



# The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

[www.ipswichsociety.org](http://www.ipswichsociety.org)

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*The Wolsey 550 Grand Parade passes the presumed birthplace of the Cardinal, 4 July; photograph by Mervyn Russen. See page 9.*

## Editorial

First, a mini-‘Letter to the editor’ from Anna Cordon: “You might like to add to your listing of this year’s anniversaries Ipswich Choral Society, 200 years old and the second oldest choral society in the UK. If your readers would like to see how we have been celebrating so far this exciting year, or indeed to find out which is the only choral society older than us, do direct them to our website (<https://ipswichchoralsociety.org>), where all is revealed! Not too late to join us either, in time to sing Handel’s *Messiah* at the Corn Exchange on Saturday 14 December 2024. Thanks, Anna.”

Another 200th anniversary, of course, is that of The Ipswich Institute. Find out more on page 9.

We will carry an article about Ipswich Chamber Music Society in our January 2025 issue to celebrate their centenary.

Your Editor’s job is made much lighter by the contributions received for this *Newsletter* and I thank contributors. There is much here of interest, I hope, and – as a quarterly publication – we aim to sum up the past three months, include some current material and peer over the parapet to see what’s coming.

Let’s hope that there is better news about our town in the coming months. The after-effects of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis have certainly left their mark on Ipswich, as so many other towns. It’s still a great place to live with much to offer and to celebrate, which we do in these pages.

**Robin Gaylard**

### New members

B. Lees  
G. Bunkell  
P. Jani  
H. Skeet

*It’s good to see a proper pub sign outside The Thomas Wolsey in St Peters Street. Appropriately, the procession of children, musicians and banners moved northwards beneath the sign on Thursday July 4 July, along the ancient route to the Cornhill. See page 9.*



## Interim Chairs' remarks

The Society seems to be weathering the continuous re-connection and churn of transition of this current year. We look forward to an autumn of absorbing lectures which culminate in an Awards Evening on November 20th also containing a Special General Meeting.

This year's heritage events, managed by Ipswich Central, will be observed with very great interest to see if there are ways in which we can tweak our own administration next year, when they return to the Society.

It was with some pleasure and relief therefore, that we had the brilliant afternoon in late August at the Brass on the Grass get-together in the Arboretum with the Stowmarket Concert Band who performed with tuneful grace and vivacity for an audience of around two hundred.

As the sponsors of the afternoon, having presented the cheque and established our gazebo stall, we expected attention and during the interval I was greeted by a number of people who asked about the Society.



*The Ipswich Society sponsored the sixth Brass on the Grass event in the Upper Arboretum of Christchurch Park on a sunny Sunday 25 August 2024 featuring the Stowmarket Concert Band.*

These occasions are genuinely valuable and can be fascinating as you chat and connect with people. The general enquiries were answered by reference to the recent publication *The Ipswich Society: What we do*. This had been produced in June as a handbill for occasions when we were out with the gazebo.

One of the questions which I sometimes ask, when the chat takes an interesting turn is: 'What does Ipswich mean to you?' The responses vary from childhood memories to stories of working lives and inevitably to the way things seem to decline. It is fairly easy then to counter mild criticism or disdain with the boost that our presence and publicity materials can provide.

On this occasion the question 'What does Ipswich mean to you?' was actually thrown back at me by an enquirer in the interval.

This jolted me to remember a piece I'd written last year when Ipswich.love was asking people to express their affection for the town in some sort of letter or communication. As an incomer – a travelled scouser really – Ipswich has become my home and centre of my life during the course of my living here in twenty years. In responding last year to the Ipswich.love request, I took my time remembering the local history snippets learnt from our late Chairman.



*The Society gazebo and banner in the Upper Arboretum*

Remembering the stories of early medieval life which I extolled on the guided walks along the waterfront, I recalled the direction in which industry took the town in the nineteenth century and the pride it developed in itself during that great time. Finally, I think I was able to make a connection to recent decades with a tone of hope for the town.

It took some time to compose my thoughts into a recognisable form and my experience in literature and education inevitably helped to encapsulate what the town means to me (a nod to John Betjeman's *Felixstowe or the last of her order* also helped).

I'd sent in my piece to the website and, to the enquirer, summarised the poem:-

### **Sonnet to Ipswich**

For Ipswich we should always hold a warmth:  
 A site of age-old footfall and renown;  
 Traders, merchants from both east and north  
 Barter on a river-bend: an ancient town.  
 In Ipswich there will always be a trace  
 Of malt and grain, of iron-grit grime of years.  
 The tang of toil and task about the place;  
 Then brewers, foundry men and engineers.  
 In Ipswich, well-worn walks beyond the quays  
 See aggregates, cement and forest goods.  
 In town financial fields show expertise  
 Unlike the times when smokes and corsets could.  
 These days and echoes past we should admire –  
 Our future is to what we must aspire.

Our enquirer seemed to make the connection between the verse and the Society's rationale and as the concert was restarting a membership application form was taken as they returned to their seat. I look forward to seeing their name appearing in the new members list and hope that further new members might be as readily attracted to the Society.

***Tony Marsden***

## Planning matters

**Land North of Railway and East of Henley Road.** Submission of reserved matters (appearance, layout, landscaping and scale) for Phase 3b of the development at Henley Gate comprising 114 dwellings, roads, parking, landscaping, earthworks and associated works. 30 conditions attached to the approval. Approved.

**Norsk Hydro Ltd, Sandyhill Lane.** Residential development comprising of 11 new dwellings (involving 3 associated plot amendments) with associated vehicular access, parking, private amenity space and landscaping. Previously 85 dwellings had been approved for this site. This application was for a further 11 dwellings, making a total of 96 dwellings. The building of a further 11 homes increases the viability of the overall project. The site will need to be decontaminated at an estimated cost of £3.45 million in 2017. 100% of the houses will be affordable. Approved.

**Land to south of railway line, Westerfield Road, Bellway Homes Ltd.** Submission of reserved matters (access, landscaping, layout, scale, and appearance) for Phase 1 comprising 198 dwellings, an electricity sub-station, landscaping, open space, roads and other associated works; in relation to outline planning permission. 39 conditions attached to the approval. Approved.

**Land north of railway and east of Henley Road.** Submission of reserved matters (appearance, layout, landscaping and scale) for part of Phase 2 of the development at Henley Gate comprising 93 dwellings, roads, parking, open space, landscaping, drainage and other associated works in relation to the Outline Planning Permission. Applicant Barratt David Wilson (Eastern Counties). This similar to previous item on the agenda and has 33 conditions attached to the approval. This was accepted.

**240 Wherstead Road.** Conversion of building and extension to side and roof to provide 24 dwellings. the proposal was to convert an existing redundant building and land to form 24 dwellings plus car parking for 27 cars. Pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular access from Wherstead Road. The building has not been in use for many years. The site was in use as part of a railway goods yard in 1969. The current application was for 32 dwellings which was then reduced to 27 dwellings and then 24 dwellings. (14 x 1-bed use and 10 x 2-bed). Many members of the committee congratulated all concerned: the developer, planning officers and local residents, for working together to find an acceptable solution. One concern was raised about the safety of cyclists entering and leaving the site. This was passed unanimously.

**Aquatics Centre, Portman Road.** The Society welcomes this proposal for an Aquatics Centre in Portman Road, which will be boulevardised in the future when the Cobbold (East) stand is enlarged. There will be adequate car parking in the new Multi-Storey Car Park, new vehicle access from Princes Street via Friars Bridge Road and three pedestrian routes. The exterior design is more than satisfactory, if not outstanding. However, we are disappointed that a decision has been made to limit the pool size to 25 metres with no diving facilities. We feel that this is a safe, economical answer. We believe that IBC is being too sensible and missing a real chance to have a national attraction which Ipswich needs so desperately not only financially but also for the town's positivity. At the meeting I raised some of these points. The discussion centred around landscaping and what building materials would be used and the colour palette.

### **32-42 Buttermarket.**

We welcome the opening of the former BHS store by the Fraser Group as it will, with its mix of outlets, provide a real retail boost to the town centre. Their proposals are mainly for quite modern undistinguished buildings but it is surrounded by important listed buildings. We should seek to reduce the size of the Sports Direct signage which is loud and intrusive in style, colour and positioning. The Society strongly objects to solid roller shutters; reticulated pattern are equally effective, less unpleasant aesthetically, and, most importantly, reduce anti-social behaviour. I raised the points about signage and roller shutters as did others. Also I raised the necessity of ensuring heritage assets were protected in that part of the building that is to be used for storage.

**Wet Dock, Neptune Quay.** The removal of 93 existing pontoons and associated piles; the installation of 15 new pontoons and associated piles. The erection of two welfare buildings. Installation of foul water treatment plant. Erection of enclosures. The Panel welcomed the dramatic reduction in the

number of marina pontoons which will open up the Wet Dock for a range of maritime uses (though it is understood this could change in the future). This is a view with which we agreed.

