



**annual  
review  
2022-2023**

# CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

The Trust was founded in 1942. On 8 April 2021 it became a “Charitable Incorporated Organisation”, remaining registered as charity No. 502132.

## **Founder:**

The Very Revd Cyril A Alington,  
DD Dean of Durham 1933-51

## **Patrons:**

Roberta Blackman-Woods PhD  
Bill Bryson, OBE, HonFRS  
The Very Revd Michael Sadgrove, MA

## ***Governing Body of Trustees:***

J Ashby, B.Sc., MPhil, MRTPI  
T J A Clark, BA, DPhil  
S Childs, B.Sc., M.Sc. (Vice-Chair)  
R Cornwell, BSc  
A G Green, BA, MA, PhD  
R D Hird, MA, MRTPI, LTCL  
CJ Hugill LL.B., Solicitor (Non Practising)

M Hurlow, CMLI, IHBC  
J J Lowe, MA(Ed) (Chair)  
M Phillips, MA, MCLIP  
F W Pritchard, LL.B., Dip. Lib.  
(Hon Treasurer and Secretary)

## ***Honorary Treasurer***

F Pritchard  
c/o Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Durham, DH1 1TH

## ***Honorary Secretary***

F Pritchard  
c/o Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Durham, DH1 1TH

## ***Honorary Solicitors***

Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Durham, DH1 1TH

## ***Bankers:***

Co-operative Bank plc  
21 High Street  
Durham, DH1 3PL

## ***Examiners***

Azets, Bede House,  
Belmont Business Park,  
Durham, DH1 1TW

## ***Registered Office of the Trust***

Blackett, Hart and Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Durham, DH1 1TH

# EIGHTY-FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW BY THE TRUSTEES

## 2022 - 2023

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

The Trust's 81st Annual General Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 31 October, 7-9 pm in Elvet Riverside ER140, New Elvet**. It is planned to make the meeting available via Zoom. To request a link please email [zoom@durhamcity.org](mailto:zoom@durhamcity.org). The detailed agenda can be found towards the end of this Review.

Our speaker at the AGM this year will be **Professor Karen O'Brien, Vice-Chancellor of Durham University**, who will speak at **8. pm** about the relationship between the City and the University. Her talk is entitled **"The Built Life of a University in its City: Durham University Now and in the Future"**.



### FREEMEN'S BEACON

The image shows a small but significant addition to the City's skyline over the past year. The beacon is located on the hill to the south east of the former DLI museum. The nineteen-feet tall structure was commissioned and funded by Durham City's Freeman and was built to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen. It was test fired in March 2023, in time to be ready for the new King's Coronation in May. The designer was Brian Russell, one of the country's top artistic blacksmiths, with a 200-year-old forge in Teesdale.

The hill on which the beacon is located is to be known as "Beacon Hill", formerly "Jubilee Hill". The site is not unproblematic, being currently overwhelmed with ecologically suffocating Himalayan Balsam. The County Council was reported to be looking into this, but it is already too late for 2023 and the large infestation there must spread. If visiting the beacon please be careful that balsam seed is not accidentally carried off on shoes or on dog fur.

### SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PLANNING SYSTEM

(John Lowe, Chair of the Trust)

Throughout its history the Trust's main focus has remained on the protection and enhancement of the City's built and natural heritage. In practice this means we take an active part in all aspects of the planning process.

Trustees and other members contributed extensive responses to the consultations about the County Durham Plan and participated throughout the Examinations in Public for both versions of the Plan (2015 and 2020). Particular areas of concern were housing numbers, student accommodation, Green Belt releases and the proposed relief roads.

Several Trustees and other members were also members of the working group that developed the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan and we continue to work with the Parish Council to ensure its implementation.

We work particularly closely with its Planning and Licensing Committee.

Now the County and Neighbourhood Plans are in place and being used to determine planning applications, our work concentrates on scrutinising and responding to individual planning applications. We study the list each week and respond as appropriate. Sometimes we prepare lengthy submissions about major schemes such as those at Sniperley Park, while others are more modest and occasionally just brief comments or letters of support. For example, in 2022 we scrutinised 304 applications, submitted 95 letters of objection, 14 letters of support and 15 comments.

We also respond fully to the wide range of national and County Council consultations. Most recently we have responded to four Supplementary Planning Documents prepared by the Council. We strongly support the County Council's initiative in producing this range of documents to assist with the interpretation and application of particular County Durham Plan policies. Trustees also welcomed the commitment of Council Officers to involve the Trust closely in continuing work towards a "Conservation Area Management Plan", for preservation and enhancement of the City's conservation area. Emerging details of what is proposed can be found in the minutes of the Durham City Parish Council meeting for Friday 1 September, <https://bit.ly/3LGfVBf>.

