

MILTON SOCIETY

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



Letter from the chairman

AGM 2026

A big thank you to those of you that made it along to the AGM last Saturday. I thought it would be helpful to circulate a short version of my report to keep you all up to date. This is as follows:

Our Beeline Project brought large flower baskets to Hamlet Court Road throughout the summer and was very successful, from our award of funds from the Council's Big Sparks project, to the fascinating talk from Essex Wildlife Trust on our local bee populations, through to the basket erection and maintenance throughout the summer by the council parks team. The display was brilliant and worked well in the extremely hot summer because we used reservoir baskets. Hopefully we can find a way to repeat the display next year, but this is likely to depend upon local business sponsorship.



Undesignated Heritage is an overlooked part of our neighbourhood and involves recognising the Edwardian and interwar building heritage in our residential roads. These buildings make up the local character and some are locally listed, such as Sunray House in Canewdon Road. This local listing gives no statutory protection but our published report (see [website](#)) does describe this special character which is a planning consideration and this can help to protect the local character whilst allowing for appropriate change.

Cliff Gardens is an ongoing concern and we have issued our petition, calling for better maintenance, to our ward councillors and specifically asked Councillor Nevin, the parks portfolio holder, about the removal of pathway barricades to give full public access to the gardens. We also asked about the mismatched

handrail and seat that have appeared in the gardens. Additionally, the Council's Environmental Stewardship Strategy document which is out to public consultation at present (see [Council website](#)), was also referenced as you might want to add your views here.



Seaside Heritage has been an ongoing project over the last year or so and, in partnership with Chalkwell and The Leas residents, has culminated in the publication of a document (see [website](#)) calling for extension to the seafront conservation areas to both recognise and protect our most important seaside heritage, including the promenade and beaches. Other towns like Brighton, Eastbourne and Scarborough do this so why not Southend?

Local Plan Policy has been nothing less than our major achievement over recent years. This includes calling for Article 4 Direction protections to permitted development HMOs and commercial to residential change of use – both ongoing local problems. HMOs are an important part of the housing mix but have gone uncontrolled over recent years due to there being no policy in the Local Plan – a major failing of local town planning. Similarly, there's been no control over the loss of commercial buildings (e.g. shops) in our commercial districts, undermining our local shopping centres. Of course, our high streets need to evolve to suit a changing world but this should be with the controls that Article 4 Directions can give (whereby planning applications have to be full planning applications rather than permitted approval with hardly any checks). We influenced these two changes through our persistent lobbying.

Casework was outlined as our normal, bread and butter work. Notably, this included 155 Hamlet Court Road, the fire damaged building in Hamlet Court Road where we are in touch with the architect involved, trying to help the repair of the building along.

As usual, if you have any queries on our work please do not hesitate to make contact at chair@miltonsociety.com