

# SPALDING & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March 2024

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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

**I**T IS REALLY HAPPENING! By the time you read this, the advert inviting artists to apply for the next two commissions for our MARK-IT trail - see last Newsletter – will have been published. The next 12 months will be a busy time for the Society. There will be events to arrange as part of the public engagement programme required as a condition of our grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. In addition to the artworks, we are also hoping to collect and preserve personal memories of the livestock markets of Spalding. If you have any memories that you would like to contribute or would like to help us to collect and record those memories, please contact the Society. *(Full details on next page.)*

We hope that when the artworks are installed early next year, it will be one of the year's more positive happenings for Spalding. It has certainly been a very mixed twelve months for the town. The highlight so far has been the announcement that the Spalding Gentlemen's Society Museum has been awarded designated status by the Arts Council for its original collection. The award means that the collection is recognised as being of national importance, alongside other special non-national museums, libraries, and archives. Only two other collections in Lincolnshire have received this status. This award raises the profile of the museum, which can only be good for the town.

However, there have been unwanted announcements as well. The announcement that Barclays Bank is to close its branch, following on from the announcement that the Halifax is to close its branch was bad enough, but then we were shocked by the sudden closure of Hughes Electricals. These are blows to the town, and I think the message „Use it, or lose it“ cannot be overstated. Online shopping is clearly a factor, as is online banking. Sadly, the change to online banking seems to be

irreversible but the decline of shops is not irreversible. Not if people use them. I discovered just how much the closure of Beale's and Hill's department stores has caused problems. Both sold a particular brand of clothing that I normally buy as a Christmas present. No other shop in the town or at Springfields sold the brand. Therefore, I was forced to buy online. Personally, I much prefer to go to a shop, so that I can see and feel a product before I decide whether I want to buy it. Surely, where gaps exist in the market, as they do now in Spalding, some entrepreneur can find a creative way to plug those gaps in an imaginative way?

If we do not want our town centres to be empty of shops, we must use them. If we want our town centres to be full of people, we should refuse to use automated checkouts where they exist, and we should all look to use services provided by businesses that have offices in the town. It is the presence of workers in shops and offices that will help our town centre to survive. We should be doing everything we can to ensure that shop and office workers are considered a necessity by their employers.