In the course of our involvement with the planning process we have identified a number of concerns and we recently had a positive meeting with Michael Kelleher, the newly appointed Head of Housing and Planning, and two of his senior colleagues to discuss them. These included the inadequate enforcement of planning conditions; the lack of time for objectors to make their case to the Committee, to respond to points made during the discussion and to challenge inaccurate facts; the lack of time allowed to study and respond to large applications such as Sniperley Park; the opaque nature of changes when applicants submit amended plans without explanation; and insufficient weight being given to sustainable transport issues, both in the internal consultee responses and in the summing up by officers.

A major concern is the unbalanced composition of the East and Central Planning Committee, especially when dealing with Durham City applications. This is exacerbated by the fact that members of a planning committee no longer normally make a site visit in relation to a planning application, relying on media such as in-house landscaping software or Google Street View. The crucial place of close local knowledge in such decisions is being lost. It was noteworthy that, with the controversial approval of STACK on the former M & S site in Silver Street, three local Councillors voted against but eight Councillors from further afield voted in favour, so it was carried.

This is, of course, a lengthy list of concerns and we hope to continue to work with officers and members of the County Council to improve the planning system and its procedures. Their initial responses indicated an understanding of our concerns, but no concrete solutions were offered. A continuing anxiety among trustees is that the County Council has a very poor record of defending the Green Belt around Durham City. There have been 11 planning applications for major development in the Green Belt around Durham City since the creation of the Unitary Authority in 2009 and the County Council has approved eight of these. By the time this article is published two more in the vicinity of Crook Hall may well have been decided and we must hope the planning committee also writes a new chapter in protecting our precious Green Belt.

## ARCHITECTURAL AWARD FOR 2022

Since 1990 The City of Durham Trust has given an annual architectural award to a new outstanding building or renovation in the Durham area (see <https://durhamcity.org/awards/past-awards/>). At the end of each calendar year Trustees will normally nominate possible candidates from the previous 12 months, and site visits are then arranged. Key factors being considered include: overall architectural challenge, adaptation to site, unity of design, interplay of form and function, and the use and quality of materials and detailing. Last but not least is 'durhamness', Douglas Pocock's useful coinage for the suitability of the development to Durham in particular, historically, culturally and aesthetically.

The Architectural Award for 2022 has been given to a development at 173 Gilesgate, near the bottom of Gilesgate Bank within the City's conservation area. It has already been recognised by receipt of the 2023 Royal Institute of British Architects North East Award, with its lead architect, Dave Hunt of *Building Design Northern*, being named RIBA North East Project Architect of the Year.





173 Gilesgate is an originally Georgian house (built c. 1760) and Grade II listed. The Trust's award is in recognition of the quality of the extensions built sensitively into the garden along the line of the historic burgage plot. The new build replaces late twentieth century extensions in bad condition.

The owners, Ms Debbie Hills and Mr John Carter, are a couple retiring to Durham who have made a large investment in restoring the main building and replacing the slightly dilapidated extensions. They have had especial regard to the design demands of catering for the possible infirmities of old age. The original planning application of 2019 was supported by the Trust. The City of Durham Parish Council praised the way the proposals harmonised with the policy of the City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan on *Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities*.

The main extension is a day room, clad in weathered zinc, simple and rather minimalist in design, all on a level for ease of access. It forms an open plan with ample light, built in high quality contemporary materials. The design eschews the temptation of offering some sort of historical pastiche, while the grey of the roofs helps to merge the buildings locally with the predominantly slate roofs of older buildings. The development exploits well the virtues of its site, with both the day room and the detached new workshop being partially shaded by two attractive mature trees, even as the garden is open to an extraordinary view westward down the bank towards Durham's historic peninsula.

The large trees had to be negotiated in construction without affecting their rootzones. Energy usage is minimised by use of an air source heat pump coupled to underfloor heating and heat recovery from a ventilation system.

If there is any blemish in the achievement of 173 Gilesgate it would relate to the view from the street where there is a rather clumsy restoration of





an area of wall to the right. The appearance of the metal cladding of the roof and back of the day room as seen from the public pavement may unfairly suggest to some passers-by something rather like a big shed.

173 Gilesgate is a private building, not accessible by the public. Trustees took the view that the Trust's architectural awards should simply encourage the best designs throughout the City, regardless of ownership. Images used here are courtesy of Michael Hurlow.



