

## The Walk *through* history

John Biggs (1801-1871) is a famous name in Leicester's history. As manager with his brother, William, of Biggs & Sons' hosiery factory, he did much for the advancement of trade in the town. A statue, said to be a very good likeness, was erected in his memory in Welford Place at the end of New Walk, looking down Belvoir Street. The statue was carved from Sicilian marble and stood on a plinth of Shap Fell granite. It was unveiled on 15 April 1873 by Alderman F.G. Foxton, the Mayor of Leicester.

In 1928 the statue was damaged by a passing vehicle and a new statue in bronze was erected. It was moved to De Montfort Square in 1952 before being returned to Welford Place in 1967.

Historical images from 'The History of New Walk, Leicester' by Helen E. Boynton.



The current trustees of Friends of New Walk Charitable Trust are:

James Bowie  
(Chairman to the Trustees  
& Resident)

Peter Wilkinson  
(Vice-Chairman to  
the Trustees)

Mark Dunkley  
(Clerk to the Trustees  
& Trustee)

Wendy Allum  
(Trustee & Resident)

Norman Gill  
(Trustee & Resident)

Colin Hargrave (Trustee)

Bill Smedley (Trustee)

David Sturgis (Trustee)

Steven Swanton  
(Trustee)

Mike Taylor (Trustee)

Elisabeth Townsend  
(Trustee)

Ave Vinick (Trustee)

Adrian Weston (Trustee)

January 2016

## Wet Centre

During the summer of 2015 the Friends objected to a City Council proposal to site a Wet Centre on New Walk. A wet centre is where 'serious drinkers' gather and consume alcohol. If there should be a meeting place for 'drinkers' the Friends deemed New Walk unsuitable on the ground of its historic beauty and a place for peace and family gatherings. The wet centre is unstructured so the Friends feared that gatherings of drinkers in the open areas of New Walk would be inappropriate. The council ultimately agreed and are considering other sites.

## Music Festival

The Friends once again supported the Music Festival during the summer, at the Museum on New Walk.

**For more information please contact Mark Dunkley, c/o Shakespeare Martineau LLP  
Two Colton Square, Leicester LE1 1QH  
telephone 0116 257 4402  
e-mail [mark.dunkley@shma.co.uk](mailto:mark.dunkley@shma.co.uk)  
[www.friendsofnewwalk.com](http://www.friendsofnewwalk.com)**

*Friends of*  
**New Walk**





## New Walk Creatives

New Walk Creatives are a partnership of creative organisations and businesses along the beautiful and historic New Walk in Leicester.

Their aim is to develop a cultural corridor along and around New Walk for Leicester. Partners currently are Attenborough Arts, Leicester University, The Y, De Montfort Hall, New Walk Museum, Soft Touch, DMU, and Belmont Hotel.

New Walk Creatives are working on a bid to put to the Arts Council for funding towards developing a creative sense of place around the area accessed by New Walk. This would be to build on the current and past work of

the Friends of New Walk in the sculpture trail, etc. The organizations and businesses involved will be adding support in kind with venues and a developing programme of creative activities working with Legible Leicester to improve signage to and around this area and to build on cultural potential. This is to be within a 5 year plan.

The Friends of New Walk have become partners in helping to put this bid forward and to help with managing and funding it successfully. NWC will need a partner with a bank account that can manage this and with the Friends' history of successful Lottery funding we feel you would be ideally placed to deliver this.

## Creative Attraction

For several years now New Walk has attracted creative organisations including architects, graphic designers, web designers, jewellers, and more recently Bulb who specialise in digital and 'app' design. It is interesting that some creatives who now use computers and high tech skills prefer working in low tech Victorian buildings.







## Redevelopment of New Walk Centre



Peter Wilkinson, Managing Director,  
Landmark Planning Ltd

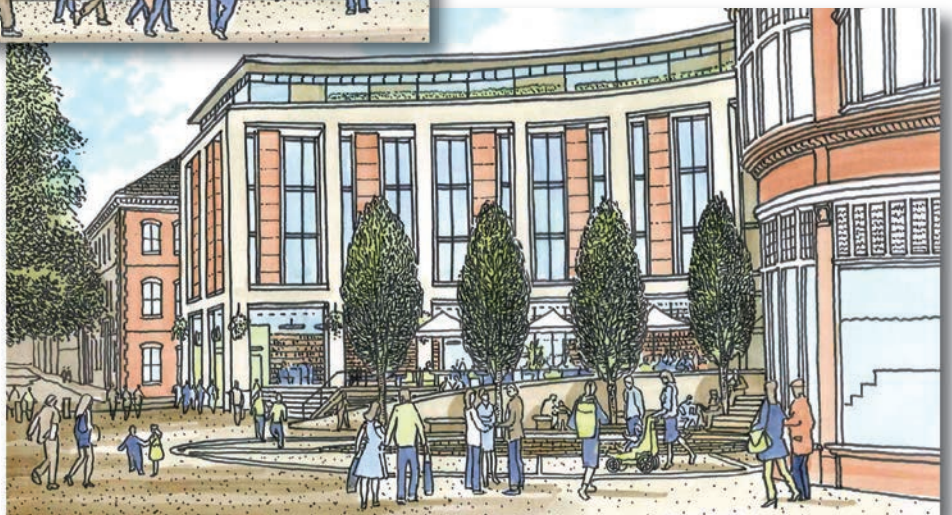
Plans to redevelop the New Walk Centre have been approved by Leicester City Council Planning Committee.

An exciting mixed use scheme of three five storey buildings was agreed in August on the site of the recently demolished

Council offices. The uses comprise offices (c. 60,000 sq.ft.) (significantly in part for the use of leading financial advisers, Mattoli Woods who return to the City centre from Grove Park the J21 motorway office development). There are also 71 flats. The office building, which fronts the new public space to be provided adjacent New Walk, will have retail or food and drink uses on the

ground floor. The 150 parking spaces will largely be in semi-basements.

That this scheme is being built by a local developers who have already secured a very significant and large end office user has to be applauded. It is yet another example of new life and activity being brought into the City centre and particularly New Walk. It will more than complement the forthcoming occupation of the old Harvey Ingram building by IBM and the recent restoration and occupation of the old Leicester Permanent Building Society offices at the New Walk /





Architectural drawing  
of the proposed plans  
for redeveloped New  
Walk Centre



Pocklington's Walk junction, by one of the City's largest solicitors practices: Spearing Waite.

The detailed nature and form of the substantial open space fronting New Walk is conditioned in the application with over £600,000 of funds committed to transforming this space.

While obviously wishing to see the further development of the detail of the scheme, in particular the elevational treatments and public

realm improvements, (including public art), the Friends of New Walk very much welcomed the scheme. The public realm, in particular, needs to recognise the primacy of New Walk. In this way it will relate to it in the same way as the other spaces on the Walk, such as Museum Square. But overall this is an extremely pleasing development.

It is expected that work will commence in early 2016 and take well over a year to complete. These are exciting times for New Walk.