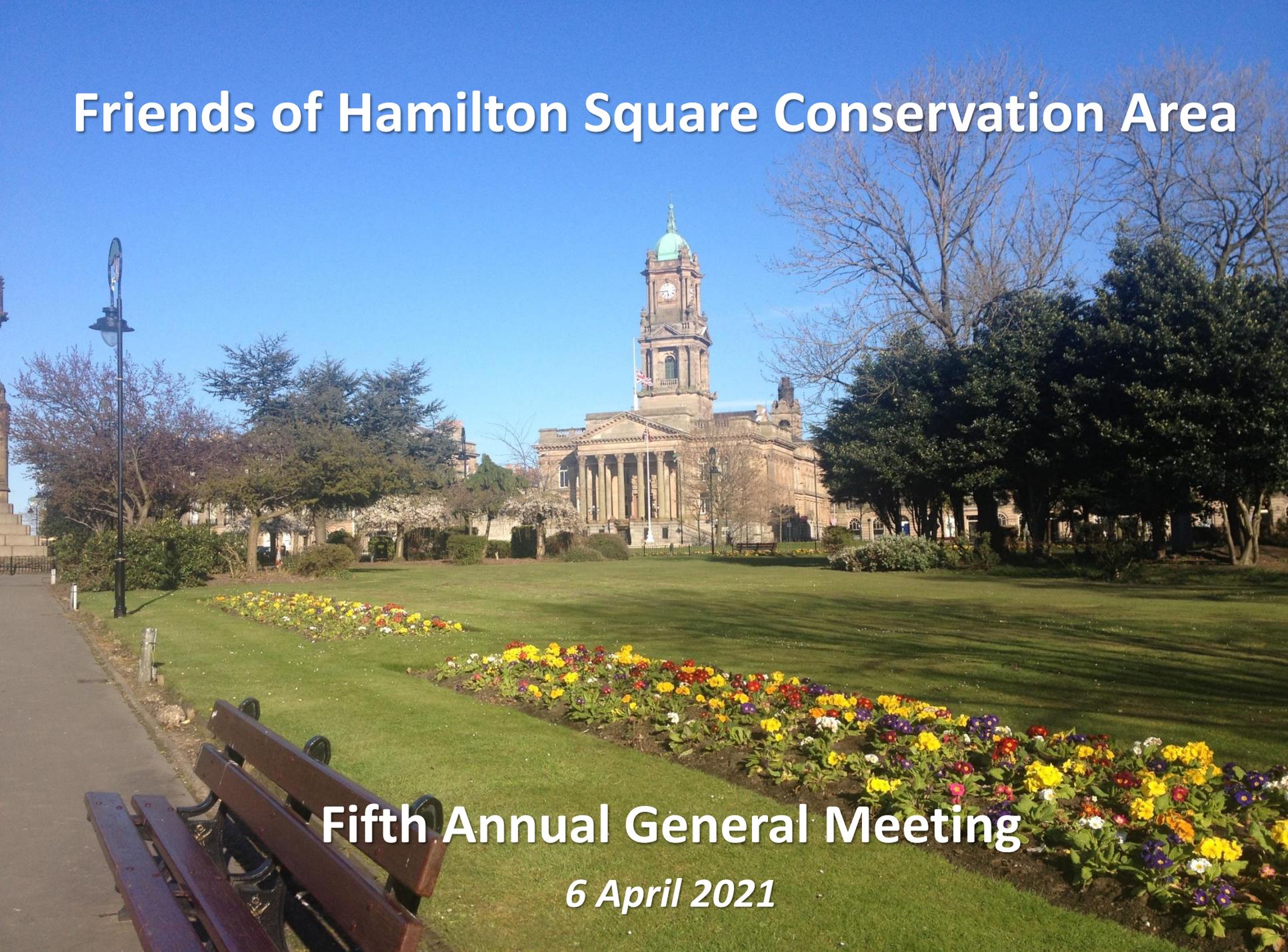


# Friends of Hamilton Square Conservation Area

A wide-angle photograph of Hamilton Square in Glasgow, Scotland. In the background, the grand, classical-style Glasgow City Hall stands prominently, featuring a central clock tower with a green dome. The square is a large, well-maintained green lawn. In the foreground, a paved walkway runs along the left side, with a black lamppost and a wooden park bench. A vibrant flower bed with yellow, red, and purple blooms is situated between the bench and the lawn. The sky is clear and blue, and the overall scene is bright and sunny.