## “SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSIONS”

The County Durham Plan was adopted in 2020, after some 10 years of study, deliberation and close debate. It included a Policy 5 for two so-called “sustainable urban extensions” to Durham City, built on land previously in the Green Belt. Together these form the largest extension to Durham City since the Newton Hall estate was built some 40 years ago. The Plan stipulated two sizeable new housing estates, with 1,700 new houses to be built at **Sniperley Park**, and another 420 at **Bent House Lane** off Sherburn Road. Accepting now that these schemes would go ahead, Trustees then committed themselves to the opportunity to make the term “sustainable” actually mean something.

### *Bent House Lane*

The development at Bent House Lane site, to the East of Regents Court, is now proceeding quickly. Gallingly, it now exemplifies just how meaningless the term “sustainable” can become.

A summary of this development is called for, tracing events since the County Plan came into force in the autumn of 2020. First, in 2021 there emerged an opportunistic outline application from Banks to build an estate of “up to 500” houses (not the Plan’s 420) on the whole site off Bent House Lane. This was approved by the requisite Council Planning Committee in October 2021, despite the absence of a comprehensive masterplan, or adequate regard for questions of affordable housing, carbon neutrality in design, or provision for sustainable transport— a scheme patently at odds with the County Plan. Having secured this outline permission Banks then made a deal to pass on the project to Miller Homes and Barratt Homes. These, presumably now under more pressure to make a good profit after the deal with Banks, jointly submitted in July 2022 detailed planning applications for 470 houses on most—not quite all—of the site. The scheme represented a downgrading of Bank’s already inadequate outline plan, offering only the kind of bog-standard, “anywheresville”, car-dependent housing estate which the County Plan policies on “sustainable urban extensions” were meant to be striving to transcend.

The Trust and other local bodies put in strong objections to these plans. However, in the Spring of 2023 the Council Officer’s report to the relevant planning committee was recommending acceptance. Trustees thought such a recommendation flawed to the point of being open to accusations of incompetence. A press release from Trustees was drafted at the end of May, expressing dismay that councillors were being advised to approve so substandard a scheme. Sadly, the press release was not accepted for publication. Any expression of dismay was soon too late, for finally, on June 6, the application from Miller and Barratt received planning permission. All any objector could do now would be to exploit the little wriggle room left by the various conditions attached to the permission. Discussion continued on how to confront the fact that the Planning Committee has approved houses that do not meet the Nationally Described Space Standard. However, building has already started and is being advertised as completed in the Spring.

The new estate is being built on former green-belt land rising toward the Sherburn Road area and will be visible from the World Heritage Site, especially given the necessary terracing of the new housing to



accommodate the significant gradient. This point was part of the Trust's original objection to this scheme in the draft County Plan, and it had been earlier a crucial determinant of where the green belt boundaries lay.

To sum up, the developers would not budge from building more houses than were approved in the County Plan and the Council Planning committee decided not to challenge this. It all means that what might have been a spacious, pleasant communal space at the gateway to Durham City will become just another rather cramped unappetizing new housing estate. The paths proposed are not wide enough for the

multiple use required by CDP Policy 5, and their layout seems set to marginalise their visibility to possible users. Policy 5 requires that the setting of Bent House Farm be protected but, again, this is now compromised by the sheer number of dwellings being forced in.

After approval on June 6 *The Northern Echo* quoted the managing director of Miller Homes using the inevitable s— word: “We’re really excited about the opportunity to create a sustainable community”. To introduce the name “Bishops Walk” for the development seems to forget that “Bishop’s Walk” already names part of the largely intact Renaissance Scholar’s Garden created by Bishop Cosin around the Castle in the 1660s.

### *Sniperley Park*

Things are less advanced and still more hopeful for this even larger “sustainable urban extension”, to be built on former green-belt land on the western edge of the city. A final draft of the County Council’s own masterplan was approved on 22 June 2022, for “up to 1,700 houses” over 28 hectares, as given in the County Durham Plan. Its stated ambition is that Sniperley Park “be an extraordinary development that responds to this special location and character. It will be an exemplar of design excellence and strive to be a carbon neutral development through its use of renewable energy, excellent sustainable transport connections and the high standard of its housing”. The masterplan can be found on the DCC website at <https://bit.ly/3zJ2r1X>. The Trust was largely supportive of the masterplan, with some reservations about sustainable transport measures and the likely impact of this vast development on the rest of Durham, in the form of even more cars.

The same County Plan that approved the Sniperley and Bent House Lane estates as “sustainable urban extensions” also deleted proposals for a Western and a Northern Relief Road for the City. One crude but commonsense test for using the word “sustainable” for any new housing estate at Sniperley must then surely be that its design ensures the safety of the countryside around Durham from revived proposals for destructive relief roads.

