



APPRA NEWS

APPRA exists to help retain the unique character of the Avenues and Pearson Park conservation area and to support the neighbourhood's strong community spirit

"Architectural charm and individuality"

From where I am we seem to have had an unusually contentious year in the Avenues; but residents are volunteering for Advent windows in cheering numbers, so we clearly are still a warm and focussed community, with the energy for festivity as well as controversy.

The Article 4 Directions, which were one source of dissension, have been passed. Now it is up to us, and the Planning Department and Committee, to use them to preserve the distinctive design and detail we value in our houses. I wonder how many of you were puzzled by the anonymous flyer which was delivered locally, claiming that APPRA had misunderstood the point of the Directions. Because it was anonymous (though



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thought to have come from local landlords) we were unable to contact them and clarify their confusion. Our Article 4 Directions are indeed solely concerned with architectural features; there is another in the offing—which we are interested in, and so, from responses to our previous newsletter, are you—proposing to control Houses in Multiple Occupation. We have asked to join the discussion, currently centred on Newland and University wards.

English Heritage supported these Directions, with a comment that we will find valuable to quote in our own arguments. They said, "In our experience the essence of a Conservation Area is its small

architectural details as well as the big street scene. In the Avenues and Pearson Park Conservation Area this applies particularly strongly as the architectural charm and individuality of the houses collectively combine to give the area such an important quality which you (Hull City Council's Planning Department) are seeking to preserve with the Article 4 Directions." Doesn't that put us on the map?

I wonder if you agree with us that 'the charm and individuality' of our front gardens is a vital local feature? The Article 4 Direction on crossovers has stopped the erosion of the grass verge to provide off-street parking; only two crossovers have been allowed since the Direction was passed, and only one of those two resulted in front garden parking. But we are now noticing that front gardens adjacent to tenfoots are being paved as parking spaces, because they are accessible sideways, across the footpath and from the tenfoot. The result—a parking lot in place of a growing breathing space—can be ugly and is definitely contrary to the original design of our houses. Although we have lost the uniformity of the iron railings, the variety of hedges and fences and the different plantings in our front gardens are a pleasure to watch and share communally; unlike back gardens, they are available to the public gaze—a gift to passers-by and a buffer between the pavement and our dwellings. **Should we protect this threatened asset**

with a further Article 4 Direction?

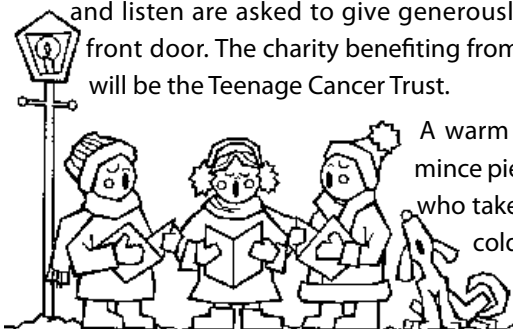
English Heritage are compiling a national list of what they call 'Blue Plaques schemes.' We have sent in details of our plaques to date and are indebted to Paul Dodsworth, who kindly agreed to photograph all our plaques and email them direct to EH to accompany our verbal response. This has served to re-invigorate our interest in the genre; we were already considering plaques for John Saville and Alan Plater; we think we should add Jean Hartley (a plaque which may be shared by the Philip Larkin Society) and James Neal, both of whom died this year, to the list; and we are undecided about Theo Tulley. The criteria for selection (as sent to EH) are "Dead and of national renown".

And yes, there have been exceptions; Ian Carmichael unveiled his own plaque in Westbourne Avenue, as well as kindly coming again to do the honours for Dorothy L. Sayers (I absolutely saw what is meant by 'star quality' when he arrived and lifted that occasion into something special); and Jack Kaye was not a national figure, but such a local character, who served the Avenues so well.

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Our annual carol singing around the Avenues takes place on 20 December. Meet at 5.45 pm at the Park Avenue fountain.

Carol sheets will be provided but please bring your own Christmas lantern or torch. People preferring to stay at home and listen are asked to give generously to the caller at the front door. The charity benefiting from this year's collection will be the Teenage Cancer Trust.



A warm Christmas drink and mince pie will be waiting for all who take part and survive the cold until the end (8 pm).

Ian & Christine Colquhoun

Avenues Advent Calendar 2011

ADVENT CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2011

1 200 W	2 27 W	3 240 V	4 119 V	5 113 W	6 37 S	7 71 M	8 160 P
9 18 P	10 178 M	11 119 W	12 9 S	13 20 P	14 190 M	15 92 V	16 115 W
17 127 V	18 199 P	19 37 V	20 142 W	21 117 M	22 222 M	23 6 P	24 85 P

Key to Location

M	Marlborough
P	Park
S	Salisbury
V	Victoria
W	Westbourne

Welcome to our ELEVENTH walk-round Advent Calendar: the event started in 2001 on a resident's suggestion.