**Fifth Annual General Meeting**

*6 April 2021*

# Agenda

1. Summary of Activity
2. Chair's Report
3. Architectural Advisor's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers
6. Issues for the Year Ahead

# Summary of Activity:

Case reference	Location	Nature	Main Issue	Outcome
ENF/17/00087	23-25 Argyle Street	ADV/LBC	Lettering fixed to stone façade	Ongoing (prosecutions pending)
ENF/19/00176	33 Argyle Street	PP	Unlawful takeaway and shopfront	Ongoing
LBC/19/00189	48-50 Argyle Street	LBC	Aluminium door	Consent granted
ENF/19/00220	55 Hamilton Square	ADV/LBC	Unauthorised signage	Ongoing
ENF/19/00221	54 Hamilton Square	ADV/LBC	Unauthorised signage	Ongoing
ENF/19/00291	1 Mortimer Street	ADV/LBC	Lettering fixed to stone façade	Consents granted
ENF/19/00349	2-3 Hamilton Square	LBC	Bins stored on railings	Ongoing
LBC/19/01016	53-55 Hamilton Square	LBC/PP	Change of use to aparthotel	Permission and consent granted
ENF/20/00010	39-45 Argyle Street	PP	Unauthorised u-PVC windows	Ongoing
ENF/20/00072	75 Argyle Street	ADV	Mural advertisement (retrospective)	Consent refused
LBC/20/00373	14 Hamilton Square	LBC	Replace u-PVC windows and gutters	Consent granted
LBC/20/00554	30 Hamilton Street	LBC/PP	Change of use to café and restorations	Consent and permission granted
LBC/20/00799	5 Hamilton Street	LBC/PP/ADV	Change of use to café/delicatessen	Consents and permission granted
LBC/20/01539	7 Bridge Street	LBC/PP	Replacement windows and doors	Ongoing
APP/20/01692	75 Argyle Street	PP	New aluminium windows and shopfront	Permission granted
APP/20/01878	66 Argyle Street	PP	Fit u-PVC windows	Ongoing

ADV = advertisement consent; ENF = enforcement; LBC = listed building consent; PP = planning permission

Text in red represents loss of historic fabric or a lost opportunity to reintroduce original materials

Text in green represents a heritage gain

Text in blue represents a neutral impact

# Chair's Report

Over the past year, there has been an overall improvement in how council officers have dealt with applications that have the potential to negatively affect the historic integrity of the conservation area as a whole and the architectural significance of individual Listed buildings within it.

In some cases, officers have actively sought the advisory committee's advice and/or opinion about the effect of development upon specific buildings. Greater notice seems to be taken of our representations than in previous years, with our comments sometimes being referenced in officer reports.

Greater attention is being paid to the twentieth century buildings in Argyle Street. For example, the proposed design of the new frontage of 75 Argyle Street was changed to reference Crittal-style windows, which we referred to in our representation.

Remedial applications have been required to restore original materials, for example at 14 Hamilton Square and to ensure that rear elevations of listed buildings receive the same attention as the front, for example at 7 Bridge Street.

# Architectural Advisor's Report

Mark Baker has continued to work on a **Historic Homes Guide**, which will contain advice about building maintenance, planning policy, shopfront design and other important issues.

