

Dear Member

I hope you had a lovely Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year.
Please find inside our new programme from January to July 2026, which I'm sure you will agree is varied and interesting.

The programme starts **Thursday 22nd January** with a lunchtime meal at **The Black Star pub (12.30 for 1.00)**. The menu is varied, from standard pub classics to sandwiches and light bites. If you are reading this online, you click on the link below for the menu.



We have to order in advance but will pay on the day.
If you have not already put your name down to attend, but would like to join us, please email me with your meal order: Stourport.Civic.Soc@gmail.com or by phoning me 01299 878718 by Thursday 15th January.

David More

[Click for menu](#)



In our **February meeting**, we will hear all about our local deer. In the Wyre Forest we have Fallow, Roe and Muntjacs. We will discover how to differentiate the stags and bucks, hinds and does, and fawns and calves. Not to mention the rutting season.



Our **March meeting** will be about Bewdley, with Richard Perrin, Chairman of Bewdley Civic Society.

As a follow up our **May meeting** is a guided walk of Bewdley. Meet at Bewdley Town Hall, outside the entrance to the museum at 6pm for a stroll around Bewdley, led by Richard. The walk will end at The Mug House on Severnside North, where refreshments will be available.

We plan to Car Share to Bewdley for this visit.

Talks Spring / Summer 2026



22nd January 2026	Civic Society Lunch in The Black Star
12th February 2026	Deer of the Wyre Forest and Beyond <i>Nigel Woodall</i>
12th March 2026	A River Runs Through Me <i>Richard Perrin</i> (Chairman Bewdley Civic Society)
9th April 2026	Stourport – A fair Trade Town <i>Elaine Barbour</i>
14th May 2026	Guided Walk Around Bewdley (6pm from museum, Load Street)
11th June 2026	The Social Aspect of the Industrial Revolution in the Black Country <i>John Homer</i> (Followed by AGM)
9th July 2026	Summer Social
August 2026	Visit / Outing

**7.30 pm Thursdays, at the Elizabeth Mills Centre,
New Street, Stourport**

£2.50 members, £4 non-member (including light refreshments)
All welcome

Stourport Civic Society Registered Charity 1092842

Email Stourport.Civic.Soc@gmail.com

Town Planning and the Civic Society

by Philip Trow - Trustee



One of the principal objectives of the Stourport Civic Society is “The promotion of high standards of architecture and town planning within Stourport-on-Severn”. In pursuit of the objective, all planning applications in the town are vetted and, where necessary or appropriate, comments are made on them to the Planning Authority. We may lodge formal objections where we feel that the proposals are inappropriate or could be detrimental to the town. We also make comments to encourage an improved application, for example to improve a poor design, and we also support those proposals which we feel are a benefit to the town.



In recent months, the Civic Society has lodged objections on several applications, including new housing off Pearl Lane, development of the former County Buildings and changes to a window in High Street. We have also given our support to the replacement of windows to Mercian House in York Street; a Padel Court proposal in Cheapside and change of use of redundant shop premises in Bridge Street to residential.

We are fortunate that much of the town is protected by Conservation Area designations and we also have many listed buildings, which means that property owners are legally obliged to maintain their buildings to a certain standard and cannot make external changes without seeking permission. We have notified the Planning Enforcement Officers of several buildings we feel need some attention. Once buildings begin to deteriorate, they become more expensive to restore, and their condition can have a negative impact upon the area and affect businesses. We want to see our town centre well maintained and thriving, so we will continue to monitor where action is needed.

Wyre Forest District Council has now begun the process of reviewing the Local Plan in order to provide the extra housing required by the Government. Accordingly, a “Call for sites” has been announced which invites landowners to submit their sites for housing, employment, leisure or other uses and be included in the next Local Plan. We will be vetting the suggested sites when they are published for public consultation.



All towns continue to develop and change and Stourport is seeing quite a few changes. The Civic Society is certainly not against development but seeks to ensure that all planning decisions are of benefit to the town. We warmly support those that result in improvements or present new opportunities, but we will continue to fight against those which would cause harm to the town. **It's a battle that never ends!**

Mike O'Shaughnessy RIP

by David More

In August we lost our oldest and longest serving member of the society—Mike O'Shaughnessy.

He was a member as far back as the Millennium, where, his previous career as a BBC sound engineer, enabled him to advise on the purchase of sound equipment, and its subsequent use at society meetings for many years. He was trustee for many years and helped oversee the continuation of the society during the Covid crisis.