Our view was that the welfare buildings look bleak and utilitarian. We were particularly concerned about the building near Neptune Quay and the car parking for berth users on the dockside. This area in particular is in a visual sight line and in an important location that can be viewed from a variety of locations. As such more thought should be given to the design of the building and how it fits in with the wider area. Also car parking should take place elsewhere which is not in such a prominent location. The sedum roof looks like an afterthought. Both buildings should have sedum roofs over the whole roof and/or solar panels.

**Agricultural land opposite Westerfield House, Humber Doucy Lane.** Erection of 13 dwellings, new vehicular access and associated hard and soft landscaping. The Panel generally welcomed the design of housing for this allocated site. The site constraints – long and narrow – make the general layout approach a logical response. Retention of the hedgerow to Humber Doucy Lane was welcomed, and the mature trees on the playing fields site (these are outside the site boundary). We agreed with this view. Also with the proposed tree planting on the Humber Doucy lane side of the site. We asked what was intended to improve sustainability of the houses e.g. better insulation, solar panels and heat pumps. And a recommendation was made that green technology be made part of the design.

**Land adjacent 43-47 Dale Hall Lane.** Outline planning application for one custom/self build residential dwelling and annexe accommodation for a carer (access to be determined, all other matters reserved). As this was an outline planning application there was very little information on what the proposed dwelling house and annexe would look like. However, it will be a large building. Much discussion took place about the site itself and how this is in the parks Character area which states: ‘Existing undeveloped space, both private and public, should be conserved for its visual and biodiversity value. This includes gardens, allotments, meadows and woodland.’

**Full planning application 85-87 Fore Street.** Erection of single apartment block of 22 flats. This site is next to the Nelson Public House (grade 2 listed) at the front and at the back is next to Fore Street swimming pools and in close proximity to St Clements Church (Grade 2 listed) and 89 and 91, Fore Street (Grade 2 listed).

Comments made – there should be fewer flats; there is too much squeezed onto the site. The building proposed will detract from the Lord Nelson. The view of St Clements from Fore Street should be retained. The front gable is out of place to allow a huge opening at the front.

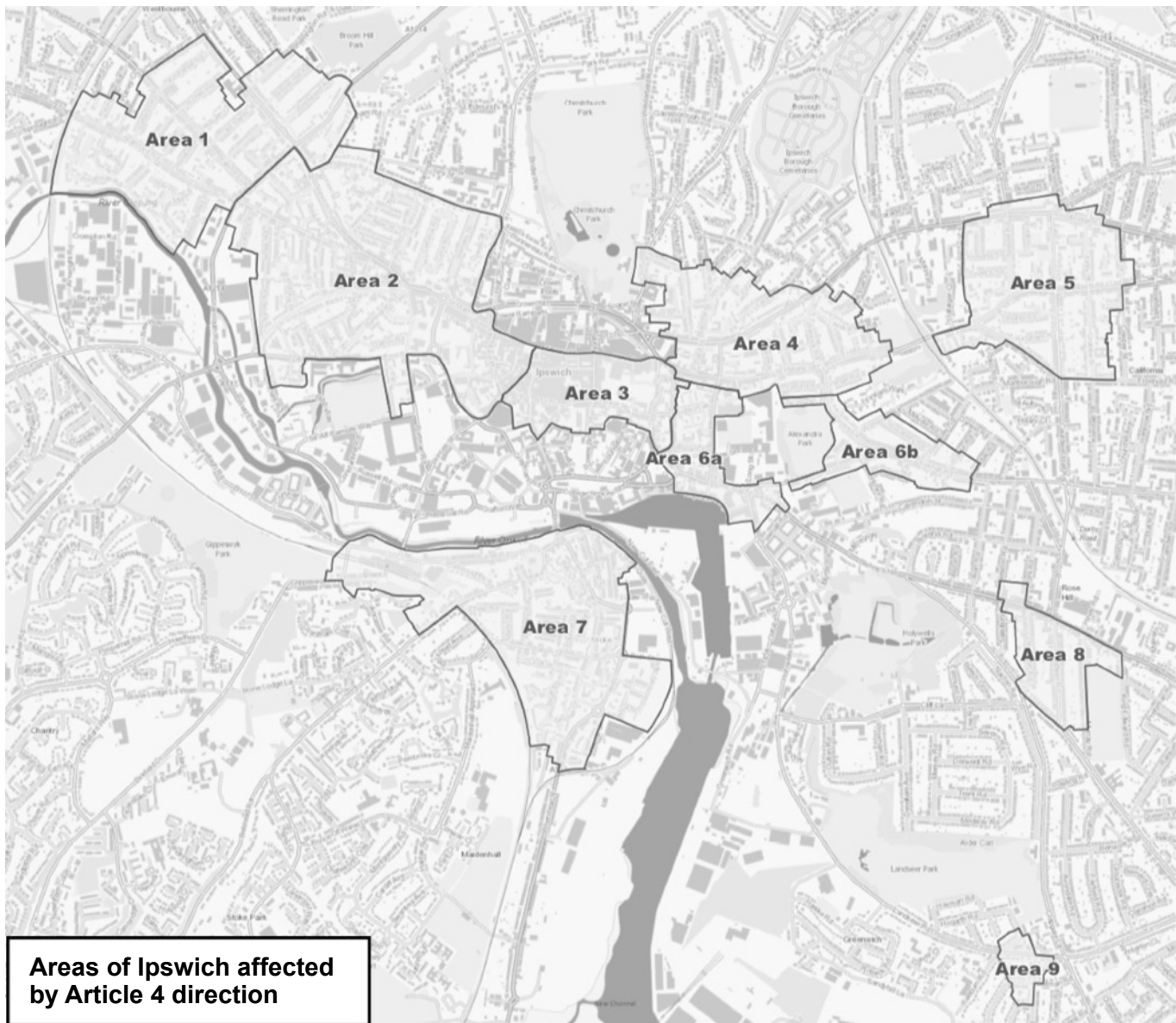
On June 1, 2024, Ipswich Borough Council implemented an Article 4 Direction for **Small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**, which removes permitted development rights for converting dwelling houses into small HMOs in parts of twelve wards in Ipswich. This results in the requirement for applicants to make a planning application for changes of use from dwelling houses to small houses of multiple occupation. The applications will be evaluated according to Policy DM20 HMOs, which addresses the concentration of such developments in specific areas to prevent potential negative impacts on local amenity.

This guidance document has been developed to aid in the identification of small and unlicensed HMOs in Ipswich. The aim of the guidance is to support the effective implementation of Policy DM20, seeking to ensure that there will not be an over-concentration of HMOs in any one area. Overall, the new Article 4 Direction and Policy DM20 aims to manage HMOs in Ipswich, ensuring that their distribution supports a sustainable community development and preserves local amenity. The guidance document was endorsed by Ipswich Borough Council’s Planning and Development Committee on August 21st 2024. Nevertheless, even with this usefully increased guidance, but without extra powers, it is hard to see how we can control the increase in HMOs and similar conversions in the future as the applications will be fulfilling all the planning requirements.

We receive frequent emails from Civic Voice, our national mothership. At present they are, rightly, very concerned and involved with **the new Government’s proposals for reforming the Planning system** in order to deliver the huge national target of new homes. Rumours concerning Green or Grey belts and NPPF revision abound together with some impositions to avoid NIMBYism. Other facts which are, to me and others, more relevant but are never mentioned. I shall be keeping a close eye on the consultations. The public consultation closed on 24.9.24 and the Society has responded to this.

**Mike Cook & Mandy Gaylard**

## HMOs in Ipswich and the Article 4 direction



Map taken from Ipswich Borough Council's website  
([https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/areas\\_affected\\_by\\_the\\_article\\_4\\_direction\\_0.pdf?mc\\_cid=2407a3fab6&mc\\_eid=092c4b53ca](https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/areas_affected_by_the_article_4_direction_0.pdf?mc_cid=2407a3fab6&mc_eid=092c4b53ca))

The article in the *Newsletter* for January 2024 by Cllr Carole Jones (Portfolio Holder: Planning & Museums, Ipswich Borough Council) reveals the story behind this rather technical-sounding heading. Many residents in Ipswich will be aware of, or directly affected by, the spread of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) in our town.

Indeed, it has become clear in recent years that property speculators and ‘developers’ – in London and Essex but even further afield, some from abroad – were moving on relatively cheaper housing in places such as Ipswich and Lowestoft. There were websites and posts encouraging them to target our housing stock, particularly Victorian and Edwardian properties, to create HMOs. Typically, a 19th century terraced house which was intended for a couple or small family is purchased and a loft conversion plus box extension are added creating up to six (or even more) single-occupant bedrooms each with a tiny *en suite* bathroom. The firms working on these conversions are often from Essex. This stripping-out of decent, small houses degrades the housing stock and, possibly, overloads the pipework and drains with the output of up to nine bathrooms and toilets with a shared kitchen.

