



## Late Summer Bulletin September 2025

### Programme

As a reminder the meetings for the rest of the year are included below.

- 9 September a talk by a Fire Service Officer on domestic fire safety.
- 14 October a talk by Deborah Overton about the historic landscape of Bredon Hill
- 11 November a talk by Martin Davis on the House of Sandys, Ombersley Court.

These talks are at 117 High Street, Evesham, starting at 7.30. £4 for members, £5 for guests.

- 9 December at the Red Lion in Market Square. Social with mince pies. Speaker to be agreed.

### Annual membership fees

Membership renewal is due on 1 March each year. To help us to reduce our bank charges, which have now been introduced by Lloyds, please set up a Standing Order or Direct Debit or pay by BACS. Next year the fee will remain at £12 for an individual and £18 for a couple.

### Business membership

We are trying to encourage businesses to join the Civic Society to give us a broader representation of interests in the town. In return for membership, our news bulletins will now contain the logo of those businesses that have joined. Business members will receive our news bulletins, so that they can see what we are doing to try to make Evesham a better place to live and work. This year, in return for twice giving members a tour of their operations in Wick, Sky Garden has been given an honorary membership, thus its logo now appears below. The logos of our two other business members are also included: Eagle One which operates The Valley, and Sinclair Transport.

### New committee members

We are delighted to welcome Judy and Peter Richards as co-opted new members of what was our small committee. Once they have completed some building work, they hope to join us at our monthly meetings, probably in 2026. Both are keen to get involved with the work that we do, especially fundraising, so should be very valuable members.

### New website

Please take a look at our revamped website <https://www.valeofeveshamcivicsociety.org.uk> Mick Hurst of Abbey Gate Media has managed to fit it in amongst all of his other efforts to improve Evesham. At time of writing, it is not quite complete, but significant progress has been made. If you have any comments/suggestions please let us know, as there is still time to make it better.



**Your Civic Society on Social media** <https://www.facebook.com/EveshamCivic>

We continue to grow our Facebook following (131 in June, now 150) which implies that more people are interested in reading about what we are doing to improve the town. So far, this increase in followers hasn't materialised into new members but we live in hope. In the last couple of months, we've posted on a range of topics eg our attendance at the Battle of Evesham Festival, our fundraising for the Almonry Museum refurbishment, tree-pruning on the High Street to keep the bus shelters cleaner and shared a number of items posted by Wychavon District Council and the Almonry.

**The Almonry Museum refurbishment: fundraising**

Brian Chilver has decided to end his single-handed efforts in selling the Lesley Brockbank prints of the Almonry. The total raised for the Almonry Museum refurbishment fund is £4,500; a fantastic effort. Final payment will be handed over, hopefully in a blaze of publicity, in the next few weeks. Our efforts as a society will now move over to selling notecards and Christmas cards. Each pack contains 5 cards, to be sold for £4. Cards are available from any committee member or email [vecs1971@gmail.com](mailto:vecs1971@gmail.com).



**Outing to Sky Garden, Wick**



Members of the Civic Society were joined by members from Pershore Civic Society for a visit to Sky Garden's growing centre in Wick, on 15th July 2025. We were given an insight into the future of sustainable building design. Sky Garden, a leading supplier and installer of green roofs in the UK, welcomed the group to its impressive 11-hectare site - a hub of innovation in the heart of the Vale.

Founded in 2007, Sky Garden has grown significantly and now employs around 50 staff across its locations in London, Tewkesbury, and Wick. Contract workers supplement this workforce in busy periods. The company has made its mark by championing biodiversity, sustainability, and stormwater management through its range of living roof systems for the construction industry, which now boast the ability to include solar panels within a roofing scheme. In 2024, Sky Garden entered a new chapter when it was acquired by Genuit, formerly Polypipe Group Ltd, a move set to further expand its capabilities and reach.



During the visit, members were shown the behind-the-scenes operations that bring green roofs to life—from plant propagation and system assembly to the logistics that support major urban developments across the UK. Most of the groundwork is unaided by machinery. The tour highlighted how Sky Garden’s innovations contribute to reducing carbon footprints and enhancing urban environments. Attendees were impressed by both the scale and ethos of the company.