He distributed posters, advertising our meetings around the town for many years, including updating our noticeboard in York Steet. He even put his hand to repairs of the said board assisting Jim Amos and myself at times!

Most recently he wrote the very informative reports of our meetings which appeared in the Kidderminster Shuttle newspaper which were then placed on our Facebook pages.

At meetings, even in his nineties, he would assist with putting out chairs and resetting the room at the end of meetings as well as doing the washing up.

He was a lovely cheerful and friendly man and will be sorely missed by the society and everyone who knew him.



The Stourport Vision / Bridge Street scheme

by Phil Trow

Following our attempts to get a developer involved in the Bridge Street site, which unfortunately we did not achieve within the limited time frame we had, **we have not given up hope of getting a suitable scheme in place.**

So, we were heartened to hear that Wyre Forest District Council still have redevelopment intentions for the site. There is, however, little detail of what is proposed and there is no budget, but at least the matter remains live.

The Stourport Vision / Bridge Street scheme *continued*



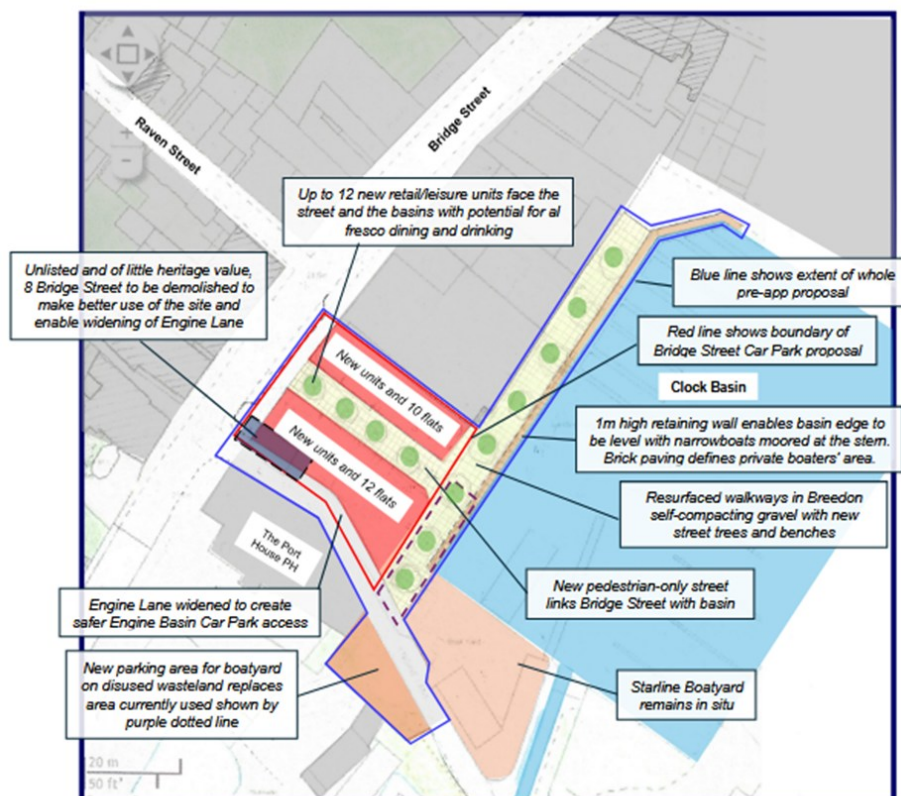
Wyre Forest DC's Cabinet recently endorsed the draft "Stourport Vision" which has been developed by Stourport Town Council in conjunction with WFDC and Worcestershire County Council. It involved a consultation exercise which resulted in 1,200 people making a total of 12,000 comments. The vision mentions Bridge Street redevelopment as a key part of the vision. It also includes the following aspirations:

- *New toilets in the town
- *Easing traffic congestion
- *Making more of the historic legacy
- *Make more of what Stourport has to offer
- *Protect green spaces
- *Improving the retail offer in the town
- *Improving the night-time economy
- *Make public spaces more welcoming

This is still in a draft form so at an early stage, but there is no action plan or delivery plan and no mention of any finance to support it. It is proposed that a Vision Delivery Group be established to implement the Vision, which would comprise the three councils and community groups. We hope that the Civic Society will be included in this. With Local Government Reorganisation only 2 years away, two of the councils will not continue to exist in their present form and so much will fall to Stourport Town Council and the community groups to ensure continuity. We will follow closely how the Stourport Vision is progressed.



Proposed Bridge Street / Clock Basin Link Block Plan



An outline of our extensive plans, with the development linking Bridge Street to the Canal Basins in Stourport.