



# SPALDING & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

October 2017

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

THE EXHIBITION of photographs of Spalding's Conservation Area (p.3) – and I still can't get over how wonderful the co-operation has been with the Photographic Society – has given rise to conversations between all sorts of people in the town. It has cheered up those of us whose views have been dominated by the tatty and run-down side of Spalding, and some very encouraging remarks have appeared in the Comments Book which we eventually put alongside the exhibition. I don't know which photo was your favourite; I overheard a number of people puzzling over the view over Holland Road footbridge, and I am sure many of you will be looking at details of buildings in a different light.

A building arousing further local comment is the former Workmen's Institute on Holbeach Road (p.7); so many memories of the time when Barry Winyard, and his father before him, ran a bike repair shop there. I learned some colourful stories of local characters when I used to take my bikes there. (These stories were told in slightly less colourful language when I had my young daughter with me!) I have really enjoyed the sense of community that underlies these conversations. It reminds me of the recent contributions to the Channel 4 *Countdown*

programme by Dr.Phil Hammond, who summarises his approach to personal wellbeing with the acronym 'CLANGERS', of which the 'C' stands for 'Connect', the 'N' for 'Notice' and the 'G' for 'Give Back'. (You can find the rest on his website.) Which in turn reminds me of the range of conversations we hear (and take part in) on our town market (p.5) – so much more interesting than at the supermarket checkout.

We have a great community in Spalding; after 35 years here I fully intend to stay. Of course not everything suits everybody – for some, there are too many foreigners, but I have met many of them and really value my young Lithuanian next-door neighbours; but who remembers the time 20 years ago when the town was described as dying out because of the large number of pensioners who were arriving? Where were all the younger people, it was said.

I hope we can all do our bit to brighten Spalding's public image; I know you are all supporting your Civic Society's projects to improve things, but this would not be my typical message if I didn't make my usual appeal for more active members, especially on the committee – if I may remind you of Dr Phil's letter 'G'.  
**David Jones**

## MARKET ART PROJECT

The project's second commission – Laury Dizengremel's *The Hiring*, for Hall Place – has recently been presented with another planning hoop to jump through. It will take several weeks to wind itself through the system. Meanwhile, the bronze sculpture (without plinth) will be on display at the following venues for a fortnight each:- the South Holland Centre (4-16 November), Hill's Department Store (17 November – 2 December), and after that in the Red Lion Quarter. Take your family and friends along to have a look – unless you want to keep it as a surprise for the official unveiling, which will depend on its progress through planning. And of course there is still the opportunity to make a donation – partly to cover installation costs and partly to establish funding for the next commissions, when the art works will start to celebrate the livestock of Spalding's market heritage.



Yes, I'd like to help the **Market Art Project** to enhance the centre of Spalding.

£5[ ] £10[ ] £25[ ] £50[ ] £100[ ]  
Other £ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your cheque payable to **Spalding & District Civic Society**, and send to:  
**Melvyn Price, 34 Avebury Gardens, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2EN.**

Name.....

Address .....

.....

Telephone.....

Email.....



Spalding **Heart of a Town** Calendar 2018

## PLANNING MATTERS

SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER we have commented on a number of planning applications which would change the aspect of central areas of our town. Thus, we have offered suggestions for improving the signs for the St Barnabas premises in the former White Hart Hotel, and we have expressed the hope that the art deco clock on the Tui travel agency in Hall Place will be retained after fascia

changes, and it would be even better if it were to function again after so many years.

Moving further out, we have commented favourably on plans to re-configure the building in Priors Road behind the Sue Ryder bookshop. Suggestions we have made for more authentic features to the new Georgian-style house behind the town library seem to have been accepted in the re-submission.

A major concern for us is the proposed security fencing around the Grammar School fields. School grounds are increasingly taking on the appearance of prison camps, as has already happened to Spalding Academy. As the Grammar School fields are a most attractive feature of their area, it makes the proposal all the more delicate. Clearly the school has had major issues with intruders, litter and vandalism, and it would be difficult to reconcile its needs with maintaining the attractiveness of the grounds. We shall never be entirely happy with this one, but at least we have persuaded the school to install fencing in traditional black rather than green.

