



# THE BECCLES SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING INTEREST AND PRIDE IN THE  
TOWN'S CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT

PRESIDENT: MARTIN BELL OBE

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# SPRING 2022

## Foreword

Welcome to the newsletter for Spring 2022, when I hope we are coming out of the restrictions of Covid. As I write, infection rates are high, but the number of hospitalisations is falling because of the high rate of vaccination in the country. With this change in circumstances, we are hoping that we shall be able to hold our AGM in person this year when our speaker will be Dr Sarah Cassell who will talk about the angel roofs of East Anglia. We are planning to zoom the meeting as well so that those unable to attend may still participate and see our speaker present her talk.

Beccles and District Museum has scheduled a special exhibition on the history and activities of The Beccles Society for July onwards.

We are fortunate that Richard Sword has been willing to be co-opted onto the executive committee. He has joined with Clare Mackney to scrutinise the planning applications submitted to the Broads Authority and East Suffolk Council.

Further copies of the Newsletter will be made available in the library and on the website.

## Membership

We have been without a membership secretary for some time now, however, we currently think we have:

56 members of which 10 are life members.

Please remember to renew your subscription. There are details below.

As always we are looking for new members to join us to help preserve the Beccles we all care for.

## Planning

Apart from a number of applications concerning trees, there have been two planning applications upon which we have commented, namely, are alterations in the house and garden of No 63 Northgate and the proposal for a 24 hour drive-in Costa Coffee on the carpark of Morrison's supermarket. Although the Society initially had some reservations about 63 Northgate, these were resolved after the applicant made modifications which softened the impact of the scheme from the river. Modifications have also been made to the Costa Coffee scheme but that the Society (and Beccles Town Council) remain strongly opposed to the proposal.

The fate of the Beales Store continues to be of concern. As you may know, the west part of the complex has been let to Tool Station. Panther Securities who own the site have said that they are seeking tenants for other areas. There is a possibility that the upper parts may become residential accommodation. Beccles Town Council has expressed concern about the future of the building and has contacted East Suffolk Council, as reported in the press recently. The Society will watch for any developments.

## Dr Nicholson Award



Dr Nicholson Award is for good design, imaginative ideas and quality development of any new development or building refurbishment within Beccles that improves or enhances the built structure of the town.

In 2021 we made a double award for Lantsbury Terrace and the Dell Care home. In 2022 it has been decided to make the award for Willow House, Providence Place, Beccles. It has shown innovative design in fitting a good looking house into an awkward plot of land. Two members of the committee visited the property and saw a good quality of internal finish and thus recommended it for the 2022 award.

The committee is currently considering candidates for the 2023 award. If you have any property in mind which you think is worthy of the award, please let us know.

## Beccles and District Museum Exhibition

In 2022, the Beccles and District Museum is open from 2 April to the end of October at 1.45pm - 4.30pm on the afternoons of Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

There are only going to be two special exhibitions at Beccles & District Museum this year. The first, from 2 April, is entitled 'Life Stories in Stitches', featuring samplers and examples of sewing from the museum's collections.

The second one, starting in mid July, will be about the history and activities of the Beccles Society. We do have a copy of the book about the first 20 years of the society, but we should like more from any members who can recall any specific interesting incidents to enhance the display.

I hope that this will enhance the visibility of the society in the town and possibly increase membership of the society.

## Beccles Visual History Project

Beccles and District Museum and the Beccles Society together have obtained a grant of £1088 to get this project underway. We have identified a number of locations in town where some noticeboards or banners with historic images of Beccles could be placed. The only such image at present is in the window of Ekta Brothers Ltd., the newsagent, on Market Street adjacent to Bob Knights, the butcher. There is still work to be done to purchase the boards and to source a company to print the large images as well as obtaining the appropriate permission to install them. We shall be delving into the photographic archive at the museum to find suitable images, but if you have something special to offer, please let us know.

If you want to see what we are intending, then a visit to Halesworth will give you an idea.

# Beccles Neighbourhood Plan

The Beccles Neighbourhood Plan sets out the vision for development to 2036. Following a 'yes' vote in the referendum on 16 September 2021, the Beccles Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' by East Suffolk Council on 22 September 2021 and now forms part of the Development Plan for the District.

The Worlingham Neighbourhood Plan is currently in the latter stages of consultation and examination, prior to a referendum. If accepted, then the two plans will together influence the development of the Beccles and Worlingham Garden Neighbourhood to the north of the southern relief road. There has been some master planning already completed (i.e., a provisional layout of the site for a proposed 1250 dwellings): further consultation is to be expected before any development starts.

# Beccles Society AGM on 18 May 2022

After an online AGM last year, we are hoping to return to a face to face AGM at Hungate Church on 18 May starting at 7pm.

This will be followed at about 7.30pm by a talk on the Angel Roofs of Churches in East Anglia given by Dr Sarah Cassell. (Please see poster below)

We are also planning to live stream the AGM and Sarah's talk so that those who cannot be present can join us remotely.

**The zoom link for the evening has**

**Meeting ID: 842 2755 5344**

**Passcode: 548177**

**Or link :**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84227555344?pwd=WEV4L2hGN1lwWUQwR2xhUzBjc0RVZz09>

If you intend joining the zoom session, the link will be open from 6.45pm.