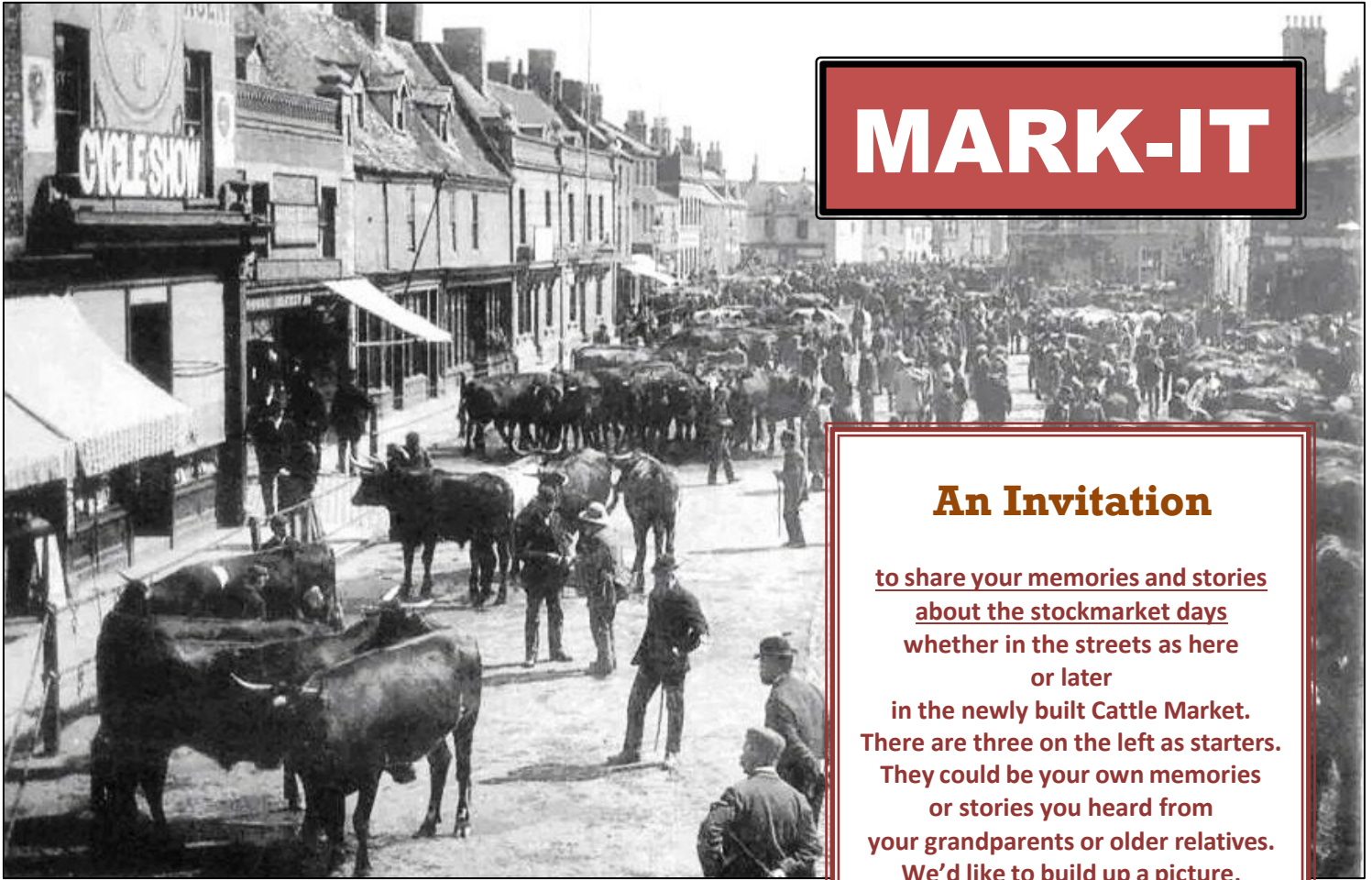
As I was finalising these remarks, the announcement of the Chair for the Spalding Town Board being set up to develop plans to spend the £20M “forgotten town” money being provided by central government was made. With his involvement in both FreshLinc and Lincolnshire Field Products as a director, Robin Hancox should know about some of the challenges that many companies are having recruiting staff with the right skills into the area and keeping them once they are here. Ensuring that Spalding has a good mix of leisure, culture and opportunity for its residents is the key ingredient to the future prosperity for all of us. We wish him every success in delivering the best outcome possible.

**John Bland**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Apologies to our members who receive paper copies of the Newsletter. The „Planning Matters“ page was missing from their last number. It was entirely the Editor's fault, who somehow overlooked it in collating the pages for printing. As it was entirely devoted to the Society's objection to the huge overbearing care home proposed for the sensitive Bull and Monkey site, we have reprinted it on p.8, so all members can be aware of our reasons, not just the email members.



# MARK-IT

## An Invitation

to share your memories and stories  
about the stockmarket days  
 whether in the streets as here  
 or later

in the newly built Cattle Market.  
 There are three on the left as starters.  
 They could be your own memories  
 or stories you heard from  
 your grandparents or older relatives.

We'd like to build up a picture,  
 a sort of Tuesday mosaic,  
 of what it was like in those days –  
 to bring cattle or a flock of sheep  
 into the town centre

or to try to cross New Road  
 or have a sneeze mistaken for a bid.

It was all once a weekly part  
 of the Spalding experience, and  
 as part of the MARK-IT trail project  
 we'd like to capture it before it  
 vanishes forever.

The memories are still there.  
 We hope you'd like to share them.

John Tippler remembers the day when a pig caused panic in the Sheepmarket. "I was a little boy with my mother outside the old post office, when I caught sight of this enormous pig rearing up and come crashing down the passage-way between the pens straight towards us. Everyone scattered in panic and ran. And two very brave market-men, I thought, stood in its way in the passage and said, „Stop!“ And it did. And, snuffing and grunting, was got back into its pen

“We kids called the market-men „bullock-whoppers“,” recalls John Honnor, “because of the little stick they carried to control the cattle”.

“Where Heron Foods now is in the Sheepmarket used to be open space, for chickens, geese, rabbits and guinea pigs. People would bid for a single chicken. It was a popular place to take little kids – though parents didn't tell them the rabbits were being bought for the pot,” John adds..

The street livestock market moved to special buildings in 1938 (now Sainsbury's carpark ), years later becoming a regular playing place for young Marian Boxall and her friends. “We'd go there after school and chase about. One market day, when the men were sluicing down the straw and dirt, I dodged another girl and slipped and nearly fell down an open man-hole. They weren't so concerned about health and safety in those days.”