What of the quality of the work done during conversion? External pipes can be run down the rear side passage, they can also extend out to create the kitchen and another bedroom, then utilise the rest of the house as ensuite bedrooms. There are no longer a shared dining-room/kitchen or living space in many of these HMOs. Two or three bed terraces in Ipswich have been converted to 6 bedroom HMOs. Above 6 and it will still need need planning permission if outside the Article 4 area. Perhaps the best word for the work and materials in much of the conversions is 'basic'.

How is a HMO converted? They strip the houses completely back to brick, often removing all the lime plaster and old fireplaces right up to the roof and the internal walls and ceilings to completely rebuild the houses from the inside. Ensuite toilet/shower in each room and sometimes a kitchenette. Developers often use external building control firms so these are not signed off by Ipswich Borough Council. Indeed, Building Control states that it is out of their remit to check such properties if external building control companies sign them off. Once completed, these property developers have professional photos done and stage these rooms as if they are 'new homes' and market them on websites such as 'Spare room' Ipswich. But this 'dressing' is all removed before a tenant moves in – essentially, these sell a tenant the dream. Often the furniture etc. is purchased in bulk – again another tax-deduction – so in a few years the house will have to be completely redecorated and furniture replaced, so more items go to the tip.

Many of the terraces being converted in Alexandra ward are part of the large batch of Freehold Land Society homes which were initially built to create housing in the town. Even that was exploited by speculators and is now being exploited by a different form of speculator and one fears for the worse for the long term damage it will do to the property and to the availability of cheaper family homes in Ipswich.

A prospective tenant would look online (e.g. the Spare Room website) and may decide to rent an all-inclusive room which covers WiFi, utilities and Council tax. Some landlords are starting to introduce a fair usage policy or will introduce key meters for people's bedrooms and control when the heating is on in the winter. So, do the councils make any extra from these HMOs, or do the owners just pay one rate of Council tax for the 6-plus tenants? A new trend seen in Ipswich in some new HMOs on Grove Lane is having a kitchenette in the room along with the ensuite so some of the tenants can be completely self-contained in their room – like a bedsit or a studio flat – yet still now having to pay individual Council tax to live in the property. One has to wonder what fire protection there is for the house having cooking facilities in some rooms in Ipswich HMOs

What happens outside the new 2024 Article 4 areas? The conversion of standard residential properties to larger HMOs (7 or more residents) already requires planning permission so there is no change. But smaller HMOs can be converted under permitted development rights without planning permission and that is exactly what is happening. Within two streets of the Article 4 HMO map, developers are busy converting homes to HMOs. They will always work a way around this. One must remember that HMOs are big money-earners for developers; one relatively cheap to buy Ipswich house can yield them £50,000 plus income per year and a great deal of that is still tax-deductible, unlike old-fashioned Buy-to-Let landlords' taxable incomes.

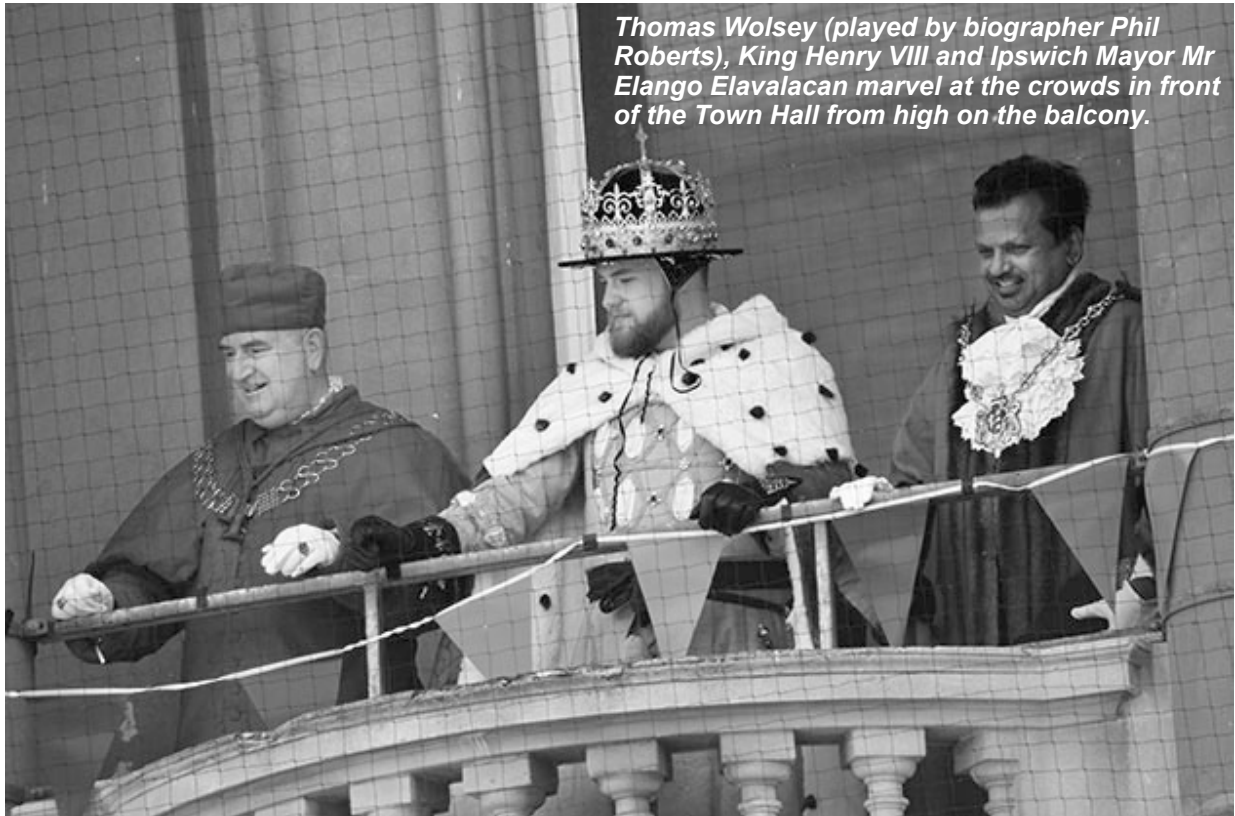
The rise in HMOs in Ipswich has also coincided with the rise in rents since the 2020 cost of living crisis along with property developers wanting to increase their profits, but it has resulted in the loss of affordable housing in Ipswich.

All this seems a bit depressing. A final question: are HMOs considered part of the government's new strategy for 1.5 million new homes? We really need to find this out – this can't be the future. There are many other potential disbenefits stemming from the continuing wave of HMO conversions which we will almost certainly return to in a future issue of the *Newsletter*.

***Lisa Wall***



## Wolsey 550 procession



Photograph by Merv Russen

Our cover image shows Ipswich school children being led from St Peters Church through St Nicholas Street by Tudor music groups: The Cambridge and Colchester Waits, fronted by professional Renaissance musician, Emma Mordue. Fortunately, in a period of unsettled weather, the sun shone as four Tudor songs were sung by the school children, they were: *Tomorrow the Fox*, *Hey Ho Nobody Home*, *Tallis Canon* and *Great Tom's Cast*. The 300 schoolchildren paraded along a special 'Cardinal Route' between the waterfront and town centre.

'Wolsey's Big Huzzah!' was the culmination of collaborative work between Ipswich Central's *Thomas Wolsey 550* project, the Suffolk Music Hub and five Ipswich primary schools: Broke Hall, Ranelagh Road, Ravenswood, St Marks and Rosehill. As each group of children joined the procession, they sang their song. The destination was the Cornhill where a performance was followed by all the children joining in singing all four Tudor songs. Luminaries looked on from the Town Hall balcony (see above). Hundreds of spectators lined the route and gathered to watch Sidegate Primary School's finale performance with Gecko Theatre on the Cornhill.

Kath Cockshaw, Thomas Wolsey 550 project director said: 'Today has been absolutely brilliant. What a way to engage children and their families in our town's Tudor heritage and celebrate all that's been achieved during the Wolsey 550 schools programme.'



## Maritime heritage award to Stuart Grimwade

Stuart Grimwade, Archivist of the Ipswich Maritime Trust's collections of over 2,000 photos, images and postcards, is this year's recipient of the Richard Smith Memorial Award, given annually by the Trust to a member who has contributed in a significant way to the understanding of local maritime culture or heritage.