As to the history of the site, planning pressure from two developers continued through 2021 into 2022, Bellway Homes Ltd putting in a scheme for 370 dwellings, and 1,550 from County Durham Land LLP (a total of 1,920, well over the 1,700 in the County Plan). Both, as the Trust argued, were at odds with the County Plan and the aspirations of the Council’s masterplan. As time passed and a very critical advisory assessment of the schemes emerged from the Principal Planning Officer for the case, both Bellway and County Durham Land LLP decided to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the Council’s non-determination of their applications. They later withdrew their appeals in the autumn of 2022, but stating they would soon be back.

The Trust responded in February to resubmissions sent in by Bellway and County Durham Land LLP, as described in the Spring Bulletin. Trustees also responded in June to some “further information” submitted by Bellway and had to confront an avalanche of new documents from both developers that appeared on the Council planning portal in August.

It is clear that both schemes are striving to be more defensible, or at least better presented, but the Trust’s basic objection remains to be reaffirmed: the County Plan, after extensive study, stipulated that *“Development will comprise 1,700 houses at Sniperley Park”* with attendant facilities, but the developers are still demanding 13% more, at 1,918 houses. The proposals still project yet another rather cramped housing-estate, undistinctive in design, unrelated to Durham in appearance, and with layouts that do too little to discourage car use. Street planting is largely planned for front gardens, which in all likelihood will mutate in time into the usual ugly series of mini-car parks. The Trust will continue to urge refusal of such schemes for Sniperley, and support all viable options for a district heating scheme, until the aspirations for the site in the County Plan are judged to be met.

Members who heard the talk for the Trust on 2 April 2022 by Professor John Gluyas of the University’s Energy Institute may remember his support for a district heating scheme at Sniperley using geothermal energy from old underlying mines. The talk is on the Trust’s You Tube channel: <https://bit.ly/3s3EgHO> .

The Trust’s responses to the various applications related to the two urban extensions can be seen on our website at <https://durhamcity.org/our-work/planning/> .

## EXTENDING THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE BOUNDARY: A PROGRESS REPORT



Members may remember the report in the Annual Review for 2020-2021 on the failure of the bid to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to extend the area of Durham’s World Heritage Site. The proposed extended boundary would include all the castle walls and their terraces, the gorge forming the Peninsula “moat”, and the historic bridges and mill sites/buildings. It would recognise the significance of the riverbanks, former gardens, and tree setting.

The UNESCO meeting of July 2021 endorsed the extension in principle but referred it back to the UK for more work. Incidentally, this was also the meeting that decided to delist Liverpool’s historic centre and docklands.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) provides UNESCO with reviews of sites and the setback for Durham reflected its more general growing concern with the need to defend and enhance the broader settings of World Heritage Sites, and the desirability of buffer zones of enhanced protection around them. The Trust’s view is that recent developments in Durham City, such as the new building on the former Sands carpark and the multi-storey carpark nearby, clearly represent a trend in the opposite direction.



What to do? In response to the UNESCO decision the Coordinating Committee for Durham's World Heritage Site is commissioning a "Setting Study", to feed into its response to UNESCO's concerns in 2021. The WHS committee's progress report this summer highlights progress since 2021 on measures aimed at protecting the setting of the WHS.

To list the report's more prominent measures, the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan is now a statutory development plan covering the area of the Durham City Parish Council, and includes specific detailed policies on protecting the historic centre and green spaces. Dunelm House now has Grade II listed status as a protected building and a controversial proposal for a large business school on the site of the old swimming baths at Elvet Waterside has been withdrawn. A new management plan for the Durham City conservation area is being drawn up. The WHS Management Plan Progress Report 2021-2023 can be found online at <https://bit.ly/3rynF1c>.

The question of the setting of the WHS highlights in Durham what has long seemed to Trustees a procedural weakness inherent in the case-by-case nature of individual planning applications and their consideration, that it can be insensitive to the *cumulative* impact of new developments. Many a scheme approved by a Council planning committee will have been found in the report to have unwelcome elements but to be still "acceptable on balance", or, abstracted from contextual issues, as having to be "considered on its own merits". The resulting erosions and elisions accumulate in the built environment all around us, with, for example, the combined effect on the city skyline day and night from the north of the raised parking facilities near the railway station, the new indoor carpark near the Sands, and the very tall "Student Castle" PBSA at the bottom of Claypath.