Other issues which will occupy our minds in the coming days and weeks include the proposal for a Lidl store and housing on the Welland Hospital site on Roman Bank, and the proposal for an over-55 housing development in Drapers' Place, off the Crescent. Both sites have been crying out for some kind of development for a long time, and the Drapers' Place proposals involve only part of a horrible derelict area disfiguring the town centre. (*More information p.4.*) Planning applications were approved for other derelict sites ages ago – e.g. the former Sorting Office, the Bull and Monkie site and Law's Yard - and we are still waiting for something to happen on these sites. However, disappointment with this inactivity should not mean hastening inappropriate development there or elsewhere simply for the sake of getting something done. Rest assured that we shall keep careful watch and do what we think is best for Spalding.

**Planning Sub-Committee**

### 2018 CALENDARS – LAST FEW

**£5 – members' discount price – £5**

The pictures include Ayscoughfee Hall, the Parish Church, Willesby Hall, Welland Terrace, the Magistrates Court, and views along the river. The price includes a cardboard envelope and free delivery locally. Otherwise add £2.50 per calendar for postage and packing. Please send cheques to: **Melvyn Price, 34 Avebury Gardens, Spalding, Lincs., PE11 2EN.**

Please send me ..... calendars at £5.00/£7.50 each.  
I enclose a cheque for £....., made out to **Spalding and District Civic Society.**

Name .....

Address.....

Tel..... Email.....

### MISCELLANY

A warm welcome to new member Roger Human and Robert and Brenda Brown.

We have held several meetings with Spalding Town Retailers Association to seek a common approach to making the town centre more attractive. We have also begun what we hope will be regular meetings with SHDC Place Manager, Paul Jackson.

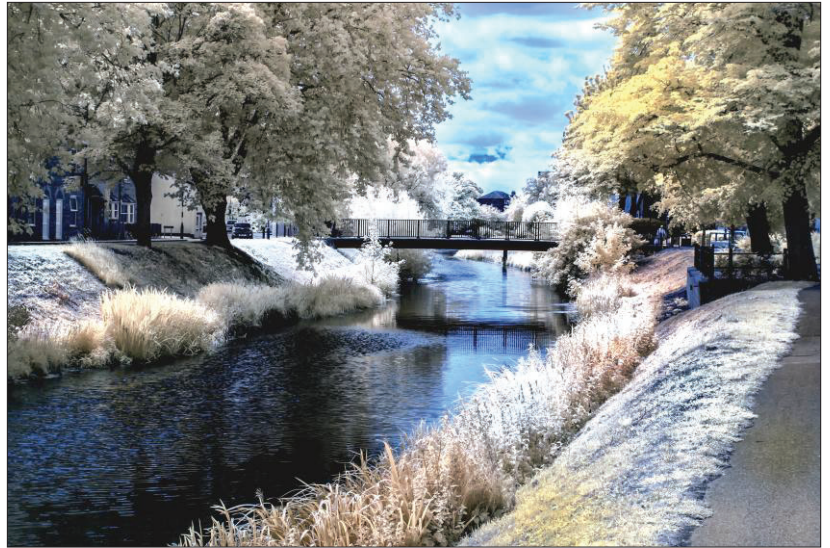
The winning photograph in our *Heart of a Town* competition kindly hosted by *The Voice* to celebrate 50 years of Conservation Areas was Jonathan Bye (of Weston Hills?).

The Editor would be delighted to include more contributions from members in the Newsletter – perhaps about things that concern you about the way the town's built environment is developing or drawing attention to pleasing bits of townscape noticed in other towns. Don't hesitate to put pen to paper or finger to key-board. Or to suggest features you'd like to see in future numbers of the Newsletter. Contact details on the back page.

## HEART OF A TOWN

WHEN OUR COLLABORATION with the Spalding Photographic Society to celebrate 50 years of conservation areas in a photographic exhibition was being planned, none of us imagined the summer-long tour of venues would finish with an invitation to extend the tour with an extra fortnight at the Council Offices in Priory Road. But this was just one of the unforeseens that emerged.

Foremost was the way the photographs were able to open our eyes to unnoticed



Brendan D'Abreo



Brendan D'Abreo



Gordon Fawley

features of our Conservation Area and to show us the familiar in a fresh light. The beauty of the nineteenth century stonemason's work at Kingston's Corner, for example, or the unusual angle on The Poacher, or the impression of an early autumn frost in Brendan D'Abreo's infra-red picture of the river.