Two generous offers of sponsorship, either in cash or in kind, for the publication of these books have been received. If anyone else would like to sponsor their publication, please contact [hscaac@outlook.com](mailto:hscaac@outlook.com)

Mark's report is attached to this presentation. Progress on the electronic Historic Homes Guide can be viewed here:

<http://hgw.batcbs.org/doku.php>

Please send any comments, suggestions or criticisms to [hscaac@outlook.com](mailto:hscaac@outlook.com)

# Financial Report

## *Friends of Hamilton Square Conservation Area* **Statement of Accounts for Calendar Year 2020**

The Friends' account has moved to *Virgin Money*, Liverpool city centre, after the closure of *Yorkshire Bank*, Birkenhead. The account and sort-code numbers remain the same.

The accounts are prepared on a non-accrual basis; that is, the report covers only items paid into and out of the account during the accounting period (cash in/cash out basis). The current signatories on the account are Richard Fassam (Treasurer) and Philip Barton (Chairperson).

Monies received comprise member subscriptions (12 people) and a one-off donation of **£150**, kindly contributed by **Mr Paul Horrox** of Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

No external audit of these accounts has occurred. No expenses were incurred.

As of **31 December 2020** cash in the bank was **£505.00**

Richard Fassam, Honorary Treasurer

# Election of Officers

As we have been unable to meet face-to-face due to the ongoing pandemic, an online survey was sent to everyone on the e-mail circulation list who paid their membership fee in 2020.

All current officers had indicated their willingness to stand for re-election and no other nominations were received. There is, therefore, no need to hold a vote. The officers for 2021 are:

Honorary Chair: **Philip Barton**

Honorary Secretary: **Mike Elkerton MBE**

Honorary Treasurer: **Richard Fassam**

Architectural Advisor: **Mark Baker**

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)

The BRF will be the most far-reaching planning intervention for the town since the publication of Sir Charles Reilly's **Outline Plan for Birkenhead** in 1947.

The BRF has now been published for consultation and it would be helpful if as many 'ordinary' members of the public as possible could contribute. The link for the consultation is here:

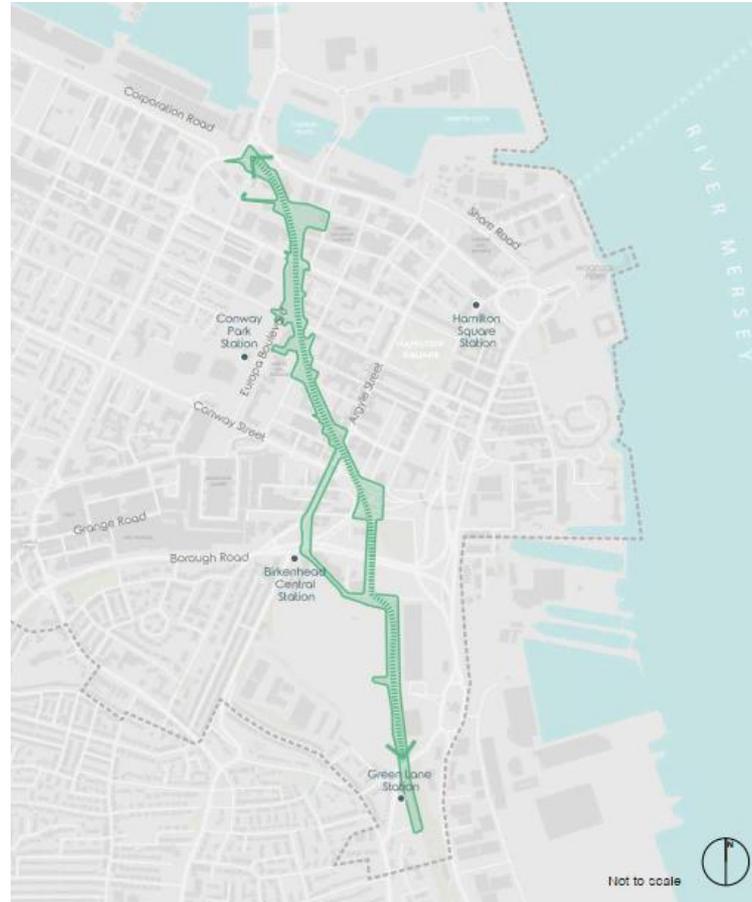
<https://haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk/regenerating-birkenhead-2>

As with all such plans, there are some opportunities and some threats. The most significant heritage opportunity is the opening up of the former Birkenhead Dock Branch railway track bed as a linear urban park from Argyle Street to Tower Road.