Against this, a recent example and statement of good practice is a Council officer's "Design and Conservation" report arguing against the siting of a 15-metre-high monopole near the corner of Church Street and Stockton Road (a case on appeal at time of writing). The report, by **Lee Hall**, is even worth quoting as forming a celebration of views in the City:

The WHS Management Plan references the importance of views as part of the setting of the WHS. Views are kinetic, providing changing experiences of the WHS from wide open vistas, skyline views, to glimpses between buildings, clear views framed by streets, incidental views over roof-tops, emerging views, and partial views where the WHS features in the backdrop of buildings etc, from both street level, river level, and higher vantage points, i.e. [and] the fact that the WHS disappears from view then reappears provides visual unfolding of the WHS offering a dynamic visual experience to the viewer that must be protected.

## UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

Durham University is an invaluable cultural asset for the City. However, over the past decade Durham City has seen the loss of prime city-centre sites to large blocks of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSAs) and the ongoing conversion of innumerable residential houses to shared student "houses in multiple occupation" (HMOs). It is a depressing fact that many remaining long-term residents in central Durham have become increasingly hostile to the University, having lived through the remorseless loss of whole residential districts and of vital centres of communal life, recent examples being a bingo hall and a care home. The centre of the City has become effectively an extension of a university campus, with distorting side-effects such as the loss of important retail facilities to numerous food and drink outlets.

## HMOs

Two issues related to the future of HMOs in Durham have become apparent over the past year. The first is that more and more planning applications for conversion of a house to HMO status now relate to more outlying areas, such as Belmont, outer Gillesgate, Carrville and North End. This must reflect the degree to which inner areas of the City are already saturated and are now protected by the belated Council requirement that no new HMOs be approved if more than 10% of houses within 100 metres are already student lets.

Secondly, members concerned by the impact of student housing on Durham might well wish to follow the continuing national debate on energy efficiency and insulation. All rented properties across England and Wales must currently have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) relating to heating efficiency, insulation, glazing etc., graded A to G, the current minimum being E. Among the “net zero” policies dropped by national government in September was the requirement that, by the end of 2028, every private rented sector property must upgrade to a minimum energy rating of C. Roger Cornwell had advised fellow Trustees: “Most of the HMOs in the City fall short. You can look up the EPC rating of any property via this link <https://bit.ly/3EeLhL6>”. Roger made a rough estimate that, with over 2,600 student lets in Durham City, some 1,800 houses would require thousands of pounds of upgrading to meet this requirement. It would dent the attractiveness of being a student landlord at all, with multiple consequences.

Although the policy at issue has been now been dropped, the issue of energy efficiency in rented properties seems unlikely to go away, with huge implications for student housing in Durham and elsewhere.

**Student Panic about accommodation.** Members may remember frantic reports in the local press and TV in the autumn of 2022 about students panicking about securing accommodation for 2023-24, with queues forming from early morning outside estate agents. Headlines on this appeared in the *Northern Echo* and the student paper *Palatinate* reported on October 14, “Freshers greeted by chaos”.

*“Students have felt ‘forced’ to queue outside of housing agencies overnight to secure housing for the next academic year as chaos continues to surround housing”*

*Palatinate, October 28, 2022*

The panic of October 2022 was needless and seemingly induced. The Durham City Parish Council put out a statement at the end of October, pointing out that there was in fact no shortage of private rented HMOs in the area, but that the panic arose from the misrepresentation of market information from “StuRents”, a national company that provides a paid-for service to private developers, private landlords

and investors. Claims of massive shortfalls of student beds as against need were misleading: “landlords and their agents deliberately promote a rush by students to secure a bed for next year and to achieve the high rents involved.”

Claims about a massive shortfall of student beds continue to circulate a year later, and the situation is not helped by local newspapers being seemingly all too ready to quote uncritically the claims of would-be landlords. The latter have also been quick to exploit the opportunistic planning argument about student accommodation that was reported in the Trust’s last Annual Review (on the former Majestic Bingo Hall in Gilesgate, now sold for student landlord redevelopment). The argument went that, although the University had now admitted more than its planned **2027 target of 21,500 students** and although it also plans to reduce intake to that number, a need for more space would still remain because pressure to offer a full range of accommodation types and costs means that there would still be a market shortage.

The stance of the Trust remains that the University, as well as continuing to draw the line on any further expansion of student numbers, should focus its development plan on land in its own estate and build new student accommodation there, while also encouraging the best existing PBSAs to upgrade to the status of colleges. However, the University is reported to be under intense financial pressure, and a former stated ambition to house 50% of its students in University-managed accommodation has now been degraded to 40-45%. It is currently only 34%.

**The Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Karen O’Brien**, has generously agreed to give a talk on the University’s own position to the Trust’s AGM this year.

