



THE HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

newsletter

NUMBER 189

AUTUMN 2018

Have you Paid?

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2018-19 were due on 6th April. Those of you with Standing Orders in place, or who renew automatically via Paypal, can relax and enjoy this Newsletter, safe in the knowledge that you are in good standing. Thank you for your continued support. Thank you also to those organised individuals who pay their dues each year in a timely manner by cheque or cash. Prompt payment helps ensure our activities continue smoothly.

But some subscribers have not yet paid this year. Please note that if you wish to continue receiving the Newsletter you need to take action now, as, by the terms of our Constitution, your membership will lapse on 6th October if we don't hear from you.

Pay Here Please!

Cheques can be sent directly to our new Hon. Treasurer, Colin Hingston, at 65 Dean Garden Rise, High Wycombe, HP11 1RF; or you can pay by bank to bank transfer – just be sure to put your surname and initials in the reference. Individual membership is £8; Retired Persons £4; and families £12. The Society Bank Account is with HSBC, Account name: The High Wycombe Society; Account number 90446688; Sort Code: 40-24-17. If you wish to correspond with the Treasurer about a payment, his email address is colinehingston@aol.com.

There will also be a membership table at Pann Mill on 16th September at which you can pay in person. Eileen Walters is now the custodian of the membership records. If you are not sure if you have paid or not, an email to membership@highwycombesociety.org.uk should enable her to assist you.

If you wish to set up a Standing Order for the future or want to make or change a Gift Aid declaration, we can also provide appropriate forms.

Too Much or Too Little?

Subscriptions were set at their current levels in 2010 and can only be changed with the approval of a motion at a General Meeting. We recently received a letter from an appreciative member who said he thought the subscriptions should be increased. He chose to make a voluntary donation at the time of renewal as a number of members do.

In view of rising costs, it is likely that a proposal to raise the subscriptions will be made at the 2019 AGM to ensure that they continue to cover our regular outgoings. If agreed, such an increase would not take effect until 2020.

Meanwhile, some of you may be inadvertently paying more than you intend – if your circumstances have changed, perhaps you have reached a certain age, your family has flown the nest, or you are now living on your own, then you may not have thought to revise your payments. Please tell us if you think we need to update our records.

Jackie Kay

...caring about our town: past, present and future

Registered Charity No. 257897

Honorary Secretary: Tony Hatton, 41 Bassetsbury Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 1QZ. Tel: (01494) 445071

Planning This Quarter

THIS QUARTER has seen the first sessions of the public examination of the Local Plan, a process which has engaged a number of Group Members. We also note with regret that Roger Lawson has withdrawn from the Group after a very long period of service. Always an active member, contributing to all the discussions while keeping a beady eye on applications affecting Downley in particular, his skills as a past chairman could also be called upon whenever the need arose. His counsels will be greatly missed, although happily he will continue to monitor Downley for us.

Wycombe Local Plan Examination

The examination of the Local Plan commenced on the afternoon of Monday 16th July. The Planning Inspector welcomed everyone, introduced herself and stated that the reason for the examination was to consider if the Plan meets the legal and procedural requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and associated Regulations, and whether it is in sound accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Penelope Tollitt then welcomed all on behalf of Wycombe District Council.

The first fortnight of the examination covered the following areas:

1. Compliance & Duty to Cooperate
2. The Plan's Strategy
3. Housing Provision, Supply, Affordability and Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation
4. Employment, Retail & Town Centres
5. Natural, Built & Historic Environment
6. Green Belt

The next sessions (due to be held in September) will cover the following items:

7. Development Framework: High Wycombe
8. Development Framework: Princes Risborough
9. Development Framework: Rural Areas
10. Development Areas: Marlow, Bourne End & Wooburn
11. Monitoring

Never having attended a Local Plan examination before, I was interested to see the mix of contributors to the sessions including representatives of Developers, members of Amenity Organisations and Council officers.

My second visit was to a morning session covering Housing Provision, where the validity of the Plan was investigated. Questions were raised as to whether the district should meet all 100% of its housing needs rather than making use of Aylesbury to cover a shortfall as in the draft plan. Also whether the Council had ascertained any need that might arise from a shortage of housing land in Greater London and Slough.

The supply of potential land was also covered, with the Green Belt review coming under scrutiny. Most of the detailed consideration of

areas would be dealt with in the Development Framework sessions to be held in September. The Society was represented at the initial sessions regarding sustainable development by Chris Woodman, who raised an issue about the need to make best use of development sites as illustrated by the case of the now withdrawn Costco development proposal.

This was not contested by WDC's Counsel although they felt that it was not appropriate in Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development) and would be more suitably added as part of a Development Management Policy which the Inspector agreed with.

Chris's next contribution didn't meet with quite such immediate success. Whilst covering the item on Small Scale Non-Residential Development within the town centre, Chris commented on the styles of shopfront as follows:

"Now the phenomenon is of shops vying with each other to see who can have the largest lettering for their name. There's a fine example of this at the top of White Hart Street, where Millets has a commendably restrained shop front, but is overshadowed by Sports Direct beyond with huge obtrusive lettering. Further back along White Hart Street, the modest Vanilla Pod is shouted down by Paddy Power".