If you have never joined a zoom meeting before please feel free to contact the chairman by sending an email to [enquiries@becclessociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@becclessociety.org.uk) or by telephoning 01502 716994. He will be happy to talk you through what you need to do to join.

Please join in good time so that any difficulties can be resolved before 7pm, so we can start the AGM promptly.

We need 15 members for the AGM to have a quorum so please join the meeting and support us.

## **BECCLES SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 10 April 2019
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive the chairman's report
5. To receive and approve the treasure's report
6. To receive the membership report
7. To elect the officers of the Society
  - (a) Chairman
  - (b) Vice-chairman (currently vacant)
  - (c) Treasurer
  - (d) Secretary
  - (e) Membership Secretary
  - (f) Executive Committee members
8. Any Other Business
9. Close of AGM
10. Talk by Sarah Cassell on Angel Roofs in East Anglia

### **Nomination form**

<b>We wish to nominate for</b>		
Chairman / Vice-chairman / Treasurer / Secretary / Membership Secretary / Executive Committee (delete as necessary)		
<b>Proposed</b>		
<b>Seconded</b>		
<b>Agreement of nominee</b>		
<b>RETURN TO: Paul Gurbutt</b> at <a href="mailto:enquiries@becclessociety.org.uk">enquiries@becclessociety.org.uk</a> Or <b>5 The Walnuts, Worlingham, Beccles NR34 7EL</b>		

### **Proposals to be discussed at AGM**

If you have a proposal you wish to be discussed at the AGM, please send it to arrive BEFORE 21 April to Paul Gurbutt



# Angel roofs in East Anglia

By

**Dr Sarah Cassell**

Following AGM at about 7.30pm on 18 May at Hungate Church and by zoom

# Membership Renewal

**Please use the renewal form below  
This will also be available on the website**

Please complete payment form and return to the Treasurer: -  
Mr J Harris, 26 Hungate, Beccles, NR34 9TT

The current subscription is £7.50 per person per year.

For Standing Order or Bank Transfer, The Beccles Society bank account details are: -

Account name:	<b>The Beccles Society</b>
Sort Code:	<b>30-84-54</b>
Account Number:	<b>37124068</b>

If you have any queries about payment please contact Jeff Harris as follows: -

Email (preferred method) [jeffharris@btinternet.com](mailto:jeffharris@btinternet.com)

Telephone: 01502 717237

To: The Beccles Society (delete whichever is not applicable)

**A** I have renewed my/our subscription by Standing Order/Bank Transfer (please put your name as reference)

**B** I enclose a cheque to renew my/our Beccles Society membership

Signature(s)

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Print Name(s)

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# Minutes of the meeting held 12 May, 2021 by zoom at 7pm

## 1. Welcome

The Chairman, Paul Gurbutt, welcomed the President, Martin Bell OBE, and current members to the meeting. There were 17 attendees.

2. **Apologies** had been received from Elizabeth Bracken and Chris Scott.

3. **The minutes of the previous AGM held on 10 April 2019 were approved.** There was no AGM in 2020 because of the covid restrictions.

## 4. Chairman's Report

This appeared in the newsletter circulated to members. The chairman thanked the members of the Executive Committee who had stood down after many years of service, including David Lindley, John Sayer, Paul and Jennifer Fletcher and the late Richard Bellefontaine. Thanks were expressed to Bob Aris for his continuing support even though no longer a member of the committee, namely for the weekly review of planning applications, help with the newsletter and with the Dr Nicholson Award. The chairman also thanked Ray Poll, our Membership Secretary, who is relocating to Scotland.

## 5. Treasurer's Report

The report appeared in the newsletter for 2019 and for 2020. The Treasurer, Jeff Harris, reported less activity than usual because of the covid restrictions.

## 6. Membership Report

Ray Poll reported that the Society has 64 members. He said that as several did not have an email address it had made communication difficult.

## 7. Election of Officers

(a) Martin Bell took the chair for the election of the chairman. Paul Gurbutt was unanimously elected.

(b) Paul Gurbutt proposed that those nominated for the committee be elected en masse. This was agreed unanimously.

- Treasurer                      Jeff Harris
- Minutes Secretary          Mu Gurbutt
- Publicity Officer            Clare Mackney
- Committee members        Barry Darch  
   Terry Goodwin  
   Douglas Peck  
   Chris Scott

There were no nominations for Vice-chairman nor Honorary Secretary.

## 8. Any Other Business

(a) Ray Poll reported that he will update the membership spreadsheets, in consultation with Jeff Harris, before he departs for Scotland. The previous chairman, Paul Fletcher, paid thanks to Ray Poll for his work as membership secretary.

(b) There was a discussion on whether the next meeting of the executive committee would be via zoom or in person. This will be reviewed in a month.

9. **Date of Next AGM will be 13 April 2022**, hopefully in person.

## Post AGM Talk by Mike Wabe, entitled "Foul Murders in East Anglia"

Two guests joined the zoom meeting.

Paul Gurbutt introduced the speaker, Mike Wabe, from Medieval World, who had been a police officer and a prison officer before retiring.

Mike explained that he could not talk about recent murders as there may be relatives still living, so he concentrated on the 19th and early 20th centuries around Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. This interesting talk finished with probably one of the most notorious in Suffolk, namely the Murder in the Red Barn at Polstead.