### ***Architectural Note, the former Three Tuns Hotel as student accommodation***

This is a good place to highlight a related matter, a small but significant enhancement of the streetscape of New Elvet, arising from the restoration and enhancement of the historic street front by the new build which now connects the old hotel with the Police Station further up New Elvet.

The Three Tuns Hotel at 10 New Elvet closed for business in 2013, and became used by the University to

house students. The University then sold the Grade II listed building to developers. In 2017 these put forward a plan to rework the site as a space for more than three times as many students, with room numbers increasing from 50 to 168. The Trust in late 2017 was concerned especially about the density of new build around the back of the building, but the plan received a certificate of approval from DCC in June 2019 and work went ahead.



The Trust's objection to the addition of overly dense extensions crammed round the back of the site seems vindicated by the incongruous intrusion of the triangular roof line over the main frontage, as the smaller image here shows.

Nevertheless, one promised benefit of the renovation scheme has at least borne fruit in early 2023 in the overall enhancement of the historic street front, something for the directly opposite side of New Elvet to emulate.



## TRUST WEBSITE AND YOU TUBE CHANNEL

Sue Childs continues to update and enhance the Trust website. An ongoing feature of interest has been "Asset of the month", <https://bit.ly/456rfgK>, set up last year to mark the Trust's 80th anniversary. It featured each month till October a well-researched entry on a building, place or issue in Durham that has been a focus for the Trust.

Early in 2023 the website was significantly upgraded: <https://bit.ly/48j8v0q>. A map now shows the site of recent planning applications in Durham, giving active links to details and the Trust's responses. Monthly summaries of past responses are also available at <https://bit.ly/3PonVIa>. Sue worked with Matthew Phillips and Roger Cornwell on this new resource.

The recently established YouTube Channel for the Trust, <https://bit.ly/3s3EgHO>, makes permanently available the various public events staged by the Trust. It is managed by Francis Pritchard who has uploaded the following talks and events: Martin Roberts, "Up The Wooden Hill: Staircases in Durham and Region"; Eric Wilton, "Crook Hall Gardens & The Durham City Green Corridor"; "City of Durham Trust 80th Anniversary Conference" (various speakers).



## NEWS TO COME

The 97th Bulletin of the Trust, due in a few weeks, will include reports on **Redhills**, including its bid for World Heritage Status, and on work with the **Wear Rivers Trust** to remove damaging alien plants from the area.

## PERSONALIA

It is sad to report that **Paul Beard** died in May. Paul had been a valued trustee from 2002 through to 2020 and for part of that time had been our Membership Secretary. He had not been in good health for a while and had been living at the Lindisfarne Nursing Home on Newton Hall. As well as being Membership Secretary, Paul brought his expertise as a retired landscape architect to meetings. His was a practical expertise too, as his garden at the end of Grays Terrace bore witness. He was also a leading figure in the restoration of Old Durham Gardens, which now feels like a fitting memorial.

Paul has left his body to medical science so there was no funeral. A memorial event was scheduled for Sunday 1 October at Old Durham Gardens, with drinks and tours of the gardens which Paul helped create, then afterwards at the Merryoaks Community Hall.



It seems right to mark here with sad respect the passing last October of **Ruth Cranfield**, a keen member of the Trust who was a notable local historian, with particular expertise in prison history in Durham. Her work is still available in back issues of the journal of the **Durham County Local History Society**, <https://bit.ly/3POjAzg>.

Last December, a civic reception was held by the Durham City Parish Council in the Town Hall in which **Dr Douglas Pocock**, our former long-standing Honorary Secretary, became the first Honorary Freeman of the City of Durham Parish.

**John Lowe** has continued his dedicated, focused chairmanship as the Trust has continued to evolve from its 80th anniversary year of 2022. A rare good side-effect of the pandemic is that Trustees have become very used to online meetings and are happy to keep their relative flexibility as part of their repertoire. John also represents the Trust on the management body of the World Heritage Site. **Francis Pritchard** is Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer of the Trust. **Chris Hugill's** legal expertise has been decisive in setting up a clear policy on "conflicts of interest" for the guidance of trustees.

**Michael Hurlow** has continued to provide his expert, illustrated reports each week on significant cases in the Council's weekly planning list. He and **John Ashby** in particular often lead the Trust's monthly batch of responses to planning applications and other developments, supported by **John Lowe**, **Roger Cornwell** and **Richard Hird**. **Matthew Phillips** invariably offers special expertise on transport and sustainability. He also continues to oversee the Trust's stock of publications. **Timothy Clark** has drafted the Trust's bulletins and liaises with our printer. **Sue Childs**, our Vice-Chair, sustains the new website, sometimes supported by Matthew and Roger. **Adrian Green** is both a professional historian (author of a study of John Cosin as an influential architectural patron) and an administrator of **Durham Museum** on the North Bailey, <http://durhammuseum.co.uk/index.html>. Last year he set up a special exhibition to mark the Trust's 80th anniversary, closing this October.