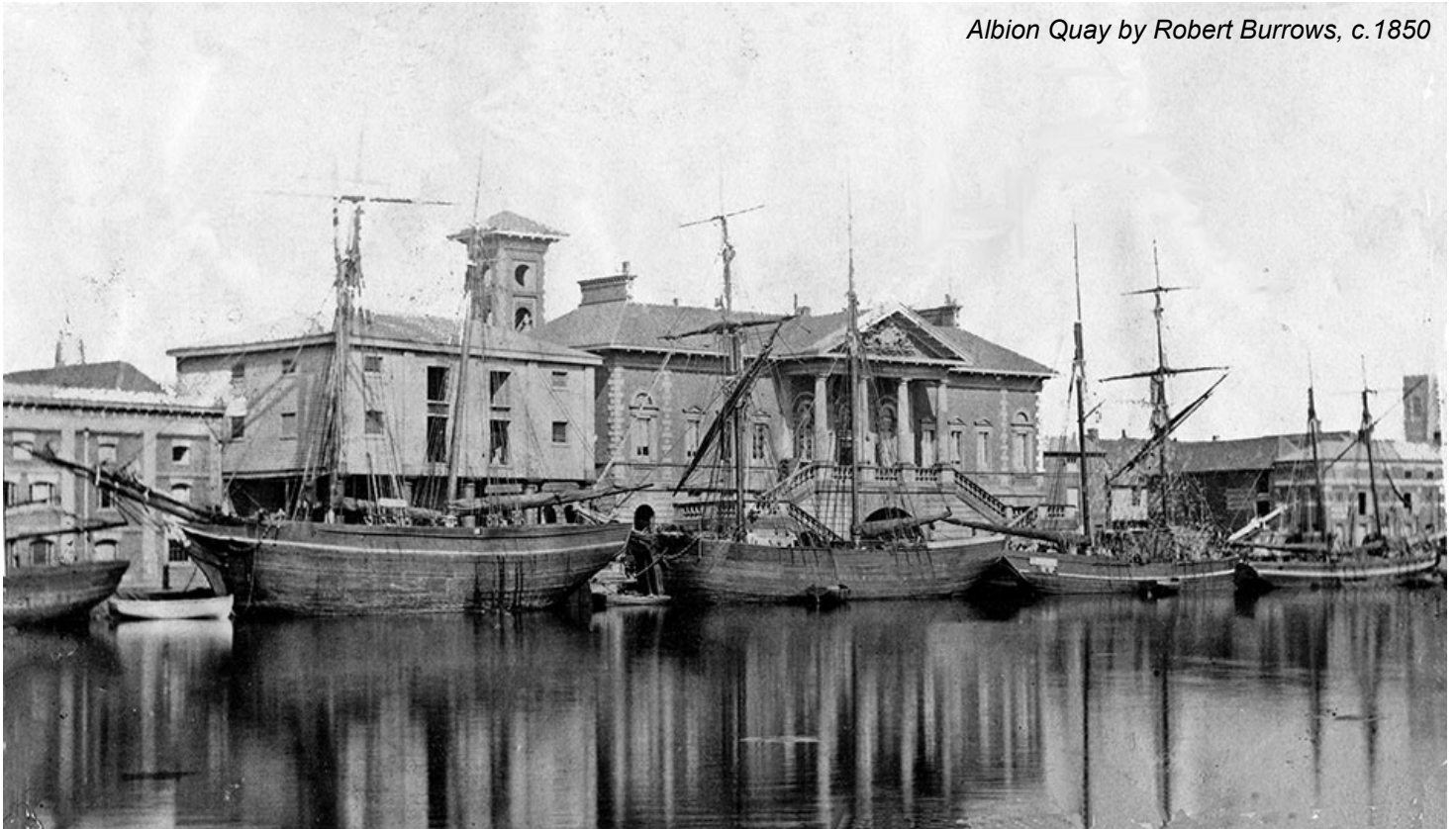


*The Richard Smith Memorial Trophy was presented to Stuart Grimwade (centre) by award-winning photographer Anthony Cullen (right) and Chairman Ben Good (left) at the University of Suffolk.*

‘The Richard Smith Memorial Award is our tribute to the commitment shown by Stuart and other volunteers in amassing our extraordinary collection of images and early photos of the Ipswich Waterfront and making a digital record of each one,’ says IMT chairman Ben Good.

Some of the earliest photos ever taken are in the collections, and include photos from individuals such as boat designer and constructor Austin Farrar; images of the construction of Cliff Quay and the Wet Dock Quays, and the 1881 Lock, from ABP; items collected by photographer David Kindred; and early picture postcards discovered by the late Leonard Woolf.

‘Even now I continue to receive remarkable old items, including this photo from circa 1850 taken by Robert Burrows, recently sent to me from a correspondent in Sydney, Australia,’ says Stuart. ‘The newly built Custom House is yet to have its clock installed in the tower, and St Clements



Church (on the right) can be viewed from the water. A sticky fingerprint gives the impression that the second from the right moored boat is covered in netting!

From an early age Stuart was messing about in boats (especially his brother Mark's) in the docks. An interest in photography led him to record, in colour, many of the comings and goings on the busy waterfront in the 1960s. When he retired from a career in town planning in 2000, he joined the IMT at his brother's suggestion and put his planning experience to use in negotiating a series of 'windows' which became the IMT's permanently open museum on Albion Quay.

Previous recipients of the Richard Smith Memorial Award include Des Pawson MBE, world authority on knots and sailors' ropework; David (Wes) Westwood, skipper of Sailing Barge *Victor*; and Bob Malster, renowned historian. Richard Smith, a founder member of IMT, was an author, photographer and great contributor to the appreciation of local maritime history and heritage. He died in 2017.



IPSWICH  
INSTITUTE

at 200

On the 23rd of November 1824 an extremely well-attended public meeting was held in the Council Chamber at which it was decided to establish a Mechanic's Institute – which would later become The Ipswich Institute – by means of a library, reading room, a museum and lectures. At that meeting a committee was elected and 107 members joined straight away.

200 years later the Institute still has the library and reading room at the present site of 15 Tavern Street, where it moved in 1834, offering a wide range of opportunities to learn. These include courses, day trips, talks and guided walks around Ipswich. To celebrate the 200 years, from May to August a variety of free events were held, open to all – both members and non-members. There were also two fundraising events: a fashion show and a quiz.  
(<https://ipswichinstitute.org.uk>)

**John Ferguson,  
photographer:  
*An eye for life***



*The opening event of the An Eye for Life in the Wolsey Gallery, Christchurch Mansion on Friday 28 June.*



From Bowie to Banger Racing, this new exhibition is a celebration of Ipswich photographer John Ferguson's first ever retrospective show. He works with the themes of portraiture, identity and home. It includes portrait projects that John has worked on over the years, including Ipswich's newly acquired Black Suffolk portraits funded by the Art Fund and The Friends of the Ipswich Museums.

John has worked in over 60 countries and covered a diverse range of photo stories from conflict zones and national disasters to promotional campaigns focusing on poverty, refugees and rural loneliness. He has photographed countless celebrities from Dolly Parton to Beyoncé. In 2005, he photographed 50 black British pioneers for the Black Britannia project, which was then collected by the National Portrait Gallery.

The exhibition occupies the Wolsey Gallery in Christchurch Mansion and will run until 27 April 2025. Some of John's most striking images are shown illuminated from behind.

*English National Ballet's Shevelle Dynott photographed for inclusion in the Black Britannia exhibition. Copyright: John Ferguson*





## 40-42 Museum Street

### The architects

#### *Thomas William Cotman*

(1847-1925) was the nephew of the famous watercolourist of the Norwich School: John Sell Cotman. Thomas trained at Ipswich Art School and set up an office in Cutler Street in 1869, then 7 Northgate Street, 1883. He designed buildings mainly in Ipswich and Felixstowe – retiring there in 1913.

*42 Museum Street:* offices for Booths & Mitchell, coal factors & merchants, 1905. In Flemish Renaissance style with a large pedimented gable bearing tablet with the date. 40 and 42 were later combined and occupied for a time by the Halifax Building Society which added grey mineral cladding to the ground floor front elevation of both premises with, in the case of number 42, a large

shop window; on no. 40, smaller windows pierced the cladding. Perhaps surprisingly, no. 42 is not listed, unlike other Cotman buildings (e.g. Lloyds banking house, The Crown & Anchor).

*John Shewell Corder*, 1856-1922, (son of Frederick Corder, silk mercer of Tavern Street, himself a gentleman of some repute). J.S. Corder began his own practice in Ipswich in The Thoroughfare but soon moved to Wimborne House, 13 Tower Street – roughly where the Pandora shop is today – where he eventually lived. He is probably the best-known local architect of the early 20th century. There are many banks and hotels to his credit and he held a reputation for country house designs, and was an authority on timber framed buildings. He specialised in church and house restorations, notably Christchurch Mansion in Ipswich. He was the author/illustrator of *A History of Christchurch Mansion*, also *Corner Posts of Ipswich*.

*40 Museum Street:* Two storey office building, 1922, Red brick with stone dressings, occupied for a time by the Halifax Building Society. Slightly confusingly, the refurbished and combined buildings now have '40' above the door of no. 42.

