

## HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION GROUP APRIL NEWSLETTER

Good news! After months of hard work Holmfirth Conservation Group is ready to make a call for action!

To help in this respect Holmfirth Conservation Group now has a temporary website (pending a comprehensive one) which gives our aim and objectives for this year. We now have a logo based on the Amiens Cross which lies in the centre of Holmfirth. You can follow us on Facebook – please like it, comment on it and share it with your friends so that we can reach a wider audience.

Just a reminder that the group's aim is to preserve and enhance Holmfirth's built environment for the benefit of all. This will be achieved through community involvement to survey all the buildings and open spaces in the conservation area. The community will create an action plan that will be published in the appraisal document.

On the 18th May at 7pm we will be holding our next open meeting at The Civic Hall in Holmfirth. Wine and soft drinks will be served for a small charge with complementary nibbles. A programme for the evening will be sent to you a week before the event.

We need experts in various areas including photography, data handling, horticulture. We need people who would like to take the lead with small groups of volunteers. Please let us know if you think you would like to become a leading light in this exciting project, alternatively enjoy being volunteer, and meeting new people. Whatever role you chose to take you will be equally valued.

We want to create a walkers' guide to the conservation area and boundary walk that would include stops at buildings and monuments of interest, viewpoints, local pubs and cafés. We hope volunteers will come forward to take responsibility so that we can celebrate our heritage and our wonderful countryside.

We have made a project enquiry to Heritage Lottery Funding prior to make an application for £10 000 – this is necessary because we have decided to undertake this appraisal using the willingness, skills and time of the people of Holmfirth rather than employ an external consultant. Kirklees have confirmed that they do not have the resources to undertake the appraisal themselves, so if we want to preserve and enhance our town, we must step forward to make that happen.

We are looking for other sources of funding. If you have any ideas to share please let us know. We will need to match some funding with our own fund raising. The team has some ideas but if anyone would like to take a leading role in this please let us know. This is Holmfirth's project – please help us to make it work.

Allowing 10 minutes to assess each building the task will take in the region of 90 hours. This would mean a commitment of 3 hours for 30 people, 6 hours for 15 people. Therefore the task would be conducted over a four week period, either in groups to support each other or individually at a time to suit you.

At the same time we have the survey of public realm – the open space, parks, roads, signage and street furniture for which we will need another army of volunteers. So please spread the word far and wide.

The process is supported with easy to fill-in data sheets and supporting documents and simple assessment guides. Full training and practice will be given before we start. Therefore after organizing ourselves into groups, training will take place as soon as possible after the open meeting.

We will need to start the analysis of the data in August and the mapping using GIS software in September in order to share the findings with the community in October. Then we would together as a community devise our action plan. This would become part of our appraisal document which we hope would be completed in draft form for community discussion in January 2017. The final version would then be submitted to the Parish Council in February to become part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

It is a huge undertaking but it will bring our community together in a shared vision for our town – giving us the opportunity to preserve our heritage and develop our town.

We will have developed a skill base, a baseline for assessment and resources that could be used to continue to protect our environment in the future and it is a programme that could be rolled out to the 10 other unappraised conservation villages in our parish.

We look forward to seeing you on the 18th May.