Warm thanks are due again to **Jan Hutchinson** for keeping so thoroughly and clearly the minutes of Trustees' meetings and preparing other monthly records for the Trust's activities and the significant local developments.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

The Trust's 81st Annual General Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 31 October, 7-9 pm in Elvet Riverside ER140, New Elvet**. It is planned to make the meeting available via Zoom. To request a link please email [zoom@durhamcity.org](mailto:zoom@durhamcity.org).

Our speaker at the AGM this year will be **Professor Karen O'Brien, Vice-Chancellor of Durham University**, who will speak at 8. pm about the relationship between the City and the University. Her talk is entitled "**The Built Life of a University in its City: Durham University Now and in the Future**".

### Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 80th Annual General Meeting (Saturday 1 October 2022) copied below.
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
4. Report of the Trustees and Presentation of Accounts of the Trust for the period ended 7 April 2023: to be presented by the Honorary Treasurer, Francis Pritchard
5. Appointment of Trustees
6. Appointment of the Honorary Officers of the Trust
7. Honorary Secretary's Report
8. Chairman's Remarks
9. Any other business which might be brought forward by members. It would be helpful if notice of this could be given to the Chair in advance, at [chair@durhamcity.org](mailto:chair@durhamcity.org).

*Interested in becoming a Trustee and engaging with us on the future of the City? Contact our chairman in advance of the meeting on [chair@durhamcity.org](mailto:chair@durhamcity.org).*

### MINUTES OF THE 80TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE TRUST HELD AT 7PM IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, NORTH BAILEY AND ONLINE ON SATURDAY 1 OCTOBER 2022, COMMENCING AT 14.00 HRS.

At the start of the meeting the **Trust's Architectural Award for 2020/21** was presented to Maya Polenz from Durham Cathedral in recognition of the Cathedral's superb new glazed lobbies.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. The Chair (John Lowe) welcomed attendees (in person and via Zoom) to the Trust's 2022 AGM in the Assembly Rooms Theatre and pointed out the emergency exits. Apologies were received from Paul Beard, Roberta Blackman-Woods, Roger Cornwell, Kevin Cummings, Francis Pritchard, Martin Roberts, Lionel Stout, Angela Tracy and Mr Woolstenholmes.
2. MINUTES OF THE 79th AGM (27 October 2021). The Minutes, already approved by Trustees, were noted.
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising. The Chair thanked Jan Hutchinson for recording the Trust's Minutes and other documents over the last year.
4. REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS OF THE TRUST for the period ended 7 April 2022: presented by the Honorary Treasurer. Dr Malcolm Reed, the Trust's Treasurer since 2015, highlighted items from the Trust's accounts (detailed in the Annual Review). There was a slight loss as there were more in-person meetings over the period, but core membership has remained constant. The end of year balance was £14.3k, so there are sufficient reserves. The 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts, already approved by Trustees and independently examined, were noted. Malcolm reported that Francis Pritchard has kindly offered to take on the role of Honorary Treasurer now, in addition to his role as Honorary Secretary, so he is very confident that the accounts are in good hands going forward. At the last AGM, Members agreed to remit the appointment of Examiner to Trustees, so Francis will recommend an Examiner to the Trustees. Malcolm thanked everyone for their support during his enjoyable years as Treasurer. The Chair thanked Malcolm for his service, both on managing the accounts and his unrivalled expertise on transport issues.

5. APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES. The Chair explained that CIO rules state that one third of Trustees must retire each year but they are eligible for re election. Dr Malcolm Reed and Dr Lucy Szablewska are retiring and not standing again. The Chair thanked Lucy for her sterling work on local issues and for being Minutes Secretary from 2014- 2019. The other two retiring Trustees, Roger Cornwell and Dr Adrian Green, were proposed and re- elected by consensus. The Chair thanked them for their continued service. Lucy proposed Chris Hugill - a retired solicitor who has lived in Durham for 40 years - to become a new Trustee. Chris was elected by consensus. The Chair urged any other Members who were interested in becoming a Trustee to get in touch.