Our congratulations to **Lesley Longworth** who works many hours to organise this event, and to all the participants for their colourful and creative work.

For pictures of our calendar windows as they open, visit www.avenuesonline.org.uk

in the Avenues.' We're easily pleased: by inclusion.

We have found it impossible this year to fix a date for the carol singing which suits all our busy supporters; but I hope there will be enough singers to join us on Tuesday, 20 December, 5.45pm at the Park Avenue fountain. We are collecting now for the Teenage Cancer Trust, in memory of Simon Brown.

I would also like to remember Barry Griffiths in this context; for years and years, he brought the NSPCC collecting boxes to our house before the carol singing, and collected them the next day. That was so useful and efficient for me, and he became a friend over the years, albeit an annual one; latterly, he warned every year that he might not be here next year—and last year, he wasn't. We will miss him at Christmas every year; he is an example to me of warm relationships which develop from these semi-official contacts.

Happy Christmas!

Stephanie Wilson MBE
Chair

Chair's Report ... continued from page 1

Is it churlish to grumble about the new equipment in the Pearson Park playground? Apparently, there are others who are critical of the various new 'toys,' and the installation of sand and water play among them (this is a separate area in East Park, which must make for happier family excursions). I myself can't see the point of the new train, because I can't get into it and tell my driver

where to take me. But our main criticism is—lack of consultation. Young parents have expressed their interest in the playground, and their concerns over its shabbiness over the last few years; but there was no proper consultation, with them, with us, with the Friends of Pearson Park. How can public money be spent on a community enterprise without the contribution of the public? Apparently, there were questions asked actually in the playground, but an impromptu, informal process is

no substitute for a thoughtful debate, over time. I'm afraid I see this as endemic in the City's culture (and the painting of the fountains in the wrong colours, for the second time, serves to reinforce my view); because—goes the argument, I infer—money is spent with our interests at heart, why waste time, or go to the trouble, of asking what we want. Then we get the aggrieved response, (historically, at the time when the flint-flecked footpath in Park Avenue was laid), 'There's no pleasing you people

After eight years, The Fifth Element (2003-2011) subsides with a push



The Fifth Element in Marlborough Avenue has gone. Its solid appearance was deceptive—it was mainly dust. We had noticed the "globe" slipping and decided to keep an eye on it. One day, the tree moved slightly when pushed. Time to call Tim Beckley. When he and his team came, on 26 October, all it took was a big push (see second photo on left)! Tim checks the other tree sculptures regularly, to keep us all safe!

Chrys Bavey and
Alan Worsley

Understanding Article 4 Directions

What is an Article 4 Direction?

In a Conservation Area, an Article 4 Direction is used to bring under planning control architectural features which are in need of protection.

What features in the Avenues are protected by Article 4 Directions?

- ◆ Chimneys
- ◆ Roofs (both for roofing materials and for the installation of 'solar panels')
- ◆ Eaves gutters, gutter blocks/brackets, fascia boards, bargeboards
- ◆ Construction of a porch or alterations to an existing porch
- ◆ Front doors

All of the above come into effect on 1 December 2011.

- ◆ The removal or alteration of a window or bay facing the highway
- ◆ Construction of a vehicular driveway across a pavement or a verge

The above two have been in effect since 2003.

NB The Article 4 Directions apply only to the elevation of the house which faces a public highway—ie mainly the fronts of houses (but in a few cases the sides also), apart from roofs and chimneys which include the front and backs of the property.

There is no fee for a planning application resulting from an Article 4 Direction. Notification and information from the council about the Article 4 Directions coming into force on 1st December 2011 was delivered to all houses in mid-November.

What do you have to do?

If you wish to alter or replace any of the above, you have to apply to the council for planning permission. In the first instance, contact the Planning Department, by phone, letter or email, to discuss your proposals. They are happy to discuss plans with you before you submit a formal application; and this will save you time and effort in the long run.

Keeping renovation in character

If you are repairing these features you do not need planning approval, and if your proposed replacement is in keeping with the original character and design ('like for like' is the term the planners use), your application is far more likely to be approved by the Planning Department.

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone: 01482 612345

Email: dev.control@hullcc.gov.uk

Address: Planning Services, Kingston House, Bond Street, Hull HU1 3ER

Planning application forms are available on the Council's website.

How to keep property safe and report property lost or stolen

"Immobilise" is the world's largest **free** register of possession ownership details. If your phone, bike, computer or any other registered item is lost or stolen, use "Immobilise" to instantly tell police, insurers, and the second-hand trade. These actions help greatly in the recovery of your property and capture the thieves.