### The MARK-IT Trail

A celebration of Spalding's market in its livestock heyday.

Mosaics, sculptures, murals.

In the town centre, where the animals were traditionally sold.

Also the annual hiring fair.

### How to share :-

Paper (typed, hand-written or printed)

Disk or memory stick

E-mail

#### Postal address for first two above:

The Secretary, Spalding & District Civic Society, 78a Edinburgh Drive, Spalding, PE11 2RT.

E-mail: [marianboxall@btinternet.com](mailto:marianboxall@btinternet.com)

For audio, please phone The Secretary first to arrange convenient method: 01775 725293.

## PLANNING MATTERS

I WAS PLEASED to see that Samuel Smith’s Brewery have applied to make good the damage to Ye Olde White Horse Inn caused by a car accident in November. Interestingly, they have chosen to replace an existing steel support beam within the bay ceiling void with timber. I feel that we can support the application and look forward to the Brewery doubling its efforts to find tenants, so that the pub can reopen. I remember the day of the accident well, as I was representing the Society at a cultural strategy discussion at Ayscoughfee Hall. Of course the road closures meant that I had to



The pictures have been matched as accurately as possible (NB: the telephone box). The fake ‘Georgian’ monster of a building will obliterate the view of the church and overpower the many real Georgian buildings in a key part of the Conservation Area.

the Council Planning Department raised various concerns, many of them echoing the Society’s, and we note that Sir John was going to consult with Nicholas Boys Smith for his opinion on the application. Nicholas Boys Smith sits on the advisory board for the National Office for Place, and is founder of Create Streets, which does excellent work campaigning for better designed places. It would be interesting to know what he thinks of the design. Having been a fan of Create Streets for a number of years, I hope that a much improved design might be required from the applicant.

It was good to see the attention to detail taken by Network Rail in their application to restore the St John’s Road Railway Footbridge. When the works are completed (including I hope a tidy up of the land below the footbridge), this will significantly enhance this area of the town. I hope that after they have completed the work on the St John’s Road Railway Footbridge, they might find some resources to improve the appearance of Steppingstone Lane Railway Footbridge.

park elsewhere and walk – and, as I crossed Vine Street, I noticed a wonderful view of the church spire (*top left*), and it struck me how vital it is to save this winter view from development. Whilst the state of the Bull & Monkie detracts from the view, the view of the spire will have been admired from across the river for centuries every winter when the trees have shed their leaves. It would be a shame to lose this view. as we will do if the proposed care home is approved (*left*).

The applicant has now slightly amended the plans, but their updated image still shows the winter view of the spire will be lost if this

over-sized building goes ahead.

A letter from Sir John Hayes to

### STOP PRESS

Council Planning Committee rejects officers’ recommendation for B&M approval, voting for deferral instead. There had been over 60 objections from the public with virtually none in favour. John Bland, the Society’s Chairman, had spoken at the meeting to urge deferral. (10.04.24)

**John Bland**

**The Society’s calendar sold well again – indeed, the 2024 calendar sold out. Attractive, colourful photographs of the South Holland countryside or townscape welcome for 2025.**



**2024  
CALENDAR**





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## NEXT TO THE NAIL BAR

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**P**UBLIC SURFACE AIR RAID SHELTER was the official designation of the big brick box at the corner of the Sheepmarket and Station Street. The country had lots of them by the end of the War, but very few remain. There is one less now. As a condition of its demolition to make way for flats the developer was required to commission an archaeological report.

The report of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. includes an interesting history of the government's air raid precautions programme (ARP). Preparations against possible air attack began in 1937, two years before war was declared. Local authorities were compelled to prepare air raid shelter schemes and households urged to strengthen basements, dig roofed trench-shelters in their gardens or small brick and concrete ones, or apply for one of the Anderson shelters (a sort of solid-topped steel cage, waist high, for either indoors or outside). My nan had one in her „front room“.

