Beacon Park receives the Royal seal of approval

Another twelve months have passed and Beacon Park goes from strength to strength. On Wednesday 24th April 2013 it received a royal visitor, The Princess Royal, who gave it her approval whilst rededicating the statue of Edward V11, her great-great grandfather.

The park is looking stunning at the moment with all the flower beds planted up giving a lovely splash of colour, the borders and entrances have been given a makeover as well as the new railings and yew hedge which allow visitors a better view of what lies within.

Children and parents have returned to enjoy all the new, exciting equipment in the play areas. It is also good to see Chandlers Bistro and Cafe doing well, offering a good variety of fare and providing meeting places for family and friends.

The park is now proving to be a wonderful tourist attraction as well as a brilliant leisure facility for the local residents.

BSARA recognises the importance of Beacon Park to the people of Lichfield and has been successful with the Park Friends in persuading Lichfield District Council to list it as a Community Asset. This means the public must be consulted before any alteration to the parks use or ownership is considered.

The Lichfield Bower will be held this Year on Bank Holiday Monday May 27th using Beacon Park as its main Arena – a wonderful setting for this historic annual event.

Let’s hope this summer, the weather matches up to our fantastic community asset, Beacon Park. This is a facility for all of us to use and enjoy over the coming months.
Will the Inspector like the District’s new Local Plan?

Lichfield District Council has submitted the Local Plan for public examination. A planning inspector Robert Yuille has been appointed to determine its “soundness” and whether the Council has complied with its legal responsibilities. Hearings are provisionally set for the last week of June and the first two weeks of July.

BSARA is sceptical about the level of development which the Plan suggests is needed. We believe that recent census data indicates that the council has over-estimated the number of new homes required and under-estimated the increase in the number of cars and the consequent need for updated roads and parking spaces.

Recently the Coventry and the Tamworth Local plans have both collapsed because local housing needs had not been properly assessed and the neighbouring Local Authorities had not co-operated effectively while plans were being prepared. The Tamworth Inspector criticised the Anker Valley development which includes 1,000 homes on the Lichfield side of the boundary.

BSARA is a member of The Lichfield Alliance and will be giving evidence at the forthcoming Public Inquiry. Lichfield Alliance members have criticised some of the proposed policies (including the evidence claimed as justification) and have proposed modifications to the Plan concerning the number, location and type of homes as well as the associated infrastructure. The Council appears to have ignored these suggestions and has yet to make any significant alterations to the plan. This lack of response is surprising especially since the Tamworth Inspector highlighted precisely these issues.

Developers are proposing even more housing in addition to the sites listed in the plan. These include 10,000 homes in the Sutton Coldfield green belt and for 5,000 homes at Brookhay near Fradley; with speculative proposals of this magnitude being mooted, it is vital that Lichfield District Council has a robust Local Development Plan in place.

31 New Homes proposed near Beacon Street

A developer proposes building six 3 bedroom homes and six 2 bedroom apartments on the site of the Windmill pub in Grange Lane. A previous application for a care home has been withdrawn. The current application (Ref: 12/01057/FULM) is under consideration.

While BSARA is in favour of residential development on the Windmill pub site, it has reservations about the impact of additional traffic on Morrison’s island, especially if the Post Office is relocated to the Swallow Croft Shopping Parade. Details of the Post Offices plans are on page 4.

The District Council has also earmarked the derelict Angel Croft Hotel as a suitable location for 19 dwellings. The site is included in the District’s 5-year housing land supply calculation. This means that the Council considers it to be “deliverable” i.e. planning consent is likely to be granted.

These and other proposals underline the importance of an up-to-date Local Plan that includes appropriate local planning policies. The Council’s Planning Committee will find itself in a weak position if the Plan is overtaken by events and developers can show that there is an inadequate supply of land for new housing.
Beacon Street Attractions
Darwin House
Erasmus Darwin House is a grade 1 listed building, charity and museum open to the public. It is run by the Erasmus Darwin Foundation and aims to raise awareness of the life and achievements of the 18th century “Grandfather of evolution”

![Figure 6 Darwin House Beacon Street](image)

Erasmus Darwin was predominately a physician, moving to Lichfield in 1756 where he became successful making friendships with men of science and business in Birmingham. These gentlemen formed the ‘Lunar Society’ A group willing to take chances and initiate change, meeting on the Sunday closest to the full moon and travelling home by the light of the moon.

![Figure 7 The Study Darwin House](image)

Erasmus Darwin was a passionate poet, inventor, botanist and evolutionist who sowed the seed of evolutionary theory for his grandson Charles to continue & develop. As well as being a museum, the House / Foundation run regular special events throughout the year.

