

Annual Report 2022

Merseyside
Civic
Society



Who we are

Since 1938 the Merseyside Civic Society has campaigned to preserve the best of our existing buildings and spaces, such as the Albert Dock and green spaces and parks, and, to insist on good quality design for our new ones.

While Liverpool is at the heart of our activities, we embrace the whole of the city region and and take a concerned interest in its environmental development and regeneration.

Although we admire many of its achievements, we do not live in the past. We believe Liverpool and the wider city region have a splendid future and we want to contribute to making that all the more splendid for all residents and visitors.

Our members come from all walks of life and are mostly ordinary local citizens with an interest in making our city region a better place to live.

We engage in expressing independent views on matters of public concern, particularly those relating to development projects, threats to heritage, the protection and enhancement of parks and open spaces, and make awards in support of activities which celebrate personal and institutional achievements contributing to the city region's quality of life.



GET IN TOUCH AND GET INVOLVED

www.merseysidecivicsociety.org | chair@merseysidecivicsociety.org

Events

Our programme of Conservation Area Walks led by Blue and Green Badge Guides started in April and continued through to September. The walks proved to be very popular, attracting 190 bookings with several of the walks selling out well in advance.

April 6

Ropes to Regeneration (Duke St)

April 19

Birkenhead Park

May 4

A Hideous Pile of Naked Brickwork (Albert Dock)

May 17

Lower Bebington

June 1

Castle St

June 14

New Brighton

June 29

Flourishing in the Shade (Wavertree)

July 19

A People's Paradise (Sefton Park)

July 26

Hamilton – The Square, not the Musical!

August 9

Canning Street

August 23

Port Sunlight

September 13

Admirals & X-rays (Mount Pleasant/
Rodney Street)

Two Walks in L17 –

From the Park to the River

In May, MCS organised Two Walks in L17 – From the Park to the River, led by Dr Kay Flavell, Author of *People of the Lane: Growing up in and around Lark Lane 1880-2020*. Now living in California, Kay lived on Lark Lane during the 1980's and recorded an oral history of the street by interviewing local residents and traders. The two walks attracted 52 bookings.

Docklands Trail Centre and Stanley Dock

On September 21, an MCS visit to the Dockland Trail Centre in Collingwood Dock was arranged followed by a guided tour of Stanley Dock by Heritage Consultant, John Hinchliffe. Attendees donned hard hats for a look round the, as yet unrestored, South Warehouse, the partially restored Tobacco Warehouse and the fully restored North Warehouse, now the Titanic Hotel.

Prescot Heritage Trail and Shakespeare North Playhouse

Our final visit this autumn was to Knowsley's brand new Cockpit Theatre on October 20, together with a Blue Badge Guide-led walk around Prescot Heritage Trail. The 20 guests who attended also enjoyed a pre-theatre menu at Pinion and a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



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Campaigning

Save the Piazza Fountain

We continued our major campaign from 2021 to raise funds for a feasibility study for the comprehensive restoration of the Piazza Fountain in Drury Lane. Funding for both phases of the study was achieved. Following completion of the first phase of the study, there are ongoing discussions about phase two and with Liverpool City Council and the leaseholder, The Elliot Group. More details on the MCS website: [MCS backs Piazza Fountain restoration study - Merseyside Civic Society.](#)



Become a Heritage Sleuth



Gateacre Heritage Sleuths

In Autumn 2021, Historic England approached MCS to be part of a national pilot re enriching the National Heritage List for England. We selected Gateacre as the focus of our study area and recruited 13 volunteers to survey, photograph and record any changes to Listed Buildings in the study area, compared to the original listings. MCS project managed the pilot and volunteers and continues to work with the Gateacre Society to produce a new microsite about Gateacre's Heritage. More details on <https://www.merseysidecivicsociety.org/campaigns/become-a-heritage-sleuth/>.

Membership Get involved

We have seen a 25% increase in our membership this year with membership numbers now at 260. There is a simple sign-up form on the website which is seeing a steady trickle of new members. We actively seek new members and welcome their contribution to our activities from volunteering to supporting the work of the Groups within the Society and spreading the word about events and discussions. See <https://www.merseysidecivicsociety.org/membership/>

We also connect Groups with the expertise they need from marketing to campaigning and fund raising.