§William Henry Booth, born in Nottinghamshire in 1861, was the son of David Henry Booth, coal merchant and Mayor of Ipswich in 1879-80. The latter left an estate of £90,000 to £100,000 to his two sons when he died in 1870. By 1866 the family had moved to 3 Museum Street, Ipswich. William went into the family business as a coal merchant; by the 1891 Census they were living at Alandale, Graham Road, Ipswich. In about 1901, Booth purchased Handford Lodge, the former home of Peter Bruff, the famous railway engineer, and formed an extensive collection of 'old master' paintings, silver, porcelain and books. The house and contents were sold in 1906 and the Booths moved to Felixstowe. His partnership in the coal factor and stoneware business at Princes Street, Ipswich with Margetts Mitchell (1847-1928), was dissolved by 'effluxion of time' on 30 April 1907 when they went their separate ways. After the sale of Handford Lodge, Booth moved to 'The Rosary', Tomline Road, Felixstowe. He was a member of the Ipswich Art Club 1922-1928. By 1923, William Henry Booth was living at 53 Henley Road, Ipswich and he died on 4 December 1928 leaving his estate to his widow.



*Detail from Goad fire insurance map of Ipswich, 1909. The label on what became No. 42 is 'Offs 1st Unionist Club' with 'Clarence Chambers' along the frontage. No 40 is yet to be built. The other 'Chambers' labelled here are 'Thursby C.' (after Thursbys Lane, the forerunner of Museum Street), 'Imperial C.' and 'Museum Street C.'. Frasers furniture store is across Museum Street.*

We see in Museum Street two professional office buildings with very different facades and separated by seventeen years. The Cotman work on the left is lavish in its use of stone and carving. No doubt the more restrained no. 42, on the right, resulted from the budget and requirements of the owner.

The current owner of both properties is Nrinder Singh, an Ipswich boy who used to pay his weekly pocket money in at the Halifax branch here. Working with Senior Conservation Officer, Mike Taylor, the external ground floor walls have been rebuilt in a style and finish to suit the original facades. The interiors, having been stripped of any original detailing, Nrinder's company has 'gone the extra mile' to install suitable panelling, skirting boards and cornices. Nick Wilson, myself and Caroline Markham were shown round the almost-completed, spacious apartments in June 2024; almost every room was different due to the wedge-shaped building footprints.

**RG (including research by John Norman and Nick Wilson)**



## Ipswich Charter Festival 825

825 years ago, King John (24 December 1166-19 October 1216) – you’ll remember him: the bad king in Robin Hood’s day – was short of money. He had only been king for a year but the economy was in a mess. There were wars to fight, barons to bribe and appearances to keep up. What’s a king to do? Raise taxes!



*Ipswich Charter Seal*

However, there’s little point raising taxes if no-one can pay. King John decided to grant charters to towns which were trading well, but could do better with fewer restrictions. A Royal Charter would release the new class of merchants and tradespeople from the authority of the aristocracy. They would be allowed to control their own economic affairs, trade with Europe, managing exports and imports as well as holding regular markets for local people. And in 1200, Ipswich was granted its very own Royal Charter, marking it out as a major place of business on the East coast of England. Ipswich’s Royal Charter was signed by King John (of Robin Hood fame) and is one of the oldest royal town charters in England’s history, it even precedes the Magna Carta by fifteen years! Serious history...

Over the centuries, Ipswich has benefited from this early recognition as a town with potential. Of course, at times, things have not gone so well but a town with such a rich heritage as ours will always bounce back. The early 21st century has been a challenge as trade has fallen away but now, 825 years after King John granted Ipswich its Charter, it’s time to plan for a new era and work together to make our town a prosperous and happy place, where all can thrive.



What better way to start than with a Festival to celebrate? In June 2025, the civic church of St Mary le Tower is leading the way, inviting other Ipswich organisations to remember the past and celebrate the future. Every school in the town will be invited to explore the significance of the Charter with its pupils, who will be able to enter age-appropriate poetry and art competitions based around this theme. Winning entries will be displayed in the Cornhill, through the generous support of the Borough Council. The festival starts on Saturday 21st June, 2025.

*David Matthews (Churchwarden, St Mary-le-Tower)*

## St Clement's Arts Centre

In recent years the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust has invested £300,000 in improvements and modernisation to bring St Clement's Church back into use as a community and arts hub for an area with a rapidly growing population.

Phase one removed the old parquet flooring, on several levels, and cast iron radiators and replaced it with a floor of marine oak, appropriate for its history as the mariners' church. Phase two, in 2023 was a major upgrade with modern toilets and a new bell-ringing floor in the church tower, and a new toilet water supply and drainage system. Further work since then includes pendant lighting to the nave. It is now one of the largest venues in the town centre and available for a variety of events and activities.



*The view towards the west end and church tower showing the reshaped bell-ringers' floor with toilet facilities below. Photograph by David Vincent.*

The first public event in summer 2023 was the Ipswich Beer and Cider Festival and since then there have been art shows, music concerts and dance with more scheduled for this year and 2025.

### **Sir Thomas Slade's grave**

We have identified Slade's grave. It is the family tomb of the Moores: Captain Moore, his wife and daughter, Hannah Moore, who had died before Thomas. Sources say: 'he is buried alongside



her'. Slade wanted to be buried with her and was brought back to Ipswich on his death. The site is the chest tomb next to the car park wall. When cleaned, the Moore names are clearly visible.  
*David Vincent*



Photograph: John Norman

#### **Additional note**

Sir Thomas Slade (1703/4-1771) is commemorated in the churchyard with an obelisk, for many years the site of his grave was uncertain. Slade was a qualified and experienced shipwright, a man of outstanding ability. He had trained at Woolwich, a major Navy Yard on the south bank of the Thames. He was later appointed as a Naval Surveyor by The First Lord of the Admiralty, one of only two in 1755. *HMS Victory*, on which Nelson fought the Battle of Trafalgar, was designed by Slade. *HMS Victory*, in dry dock at Portsmouth, is still the number one ship of the realm. Appropriately, a detailed model of *HMS Victory* made by the late Henry Tomkins of Ipswich who died in 2022 at the age of 94 was presented to St Clement's by his family.

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## **Wolsey in Marlborough**

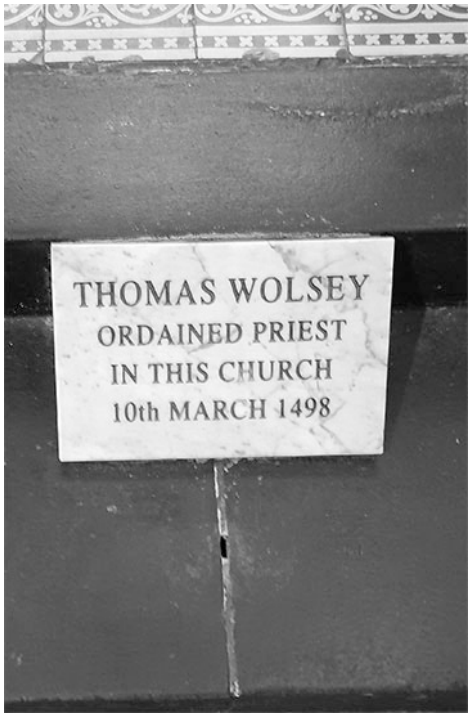
On a what turned out to be a disastrous trip to Sidmouth in Devon in early August we stopped as before overnight at Marlborough. In the town centre and not far from our hotel is St Peters Church which dates back to the 15th century.

It was also the church in which Ipswich's famous son, Thomas Wolsey, was ordained as a priest in 1498 probably because it is halfway between Oxford – where Wolsey was a curate – and Salisbury, where the bishop who ordained him lived.



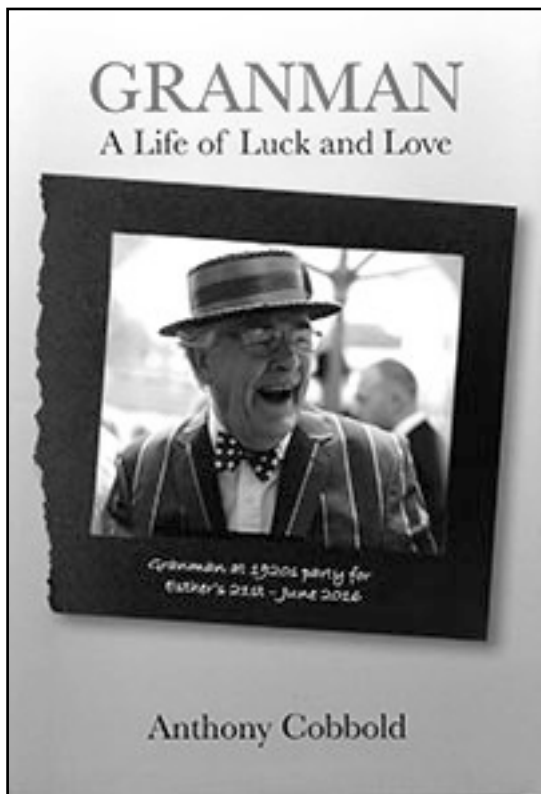
Until recently, I was unaware of the connection but now inside the church is a bust with a cat copied from the Ipswich sculpture plus some other artefacts. I have included some of my photos which may be of interest. The signs for the refreshment facilities in this events space are interestingly prominent!

