

ARCHITECTURE GROUP

VISIT TO SOUTHSIDE (August 2026)

For our August Meeting the Architecture Group hired the impressive former Medieval Priory of St Katherine's for the morning, together with parking on the South Common opposite. As a result we had no restriction on numbers attending and 42 members enjoyed a very special couple of hours.

As we began our walk from South Common we were treated to a commanding view of the majestic exterior of this Grade II listed mid-Victorian Gothic Revival building. Once through the door, we were able to admire and appreciate the splendour of its interior.

We were welcomed with tea/coffee and biscuits by Southside's Financial Director Colin Webb. Small round tables had been set out for us to enjoy refreshments in a friendly and informal atmosphere, before the presentation began.



With the assistance of a screen showing a timeline of the history of the site, Colin took us from construction around 1148, as St Katherine's Priory, to dissolution in 1538 during the reign of Henry VIII. He included historic details of visiting medieval monarchs and its Royal significance when in 1290 the body of Queen Eleanor of Castile lay at the Priory during the first stage of her Funeral Procession to Westminster Abby. Colin then moved on to 1887, when a new Methodist Church opened on the site, to seat up to 600 people, with a distinctive tower and spire added later. The building eventually fell out of regular religious use and was declared redundant in 1982. Over subsequent decades, the building served various commercial purposes. Archaeological excavations prior to renovations in 2008-2009 uncovered medieval priory walls and an early water system beneath the floor. This incredible find is covered by a glass floor, for all to view some of the site's many past lives. Colin had shared so much of his passion and extensive knowledge with his captive audience and

a half-time break provided a welcome interlude, with an opportunity for a look around.

After the break, Southside now featured on the screen in front of us, giving names of all organisations involved with the running of this incredible venue, together with a very long list of activities taking place at Southside.

Since its opening in 2022 it has become a vibrant home for live music, heritage, culture and so much more, breathing new life into the former St Katherine's Church. The venue is operated by Acoustic Nations, a not-for-profit organisation which nurtures creativity and emerging talent across a range of art forms. We congratulate Colin and his team for their sterling efforts in providing this unique grassroots venue, at the South Side of Lincoln and wish them well for the future. Hopefully, enterprising Lindsey u3a members can organise a visit to one of the events or productions.

In the meantime, I recommend a visit to www.southsidelincs.com

Jenny Porter