

HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

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HON SECRETARY:

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1. High Wycombe and District Planning Review.

(i) Notes on the activities of the Planning Sub-Committee, by John Boothman.

Since the appearance of the High Wycombe & District Planning Review from the County Planning Office at the very end of 1969, we have seen the first fruits of the most significant planning laws and proposals since the War, which will still be having their effects at the end of the century.

Unfortunately, the Society has been unable to consider the development of future plans as much as the committee would have wished, since it has been handicapped by insufficient information and lack of expertise in this rather special field.

The planning group of the society was set up early last year especially to consider and report on the Planning Review. A report in two sections, preliminary and final, was the basis of the Society's comments to the County Planning Officer.

It bears repeating that a most surprising and disturbing feature of the High Wycombe & District Planning Review is the assumed population growth rate to 1981. This is considerably above the approximate growth predicted by the S. E. Study Group in the S. E. Strategic Plan (of mid-1970) for the whole of the South Bucks area including also Slough. The population increase rate allowed in the Review is greater than the actual rate of the area over the last twenty years. It is greater also than that reasonably projected by the County plan of 1966 only five years ago.

The planning group has come to the conclusion that the content of the Review has been dictated by a limited pressure from Whitehall and considerable pressure from land-owning developers and commercial interests.

All the other objectionable points of the High Wycombe & District Planning Review spring from the rate of development. Consequently the comments made to the County Planning Officer have laboured this point and are echoed by the comments of other organisations and groups in the area. Towards the end of the year representatives from these organisations and groups began to be co-opted to the planning group. The group also collected their comments.

(ii) Public Meetings.

We have heard verbally that the County Planning Authority would like to hold further public meetings at Cressex, Hazlemere and Downley in the near future. These will enable residents to question the planners very closely on matters in the Planning Review about which they feel strongly.

(iii) Public Inquiry.

A Public Inquiry is to be held in High Wycombe on Tuesday, 2nd March, when the County Planning Authority will oppose the development of Areas H.4. and H.5. at Downley. Although these were suggested as possible housing developments in the Planning Review, the County Authority feel that the Review must be treated as a whole and should lead to a comprehensive plan after full discussions at all levels. The people of Downley, already incensed about the loss of their allotments, are determined to resist this attempt to complete the destruction of the village as a separate village community. This Society will be represented at the Inquiry.

a. Membership.

We are very pleased to record that the following have decided to affiliate to us .

Wycombe Division Conservative Association
Hughenden Park Estate Residents' Association

The affiliation of the Conservative Association means that all the local political associations have become affiliated, and this fact enables us to show quite, clearly that we are a non-political Society in which people of all political persuasions can work together for the good of the town and surrounding area.

With the affiliation of the newly-formed Hughenden Park Residents' Association it seems that all the local Residents' Associations have become affiliated. We wish every success to the Hughenden Association. There is certainly a great deal to protect in the Hughenden area.

Mrs. Wess, our Membership Secretary, has had to resign because of pressure of other work. We are very grateful to her for all her hard work in helping to build up the Society. We are fortunate in that Mrs. E. Roe has volunteered to take over this work. Her address is:-

3, London Road, High Wycombe. Tel: High Wycombe 32575.

a. Publicity and Exhibitions.

A group of enthusiasts is piecing together an Exhibition for display from Monday, 22nd March until Wednesday, 31st March inclusive, as part of the Wycombe Arts Festival. The Group is receiving a great deal of help from various official bodies. The title of the Exhibition will be "High Wycombe - Today and Tomorrow", and we hope that as many members as possible will visit the Oak Room of the Town Hall. The hours of opening are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Exhibition will be closed on Wednesday afternoon, 24th, and on Sunday 28th. It is most encouraging to have received so much support from our members already in making our arrangements to man the exhibition.

b. Historic Works and Buildings.

(i) Old Chequers Inquiry.

We are still waiting for the result of this. We managed to meet the bills without using any of our slender funds. Our thanks are due to all those members who contributed at our last Quarterly Meeting and to members of the Historic Works Group.

(ii) Historic Buildings.