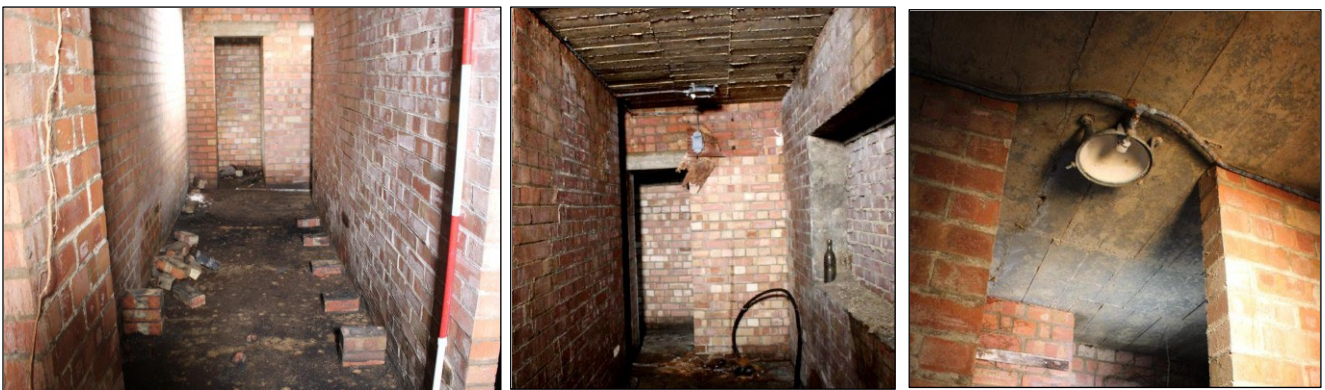
Public provision had at first been concentrated on reinforcing large basement spaces and hastily-dug trench shelters in parks and waste ground. Shortly before the outbreak of war, the government encouraged local authorities to build much larger versions of the domestic bricks and concrete surface shelters, big enough to hold up to 50 people, as they would be quick and cheap, and materials would be readily available locally. Their numbers multiplied in built-up areas, eventually even on roadways, empty of traffic as there was no petrol for private vehicles. They contained no lighting, seating or sanitation. Early in 1940, with steel in desperately short supply, the use of steel reinforcing bars in these shelters was discouraged.

It was short-sighted. The shelters proved vulnerable to near misses by even quite small bombs, never mind direct hits, as blast or earth shock damaged or destroyed the walls, bringing the concrete roof crashing down. And so, from December 1940 onwards, all new public surface shelters had to be built with their walls and roof reinforced with steel rods and, as an air raid often went on for much longer than originally envisaged, seating at least now had to be provided. The Sheepmarket shelter seems to have been built in this period.

The PCA report notes the “quality of construction and relative refinement of [its] facilities”. With reinforced walls and roof, it was divided into two corridor-like sections with wooden benches along the sides. The first three courses of their brick supports can be seen in the left photograph. The centre photo shows the electricity supply cable and a junction box up by the doorway. Right photo: close-up of light fitting. There were two sanitary cubicles (pails) at each end, and shreds of a gas curtain had survived above an internal doorway. Overall, it “appeared to be in good structural condition and most of its interior fittings had been well preserved”.

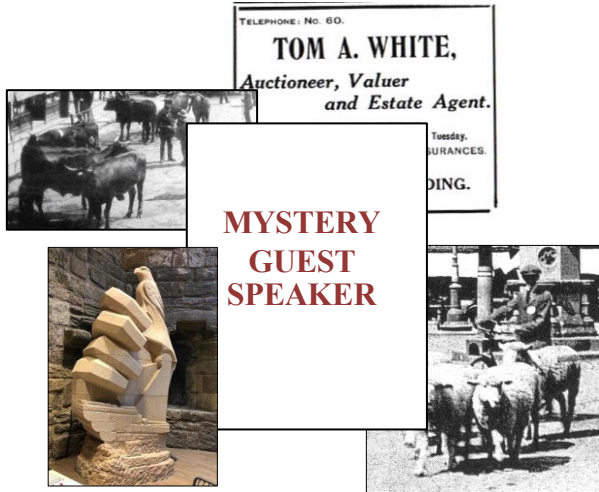
The shelter's post-war history remains obscure, says the report. A map (c.1970) labels it “STO” (presumably “store”), but beyond that they found no information. Older residents will remember that the present nail bar was a baker's and confectioner's (Bun's the Baker and before that Hardy and Clifton), and there may well be some who know what the shelter was used for post war – if anything. We should be most grateful to receive any information about its post-war days. Contact details on last page.

**John Charlesworth**



[Many thanks to CPA for permission to use information and photographs from their report. The full report can be found on-line attached to planning application **H16-0915-23** on the Council's planning department web site.]

For the diary



TELEPHONE: NO. 60.  
**TOM A. WHITE,**  
Auctioneer, Valuer  
and Estate Agent.  
Tuesday,  
INSURANCES.  
DING.