The visit concluded with a lively discussion on the future of green infrastructure and its importance in shaping environmentally responsible cities. For many, it was a memorable experience and a glimpse into how technology and ecology can work hand in hand. Sky Garden’s work stands as a testament to the green ambitions of modern construction.

### Battle Festival weekend

This year our gazebo was put up adjacent to the Almonry display, which ensured that quite a few visitors came our way. However, the two stands were in a corner, which did mean that most visitors missed us as they cut the corner on their way around! Comments have been made to the Battle Festival team in the hope that a different layout will be achieved next year. Although no new members were signed up, membership leaflets were given out; hopefully some of these will result in some response. We did however manage to talk to various people about our work and have consequently gained 2 new committee members (see earlier item and photo). Brian Chilver was also successful in selling two of the last Almonry limited-edition prints.



Peter and Judy Richards pictured with Brian at the Battle Festival stand, showing the Almonry print purchased on the day by the couple. They have agreed to join the committee.

### Evesham Place Board <https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/business/evesham-place-board>

At the recent meeting of the Board, it was agreed that funds will be devoted to the following projects:

- A Guide for Businesses in the Evesham Conservation Area, explaining why it is so important to respect the character of the area and setting out all of the policies and regulations that need to be complied with.
- A new Town Map for use in Noticeboards, publications and websites; bringing it up to date and making it easier to read.
- A grant scheme for new shop signs, to demonstrate how the Shop Front Design Guide can be complied with.

- Continuation of many of the other projects started during the first 3 years of the Board; a full list of Board projects was included with our May news bulletin.

If you would like more information about any of the projects, please ask via email [vecs1972@gmail.com](mailto:vecs1972@gmail.com).

Wychavon District Council is making progress to purchase the Riverside Shopping Centre and associated land from PJK Investments Ltd, but no formal statement will be made before October.

### **Planning and Enforcement**

Our attention was drawn to proposals at 40-44 High Street by one of our members. Comments were submitted to Wychavon's Planning Authority about proposals to use the space at first and second floor levels as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). There are already many HMOs in and near the centre, but apartments are also needed and the space would convert easily to two apartments.

We have commented on the proposal to establish a plant nursery and garden on land at the junction of Coopers Lane and Waterside. We welcomed proposals to re-use land that has been unused for decades, but have sought submission of a scheme for managing traffic during open days and for the provision of toilets on site.

We have objected to the graphics proposed for the windows on the highway façade of the proposed Tesco Express on Elm Road. No graphics are needed; everyone know what Tesco sells!

We continue to work closely with Wychavon's Enforcement Officer, who is being very effective at convincing offenders to make changes that are more acceptable in the Conservation Area. This includes removal or reduction of window posters, modifications to paint colours on shop fronts, removing illuminated shop signs.

### **Evesham Town Plan**

For 2 years, Gill worked with councillors to assist in reviewing the very out of date Town Plan. Earlier this year, a new document was printed for distribution and made available on the Town Council's website <https://eveshamtowncouncil.gov.uk/town-plan-2/>. It concentrates on those actions that the Town Council can either undertake or influence; gone are the actions that rely on other parties to deliver but which the Council would be unable to influence.

For some time now we have been working to assist the Town Council staff with some of its many responsibilities, where they have a bearing on our aims and objectives; primarily improving the public realm. To help us to understand what you the members would like to see us devote some effort to in this regard, we have prepared a document listing in a table all of those actions that we might have an interest in. Please can you look at the table and fill in (either in the word document or a printed document) your priorities and any comments that you might have. If you would prefer to have a printed version to work on but are unable to print one out, please let us know and we will get one to you. The table is in a separate Word document for ease of printing or adding to on the computer.

PLEASE respond to this request as soon as possible, so that we can have a clear mandate from the membership for the direction of our future efforts and actions. **Please also let us know if you'd like to get involved – many hands make light work!**