Immobilise helps police identify the owner of lost & stolen property thousands of times each day. Loss and theft updates you make are immediately available to the Police nationally.

www.immobilise.com/

"ReportMyLoss" is a Police- endorsed site allowing the UK public to record lost property. This information is placed on the UK Police online systems allowing them to contact the owner if the property should be recovered. Once you have completed the online form, you will be provided with a lost property reference number for use with an insurance claim. You will be able to print out a report certificate with all the information that you have provided. To add or update the report in the future you can log into it at any time. *ReportMyLoss* means you do not have to telephone or visit your local Police station.

www.reportmyloss.com/

Louise Wilkinson, Partnership Delivery Assistant, Hull Citysafe, Hull City Council, Kingston House, Bond Street, Hull HU1 3ER

Telephone: 01482 612205

Neighbourhood Network

<http://neighbourhoodnetworkhull.co.uk/>

Friends of Pearson Park

COMMUNITY TREE
DECORATION AND
CAROL SINGING

Saturday 17 December
3 pm start

Meet in front of the Pearson Park Hotel
Bring tree decorations—either your unwanted ones, or ones you have made yourself specially

Best to wear warm clothes!

Refreshments provided

LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE AVENUES & PEARSON PARK

Pearson Avenue	The entrance to the park: a cast-iron gateway created in 1863 by Young & Pool
Pearson Park	An ornate cast-iron canopied drinking fountain erected in 1864
	The east entrance lodge, built in 1860-61
	A statue of Queen Victoria by Thomas Earle in 1861
	A statue of Prince Albert by Thomas Earle in 1868
	The Pearson memorial
	The cupola from Hull's demolished Town Hall
	№ 43 Studley House, № 50, № 54
Queen's Road	№ 41
Salisbury Street	№ 1, № 3, № 5, № 7
Park Avenue	№ 107
	The fountain at the junction with Salisbury Street
Westbourne Avenue	The fountain at the junction with Salisbury Street
	№ 96 & № 98 International House

Is First Footing still around?

The Avenues have a couple of activities around Christmas time which could be said to be customs or at least activities 'working towards' that level.

These are carol singing and the Advent Windows. However, one that was practised here but seems to have fallen out of use, though I may get howls of protest if I'm wrong, is that of First Footing. Basically this is practised in the north of England and Scotland and is a new year's custom which is said to bring good luck and prosperity to the house.

First Footing involves someone, bearing specific gifts, entering the house through the front door just after the stroke of midnight that heralds in the new year. The gifts as well as the statue and hair colour of the person vary between regions where First Footing is still practised though ideally the person should be tall and dark haired. However, in some areas a light haired person is acceptable and height less important and in some cases a woman might perform it. The custom is particularly strong in Scotland and the cosmopolitan nature of our community has influenced the details that some practitioners of the custom use.

So how did or does First Footing work?

The basic requirement is that the first person over the threshold after the strike of the New Year should bring a gift of fuel—usually a piece of coal wrapped in newspaper. This is offered to the householder who keeps it for a year and burns it in the first fire of the next year. Frequently the First Footer is offered a tot of whisky.

As I mentioned previously the gift can vary but commonly around here both coal and wood are or at least were offered by the 'visitor' though salt might be included as well. Interestingly one family who try to keep the custom alive in the Avenues are heavily influenced by Scottish roots and First Foot with a whisky

miniature, oat cake (or bread), coal and a coin. Another family who First Footed here for 39 years, to 2006 when they moved away, used coal and wood and occasionally salt.

Post WWII the custom seemed strong and in my family's case I remember we had three houses who used to First Foot each other. Our received gift of coal and wood was kept for a year under the bottom drawer in the kitchen (breakfast room) to be burned on the first fire of the next new year. This was reverentially done for years.

As a youngster I remember being allowed to sit on the stairs to wait for the First Footer whose arrival was followed by much jollity, back slapping and hugging. I understand that in the days when people were about in the streets more at new year, especially in Scotland, the button-holing of a passing 'tall dark stranger' to do the task was not uncommon. The fear of crime and the more insular nature of people's existence has probably reduced this approach!

Nowadays it is more common for a member of the household to be pushed out just before midnight to bring in,

after the midnight chimes, the coal and wood which had been earlier left on the step by them. Sometimes if this was not timed right the person might be left out in the freezing air, skin flushed with pre-First Footing drinks, waiting for what seemed an age for the chimes of Big Ben to occur!

It would be nice to see the custom back, at least among the younger residents—the

more elderly probably being tucked up in bed before midnight! However, what more can we wish for than a Happy New year, First Footing or no First Footing!

Chris Coulson



This column represents the personal views of its writers

Camera ^{not so} Obscure

Following a recent incident when the sight of a resident's camera in action, photographing our fountains, made someone so anxious they rang the police, I am hereby giving notice of my intention to continue my regular practice of walking (or even driving) in the streets and byways of the Avenues and Pearson Park, carrying a digital camera and taking photographs.

The police confirm that that taking photographs of the public domain is legal (whether peopled or not).

I intend to take pictures of trees, monuments, architecture, fountains and other public local features for subsequent display in print and digital media, including this newsletter.

I may include identifiable people, but only with their permission, if the occasion is a public event.

Chrys Bavey
Avenues resident



Photo of First Footing in action, courtesy of Chris Coulson

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