**MYSTERY  
GUEST  
SPEAKER**

# AGM

Tuesday 4 June 2024 7.30pm

Spalding Baptist Church  
Swan Street, Spalding, PE11 2BT

Opportunity to ask questions, suggest ideas,  
join the committee.

We hope the guest speaker will be someone very much involved in the MARK-IT project.  
A chance to meet the commissioned artist perhaps?  
Or to share your stories from the cattle market days? Or learn the tricks of the auctioneer's trade?  
Or become involved in the project yourself?

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## JOHNSON FOUNTAIN (1874): THE PREQUEL

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1861

“ONE BENEFICIAL RESULT of the Waterworks now in course of completion will be that Spalding can, like most towns of note in these days of sanitary progress, have its drinking fountain. A very good design for a public fountain has lately been brought out by Mr.Wm.Brown, architect and surveyor of this town, and his intention is not only to make it a work of public utility, but to erect it by public subscription

so as to form a lasting memorial to the memory of Theophilus Fairfax Johnson, Esq., a man whose good deeds are worthy of an enduring record. The design consists of an Ionic Portico of four columns upon a suitable base, the whole structure being about seventeen feet in height, with a fountain in the centre flowing into three vases and a trough below.”  
*Spalding Free Press*, 5 April 1861. (Michael Elsdon: *More Aspects of Spalding*, 2001.)

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## MUCH APPRECIATED

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### Spalding Heritage Strategy

Shortly after the Pedestrian Area consultation (page 6) came another genuine consultation, this one asking people not just to tick boxes, but for their ideas of what to include in a heritage strategy for the town. The resulting draft *Spalding Heritage Strategy* and *Action Plan* appeared recently, and the value of genuine prior public consultation are plain to see in the wide spread of fresh and thoughtful ideas it contains. It was gratifying to see many of the Society's proposals amongst them, ranging from major undertakings such as the MARK-IT project and drawing up a Shop Fronts Guide to smaller items such as restoring the White Hart's name. The proof of the pudding will of course lie in the eating, but we look

forward in hope, given the energies of a relatively new Council after last May's elections, and offer the Society's help wherever we can.

- **HSBC** for the rapid removal of graffiti from the side of their building, unlike other premises.
- **Lincolnshire County Council** for the recently installed timetables at the Bus Station – and the Society's committee member **David Jones** for beavering away until they supplied them.
- The **various bus companies** that between them now provide a frequent bus service to and from the Johnson Community Hospital.
- **SHDC Planning Committee** for unanimously rejecting a planning application to cover a huge area of high grade farm land with solar panels.



Graham Boor

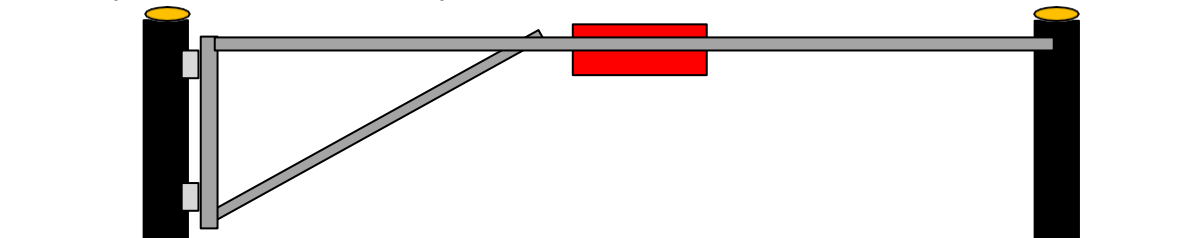
**T**HE VERDICT was clear. Spalding’s pedestrian area should stay as it is, **and be enforced**. Owing to government cuts to the Police Force, however, there are not enough officers, it seems, to do this. Meanwhile, motorists flout the **NO VEHICLES** sign more and more brazenly (*see below*) and pedestrians grow more and more angry. Something has long needed to be done.

In the absence of effective enforcement, an obvious solution would seem to be some kind of barrier where Herring Lane meets Broad Street. The sort of lo-tech swing barrier proposed by the Society in the June 2022 Newsletter– closed at 10am and

opened again at 4pm – would be simple, cheap and surely do the job. The photograph shows one in place in Wisbech.

