

HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

Telephone:
High Wycombe 25933.

" HON SECRETARY: '
J. Scruton, Esq.,
17, London Road
High Wycombe, Bucks.,

NEWSLETTER No. 10 - SEPTEMBER, 1911.

1. GROUP ACTIVITIES.

a. Membership.

We welcome the affiliation of the Caribbean Peoples' Association.

We are still worried about the renewal of subscriptions and hope that all those affiliated organisations and members concerned will renew their subscriptions as soon as possible. A reminder letter is enclosed where necessary.

b. Planning.

Following the meeting in early June with Mr. Ray Bunn of the County Planning Department and his assistant, which was attended by representatives of other amenity societies affiliated to the High Wycombe Society, the Planning Sub-Committee has concerned itself with two items which arose at that meeting. One is the impact on the centre of High Wycombe which will result from the generation of additional traffic when the new Marlow Bridge is completed. It is our intention to raise this matter at every level, from the Department of the Environment downwards as it seems ludicrous in the '70s to build a network of roads that will encourage traffic to re-route itself through the centre of a town in vast quantities.

What price Buchanan? You will have read in our last Newsletter no doubt, of the formation of a Traffic Group. Such matters will be their concern in the future, but it is confidently expected that the two Groups will work in close co-operation.

Secondly, we have been looking at the clearance area to the south of the West Wycombe Road, and an invitation has been sent to Borough Councillors to walk the area with us so that we can discuss and find out more about the area's future. Additionally, we have taken an interest in the question of office block construction, following the affair in Totteridge Road. We are pleased for the residents there that their sterling efforts have brought about a modification in the original plans - but we are still concerned at a general level about the provision of office accommodation.

Public Inquiry - Proposed developments in the Hughenden Valley.

On Wednesday, 20th October, at 10.30 a.m. a Public Inquiry is to be held in the Wycombe Rural District Offices at Bellfield House, Oxford Road, High Wycombe, to investigate an appeal by the developers to build in the Hughenden Valley, in the Green Hill and Brands Hill Areas. As you will have seen in the local press there is a great concern within a number of Residents' Associations about the growing threats to the Hughenden Valley from building and road proposals, and they are gathering their resources to support the Bucks County Council against the development Company. Undoubtedly this Society will support the Residents' Associations at the Inquiry. All those who care about this are urged to attend the Inquiry, if only for part of the time. A large gathering will demonstrate our concern for the future of this lovely valley.

c. Historic Works and Buildings.

Guildhall. It now seems unlikely that the repairs will be completed before the end of the year.

Rye Mill Area. We made representations to the Borough Council about the condition of this site and its effect on the Rye and surrounding area. The Borough Engineer is to carry out some improvements, and it is hoped, that the owners of the properties will co-operate in eliminating the various eyesores.

Castle Hill, House and Grounds. A survey of this most attractive area is under way. We hope to make proposals for the house and grounds to be designated as a small Conservation Area.

Toll House. The Group has not yet been able to make any further progress towards the restoration of this Listed building, but they hope to do so in the near future.

...

Conservation Areas, High Wycombe and West Wycombe. Qualified members of the group examine all planning applications affecting our two established Conservation Areas, and constructive suggestions and criticism are forwarded to the local authority. It is important to carry out this watchdog duty if we are to maintain and improve the quality of these, two, important areas.

d. Traffic. The Traffic Group is actively pursuing the problem of how the High Street can be cleared of unnecessary traffic. Letters were written to the Borough Surveyor, the Bucks Free Press, and the High Wycombe Observer, commending the "Kinnear Plan", pressing for an early diversion of through traffic from the High Street to the Inner Relief Road, and inviting a public discussion. The Borough Surveyor's recent rejection of the Kinnear Plan is now being studied.

e. Water Group. The aims of the Group are to promote a well-kept river with attractive banks, and to establish riverside walks so that the Wye and its tributaries may be enjoyed by all. We would like to achieve this by keeping the river clear of rubbish, maintaining a watch on the purity of the water, and planting trees and grassing the banks wherever possible.

The Group has started to survey the river to find out which stretches are most in need of attention, and a report has been written. The river retains its natural beauty from the source to Chapel Lane, where it begins its course through industrial premises. From here to the culvert much could be done to make the river more attractive.

The Group took part in the National survey on River Pollution organised by the Advisory Centre for Education in co-operation with the Sunday Times. The river was tested by simple chemical methods and the fauna examined in three different places. A report was made on the condition of the water, which declined as it flows through the town.

The river and stream bounding Holywell Mead was cleared of rubbish on 14th August. This was carried out in co-operation with the Rye Summer Centre, which provided some enthusiastic helpers, and also with the Borough Council, who took away the piles of assorted litter removed from the stream bed.

The Group had an informal meeting with Mr. Dapling and Mr. Wells of the Borough Engineer's Department, on 27th August, when there was a general discussion on the river and its problems.

Any other members of the Society who would like to join in the Group's activities are invited to contact the Secretary, Mrs. Diana Smith (High Wycombe 29301).

3. Wycombe Show

While this Newsletter is being prepared, our "Exhibition Group" is making a last minute effort to complete the material for our Wycombe Show Exhibit. Messrs. Stephens and Carter have very kindly agreed once again to build a structure, and we are also grateful to Messrs. Lovells for their loan of boards and transport. We are indebted to this Group and other supporters for mounting yet another exhibit and so bringing the work of the Society before very large numbers of the public.

4. News from other Societies.

South Bucks Arts Trust. The Trust is continually seeking new means of support in its quest to build the Dove. They have now announced the formation of an Association called "The Friends of the Dove". All those interested in this worthwhile project, and who would like to join the new Association, are asked to write to the Campaign Office, 11 Pauls Row, High Wycombe, or telephone High Wycombe 30598.

Community Relations Council.

The Council is holding a Social Evening at 7.30 p.m. on Sunday 3rd October, at Townfield House, Totteridge Road, as part of Racial Harmony Year '71. The Council has sent invitations to many organisations in the Town. These socials are always enjoyable and worthwhile, and we hope that many of the members will be able to attend. Price of admission: 30p including refreshments.

5. Quarterly Meeting.

We are holding our Quarterly Meeting at 7.45 p.m. on Friday, 1st October, 1971, at the Wesley Hall, Priory Road, and we hope that many members of the Society and affiliated Societies will attend. This meeting will take the form of a discussion on "What makes a Good Community?" and is a joint effort with the Wycombe and District Council of Churches. It is hoped that many members present will be able to take part. Full details are given in the enclosed letter.

6. Conclusion.

Coinciding with the growth of the High Wycombe Society has been the remarkable increase in the number and influence of local Residents' Associations. An ever increasing awareness of the many threats to their environment has been the major reason for this welcome development. These Associations are the front line troops in the unending struggle. This Society can in many ways act as a link between the Associations, and as a support whenever a threat arises. Conflicts are bound to arise. It would be miraculous, and perhaps unhealthy, if perfect harmony prevailed. We feel that if all those who care can work together, we shall go a long way towards achieving our principal aim of improving the quality of life in High Wycombe and District. We hope therefore that Residents' Associations and all our other affiliated Societies will continue to support us in the difficult times which lie ahead.