*Graham Day*



*Photographs by Graham Day*





## Book review

*Granman: a life of luck and love* by Anthony Cobbold

“Every ordinary person may be extraordinary in their own particular way.” – *Leo Tolstoy*

This quotation is embraced by the author in his ‘ordinariness’. A new book from The Cobbold Family History Trust (CFHT) is always welcome, but this one is a bit different. Many Ipswich Society members will know the work of Anthony from talks and his tireless efforts to seek out and preserve the stories of his ancestors, the famous Ipswich brewing and banking family. This volume is much more personal and written in the first person – sometimes with surprising frankness. (However, if one is going to write an autobiography, what is the point if one can’t be honest?)

Just as the website and vast family tree dealing with the Cobbold family and their kin seems like a patchwork of people and stories, so the life of Anthony Cobbold. So many places of residence, so many occupations and experiences here and abroad and a number of romantic liaisons. Never a ‘high flier’ academically, Anthony attended Caius College Cambridge in 1955, delayed for two years by National

Service. Being rather more interested in sport and extra-curricular activities didn’t make for a stellar degree. His working life never seemed meteoric in its progress. but he worked hard and raised a family. Ah – that last word... If this book is about nothing else, it is about the importance of family. It was, in fact, written for his grandchildren.

For the present reviewer, the latter section of the book when Anthony enters his seventies and has time to delve into family history, eventually setting up The Cobbold Family History Trust (publisher of this very volume) in 2004 is the most interesting. Starting from his father’s rudimentary family tree printed on the back of the menu for his 50th birthday celebration, the online tree now bears over 15,000 names of Cobbolds and their kin, from several continents of the world.

The appendices add more family trees and lists with a timeline documenting Anthony’s tireless quest for Cobbold information and artefacts.

It’s a good read from a self-effacing man who holds Ipswich dear to him.

**RG**

Incidentally the title: ‘Granman’ is the name given to the author by his (very young) granddaughter Hannah. The book is available to purchase from [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk) at £20 (any profits to the CFHT).

## Take a Walk and Afternoon Tea with Ipswich Tourist Guides

As autumn approaches all are welcome on our occasional themed, guided walks followed by tea and cake in a cosy café. Costing just £10 per person (including refreshments); the walks led by Ipswich Guides start at the Ipswich Institute in Tower Street at 1.30 pm.

### Dates and titles for tea walks in the coming months are :-

Fri 11 Oct: Backwaters of Ipswich; Wed 23 Oct: Northern Heights of Ipswich; Mon 11 Nov: Ipswich in World War I; Mon 25 Nov: Stroll with a 100 year old Guide; Wed. 11 Dec: Ipswich Medics; Fri 17 Jan 2025: Walking in Wolsey’s Footsteps.

<http://ipswichtourguides.onesuffolk.net>

<https://ipswichinstitute.org.uk>



## Discover Geolpswich: geological ages within walking distance

GeoSuffolk's new, free leaflet focusing on the geology of our townscape was launched at St Peters by the Waterfront on September 14 2023 to celebrate Heritage Open Days. It is the latest in a series of leaflets we have written on the geology of Suffolk – all on our website. There is such a wealth of geological material in the buildings, streets, and parks of Ipswich that this leaflet practically wrote itself. It starts at the Question Mark on the Waterfront – the black dolerite from Uruguay (used to dramatic effect with a white Portuguese marble) is surely the furthest travelled rock in Ipswich. Following this, the leaflet describes the geology of St Nicholas Church and surroundings, the Cornhill, Ipswich Museum, Christchurch Park, and Blackfriars. You can visit the six locations separately or take a longer walk and cover them all. When GeoSuffolk visits the Geologists' Association Festival in London, we are often asked if there is geology that can be seen on foot, via a train trip. This leaflet is the answer, and we shall be taking it to the next Geologists' Association Festival!

There is so much to see in our town that we had to be choosy about sites – what about the ones that got away? The leaflet describes the British limestones and sandstone used by the Victorians in the construction of the Town Hall. These were brought in by train, but what of the spectacular red granite pillars inside the building? This rock is often called 'Balmoral Red' but comes from Finland and is usually imported through Aberdeen – quite a transport feat in the 1860s. Then there is the Kentish Ragstone we are familiar with in the Museum Street and Tacket Street churches. This is a Cretaceous age calcareous sandstone from the Medway area: a rough stone used in characteristic dressed blocks. We were *really* sorry not to have space for the Library because the beautiful red bricks are documented to be made from local London clay at the Dales Road brickworks. The limestone, Ancaster Stone of Jurassic age from Lincolnshire, supports skilled ornamental carving. If you look closely, you will see its oolitic structure (tiny spheres similar in appearance to hard fish roe), and fragments of fossil shells.

Do keep an eye out for the leaflet, copies will be at various outlets around Ipswich, or download one from the GeoSuffolk web site: [www.geosuffolk.co.uk](http://www.geosuffolk.co.uk). GeoSuffolk is indebted to The Ipswich Society for their support for this project.

***Caroline and Bob Markham***



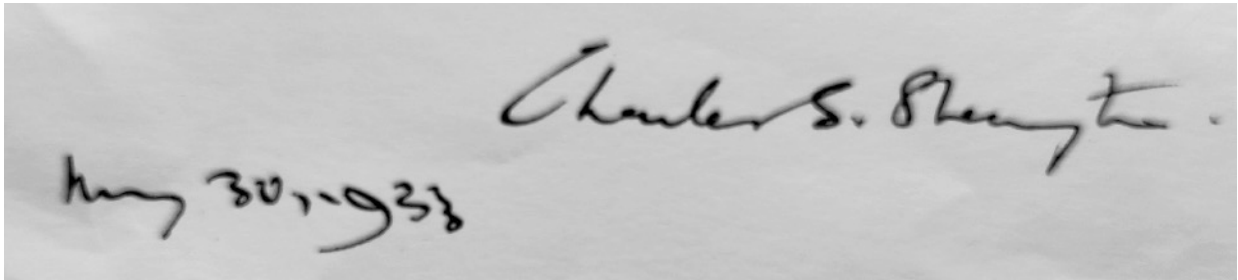
*The terracotta ornamentation on the front pediments of the Museum is obscured by scaffolding for the moment. The leaflet tells the story of its inception by John Ellor Taylor, the Curator at the time of its construction in 1880.*



*This large sarsen stone in the rockery in Christchurch Park was dug up when the dock basin was constructed in the 1840s. It displays the characteristic rounded surface structures (mammillated) of this local rock.*

## The Eleven Presidents of Ipswich Museum

(Notes from a talk for the Ipswich Society, December 2023 – final part.)



**Charles Scott Sherrington** (President 1944 – 1952)



*Charles Sherrington Blue Plaque on Ipswich School*

Charles Sherrington's work as Physiology Professor at Liverpool and Oxford Universities was recognised by a knighthood in 1922 for services to science. Soon after, in 1924, he opened the new Ipswich Central Library in Northgate Street. It had previously been housed in the High Street Museum, where he served on the Museum Committee.

In 1932 Sir Charles jointly received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discovering how the nervous system works. He has been further celebrated by having a lunar crater (on the far side of the Moon) named after him, and by an Ipswich Society Blue Plaque at Ipswich School (where he went to school). He knew the Museum (then in Museum Street) as a child, being taken there by his mother – his favourite item was a landscape by Haydon. In 1946 my mother took me to Ipswich Museum (in High Street) to see a recently acquired hoopoe. I wonder, did I see an elderly, grey-haired Sir Charles there and did he see a young lad with his mother? There are those, me included, for whom Charles Scott Sherrington is Ipswich's greatest son.

**Anna Airy** (President 1952-1964)

Anna Airy was born into a scientific Playford family, and it is her botanical illustrations I find so perfect and so beautiful. For many, the dark days of the second World War were lightened by an exhibition of Anna's paintings and drawings at Christchurch Mansion in November 1943. They were brought here from London, only after Anna had carefully cleaned them of brick dust from the blitz. No stranger to the hardships of war, Anna had been an official War Artist in 1918. She was a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, and not at all overawed by them - once, when asked to submit a preliminary sketch, she quite happily told them not to waste her time! She bequeathed her painting 'Ruined Root-Knot' (Royal Academy exhibit 1948) to Ipswich Museum. She also presented to the Museum, in 1956, 'a blue China silk dress with Maltese lace, and gloves, worn by her aunt at the wedding of Lady Catherine Hershel'. It is probable this bride was a relative of astronomers, Caroline and William Herschel as Anna's grandfather was George Biddel Airy, the 7th Astronomer Royal.