6. APPOINTMENT OF THE HONORARY OFFICERS OF THE TRUST. Proposed by the Chair, and carried by acclaim, Francis Pritchard was elected in absentia as both Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. The Chair thanked him. As confirmed at Item 4, Francis will propose the appointment of an Examiner to Trustees.

7. HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT. In the Honorary Secretary's absence, the Chair reported that membership numbers are reasonably steady, but we would welcome more recruits, so he urged Members to nudge their acquaintances.

8. CHAIR'S REMARKS. It has been an auspicious year for the Trust on our 80th anniversary, marking the remarkable foundation of the City of Durham Preservation Society in 1942, in the midst of war – just imagine a group of citizens in Kyiv doing the same today! Around that time Thomas Sharp must have started writing his Cathedral City (published 1944). The exceptionally good Annual Review, produced by Trustee Prof. Tim Clark, has details of the Trust's work over the last year and how we are marking the anniversary, which includes two commemorative paintings of Crook Hall (by Member Angela Tracy), a new bench in the Botanic Gardens, and 'asset of the month' posts on our website (by Trustee Sue Childs). Trust publications and cards are available to purchase after the meeting. The Trust has sponsored two local guides: Coal Stories (co-authored by Trustee Dr Adrian Green) and the Parish Council's Durham Seven Hills Trail (pioneered by Member David Miller). A major event planned is the WHS Conference 'Perspectives on Durham's World Heritage Site' on 5 November at the Pemberton Rooms on Palace Green – final details for this will be shared electronically. On the actual anniversary, 9 November, we are holding an informal reception in St Nics church, from 19.00 to 21.00, that all Members are invited to attend. We are keen to develop partnerships and now have good working relationships with the National Trust at Crook Hall, Redhills CIO and organisations working to improve the riverbanks including the Wear Rivers Trust. The issue that preoccupies us most at the moment is preparing for the public inquiry regarding the major housing developments at Sniperley Park, with a Statement of Case required by Monday and a Case Management Conference next Thursday. The Chair thanked John Ashby and Matthew Phillips for drafting the Statement of Case regarding the appeals. The inquiry starts on 16 January - we will keep Members informed on proceedings. All these outreach activities raise the profile of the Trust and aim to engage as many people as possible to protect and enhance our natural and historic heritage. I was struck by Thomas Sharp's words on the back cover of Cathedral City that planning issues should be the concern of everyone: "The thing we all have to realise is that planning in a democracy must either be something in the nature of a national pursuit, or nothing at all. For in a democracy government and local authorities can make the really important moves only under the pressure of public opinion." So, we hope you will all continue to support Trustees in our efforts to protect our city.


9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS. No other business. The Chair thanked all attendees and drew the AGM business to a close at 14.40. After the formal agenda, Prof. John Pendlebury from Newcastle University presented an illustrated talk on Thomas Sharp, town planner and author of Cathedral City – A Plan for Durham. The talk 'Thomas Sharp: Urbanist, Modernist, Preservationist, Planner .... and a Durham lad' was very well received with a number of questions from Members. A vote of thanks was given by Dr Adrian Green, who also invited all attendees to a reception in Durham Museum to view the exhibition: 'How Historic Durham Survived the 20th Century', which includes Thomas Sharp's plaster model of his vision for the city.

*The Trustees*



# TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2022-23 (FRANCIS PRITCHARD)

Please find here the draft accounts for 2022-23. I am awaiting a meeting with our accountants, *Azets*, before submitting the final accounts to the Charity Commission.

 <b>CHARITY COMMISSION</b> FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	Charity Name <b>City of Durham Trust</b>		No (if any) 502132	<b>CC16a</b>
	<b>Receipts and payments accounts</b>			
For the period from 8th April 2022		To 7th April 2023		

## Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Subscriptions & Donations	2,510	-	-	2,510	3,140
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-	-
Legacies	-	-	-	-	500
Publication Sales	1,559	-	-	1,559	1,315
Interest	22	-	-	22	11
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>4,091</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,091</b>	<b>4,966</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>4,091</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,091</b>	<b>4,966</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Cost of sales	-	-	-	-	47
Direct expenditure on charitable purposes	-	-	-	-	1,916
Subscriptions and grants to other bodies	156	-	-	156	1,146
Management and member services	1,765	-	-	1,765	1,790
Governance and professional fees	674	-	-	674	780
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>5,679</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>5,679</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>- 713</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>14,369</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14,369</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>15,866</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,866</b>	<b>- 713</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Co-operative Bank current account	7,401	-	-
	Virgin Money charity savings account	8,464	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>15,865</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details			
	Gift Aid to claim	670	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		F.W. Pritchard		
CCXX R2 accounts (SS)	2	27/09/2023		