Recently an Inspector from the Department of the Environment has carried out a survey of buildings in High Wycombe, using information supplied by the Society as a basis. A new list of Historic Buildings will result from this and we are confident that a number of additions will be made to take the place of those buildings lost since the Statutory List was published in 1947.

c. Outdoor Activities.

Since our last Newsletter we have helped the Chiltern Society in clearing footpaths on West Wycombe Hill. Senior children from Cressex Secondary School played a prominent part.

We feel that we ought to be doing far more of this valuable work in co-operation with the Chiltern Society, Scouts, Guides and other Affiliated Societies. Our chief need is a Leader or Leaders. The work is interesting, important - and very healthy! Any volunteers should contact the Secretary as soon as possible.

3. Wing Airport Resistance Association.

With the publication of the full Roskill Commission Report, the battle for a Third London Airport has reached a crucial stage, with debates in both Houses of Parliament, The Association needs every possible support to ward off this, terrible threat. Members who feel strongly about this are asked to write . to our, M.P. John Hall, Esq., O.B.E., at the House of . Commons, London, S.W. 1.

All Affiliated Societies are urged to help by sending donations to:-

Wing Airport Resistance Association,
Bridge House,
Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

The money is needed urgently. Any members interested in forming or joining a WARA Group should get in touch with your Secretary as soon as possible.

4. Social Activities

Derek Woods has provisionally booked canal trips for this year to run on:
 Saturday, 29th May, from Marsworth to Linslade
 Saturday, 19th June, from Yardley Gobion to Weedon,
 (this trip takes in the Canal Museum at Stoke
 Bearne and the Blisworth Tunnel).

Any members interested should contact Mr. Woods (Tel. 20284).

5. Annual General Meeting.

Please make a note of the date of our Annual General Meeting. It will be held at 7.45 p.m. on Friday, 30th April, in the Methodist Church Hall, Priory Road, High Wycombe. Further details will be sent out later.

6. Museum Services - National Heritage.

Because of extreme disquiet about the state of Museums a new appeal has recently been launched called National Heritage. This is a national crusade to improve the position of museums, which are our national heritage, at a time when they are in desperate need. The first aim is to recruit members throughout the country and eventually form local Museum Support Groups. Such a group would be of great benefit to High Wycombe. All those interested should ask the Secretary for further details.

7. South Bucks Art Trust.

We feel sure all our members will be interested in the progress now being made by the South Bucks Arts Trust. With the support of all the people of this area what was once a dream will become a reality. On a site, generously donated by the Borough Council will rise The Dove - a most imaginative Arts Centre, of interest to all ages, combining facilities for Theatre, Cinema, Music of all kinds, Exhibitions, Restaurant and Cafeteria. This will be a tremendous asset to High Wycombe and District and we hope that many of our members will be able to help by becoming members of the Trust and by making donations. At our Exhibition we hope to show a fine model of the project, together with full information.

8. Fund Raising.

- (a) Mrs. K. Hudson has very kindly agreed to hold a Bring and Buy Coffee Evening at her home, Dorina, 1, Beechwood Road, High Wycombe, on Friday, 19th March, from 7.30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Price of Admission 2/-. We hope that as many members as possible will attend with contributions, and help to make this a pleasant and successful evening.

(b) Grand Draw

You will notice that a book of Raffle tickets (more than one in the case of affiliated societies) is enclosed with your Newsletter. We hope you will wish to do one of the following things with your book:

- a) SELL the tickets and return the counterfoils;
- b) BUY the tickets yourself and return the counterfoils;
- c) RETURN the tickets so that they may be passed to a member prepared to do either a) or b) with them.

This is our first Raffle (and it isn't Christmas time when there are so many competing for your attention), so we are hoping you will make it a success by selling the maximum of tickets.

We are asking you please to return the counterfoils and money - with your name and address - by April 24th to 66 Brands Hill Avenue, or, if you are in the Town, 17, London Road, If there is ANY difficulty over this, please telephone High Wycombe 26536 so that collection may be arranged.

The results of the draw, which will take place at 3, London Road on Tuesday, 27th April at a little after 8.0 p.m., will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on Friday, 30th April, and it is hoped that the prize winners will attend for a small presentation.