



## News in Brief

† **Mountwood** - Prenton Golf Club's application to build on the Green Belt to support the club's finances has run into fierce opposition from Mountwood Conservation Area Advisory Committee. A decision on the application is awaited.

† **West Kirby** - A defining feature of the Conservation Area is 'the open setting of land and woodland' at its heart. This is currently threatened; the site of the Ring O'Bells is being marketed as a 'development opportunity' and the glebe land in Rectory Road, despite sustained opposition from local residents and St Bridget's Church, has been offered to a developer by the Diocese of Chester. Local protest is strong - see the Halloween Pumpkin banner below.



† **Frankby** - Frankby Conservation Committee have expressed their grave concerns and total opposition to an application to build a combined dwelling and barn on the Green Belt and within the penumbra of the Conservation Area. Their concerns are not only the violation of the green Belt but that access will be via The Nook which is a small privately owned unmade road. Caw have supported the Frankby committee in their opposition to the proposal.

† **Trees** - Trees play a hugely important part in many of our Conservation Areas so we are delighted to support Wirral's very lively 'Wirral initiative on Trees' group. They have worked with the Council to produce a much needed Council Policy on trees and we look forward to its implementation.



Frankby - The Nook



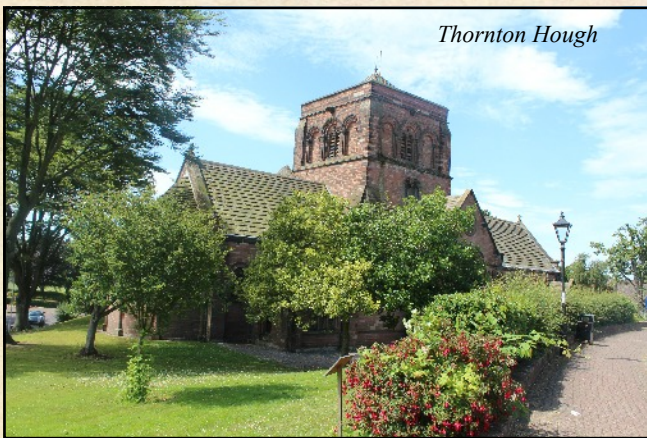
Lower Bebington - Mayer Hall



Rock Park - the beach

### Wirral has 26 Conservation Areas - is yours listed here?

Barnston	Lower Bebington
Bidston Village	Meols Drive
Birkenhead Park	Mountwood
Bromborough Pool	Oxton Village
Bromborough Village	Port Sunlight Village
Caldy	Rock Park
Clifton Park	Saughall Massie
Eastham Village	The Kings Gap
Flybrick Cemetery	The Magazines
Frankby Village	Thornton Hough
Gayton	Thurstaston
Hamilton Square	Wellington Road
Heswall Lower Village	West Kirby CA



Thornton Hough

**Photo Exhibition** - Our contribution to Wirral's History & Heritage Fair in March was to stage a photo exhibition of the best images of all our Conservation Areas. This then went on a tour of many of Wirral's libraries where it was highly acclaimed.





The Blue Plaque programme continues unabated. Wirral certainly has no shortage of memorable characters who have contributed their talents to Wirral's way of life and culture. Recently erected plaques have commemorated Thomas Brassey, the world's most prolific builder of railways in the 19th century. Erected at Birkenhead Docks where he had his factory.



Blondin, the world famous tightrope walker who crossed the Niagara Falls on a tight rope without safety equipment and then came back - blindfold. Erected at Eastham Gardens where he performed twice to vast crowds in 1883/4. Personalities in line for commemoration this year include Robert Hope-Jones inventor of the Wurlitzer Organ and the writer Helen Forrester.

### Blue Plaque Trail

So much interest has been generated by the people and events commemorated by Wirral's Blue Plaques that with the help of Eileen Willshaw (Wirral's Heritage Officer) a leaflet has been designed by Adam Evans from the Council's Graphics Department depicting the location of all our Blue Plaques to date. Copies are available in your local library.



Stephen Scarborough Blondin's great, great grandson points to the Blue Plaque at Eastham in honour of his dare devil relative

The failure of the Council's planners to understand the legal requirement for the Heritage Statement that must accompany all planning applications in a Conservation Area is disquieting. The Government guidelines are quite clear.



**"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting".**

In a recent letter, Chris Moore of the Hoylake, Kings Gap and Meols Drive Conservation Areas observes:-

*"The poor quality of many Heritage Statements and the lack of adherence to the agreement that an application would not be registered if a heritage statement was not appended is a matter of grave concern"*

CAW Chairman, Alan Chape, responded, "This is on the agenda for future meetings. Even when Heritage Statements are appended to a planning application they are often not fit for purpose because they do not explicitly relate to their immediate surroundings especially where, for example they might be adjacent, to a listed building. Applicants in a Conservation Area that do not include an appropriate Heritage Statement with their application should be advised that it will not be processed until one is received. This needs to be written into the on-line Guidance notes for Planning Applications.

Oxton Conservation Area is about to embark on a second attempt at getting the planning service to make it clear that a planning application will not be processed until it has an acceptable heritage statement. Progress on this issue will be reported in future editions of *CAW News*.

### Talk - "A Tour around Wirral's 26 Conservation Areas"

Our energetic secretary, Gillian Bolt, is very pleased to be able to offer a talk entitled "A Tour around Wirral's 26 Conservation Areas." Contact Gillian on 0151 678 9300 to book a talk.

**LOCAL PLAN**  
**"NEW POLICIES FOR**  
**CONSERVATION AREAS"**  
**UPDATE YOURS NOW!**

**POST**  
**NO**  
**BILLS**

The Council's policies for Conservation Areas, in many areas, are almost twenty years out of date. The new Local Plan, which is entering its final stages in advance of a Public Inquiry, will incorporate individual policies for all 26 of Wirral's Conservation Areas. This will dictate how the Council treats planning applications and other concerns within your Area for the next at least fifteen years.

These individual policies need updating now. Conservation Areas Wirral will be working with Council Officers to ensure that each policy is fit for purpose and robust enough to defend the Conservation Area from damaging development.

However, we need your input from your Conservation Area. Please ask us for the current policy for your area - it will only be two or three paragraphs long - and we will send it to you. Then decide what assets or features need protection and let us know. This will be helpful in producing the policies that will inform the Council's decisions for years to come.

Amongst a considerable number of concerns a major one is the limited degree of planning control the Council has for most of the character dwellings in your area. These will show in the character appraisals of your area as unlisted buildings which make a "positive contribution to the character of the area". This is a particular issue in areas such as Lower Heswall, Oxton, Meols Drive and Kings Gap.