"It was good to have the exhibition in Spalding Parish Church," said the Revd. John Bennett. "It reminded me how varied and interesting the buildings are in Spalding. I would love to see even more done to promote the town as a place with a fascinating history and a bright future." • "Super photographs of a super town. Plenty of wonderful sights and buildings to conserve for the next fifty years! Best wishes" – a visitor from Long Eaton in Derbyshire. • "Come regularly – loved the photos"

– Boston visitors. • "Good to see our town in a positive light. Excellent pics!" – Councillor Christine Lawton.

A second unforeseen was the sheer good will and readiness of local businesses and organisations to host the exhibition. There were no refusals and, in the end, we had more offers than we could take up.

A third was the idea of producing a calendar, suggested by our Photographic Society partners – already almost sold out.

A fourth was Councillor Elizabeth Sneath's invitation to her fellow-councillors to view the exhibition over tea-and-cakes when it was at the Council Offices.

A fifth the possible workshop for Civic Society members outlined on the back page.

The list of thank-you's is long. Above all, of course, to the Photographic Society, particularly the warm support of Chairman Roger Human, the indefatigable Brendon D'Abreo and the photographers. To all who hosted the exhibition: Calthrop's Solicitors, the Red Lion Quarter, Hill's Department Store, Bookmark, the County Library, the Church of St.Mary and St.Nicolas, Ayscoughfee Museum, Broad Street Methodist Church, and South Holland District Council. To *The Voice* for its coverage. To SHDC's Place Manager, Paul Jackson, and Ian Oliver of the Graphics Department. And finally to Councillor Elizabeth Sneath for her invaluable encouragement and practical support.

### BE PAREPARED!



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aulacly uesdtannrd waht I was  
rdnaieg. Aocdcnrig to rsecrah at  
Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it dseno't  
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in a wrod are, the olny irpoamtnt  
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### TALKING POINT

Can you understand it?  
If not, have another go. It's not Icelandic or Greek.  
It's nothing to do with the Society either, of course,  
except that a member of your committee came across it  
at a meeting that was.  
But you might like to try it out on your family or friends.  
Is it English? Does spelling matter?



## LANDLUBBERS DOWN BELOW

WHAT DID WE SEE? We saw the sea ... and the seals ... ninety or more of them recumbent at the water's edge in an afternoon snooze. And a procession of returning cockle-boats.



And cormorants and Canada geese (*below*), and a terns. And a long Dutch freighter heading inland. and little egrets like white sentinels, and a V-flight of trel's motionless speck above the shore, and the pilot home, and banks of samphire, and a drift of small from inspecting the mud in a glittering weeting cloud ing as one, and gulls of course, crying and calling.



rabble of screaming And solitary herons ducks and a kes-launch speeding waders whirring up wheeling and turn-

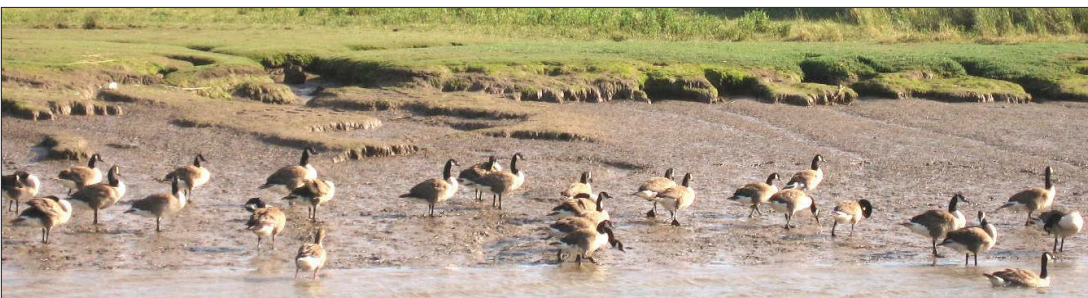
Our trip on the *Boston Belle* on 20 July had taken Boston and out into the Wash, then up the Welland Bridge, and back. It was here in the Welland outfall most abundant. Although it's the North Sea, the Wash for me on this first visit felt more like a great expanse of lake – I suppose because even at our furthest out there was a thin level landline on three sides all the time from Hunstanton one way to Skegness on the other, with an occasional thickening of trees, and always, unmistakably, however tiny, the 'Stump'.

us downstream from almost to Frosdyke that the birdlife was

And, after a gloomy morning of intermittent rain, the clouds had parted as we gathered on board and the sun shone.