We understand that Lincolnshire Highways are belatedly working on a revision of the traffic order – not least, we hope, to deal with the drivers who think “pedestrian area” means “free long-stay carpark”, arriving in the Market Place before 10am and leaving their cars there all day.

The barrier shown is a bit basic but, if successful, a rather more handsome one, befitting the Conservation Area, could be sourced or commissioned.



“Why are all those other cars here then?” • “The regulations don’t apply now.” • “It’s not a pedestrian area – repeated aggressively – and what about all that lot?” This arrogant, disturbing, conviction from drivers in the Market Place that you only observe regulations that suit yourself came not from rebellious youths but from middle-aged drivers.

**SPALDING AND DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY**

I enclose a cheque for:- [ ] £8 for individual membership; [ ] £12 for 2 persons in the same household; [ ] Free if in full-time education; [ ] Details of a standing order mandate.

Please send to **Melvyn Price, 3 Morus Close, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2QL**

Name..... Address.....

Posr Code ..... Telephone ..... Email .....

**Gift Aid**

[ ] I am a tax payer and I wish to gift Aid my annual subscription. Please send me the appropriate form.



# BLUE PLAQUE UNVEILING

Saturday, 18 May  
11.00 am

11 London Road, Spalding

For the diary

The home  
for many years of  
**CHARLOTTE  
CHARINTON**  
(1801-1888)

whose generous benefactions  
built St.Paul's Church,  
Fulney,  
restored other local churches  
and benefited parish schools

*Charlotte Charinton is the first woman to be commemorated in one of the Society's blue plaques. It was the Society's long-serving secretary, the late Marion Brassington, whose researches opened our eyes to Miss Charinton's great generosity and thought-provoking story.*

**A** VICTORIAN NOVELIST – Anthony Trollope perhaps or George Eliot – might well have seen potential plot material in the apparently uneventful life of Charlotte Charinton, quiet spinster philanthropist in a small market town.

Born in 1801, she was the younger daughter of a wealthy Gedney Hill farmer, Thomas Charinton. When he died, she inherited the whole of his estate, as he had disinherited her elder sister Sarah for eloping with a brick-layer and refused to recognise the marriage.

Eventually moving to Spalding, Charlotte settled in No.11 London Road, where she lived frugally for the rest of her life. Devoting her inheritance to various churches in South Holland, she financed the restoration of the parish churches of Holbeach, Gedney Hill (seriously damaged when struck by lightning), Cowbit, Fleet and St.Mary and St.Nicolas Church in Spalding, whose vicar, the energetic Canon Edward Moore, had at some point become steward of her land and properties. She was a major contributor to the building of Canon Moore's second new Spalding church, St.Peter's in Priory Road (now demolished). Church schools, too, received generous donations, not to mention private charitable gifts to individuals in need.

She wanted in the end to leave all her remaining money to her sister's grandchildren, as she felt guilty about having inherited all of her father's money. However, Canon Moore persuaded her to finance the third new church he wanted to build, at Fulney. And

so, St.Paul's Church [pictured] was built and endowed, together with its vicarage and schoolroom, entirely at Charlotte's expense. (The London architect chosen by Canon Moore, the renowned Sir George Gilbert Scott, cannot have come cheap.) Her grandnephew Richard Guy Ash was installed as the vicar.

When Charlotte died in 1888, she left her estate, not to her sister's grandchildren, but to be shared between Mr.Algernon Peckover, a Wisbech banker, and ..... yes, the Revd. Canon Edward Moore.

The Ash family disputed the will. The local press speculated. "Should the dispute come within a public court, some very sensational evidence may be expected to be produced, and the legal struggle in which the principle figure of the Vicar of an important parish, advanced in years and rich in worldly goods, is likely to create no small stir not only in this locality but throughout the country." But the case was settled out of court and the Revd. Ash received some remuneration. Canon Moore died in 1889.

But whatever the moral conflicts for those involved – of love v. class, family v. religion, religious calling v. worldly prestige, and the use or misuse of a powerful position – we all remain in Miss Charinton's debt. South Holland, like most of Lincolnshire, is rich in mediaeval churches, and that the architectural glory of many local ones was preserved from neglect or misguided alteration owes much to the quiet munificence of Charlotte Charinton.

( Picture from a watercolour by Phil Biggs.)