There will be a flower festival – ‘A Temple of Nature’ from 22nd to 25th June with a tea room selling refreshments including homemade cakes. Everyone is welcome.

For other activities see the website: - www.erasmusdarwin.org/events

Outer Friary Development

Following requests from members, BSARA asked Lichfield District Council for an explanation why “Due to unforeseen circumstances” Staffs County Council have had to extend the pavement closure order on the Outer Friary development for a further eight and a half months until 11th December 2013.

The reasons given are now posted on the: - Friary Outer development blog.

“Once the car park is open, we’ll reopen the footpath on The Friary.

That said, the footway closure order has been extended to allow the new Premier Inn hotel to be built.

The hotel will be built on the Swan Road end of the site, next to the Greyfriars House apartments, which will be completed later this summer.

This will mean that the footpath on Swan Road that is currently closed will remain closed whilst the work on the hotel is underway.

The development of the site was planned in phases, with the hotel development being the last phase, which is why the works are starting later than the initial build.

Work on the new hotel is due to start soon.”

BSARA is disappointed that yet another major development in Lichfield has been delayed causing extended disruption for residents and visitors to the city centre.

Staffordshire County Council Election Result

The elected Members for Beacon Street Area are:

Lich City North: Caroline Wood (LAB) majority 41
Lich City South: Terry Finn (CON) majority 735
Why Speedwatch?
Speedwatch has again been active, monitoring the speed of traffic in Beacon Street, with the support of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership. We all want safer roads and BSARA’s contribution is to raise driver awareness to the 30 mph speed limit on our street. There is no doubt that Beacon Street is busier than ever due to traffic using it to avoid the A51 by-pass which is being resurfaced. A recent traffic count recorded on a Saturday morning between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. 434 vehicles traveling into the city!

SSRP have organised training for volunteer members to help us maintain a watchful presence on the street more frequently.

Our aim is to change driver attitudes and behaviour, not to catch people speeding. During recent checks speeds in excess of 40 mph have been observed even with the high visibility of the volunteers, warning signs in both directions and twitter publicity. This should never happen.

Did you know?
If a pedestrian is hit by a vehicle:

At 20 mph there is a 1 in 40 chance of being killed.
At 40 mph there is about a 9 in 10 chance of being killed.

Please drive carefully SPEED KILLS

Obituary Peter Rear
It is with great sadness that we have to report the passing away in February this year of Peter Rear after a long illness. The funeral at Sutton Coldfield Crematorium was a very moving service and attended by family, friends and associates including residents of the Beacon Street area. Founder member Peter was Chairman of BSARA for ten years and devoted a tremendous amount of his time and effort working to improve the quality of life for all of us who live in the area. We owe Peter a lot of gratitude for steering BSARA to be one of the leading Residential Associations in the Lichfield District and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Proposed Post Office Move
The consultation regarding the relocation of the Post Office in Beacon Street to the Swallow Croft Shopping Parade closed on 18th April 2013. BSARA received only two comments regarding the move:

1. Could the Postbox be retained in the same location on Beacon Street?
2. Is there a bus stop close to the proposed new Post Office?

Reply from Post Office Counters - They confirm that there are currently no plans to relocate it as there is a small post box located outside the proposed location, however, the provision or relocation of a post box is a decision for Royal Mail which would depend on a number of factors such as the potential need for a planning application. They also confirm that there are a number of bus stops in the vicinity of the proposed new location on Wheel Lane.

BSARA Membership
If you wish to join BSARA please complete your details below and return with a £3 annual subscription per household to 50 Beacon Street.

Name:

Email address:

Address:

Post Code:

Telephone Number:  

Please drive carefully SPEED KILLS
Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks
Beacon Park • Minster Pool & Walk • the Garden of Remembrance • Stowe Pool & Fields

Become a friend
The Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks are always looking for new members. So, if you are interested in helping to make Lichfield’s historic parks even better, please come along to our meetings and become a friend of the parks.

www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/historicparks
For more information, email parks@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks

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The Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks are a group of local residents who believe that Lichfield Historic Parks are wonderful green assets in the centre of Lichfield.

The group meets regularly with officers from Lichfield District Council to discuss the maintenance and development of the historic parks and to hear about upcoming events, at many of which group members can offer practical assistance.

If you would like to become a Friend of Lichfield Historic Parks, you will be made very welcome.

Our meetings take place in the evening at the Lichfield District Council’s Frog Lane offices.

Find out more by emailing parks@lichfielddc.gov.uk

For dates of upcoming meetings, visit www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/historicparks