With 50 of us, members and friends, it was the most successful Society outing for some time. Many thanks therefore to David Jones and John Honnor for organising it and to Stephanie Hewat-Jaboor for suggesting it in the first place. (David Jones and Marion Brassington would be delighted to receive **further suggestions from**

**members for outings or events – contact details on the back page.)**



**John Charlesworth**

## BROWNFIELD PLANS

NO SOONER had the last Newsletter said the Society was "keen to see action" on the town's brownfield sites than brownfield applications came dropping in on the electronic doormat. Why then are we disappointed?

First, the old Welland Hospital and garage site on Holbeach Road. The proposed Lidl supermarket violates the principle of town-centres-first for retail development and thus threatens the centre's retail viability. There is already a large convenience store next to the site. And one is dismayed to see another huge area of building land taken up to park cars. The site cries out for much-needed housing – with a convenience store next door, Springfields round the corner and a well-equipped public playing field across the road.

Second, there's a proposal for a four-storey block of flats on half of the long-derelict land between the Market Place and the Crescent. Neither the bulk of the building nor its lack of detailing harmonises with the site; and just

15 parking spaces are provided for 35 households. Vehicle access is via Francis Street, which is too narrow for cars to pass each other. Moreover, Francis Street is part of the town centre's second-busiest – and safe – *pedestrian* way. Overlooking balconies will inevitably prejudice the development of the rest of the site (mostly owned by SHDC). The site calls for development *as a whole*, not piecemeal, with access from the Sheepmarket via Gore Lane.

Crucially, both these applications point up the short-sighted failure of the Council to draw up development briefs for its brownfield sites, so that would-be developers know what is expected in each as part of a coherent plan – in this latter case surely mixed retail and housing.

A third proposal is to demolish the Broad Street Business Centre and replace it with a mews-style group of flats and maisonettes. At a first glance it shows a much more sympathetic and imaginative understanding of its site than the other two, but we have yet to examine it in detail.



# “LOVE YOUR LOCAL MARKET”

We do, we do!

□

Shopper, counting through coins: “Sorry, it’ll have to be a note. Penny short.”

“Shan’t lose sleep over a penny.”

□

An empty stall, save for a blue cloth spread, a vase of flowers and a white card. The traders mark the passing of one of their number. He was here only a week ago.

□

Shopper at the home-made fudge stall: “It was the rum-and-raisin or the Jamaican I was after.”

“Sorry – wasn’t time for those this week.”

“Well ..... a cut of the double chocolate then.”

“I’ll make it two ..... same price ..... as there wasn’t what you wanted.”

□

“Never bought one before,” says the shopper, picking up a water melon.

The trader presses it and shakes her head. “You want a softer one. Like this.”

□

Fruit and veg.stall again. A tap on the shopper’s shoulder. It’s the man from the cheese stall: “You left your wallet.”

“Me? Yes, that’s mine ..... Thank you very much ..... How did you .....”

“Driving licence, it’s got your photograph, and I saw you over here.”

“But what about your stall?”

“The chap next stall’ll keep an eye on it.”

□

“Have you got any runner beans?”

Saturday stall-boy: “Sorry. We did earlier. But it looks like they’ve run off.”

“I’LL GIVE IT A TRY,” says a shopper, picking up a green and yellow melon like a rugby ball.

“Sweetest on the market,” says the trader. “Head and shoulders.”

□

Shopper looking at change: “That’s the first new pound I’ve had.”

Trader: “Be careful with it – it might fall apart.”

□

Fruit and veg.stall. An eastern European giant sampling; a diminutive stall-keeper, her face looking more and more alarmed – a green grape, then some red ones, then a couple of cherries, now a pod snapped and the peas eaten. Easy-peeler next? Peach? The giant orders.

“£2.47,” says the trader.

The giant finds £3 and signals to keep the change. The trader smiles.

□

Shopper: “It’s better than it said in the paper this morning.”

Trader, taking out a phone and swiping through: “Sun by twelve, it says, showers later – about four. .... Here, don’t forget your bread.”

□

A spread of summer fruit, the scent of strawberries filling the air – not dead under plastic – raspberries, blueberries, victorias, peaches, grapes, pears, bright in the sunshine as a child’s book.

At Sainsbury’s they say: “Have you got a Nectar Card?”



