

Site Visit to Peterborough



and Market Harborough



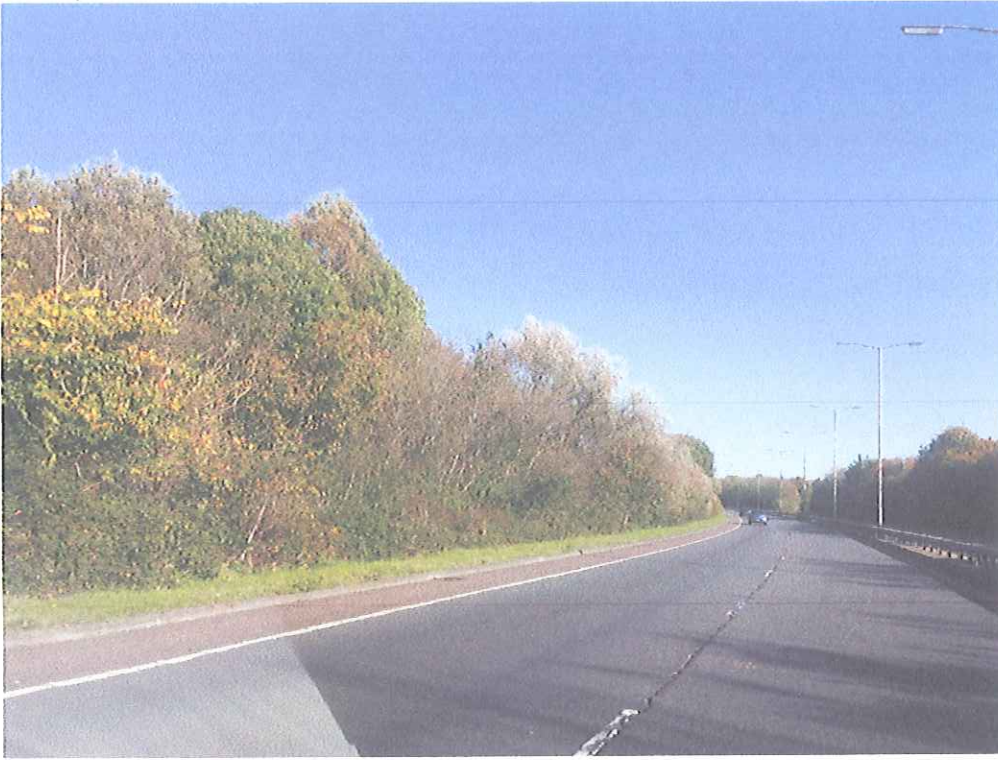
By Scrutiny Panel 3

‘Keep Northampton Tidy’

Attendees: Councillor Tony Ansell (Chair), Councillor Phil Larratt
and Councillor Dennis Meredith

Officers: Steve Elsey and Tracy Tiff

28/10/2014



As we drove into the Peterborough City Centre there was evidence of rubbish along the highway.



There was a small pocket park as we approached the city centre on an unusually warm late October day that was well used and very well maintained.



The market area looked clean and tidy and as you will see from the picture there was a sign saying 'Do Not Feed The Pigeons' which there seemed to be an abundance of.





As we walked through a wide alley from the Market area to the high street there were a number of entrances that had been used as a toilet and looked very dirty. There were also pigeon droppings along the alleyway and lots of chewing gum on the pavements in this area.



In part of the shopping area there was rubbish and cigarette butts at the base of the tree. The way the brick work has been designed around the tree would make it very hard for this to be cleaned out.