Our donation-based membership scheme was reviewed by MCS towards the end of the year and it was agreed to continue with the current scheme, subject to regular review by the Resources, Governance and Membership Group.

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Merseyside Civic Society Council

The Council meets four times a year, with much of its activity now actioned through its three working groups. We have returned to in person meetings this year but some of the sub groups continue to meet on Zoom.

How we work

Merseyside Civic Society is organised into a number of subgroups which focus on distinct aspects of the Society's business. These meet to respond to matters of public interest, to plan our events and campaigns and to organise the Society's working and membership services. If you want to contribute and have ideas on issues which need attention, suggestions for events or activities, or can help with administration, we want to hear from you:

secretary@merseysidecivicsociety.org

Planning, Campaigns & Policy Group

MCS reviews and responds to planning issues and activities within Liverpool and the wider city region. We encourage public engagement with on-going debate and aim to draw together diverse voices from our member communities and make a positive contribution to discussion that have an effect on the quality of life for us all. The Planning, Campaigns & Policy Group has met four times this year and brings together professional experience and community engagement

In the course of 2021/22 the group has engaged with a number of topical issues:

- Meeting with Liverpool City Council Planning and Conservation teams (April)
- Represented MCS at the World Heritage UK World Heritage Lost Conference on 23 June and produced a bold initiative recommending the establishment of National Heritage Areas: *Seizing the Moment* <https://www.merseysidecivicsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Seizing-the-Moment.pdf>
- Produced two policy documents on *Conservation Areas* and *Listed Buildings*
- Supported the Mossley Hill Residents Association on achieving the successful Listing of Bark Hill House which resulted in a change of plans for the site by LJMU
- Commented on Planning Applications by Leverhulme Estates for Wirral Green Belt housing, Bonded Tea Warehouse, and the Former Central Hydraulic Tower in Wirral Waters
- Responded to Wirral Local Plan
- Responded to consultation on the Liverpool City Council Tall Buildings Policy
- Responded to consultation on the Liverpool City Regional Transport Plan Vision and Active Travel Schemes
- Is in the process of setting up a community partners working group for the Bicentenary of Liverpool – Manchester Railway



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Communications & Events Group

We have communicated with our members through 2 e-newsletters in March and August and organised the programme of Conservation Area Guided Walks together with the one-off Lark Lane walks, Stanley Dock and Docklands trail visit, and the visit to Shakespeare North Playhouse and Prescot Heritage Trail.

We issued one media release re the *Seizing the Moment* publication and have continued to use our social media accounts within the resources available to us.

After the COVID-enforced absence at the annual Wirral Heritage and History Fair, MCS was delighted to take a table and send representatives to the resumed March 2022 event at Hulme Hall in Port Sunlight. This participation provides the opportunity to promote the Society and its activities and to meet and exchange views with representatives of local conservation, amenity and heritage groups from across Wirral.

Resources, Governance & Membership Group

The group met twice during the year and focuses its activities on: membership recruitment and services; governance issues, financial supervision; and, liaison with national and local groups. It also plans the Annual General Meeting.



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Members of the Council 2021/22

COUNCIL MEMBERS	ROLE
Gavin Davenport	Chair
David Massey	Vice-Chair & Lead, Resources, Governance and Membership
Pam Wilsher	Hon Secretary
Trish Dowling	Hon Treasurer
Victoria Alderton	Co-opted Council Member
Daniel Bimpson	Elected Council Member
Andrew Brown	Elected Council Member
Peter Brown	Vice President
Chia-Lin Chen	Elected Council Member
Dave Chetwyn	Elected Council Member
Sebastian Dembski	Elected Council Member & Lead, Planning, Campaigns and Policy
Lord Derby	President
Peter Elson	Elected Council Member
Sarah-Jane Farr	Elected Council Member
Steven Garnett	Elected Council Member
Richard Garside	Elected Council Member (Resigned Sept 2022)
Jean Grant	Vice President
Dai Gwynne	Elected Council Member
Eric Lybeck	Elected Council Member
Glynn Marsden	Co-opted Council Member
Jo Pearce	Elected Council Member
Roger Phillips	Vice President
Tony Scanlon	Elected Council Member
Trevor Skempton	Elected Council Member
Adrian Swift	Elected Council Member
Andrew Weatherstone	Co-opted Council Member
Eileen Willshaw	Elected Council Member
Ian Wray	Elected Council Member



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