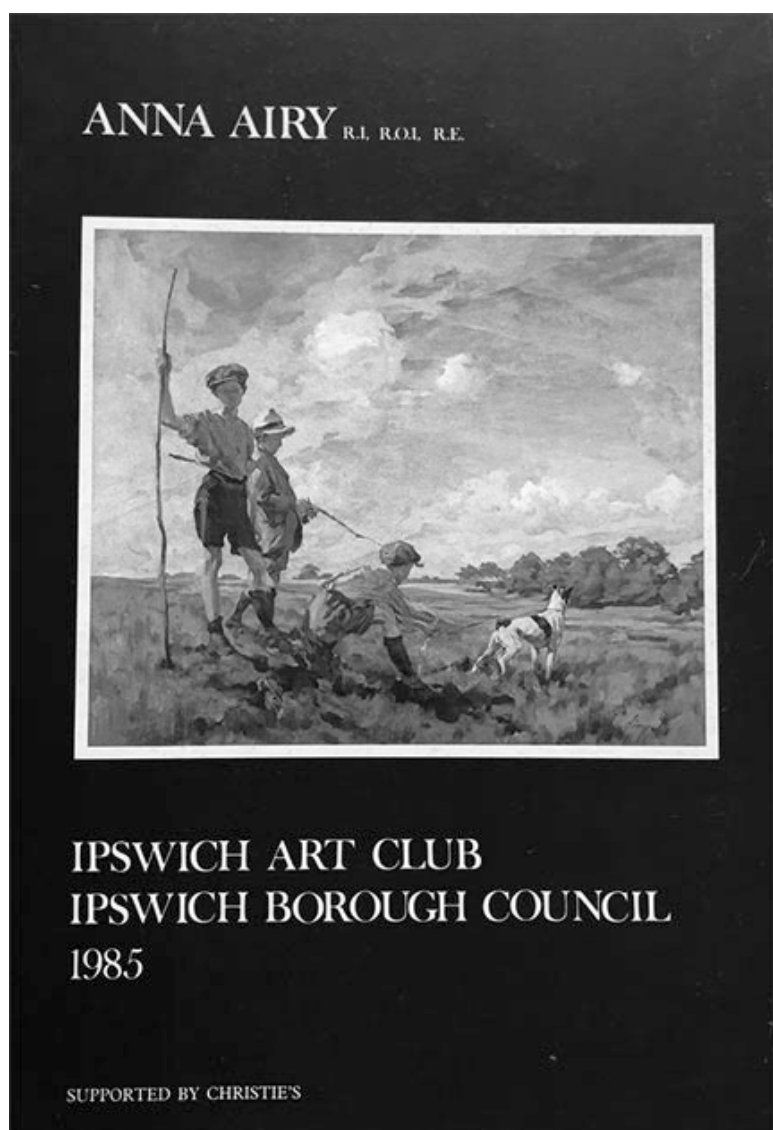
**John Gathorne-Hardy** (President 1965-1978)

The 4th Earl of Cranbrook's scientific work included collecting mammals in the eastern Himalayas. When I first met him (at a Suffolk Naturalists' Society meeting) I found many people addressing him as 'My Lord', which was outside my usual acquaintance, but I got on very well with him.

We received correspondence from him at the Museum, one of my jobs being to decipher his handwriting! I was always a little disappointed that the envelopes were stamped 'House of Commons' - but let us not get into postal politics! With the reorganisation of local government in 1974 the new Ipswich Borough Council abolished the Museum Committee (the Museum became a division of the Recreation and Amenities Department) and with no Museum Committee to contribute to, Lord Cranbrook was President without a job. When he died in 1978, the new R & A Department did not seek a new President for Ipswich Museum.

**Bob Markham**

*Previous parts of this talk appeared in Newsletters: April 2024 and July 2024.*



*Anna Airey exhibition catalogue, 1985*

## Awards 2024

We are in the early stages of finalising the arrangements for this year's awards evening, as usual we have awaited the flood of nominations, projects and finished constructions that this time of year brings. However, the paucity of this year's entrants has given us pause for thought: we may not have sufficient to conduct the normal Awards Ceremony which we have in the past...

I was reminded of November 2015 when we awarded certificates for the schemes completed in 2014/5. At St Peter's by the Waterfront, a record audience was entertained by a review of two years-worth of nominations with a thoughtful and lively commentary by vice president Bob Allen. In the absence of the Mayor, conservation consultant, Bob Kindred gave a short overview of the current state of construction and presented the awards.

Commendations and two High Commendations were awarded as well as a deserved Distinction for the Holywells Park renovation of the Orangery and the Visitors' Centre - notably, the same project went on to receive a national Civic Voice award later that year, resulting in a members garden party in July!

We continue to plan for an Awards Evening on November 20 2024 and Society members can expect an enthralling and exciting evening not unlike those which followed last year's dazzling event.

One important addition will be a Special General Meeting which will approve the election of our new Chair Person.

Members can be assured of a memorable evening, make sure the date is on your calendar.

***Tony Marsden***



*The new footbridge from the riverside housing development, up to Princes Street bridge.*

*The river path has yet to be improved.*

*Photograph by Lisa Wall, August 2024.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Ipswich as a native sees it from Rowell Bell

I am writing in response to *Ipswich as others see us* by David Vincent (July 2024 issue) and Charlotte Wilmot (April 2024 issue). As an Ipswich native, apart from a few years across the pond, living next to Christchurch Park on and off for 57 years to speak from my and, I surmise, many like-minded long-term residents' perspective.

First, on the positive, the following extracts from *The Suffolk Traveller* written one quarter of a millennium ago is our drum: 'The Streets of Ipswich, like those of other ancient towns, which have not been destroyed by fire and rebuilt do not run in straight lines and therefore do not strike a stranger's eye'. He goes on: 'The many walks and rides which abound with a variety of pleasing views, together with the goodness of the roads in the environs of Ipswich, do also make the place agreeable.' Our traveller then describes the prospects from the River Orwell which he refers to as 'one of the most beautiful salt rivers in the world'!

Then in the 19th century the potteries close and are replaced by workers' cottages for the Gas Works, Orwell works and Manure works, first in courts in the Rope Walk in the 1830s. Only two bedrooms with little chance of personal privacy. Read about the slum developers in *Rags and Bones* by Frank Grace, with sorrow, took over 100 years to sort. And now, what is this I read about proposed substandard accommodation in our town centre in July's Newsletter? What is positive about that?

I remember the centre, string quartet in the restaurant at Debenhams, the cinemas, the florists, Corders (established 1787), Ridleys, Croydons, Green & Hatfields – a favourite stop of Queen Mary. I miss the Tourist Information Centre too. We still have Christchurch Mansion thanks to Felix Cobbold and, by default, on 14 September 1940 when two bombs narrowly missed it. I miss the croquet lawn and the beautiful flower beds in the Arboretum, *see the photograph by David Miller*. Now with two gardeners instead of 18, thanks to council cuts due to other priorities most have gone.

**'But Nostalgia is a Siren and one must be wary of her.'** We need to balance those feelings with the present and future and do something about it. Ipswich: stop replacing designer paving bricks and slabs with tarmac; it looks shabby – where is the civic pride? Stop cluttering Christchurch Park with event fencing, for example outside the East Wing of the Mansion, which badly needs repainting. Fix the gutters and downpipes that caused the water damage compromising the unique 17th century

Hawstead Panels, now closed to the public, and will cost dearly to restore. Fix the potholes and road surface, and scrub out all unsightly graffiti, and do something about speeding traffic. We survived Covid, beware complacency.

Well done re: St Clements Church: all hail friends' groups and volunteers.

