especially with a view to preserving the well loved Kymin building itself.

#### Beach Wardens Update

Throughout the year Penarth Beach Wardens regularly scour the beach for debris dropped by visitors or washed up on the shore. In the last year there has been an increase in the amounts of mud appearing on the stretches of sand to be seen when the tide is out. This is a worrying development for anyone walking along the shoreline and anyone entering the water either to swim or to wade in while launching a boat. We are monitoring the amounts by taking regular photographs of the muddy areas.

On querying the water quality with the Vale Council last year we were informed that the water is no longer tested as Penarth is no longer considered to be a bathing beach. A puzzle then to walk along the promenade down to the lifeboat launch area to see the sign informing swimmers to beware!

On a happier note it is good to see some new bins have been installed on the promenade. Let's hope they will fare better than the old ones.



**Do you care about Penarth? - Join the Civic Society**

**www.penarthsociety.org.uk - £10 per annum individuals - £15 per annum for couples**



## Celebration and Conservation

### Tree Strategy for Penarth - Planting trees in Front Gardens

The Society's Tree Strategy is now available on the web site. The strategy is based on our belief that trees are very important to our town and to the wellbeing of people. We have focused on the values of individual trees, and on the benefits to society and the environment that a healthy and expanded tree canopy will bring.

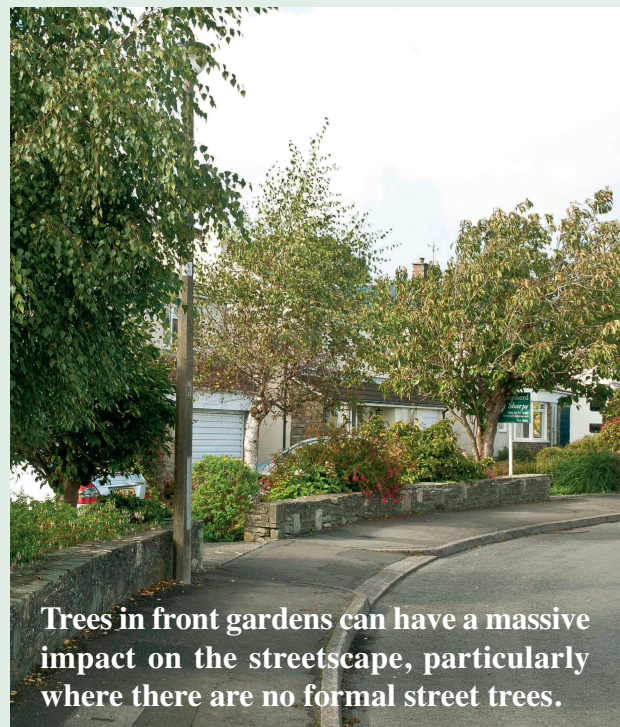
The Strategy proposes a single overall target: -

**"Within 10 years to achieve 'Woodland Town' status for Penarth.** By reversing the decline in tree canopy cover, and increasing it from currently 17.4% up to a target 20% Penarth could achieve 'Woodland Town' status under the UK Forest Standard."

This target can be achieved both by the protection of existing trees and by planting new ones, and the Society sees its role as raising awareness of the importance of a healthy tree cover to the quality of life and commercial viability of the town.

As well as parks, streets and other public areas, there are many opportunities for tree planting and management on private land - particularly in front gardens, of which there are plenty in our town. The web site aims to encourage residents to plant trees in their front gardens, and it gives some basic guidance on the choice of appropriate species, how to go about planting and managing trees, and where to buy them.

With this material now in place, the challenge for the society is now to promote the benefits of trees, raise awareness of the availability of this web resource, and encourage residents to take action. In particular, we are now investigating sources of grant support for the purchase of trees for planting. Details of this will we hope be available later on this year.



Trees in front gardens can have a massive impact on the streetscape, particularly where there are no formal street trees.

### Victorian Lamp Posts, an apology..

The Society would like to apologise to the community for failing to take a more active and earlier approach to the decision by the Vale of Glamorgan to remove our lovely Victorian lamp posts. There was a campaign in February which was initiated by local resident Gemma Crutchly and raised 1158 signatures of objection.

We contacted the Vale of Glamorgan Council to see if the replacements could be halted and failing that whether the posts could be saved as

monuments to their historic past. We were told that a large number of them were in a poor state of repair having corroded badly from the inside and that conversion to the new LED lights was either not cost effective or possible. The posts were being sent to a scrap metal dealer in Bridgend.

This project was actually announced in 2016 and that was the time to oppose it, not once contractors had already been appointed and replacement posts erected. Had we noticed the announcement we would have been in a better place to raise Freedom of Information requests to challenge the Council's assertions. We are also disappointed that the Town Council did not see fit to take action at the time. As a result the posts are lost forever and we apologise for our failure.



Railway Path Project Penarth has, in conjunction with Penarth scouts, placed 3 bat boxes along the Railway Path. All of the boxes were made by the scouts earlier this year. The wildflowers are proving popular with residents and bees alike and we have planted a new batch of wildflower seeds in the beds which should give us and the wildlife some welcome colour and food during the summer.

### Penarth Civic Society Events 2019

#### Sunday 14th July Alan Thorne

Penarth Town Walk. The Bowery, West Side Story 2.00p.m.

*Alan will take us on his annual walk to tell us about the landmarks and wonderful history of the oldest part of Penarth, drinking dens, brothels, gambling houses, crime and punishment. Let's hope for nice weather again!. Meet at 2.00PM outside St. Fagans pub.*

#### Thursday 19th September Visit to Glamorgan Archives

Clos Par Morgannwg, Leckwith CF11 8AW 2.00p.m.

*A behind the scenes tour lasting two hours approx, we will see the office, strongroom, conservation in action and a display of documents relevant to Penarth. Free to members. Pre-booking essential as numbers are limited.*

#### Friday 18th October Annual Dinner

The Pilot 7.00PM Guest Speaker Phil Carradice ... .. Cost £35.00pp

#### Thursday 28th November - An evening with Alan Thorne

St Augustine's Hall 7.00p.m. *with complimentary cheese and wine, after all, this event was so popular last year it makes sense to make it an annual event* Cost £5.00pp. **Pre-booking essential.**

#### Wednesday 18th December Spectrum Singers Choral Event

Tabernacle Baptist Church Plassey Street 7.00PM ... .. Cost TBC  
*Get into the Christmas spirit with a return booking for this marvellous choir.*

To pre-book events by post please send a cheque (where necessary) to Penarth Civic Society, 1 Archer Road, Penarth Cardiff CF64 3HW  
To pre-book events by email please send BACS payment (where necessary) to Sort Code 20-18-27 Account Number 90698296 and email confirmation of details and reference to dave.noble1959@gmail.com

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