

## The World's Oldest Identified Grot Spot.

It was Daniel and Katharina Bech, both passionate about their adopted home town, who first came up with the term 'grot spot'. It has now become part of the national vocabulary. A quick web search reveals many towns that have adopted the term and listed their own grot spots.



The Cinema site, which had been derelict since 2000, featured as one of the Town's Top 10 grot spots on the Bechs' initial list in 2005.

It is the very nature of grot spots that they breed prolifically. After a while, if an area has become shabby, people take less care of its surroundings. Lower standards of tidiness and cleanliness become accepted and a steady decline starts. A period of austerity and budgetary constraint may not be the time for initiating major schemes but attending to grot spots does not necessarily involve great expense. It may just be a question of undertaking essential maintenance, keeping things clean and clearing waste. In some cases contracts for the work may already be in place and just need enforcing.

While we await the design, planning approval, funding and building of a number of major schemes for the



2005

Monson Colonnade



2013

town, the RTWCS is reviving the Bechs' initiative. We are asking you, its members, to nominate the grot spots in the town for a new list. They needn't be whole buildings or sites but could be as small as items that need cleaning, clearing away or repair. If you would like to remind yourself of what was in the original list in 2005 they can be found at

<http://www.townforum.org.uk/focusgroup/slideshow/slideshow291105.html>

The survey of street clutter grot spots also gives an idea of the kind of things worthy of listing

<http://www.townforum.org.uk/focusgroup/highways270306/highways270306.html>



One of the gateways to the Town  
2005 2013

Nominations will be graded by giving them a mark for various factors which include

- Prominence in the town
- How long has it existed as a grot spot
- How little would it cost to rectify
- Is it a health hazard
- Is it a safety hazard
- The number of nominations received for it

We will then have a more objective assessment rather than a purely subjective opinion. The prioritised list will be published on our website and in this newsletter (and hopefully in local media). It will include the names of the organisations or individuals responsible for the individual sites and will hopefully lead to the sites being improved.

A web address has been established where you can nominate sites or items for inclusion ([rtwgrotspots@thecivicsociety.org](mailto:rtwgrotspots@thecivicsociety.org)). Please send photographs (perhaps directly from a mobile phone) of any nominations, together with details to the web address. The RTWCS Executive will allocate marks against the individual factors and include the grot spot in its appropriate position on the list. If you do not have access to the internet then please pass the details to one of the Committee at a monthly meeting or send them to the secretary by post. The list will not be limited to just ten grot spots and all legitimate nominations will be listed.

The Bech's list was responsible for drawing attention to those areas and elements of our town which were in need of care and attention in 2005. It acted as a catalyst and in many cases, eight years later, many of the grot spots in the original Top 10 no longer exist. Sadly the Cinema site, the most prominent of them all, still remains and has deteriorated further. It could be said that it must be the world's oldest identified grot spot!

(595 words)