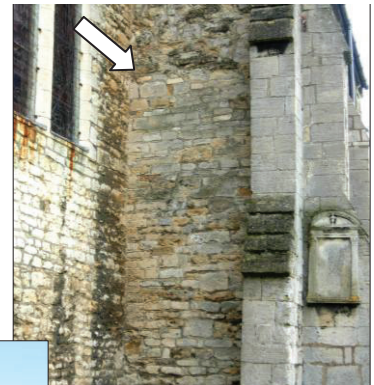
We don’t like clutter, though. On the date of this photograph, did we really need telling *ten times over* in the Market Place that the Council was supporting the local market? Wouldn’t some action to increase its attractiveness show more support? Efforts to get an on-the-stones auction again, up by the South Holland Centre, for example? Or a programme of Saturday entertainments and events in the Hall Place circle? Both were successful a few years ago, and would increase footfall – to everybody’s benefit.



The fourth in our series of some of the things that make Spalding a pleasant and interesting place to live and work in and to visit. Chosen this time by member **Roger Smith**, former SHDC Head of Planning.

# SPALDING

► **Fascinating history:** Spalding Grammar School began life in an upper room in St.Thomas's Chapel on the SE side of St. Mary and St.Nicolas Church. The external staircase up to the room was demolished long ago, but you can see the shape of the doorway, now filled with stones, in the wall of the chapel.



**Intriguing place names:** such as Crackpooool Lane, Woolram Wygate and Westlode Street. Above shows a remnant of the wall of Spalding Priory, now incorporated in Beales' Department Store, which gave its name to the Hole-in-the-Wall Passage.



◀ **Fresh air and open spaces:** we are fortunate to be able to enjoy walks so close to the town, alongside the River Welland, the Vernatt's Drain and the Coronation Channel, pictured here.

Members are invited to send in photographs of parts or details of Spalding they particularly enjoy (print, memory stick or DVD) to the Editor – contact details on back page - with a few words about their choice.

## 26 + 9 + 5 = A Mess

**E**ARLY in September the Amazing Circus Vladimir was coming to town. An amazing 26 posters appeared on the amazing old Sorting Office. The amazing people of Spalding, it seems, won't remember information for more than a couple of steps,. The amazing circus came and went, leaving their amazing posters behind, plastered over the building. Spalding's amazing people were not amused.

A few weeks later Russell's International Circus was approaching. The International Russellers came ahead with *their* posters. Nine on the Sorting Office and four on a nearby telephone box – after ripping down the amazing Vladimir's and stuffing them behind our amazing street furniture. Amazingly, we were even less amused.



amongst the international nine then on the Sorting Office.

It will be interesting to see just how long these posters remain – a shabby building left even shabbier. The amazing 26 would still have been there but for the international nine. And tatty Russell's posters were still up in the town 12 months after their last visit.

Unlike the circuses, however, the Fun Fair has more respect for the towns it regularly visits. Roger Tuby's posters are always taken down when they leave.

**And the law?** Posters for travelling circuses or fun fairs “must not be displayed more than 14 days before the opening of the circus or fair and must be removed *within seven days afterwards*. The local planning authority must be told 14 days beforehand of

Then Roger Tuby's Fun Fair joined in. Five fun posters **the sites of the notice[s].” And if they aren't ..... ?**

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## GOODBYE, WIZZ

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**P**LANS WERE APPROVED recently to replace the former Workmen's Institute in Holbeach Road by three pairs of semis. So another bit of Spalding's past will survive soon only as memories and a few faded newspaper paragraphs.

● "Everything is being pulled down and replaced, so sad. That's nostalgia though, isn't it? Childhood gone. It's something you see that reminds you of that child. It's a part of who we were that's being wiped out in a way."

● "What a shame it's going! I remember Wizz Winyard doing the bike repairs. My first bike came from there. It was a second-hand Raleigh 'Invincible' in red, white and blue, with a white seat and a black pump. I think I was about 10 at the time, and I absolutely loved that bike. I learnt to ride my bike along Queen's Road – no chance of that these days!"

● "I bought a bike from there when I was 17. Needed a cheap one to get the first job I ever had."

● "My dad worked there with Barry Winyard mending push bikes. I wish he still did the bikes, because town shops are extremely over-priced."

● "Always used to take my bike there to be repaired, like most Pigeon enders." [Editor: the Chinese take-away where the road bends was formerly The Pigeon Inn.]

● "We used to buy our airgun pellets from there in the 1960s."

● "I am hoping whoever develops the site retains the 1879 plaque above the entrance and somehow incorporates it into whatever replaces the building."