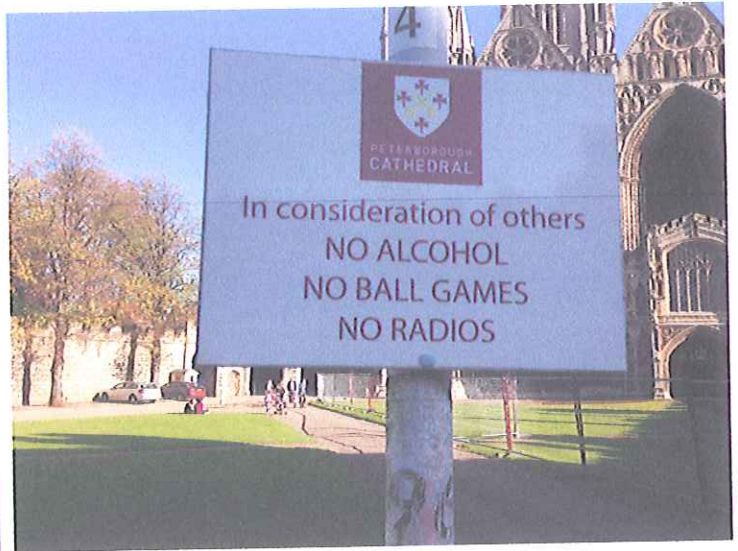
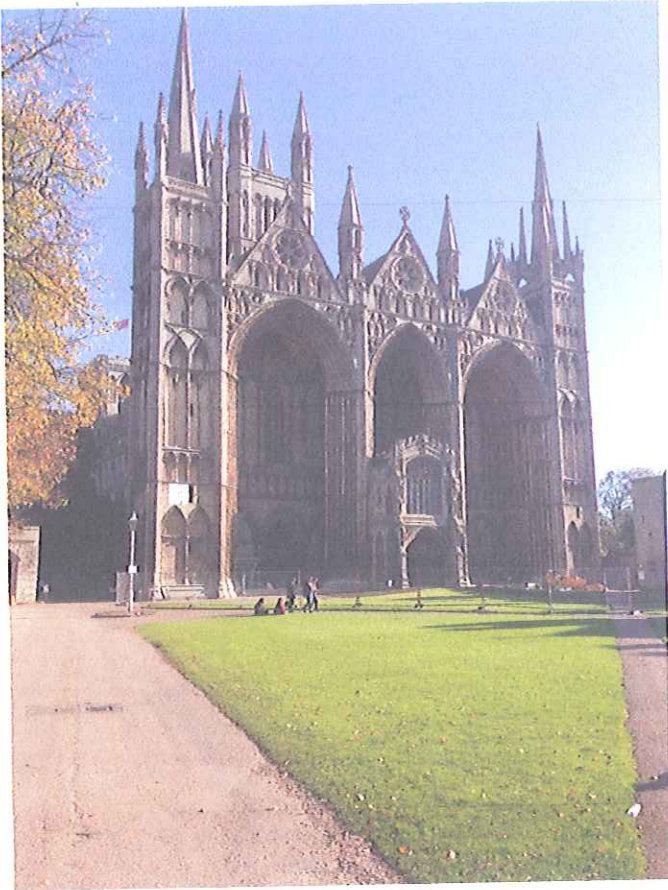
There was fly posting on a telephone box.



Some of the bins around the shopping area had obviously seen better days and there was evidence that liquids had leaked from them. They were rusty and whilst there was no facility for an ash tray on top of the bins, one of them had been used for this purpose and the area surrounding the base of the bin was covered in chewing gum.



We noticed a number of blocked drains on our visit.



The Cathedral area was very well maintained and there was a prominent sign banning alcohol, ball games and radios.