The Inspector understood the point Chris was making, having undertaken a walk around the town centre herself. She asked for clarification from Chris on the proposed wording. We are hopeful that there will be a successful outcome which would strengthen the Council's hand on this issue when the Plan is adopted.



Vanilla Pod shouted down by Paddy Power

Photo: Chris Woodman

Town Centre Masterplan

As the last Society newsletter went to press we received the welcome news that the proposed works compound on the Rye had been dropped and a new location had been found in the Railway Place car park. Thanks must go to the Society Chairman and also to the Councillors who made strong representations that The Rye was not a suitable location for a works compound for what could have been up to 12 months.

Although the Suffield Road section of the masterplan had overrun, the Queen Victoria Road/Easton Street section commenced. We wait to see how reverting these roads back to the 2-way system of the pre-1960's works out.

We await the Council's proposals also for the Oxford Road, Bellfield Road & Archway section, including plans to de-culvert the River Wye alongside Oxford Road from Westbourne Street to the Oxford Road roundabout, and have queried how we can assist the Council's River Wye Task & Finish group further with regards to opening up the river through the town centre.

Conservation Areas

The Planning Group have received a few emails about plans for extensions and other works in the Priory Road/Avenue Conservation Area. An objection was raised to one of these developments, which was a substantial extension to the side and rear of the property. This plan was later withdrawn. Our attention was also drawn to the installation of bicycle and bin stores immediately adjacent to the pavement to the front of a property undergoing building work in Priory Avenue. Although the details of

these wooden structures were not covered in the relevant planning permission, we discovered that Wycombe District Council had subsequently approved them. While admitting that the structures are not ideal, the WDC case officer said that consideration was given to other stores close by, and to the restricted space on site. It subsequently emerged via a society member that the structures originally erected were even taller — obscuring the view from the downstairs windows to the street and vice versa — but that neighbours had persuaded WDC to get them rebuilt to “only” waist height.



Even waist-height bin-store structures obscure features in a Conservation area. Picture: Chris Woodman

While it is possible to argue that parts of Priory Avenue are not in the best condition for a conservation area, it is a shame that this can be used as a precedent for further undesirable structures to be approved without the opportunity for public scrutiny.

Andy Cole

The Dove Tree

THE MAYOR was in attendance on Sunday 15th July to help welcome a new addition to the corner of The Rye: The Dove Tree (or *Davidia Involucrata* as it is otherwise known) was to be “planted to celebrate the achievement of Dame Frances Dove, campaigner for girls’ education and the High Wycombe nominee of the Women’s Local Government Society’s 100 Suffragist project, who campaigned for women’s rights in voting equality.”

Several Society members had donned something purple to take part in the Suffrage walk that day, which was first announced by Cllr Lesley Clarke at a Society meeting in March.

The guided walk was led by Willie Reid. Starting at Wycombe museum it took in many local sites related to Women’s suffrage including Dame Frances Dove’s grave, on which purple flowers were laid, and the Dove Window at All Saints’ church, where we



Caught on camera, with the Mayor, Penelope Tollitt, dressed for the occasion of the tree-planting. Photo: Jackie Kay

were welcomed first by the the Rev. Hugh Ellis and then by David Snoxell, who showed us features of the stained-glass window. The group then made its way to the Rye for the tree-planting and on to Wycombe Abbey for some welcome refreshment.

Thanks to all involved in the organisation of such an enjoyable event.

Jackie Kay

Progress at Pann Mill

THE PANN MILL Team have been making great strides with the preparation of the new buckets for the waterwheel, as mentioned at the AGM. The steel sheets went off to a factory in Birmingham a while ago to be bent to the appropriate shape. They have now been returned to us to cut the necessary slots and drill holes for fitting the buckets to the wheel. When this is completed the buckets will go away again to be galvanised prior to painting.

Much of the work has been simply handling and moving the buckets from place to place so that they can be cut, drilled and smoothed, so if anyone would like a bit of a work out on the mornings of the first or third Sundays in a month then please come along to the Mill.



Otherwise we still need people to do wonderful things with the garden. We are approaching that time of year when plants are dying back and need to be cleared onto the compost heap and new plants put in for Spring, so if you could help we would very much appreciate it. There is tea, coffee and biscuits on the work Sunday mornings and, thanks to the generosity of the wife of one of the Team, sometimes even cake.



We are often asked on Open Days how we get the wheat up to the stone floor and some people notice the sack hanging outside the Mill. We have recently obtained a stock of wheat from our supplier, Hill Farm, and the photo shows how we lift it. The bins are filled with wheat and are then hauled up using an electric hoist. We obtained a proper sack hoist many years ago but did not have the room to install it so donated it to another mill that was being renovated. There is a lot of manhandling of the bins so nowadays we don't fill them completely. They still contain around 70 lbs, which is a traditional bushel and a peck.