● "Hear, hear! Some of the old buildings stand the test of time far better than the new ones. I remember going there with Dad to get my bike fixed ..... Standing next to a roaring coal fire and waiting for my precious bike! They were nice days ....."

● "So sad! There's a lot of memories in that building. Some as used to live in it, as well as play



billiards. The plaque [needs to go] on what replaces the building, so children can tell grandchildren of that story. Soon there won't be no story to tell our grandchildren."

*The Workmen's Institute opened in 1879 for the "benefit of the Working Classes". It had a reading room, a smoking room and a small library, with occasional entertainments of music and readings. It was a sort of poor man's version at the north end of the town of the vigorous and much larger Mechanics' Institute in the town centre, which had a library of over 1250 books and an abundant supply of daily, weekly and monthly papers and periodicals, and whose "penny readings" at the Corn Exchange attracted huge audiences. Both institutions survived into the 1920s. By the 1960s the Workmen's Institute building had become a bicycle repair shop and general workshop, but has been boarded up and more or less derelict for some time now.*

*The Society has recommended that the stone tablet above the door be incorporated in some way in the small group of houses approved for the site.*

*(Many thanks to Geoff Taylor of the Chain Bridge Forge for collecting the memories of the repair shop above. More can be found at Facebook: South Holland Life, and more about both institutes in the invaluable Aspects of Spalding, People and Places by Norman Leveritt and Michael Elsdon.)*

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## MUCH APPRECIATED

● All those who contributed to Spalding winning its third successive gold award (small towns category) in this year's **East Midlands in Bloom** competition. Nice to see amongst other awards:- St.John's School's (best school fruit and vegetable garden in the region) and the Railway Station, always outstandingly colourful.

● **St.Barnabas Trust** for bringing life and people back into the White Hart after its being so long empty.

● The **Town Forum** for its decision to find funds to maintain the town's grass verges, after the County Council abandoned its responsibility.

● **Anglian Water** for the spruced-up Water Tower, newly emerged from its wraps. (Summer visitor: "What on earth's that giant sugar cube?")

● **SHDC** for their renewed determination to increase tree-planting in the district. It's good to learn they're working with the Woodland Trust, and we hope it will include urban planting and renewal as well.

● All involved in the increasingly popular **Pumpkin Parade**: SHDC, David Bowman Pumpkins, Spalding and Welland Rotary Club, Spalding Lions, Transported, and of course all who actually took part in the parade itself.



## WHY DON'T WE .....

... halve check-out times? The usual English system has delay built into it. We stand and wait while the person ahead packs bags or trolley and decides whether to pay by cash or card – if either can be found.

Supermarkets in Sweden, however, whether large or small, have a simple, much more efficient system. The belt carries Customer A's goods down Channel A. Customer A pays, and the cashier moves the divider across. Then, whilst Customer A is packing her purchases, Customer

B's goods are now travelling down Channel B. By the time 'B' has started to pack, 'A' is finishing, the divider is swung back, and Channel A is now free for Customer C's goods'. Simple. Why don't we?

## Most of Us Take Photographs

**And some of us must have felt disappointed at times when they've not turned out as well as we'd hoped. We are delighted therefore that members of the Photographic Society would be happy to give us a bit of help to improve our efforts.**

The idea is this. There would be an informal workshop at which Photographic Society members would pass on tips and advice. Sometime during the next few months. Date and time to be arranged. Followed by a second session in the spring, when we'd bring along some of the photos we'd taken in the meantime, or perhaps meet at a particular venue (such as Ayscoughfee Gardens or the riverside or the Saturday market) and afterwards compare what pictures the venue has inspired.

This is a marvellous opportunity for members, made possible by our friends in the Photographic Society. We need to know numbers, so all members interested please contact Marion Brassington by 15 November (tel. 01775 767923, email [marion.brassington@btinternet.com](mailto:marion.brassington@btinternet.com)).

**Please note no technical knowledge or prior expertise is expected. It's for those who, like most of us, probably just 'point and shoot' – whether it's people or places, pets or events.**

### SPALDING AND DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

I enclose a cheque for:-  £8 for individual membership;  £12 for 2 persons in the same household;  
 Free if in full-time education;  Details of a standing order mandate.

Name.....

Address.....

Post Code..... Telephone..... E-mail.....

Please send to: Melvyn Price (Hon.Treasurer), 34 Avebury Gardens, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2EN.

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01775 766145

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