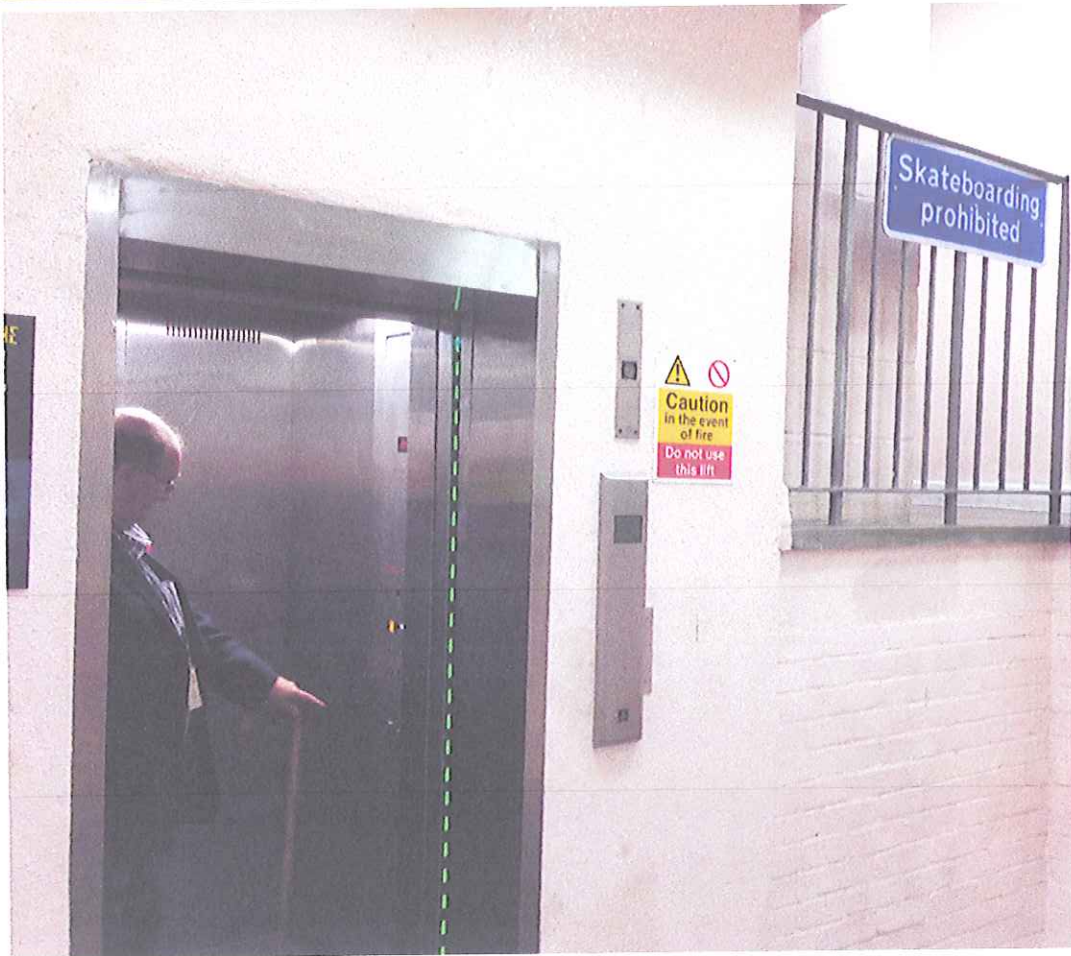


This doorway gave a dirty appearance in one of the shopping streets in the town.



Like Northampton, Peterborough was undergoing construction work to de-pedestrianize the high street and allow cars to drive there again. As we walked past there was an unpleasant smell coming from the sewers.





The lift area within the car park near the city centre was well maintained and of a clean appearance.

Second Part of the Visit





The town also features the Market Harborough Building Society which has been associated with the town for many years. This, along with the wooden bus shelters, are situated within the pedestrianised area of The Square and are of a smart appearance, clean and practical and keep the bus users well sheltered from inclement weather.





I was very impressed by the overall cleanliness of Market Harborough. Its neat appearance is, in my opinion, one of the reasons as to why Market Harborough is such a sought after shopping destination; not to mention its extensive range of independent shops. Church Street is home to various shops which I would not have found anywhere else from local

Tearooms to a Florist. Market Harborough's cleanliness is a credit to the town and it is not surprising to see that it continues to attract many visitors a day from the surrounding areas.



Next to St. Dionysius Church is the Old Grammar School, which is a small timber building dating from 1614 and has an open ground floor and has become the most iconic feature of this town. The area at the time of visiting was litter free.



The public toilets were open, clean and there was evidence that they were being regularly monitored. Free, well maintained public toilets seem lacking in Northampton and I believe this is one of the reasons why we have the public urinating in the streets and urinating and defecating in the lanes and jetty's around the town centre.



We noticed that one of the shops had a gate on it towards the jetty and I really feel we should look into this for the jetty's along the Drapery and the lanes leading onto the Market Square. If we could somehow lock the gates during the evening and early morning hours I'm sure this will go a long way to stopping the street drinkers and the night time revellers using these as a public toilet.



I noticed the alcohol notices seemed far clearer and to the point than the ones we have in Northampton which is probably why we didn't encounter any drunks or beggar's. I was very impressed with the excellent level of cleanliness throughout the town. The recycling bins were neatly tucked away on a street just off the High Street and everything appeared to be under control and well managed. Unlike Peterborough, there was a cast iron guard around the trees and a metal grill base which gave it a far tidier appearance.



The bins in the area seemed tidy with no spillages coming from the base. It was also noticed on our visit that the pavements seemed clean.



There was a lovely memorial garden with crosses laid out neatly in preparation for Remembrance Day, which at our time of visit was only two week away. This sacred area was kept in a very tidy condition.



The only fly posting we saw was on a phone box.



Only one dirty doorway was spotted.



We all stopped off for lunch in the Market Hall which was of a very clean and smart appearance has been in use since 1219. It is situated within 200 yards of the Town Square. It operates with outstanding facilities for both traders and shoppers and there are a nice selection of stalls, 87 in total in the Retail Market, also featuring a Food Hall.

In concluding, the two places that we visited were during the Autumn School half-term and seemed busier than they usually would be. We felt that Peterborough, with a population of approximately 190,000 seemed of a dirtier appearance than Northampton. However, Market Harborough, with a population of just over 20,000 was a far cleaner town and seemed a far more pleasant environment to visit.