It is also proposed to demolish the remaining tunnel flyovers, which will release land in the Hind Street area for development. We have been campaigning for both of these interventions for a long time and it is gratifying that they are now likely to happen.

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)



Proposed extent of Dock Branch Linear Park

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)



Proposals for Dock Branch Park

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)



Dock Branch Linear Park – Cleveland Street to Tower Road

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)

The tall buildings strategy for the Waterfront area represents a potential risk to an accurate appreciation of the scale and appearance of Hamilton Square. Tall buildings should not intrude on views into and out of the square. As a general rule, they should not appear higher than four storeys, as viewed from within Hamilton Square (i.e. they may increase in height the further away from Hamilton Square they are built). We will need to make this point strongly during the consultation period.

The **Planning White Paper** (see link below) represents an opportunity for the advisory committee to contribute to the development of a design code for the conservation area. The production of design codes is also referred to on BRF page 55.

An update to the **Conservation Area Appraisal** is also promised. We will need to lobby to ensure that this work is led by us and not exclusively by *Conservation Areas Wirral*, which may not fully share our priorities and objectives.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/958420/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/958420/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf)

# Issues for the Year Ahead

## Birkenhead 2040 Framework (BRF)

### Cart before the horse

Some unlawful development has taken place as part of promoting emerging BRF objectives. However, council enforcement officers have not allowed these to go unchallenged and hopefully those behind these breaches of planning law have learnt a lesson – that public consultation must be allowed to run its course before a plan can be implemented.

75 Argyle Street has been a nightclub for many years now, so I am unsure how this use can be described as “brand new”.

Care needs to be taken not to blur the lines between public policy-making and private enterprise.

Figure 52. FUTURE YARD advert. A brand-new, 350-capacity space, is due to open at 75 Argyle Street September 2021.



# Issues for the Year Ahead

## The 20-minute Neighbourhood

The idea of creating a neighbourhood where all the population's daily needs (i.e. not necessarily hospitals and schools) are provided for within a 20-minute walk is becoming popular in the more socially progressive cities and countries of the world (e.g. Scotland). Hamilton Square was financed, designed and built by Scots, so it would be appropriate if we adopted this principle here, too. The conservation area could become the hub of one of Birkenhead's future 20-minute neighbourhoods. If you would like to know more, contact [hscaac@outlook.com](mailto:hscaac@outlook.com) and I will send you a copy of a briefing document which explains the concept.



# Membership

We had **12** members in 2020. That gave us an income of **£60.00** per annum. The support of each one of those 12 people is greatly appreciated. However, this income is insufficient to cover the cost of hiring a meeting room in Birkenhead Town Hall for more than about 90 minutes. Such costs are currently met personally by the officers.

There are, by contrast, **286** members of our [Facebook group](#). If all of those interested people became members, our annual income would rise by about **£1,430.00** per annum, which would allow us to do much more.

Please do what you can to encourage those you know to join the Friends. It is very unlikely that substantial public funds will be made available in the near future to help preserve or enhance the conservation area. Despite the amount of investment planned for Birkenhead, there will be financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic that will limit the ability of both central and local government to devote more resources to historic assets – even to those that it owns.

It is only through continuous public pressure and the dedicated work of committed volunteers that Hamilton Square Conservation Area has any real hope of receiving the tender care and attention that it needs and deserves.

**Friends of Hamilton Square  
Conservation Area**

**Thank you**