

## Old Worcester Buildings

Despite the horrendous weather conditions on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September over 60 people turned up to hear Paul Harding, AKA the History Man, delve in to the history of some of Worcester's finest and oldest buildings. As you can see from the pictures it was a full house of very enthralled people. I just do not know how Paul manages to remember all the dates and facts, but he was not stumped at any point, couple of times he had to think which building someone was asking about but as soon as he had it then the facts started coming.



As I am sure we know Worcester has always been an important city but in the Medieval Ages it was the 7<sup>th</sup> most important city in the country and that was due to the River Severn as rivers were the main throughways and access to the sea was important. The original Worcester Castle was not sited in Castle Street but near where the King's School boathouse now stands.

The oldest church is St Helen's dating back just before the Cathedral, which was started in 680 AD on the site of the older St Peter's church, St Alban's is nearly as old as these as well. Both St Helen and St Alban were very early Saints. The oldest pub is thought to be the Cardinal's Hat but it has been rebuilt many times. St Oswald and St Wulstan are the only specific Worcester Saints and they were responsible for the early building of St Peter's and the Cathedral.



The oldest building is Greyfriars, which was not part of a Monastery as the name seems to indicate but a 15<sup>th</sup> Century Merchant's house. Greyfriars was in a terrible condition by the 1930s and was going to be demolished but due to the actions of one man it was saved, and that man was Adolf Hitler! At the outbreak of WW2 a decree went to all councils to halt the demolition of any buildings in case they were needed for the War Effort.

Broad Street is not named due to it being a wide street but after Broad Cloth, which is part of Worcester's woollen manufacturing past, which predates the porcelain works. There are buildings in Worcester that cover all the periods from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, Greyfriars, right through to the modern era with the Hive. Interestingly though many buildings are actually 'fakes', for example the Lastett's Almshouses look as though they should be of Tudor origin but were actually built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.





There was an earlier wooden Guildhall on the site of the present Guildhall and the guilty were taken out the back on to Cucking Street, now called Copenhagen Street, and down the street to the River where they were attached to the Cucking or Ducking Stool and given a deep wash in the river!



Next month why not join us on the 18<sup>th</sup> October to hear about some of the Myths and Legends of Worcester, it should be yet another fascinating talk by Paul about our City.