**S**PALDING has been waiting for over a decade for the Bull & Monkie’s owners to come up with proposals for the site. Suddenly one appeared towards the end of the summer. The Heritage Statement accompanying the planning application states there have been “*pre-application discussions with interested third parties, including presentations to Council Members and the local Church group.*” It is unfortunate that these discussions did not include the Society, or indeed English Heritage, as that might have resulted in a more agreeable proposal being put forward for public consideration. Indeed, if they consulted the Church group, did they listen? Judging by the comments of the Rev. John Bennett, Vicar of Spalding, perhaps not. “*I think it may be too big. It would be helpful to have some drawings that show the proposal in the context of the buildings around it*” („Spalding Guardian“, 14 September 2023). We agree with that sentiment. Indeed, there is not a single drawing or computer image that shows the building in relation to the Church



Then there is the lack of parking provision. The 13 parking spaces are less than half the 30 spaces required by the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan for a development of this size. The applicant suggests that visitors should make use of pay-and-display parking around the town! This would simply add to the demand for parking and then require visitors to cross several busy roads. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan requires that “*Parking for residents, employees and visitors should be integral to the design and form of all new development*”, whilst the Care Quality Commission’s interpretation of Regulation 15 (1)(f) Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014) is that “*When planning the location of premises, providers must take into account the anticipated needs of the people who will use the service .*” “*Facilities should be appropriately located to suit the accommodation that is being used. This includes..... sufficient car parking that is ..... reasonably close, and good access to public transport.*”

The Church Gate elevation is intended to look like a “*large single Georgian detached house*” – except it doesn’t. There are many examples of actual Georgian buildings in the town that feature the three main elements of Georgian design: symmetry (Welland Terrace), marked eaves lines, whether ornamental (Wisteria Lodge) or projecting (The Sycamores) or a parapet (centre of Welland Terrace), and a pediment. Holland House displays all three. Even Merchant’s House (High Street), built in 1996, manages it correctly. The proposed care home’s final insult to Georgian architecture is the unnecessary vehicle arch, which, out of all proportion, looks more like a Victorian railway tunnel. Lastly, whilst the developer asserts that the design echoes the historic context of Holyrood House, it does nothing of the sort. Holyrood House (where the Social Services building now stands) was set further back from the road than even Ayscoughfee Hall. The proposed care home is directly on the roadside, and does not follow the building line of even the Bull & Monkie, which is set back from the road.

In the circumstances we have formally objected to the application. I have made this point before, and I make it again. The Local Government Association’s guide for planning authorities *Probity in Planning* (2019) encourages pre-application discussions involving the council and local councillors. It highlights that some local planning authorities have public planning forums to explore major pre-application proposals, with the developer outlining their ideas and inviting speakers to represent differing interests and consultees. The Bull & Monkie application is a major proposal for the town, as it is in a prominent location close to the Church and other listed buildings. If we had been consulted and heard at an earlier stage before the application was lodged, then the resulting outcome may have been more desirable than the self-important monster of a building presented for consideration now.

The Council is required by law to publish its own Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) on its website, and to review the Statement every five years. The only Statement for South Holland that exists is a joint one published with Boston Borough Council as part of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan consultation process in 2012. Since 2017 there has been a requirement to review SCI’s every five years. Within the Three Councils Partnership, East Lindsey District Council updated their SCI in 2020. Isn’t it about time that South Holland followed suit? **John Bland**



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## MARKET ► MARK-IT ► MAKE IT

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**T**HE PROJECT to bring sheep, cattle and pigs back to the town centre – albeit as high quality art works – is under way again. The commission was advertised a few weeks ago via professional outlets and social media. Seventeen artists responded, from Devon to North Yorkshire. Even one from France. The shortlist of seven was drawn up on 25 March.

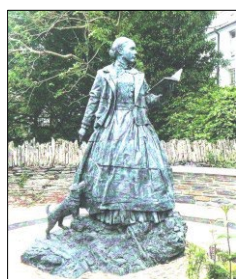
But it was not just photographs of their previously commissioned artworks elsewhere that had to be considered in making the selection. A condition of our grant from the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** was that the submissions should also provide evidence of the artists' ability to engage the community in the creation of the sculptures or murals, via people's recollections of the livestock auctions, for example, or hands-on workshops.

The shortlisted artists are given alphabetically below, and the next stage is for each to come up with a specific proposal for one or both of the sites – Longstaff's corner in New Road (cattle), The Sheepmarket (sheep) – along with computer images, drawings and maquettes.



### David Appleyard

- lives in Sheffield. Commissioned public art works there, and in Merthyr Tydfil, New Quay and elsewhere. Works in timber, metal, glass, stone, resin. Created a temporary sound sculpture for the Ice House at Norton Priory Museum and Gardens.