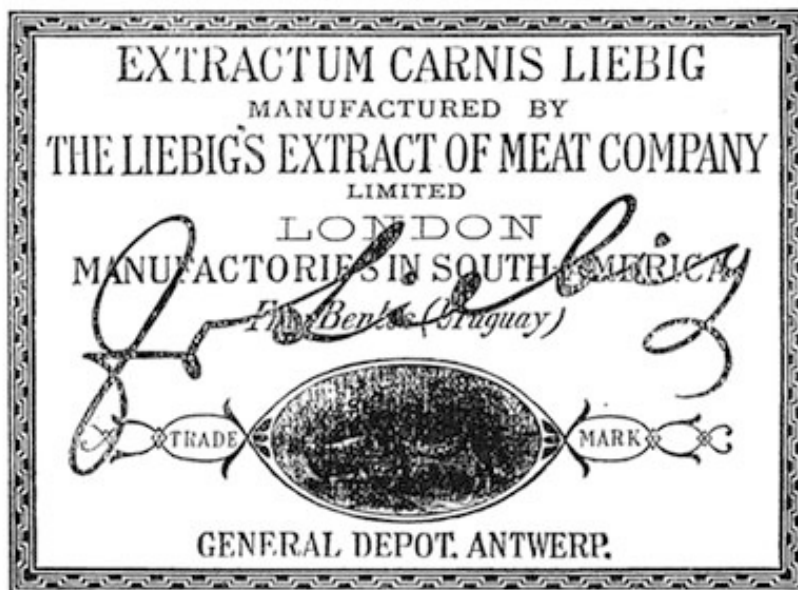


*Upper Arboretum flower bed... 10,000 plants, 1990.*



## Presidents of Ipswich Museum and 'OXO' from Alan Swerdlow

Mention of Justin von Liebig in the article about Presidents of Ipswich Museum made me think of OXO! Members might google him and find where his interest in superphosphate led: Liebig's Extract of Meat, and eventually OXO



[*Editor's note:* within the text at upper left is 'Fray Bentos (Uruguay)'. Fray Bentos is the capital city of the Río Negro Department, in south-western Uruguay. Historically, Fray Bentos' main industry has been meat processing. An industrial plant owned by the Societé de Fray Bentos Giebert & Cie., the Liebig Extract of Meat Company (LEMCO), was founded there in 1863. It was closed in 1979, after 117 years in operation. See page 7 of our July 2024 *Newsletter* under the heading 'Edward Packard, Senior'. And we won't even mention corned beef or tinned steak and kidney pies... 'Buljong is Norwegian for beef tea.')

**ANPR, private car parking predation and an historic site** from Douglas Seaton  
I can relate only too well to the bad experiences of David Vincent and Graham Day, (*Newsletters* 232 and 235) having recently defended myself against a claim made by a private car parking company.



The local car park in question contains items of historical interest to members of the Ipswich Society. It is known as Slade Street car park and is also bounded by Salthouse Street, Key Street, Star Lane and Fore Street. It may be entered by car from both Star Lane and Salthouse Street, in the latter case by a route formerly known as Salthouse Lane, and also on foot via a passageway from Fore Street. The land once belonged to R. & W. Paul Ltd as their former head office, built in a typical 1930s style, still stands on Key Street, as described so well by Derek Lay (*Newsletter* 228, January 2022, 'Starting work at R. & W. Paul'). Within this car park, somewhat incongruously, there is an old half-timbered building that I believe is still in some form of commercial use and also the historic Grade 2 listed Jewish Cemetery containing 36 tombstones surrounded by a wall dating from the 17th century (*Newsletters* October 2008, January 2009). There used to be a synagogue in Rope Lane (now Rope Walk) that fell out of use and was pulled down in 1877. The Board of Deputies of British Jews has taken over responsibility for the maintenance of the surviving cemetery.

Should any reader feel inclined to take a look at these sites - or even visit the waterfront - then don't be caught out as I was, for this car park is no longer 'pay and display' as it used to be but now operates under the watchful eye of ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition), which

means that a camera clocks your entry and exit time enabling the keeper of the vehicle to be traced through the DVLA. A driver parking on private land that carries both a clearly displayed tariff and terms and conditions is deemed to have agreed a 'contract by conduct' and any perceived breach of the terms and conditions may result in a so-called parking charge which is not a charge for parking as the term suggests but a fine or penalty charge in all but name - so if you see the term 'parking charges apply' beware! Any perceived breach of the terms and conditions is likely to be rewarded within a few days by an automated postal demand for £100 (generously reduced to £60 for prompt payment).

Indignation alone is no defence for refusing to pay up but a consumer, and this includes the user of a private car park, is protected by law from commercial treatment that is deemed to be unfair. If you feel that you have been unfairly treated by a private car park company then very helpful advice can be found free of charge on the internet and I would recommend googling 'Martin Lewis parking charge' as a useful start. I admitted that I had stayed for some minutes longer than the two hours for which I had paid but was able to present a defence in the County Court by providing evidence of inadequate signage as there were no terms and conditions prominently displayed at the place where I parked or at the machine where I paid. I told the court that I would have behaved differently had they been. The Claimant (car park operator) was legally represented in court. I represented myself, having spent time and effort preparing a written defence backed up by documented photographic (mobile phone) evidence. The judge dismissed the claim that had by this time been inflated to £160 plus costs (limited by the small claims track court rules).

The whole process extended over almost two years culminating in a 90 minute on-line video court hearing. Many may feel that this is too much hassle and it's certainly best not to fall into such a trap in the first place if you can avoid it. In monetary terms however it cost me only 10p – as the car park machine failed to give me the change that I was due – and at least I now know some of the ins and outs of English law in relation to parking charges and have more than a passing familiarity with this historic dockside car park, although I now prefer to visit it on foot!

### **John Norman**

As a family we knew how tirelessly John worked to make this world a better place for us all to live in. However, we were perhaps not fully aware of how much his efforts were appreciated by all of you out there. We have been touched by all the awards John received in recognition of his life's work but most of all we have been deeply moved by the tributes paid to him in the media, online, in the pages of this very newsletter and in the cards and letters we have personally received.

John was many things to many people, sometimes a thorn in their side! To us, his family he was 'just John'. Just John because all he did was his 'norm', his everyday and nothing out of 'his' ordinary. He was a very special ordinary man who did extraordinary things and I know he will be missed by many so I'm sure you can imagine how much we as his family will miss him too.

Thank you all for your kind thoughts, words and deeds.

*Christine Norman*

# The Ipswich Society

Registered Charity no. 263322

[www.ipswichsociety.org.uk](http://www.ipswichsociety.org.uk) | <https://www.facebook.com/ipswichsociety> | <https://www.instagram.com/theipswichsociety>

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Vice-Presidents        Bob Allen, Chris Wiltshire  
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	Samantha Sherman    sam@temmt.com	
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## Diary dates

*Wednesday November 20:* Annual Awards Evening and Special General Meeting 7.30pm at The Hold.

**Winter Illustrated Talks** at Museum Street Methodist Church (entrance in Blackhorse Lane); all talks start at 7.30pm and free tea, coffee and biscuits are provided afterwards. All are welcome.

*Wednesday October 16:* John Warren on The River Gipping Navigation.

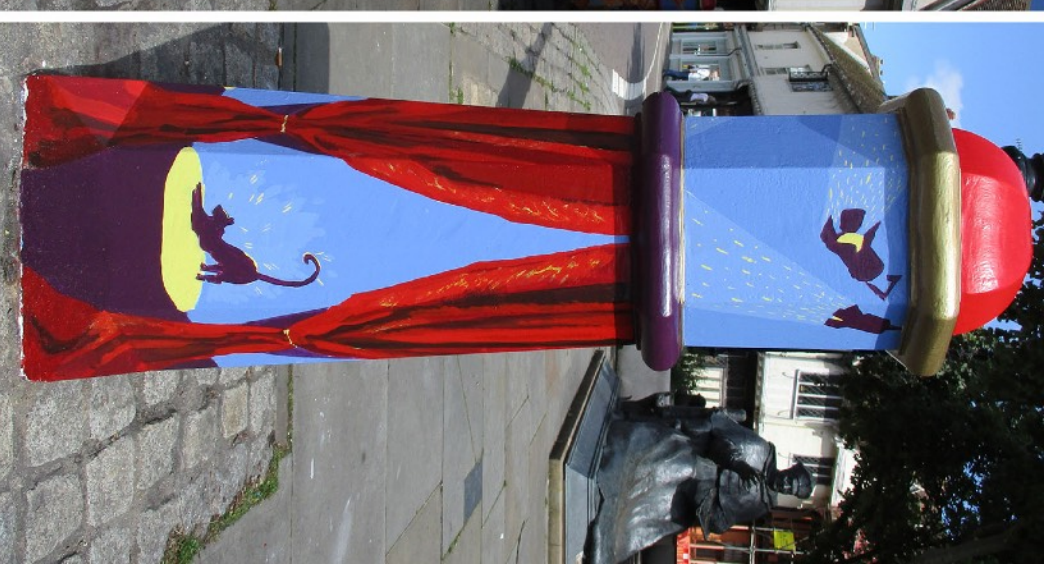
*Wednesday December 18:* Neil MacDonald, Leader of Ipswich Borough Council,

*Wednesday January 15, 2025:* Derek Clarke on Ransomes and Rapier.

*Wednesday February 19, 2025:* Graeme Mateer, Head of Transport Strategy, SCC on their Walking and Cycling Strategy.

### Newsletter deadlines & publication dates (the latter may vary by a few days)

Deadline for material: 1 December;	Publication date: 22 January;
1 March;	2 April;
1 June;	17 July;
1 September;	9 October.



A burst of colour comes to the cast iron bollards around the statue of Cardinal Wolsey at the junction of Silent Street, St Nicholas Street and St Peters Street. A group of young painters decorated the bollards in preparation for the procession of musicians and children as part of the Wolsey 550 celebrations on 4 July 2024. See the front cover and page 9.