### Sebastien Boyesen

- lives in Lincolnshire, went to school in Peterborough, knows Spalding well. Public art works commissioned by Newport City Council, Neath Borough Council (Port Talbot), Doncaster City Council, and others. Stone, tiles, bronze, welded steel, resin, glass, high tech lighting. Particularly enjoys sculpting animals.



### Harley Budd

- lives in Barry, Vale of Glamorgan. Has worked extensively in film and TV props departments, seeking to diversify now into public art. Clay sculpting, wood carving, resin.



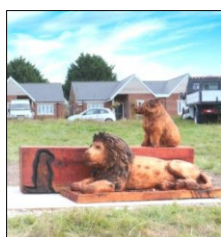
### Michael Disley

- lives in Holmfirth, West Yorkshire. Works in granite. Work commissioned for Leeds City Centre, Bangor District Council, Chelsea Flower Show. Shown in Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



### Graeme Mitcheson

- lives in Colporton, Leicestershire. Commissioned by Newcastle City Council, Wakefield City Council, Caernarfon Castle, English Heritage, Woodland Trust. Works in stone – limestone, sandstone, slate and granite, using local stone wherever possible. Created memorial tribute to Sir Bobby Robson, former England Football Manager.



### Rob Neith Nicholson

- lives in Newton Abbot, Devon. Royal commission for works at Glamis Castle, and commissions for Barrett Homes, English Heritage, National Trust. Works in oak.



### James Sutton

- lives at Kirton in Lindsey, Lincolnshire. Works commissioned by Transported Arts for North Kesteven; recently Isle of Man. Stainless steel, bronze, stone.

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# SAVE ENERGY

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THE SOCIETY has long called for traders in the town to use their windows for their intended purpose. To let people look in and see what they have for sale and their latest offers. Whilst we hope that eventually the Council will introduce a Shop Front Design Guide – including former shops now used for other purposes – the use of blanking-out vinyl continues unabated, throughout the town.

During these dark evenings it's apparent that some traders have realised that their vinyl coverings have a significant drawback. People cannot see that they are open. Why else are their doors left open in the evenings? This must surely be inflating their heating bills. There is a simple solution of course. Remove your vinyls, so that everyone can see that you are open. It's a win-win solution, as you'd cut the heating bills and still stay warm.

There is some legislation that the Planning Department might like to make far greater use of now. In order for advertisements to secure consent they must meet the deemed consent provisions set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, which requires that no single advertisement should exceed 1.55 square metres. This was the regulation that we quoted when we successfully objected to the retrospective planning application for the vinyls blanking out the windows of the former Great Northern Bar.

The Council could also implement a „special control order“ (Schedule 5 of the same regulations). Such an order could be implemented within any area. The benefit of a control order is that an advertisement may not exceed one-tenth of the overall area of the face of the building on which it is displayed, amongst other strict limits. Whereas drafting a Shop Front Design Guide would require considerable consultation, implementing a special control order would seem to be much more straight-forward.

The trouble is that there are loopholes in both of the above. For example, even if the vinyls were removed, there would be nothing to stop shop windows being blanked out by the rears of shelving or

refrigerators – just as a loophole was inserted into the vinyls policy the Society thought it had successfully steered into the Local Plan a few years ago.

(It's the mini-markets that are the main offenders, of course, five of them recently closed down for several months for selling illegal goods. We hope this spurs the Council into speedy action now, so we can all see what is going on in some of these shops.)

The opportunity to do something effective to rid the town centre of vinyl blight has arrived coincidentally with the recently published draft of the *Spalding Heritage Strategy* (p.5), which includes the preparation of a Shop Front Guide in its *Action Plan*.

Meanwhile, we feel that credit should be given to the Bulgarian-owned Dejema Shop on New Road. They provide proof that you can have a mini-market with a shop window that you can look into. Thank you.



**Chairman:** John Bland, 36 Park Avenue, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 1QX.

**Secretary:** Marian Boxall, 78a Edinburgh Drive, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2RT.

**Treasurer:** Melvyn Price, 3 Morus Close, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2QL.

**Newsletter:** John Charlesworth, 37 Regent Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2YN.

**Registered Charity Number** 259956

01775 762105

01775 725293

01775 722908

01775 768303

**Website** [www.spaldingcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.spaldingcivicsociety.org.uk)