Malcolm Connell

Disengaging – and Recruiting

VIGILANT READERS of the Newsletter may have noticed in recent months that the compilation of “Planning This Quarter”, previously wholly undertaken by regular Planning Correspondent, Chris Woodman, has been devolved to other members of the Planning Group. Chris has also announced that he wishes to scale down his Society activities in other areas.

Email recipients will soon miss his distinctive reminders of our forthcoming events, a service he has been providing since around 2000. Who will take his place? (Are there any volunteers out there who would like to give it a go?)

Chris is also stepping down from overseeing newsletter delivery, a job he first took on in 1998 and which has evolved to include: being the first to see each printed edition while taking delivery of about 400 paper copies direct from the Printer; generating hand-delivery lists and covering letters for a hierarchy of 30 postmen; addressing and stuffing envelopes for about 70 members who need to receive their copies by Royal Mail.; emailing to another 60



members who opt to receive their copies electronically, and to other lists of recipients (currently under review); and also taking a bundle of hard copies to WDC offices, with the appropriate covering letter, to go in the pigeon-holes of those District Councillors who are not members of the Society.

Chris says that in order to ensure a smooth handover, his successor will need to be reasonably happy using Excel. He is willing to lend a helping hand as necessary and is also happy to remain in his role as one of the senior postmen.

Jackie Kay

Tribute to Lord Carrington (1919-2018)

THERE HAVE BEEN numerous national and international tributes to Lord Carrington, who was born on 6th June 1919 and died on 9th July 2018, aged 99. Although I was an official in the Foreign Office on the day he resigned in 1982 over Falklands this tribute will focus on Lord Carrington's contribution to the local scene. There has been much praise for his principled resignation, particularly in the House of Lords. Suffice to say that Lord Carrington was one of the most respected Foreign Secretaries the FCO has known.

Lord C (as he was known) followed in the long tradition of his ancestors, who had been generous benefactors to High Wycombe and involved in local politics, representing the Borough in Parliament at different times from 1832. The family left High Wycombe when Daws Hill Lodge was sold to Wycombe Abbey in 1929. In 1946 Lord and Lady Carrington moved to Bledlow Manor, part of the Carrington estates, restored the house and jointly developed the gardens, which are regularly opened to the public and for charity fund raising events. Later they created The Lyde, a sunken water garden, opposite the Manor, which is also open to the public.

In 1945 Lord C was elected to Bucks County Council and became Treasurer of the High Wycombe Conservative Association. He was also appointed a magistrate. Despite his demanding national and international obligations Lord C did not forget his family's close ties with High Wycombe. He took an interest in local developments and was present at local events. In April 2011 he wrote the foreword to the Society's publication "Wycombe Pioneers of Progress", known as "The Wycombe Worthies", one of whom was his great grandfather Robert Smith. In it he noted that it was "a timely reminder of how much we owe to our Forebears in laying the foundations - educational, industrial, social and religious - of which we are the fortunate heirs." Lord C joins that illustrious band of past Wycombe Worthies.

Along with the Wycombe Abbey estate went the advowson (patronage) of All Saints Parish Church, which gives the Patron a role in the appointment of the Vicar. The family vault lies behind the clergy vestry, where the first Lord Carrington was interred in 1838. It is possible that Peter Carrington will also be buried there. In a conversation with him on Carrington history I commented as a member of All Saints choir that on a Sunday we processed over the memorial stone to the first Lord Carrington, which is the entrance to the family vault. He responded, "I hope you wipe the soles (souls?) of your shoes before you do so". He then said

there was one space left in the vault which he thought he might at some point occupy.

On 15th June 2012, as Patron of All Saints, Lord C hosted a dinner in the church to launch a fund-raising appeal to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. We had seated him in the ornate armchair that the chair manufacturers of High Wycombe had presented to his great uncle on the occasion of his marriage in 1878, and which became the Mayor's Chair in 1929. With typical modesty Lord C said he could not possibly sit in the chair, it now belonged to the Mayor, who was then obliged to sit in it. Recounting a sermon to which his great grandfather had taken exception on the theme "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" Lord C concluded that "when you get out your cheque books don't be put off by the difficulties of either the camel or the rich man".

Lord C's last appearance at All Saints was probably on 19th May 2015 when he attended a service to remember the 500 Wycombe men who did not return from WW1. The date was the 100th anniversary of the death following the Battle of Ypres of Viscount Wendover, whose memorial is in All Saints. Aged 20 he was the son and direct heir of Lord Carrington's great uncle, the Marquis of Lincolnshire. Before the service Lord C had officially opened the New War Office Gates on the Rye to commemorate WW1 - an event that was organised by the High Wycombe Society, Wycombe Abbey and WDC (see my article in summer 2015 Newsletter). At that event he introduced me to various guests as "Mr Snoxell, who knows more about the history of my family than I do".

What I shall most remember about Lord Carrington was his puckish sense of humour, down to earth human touch which enabled him to relate to anyone at any level and his courtesy and consideration towards those he met.

David Snoxell



Golden Anniversary Event

IT SEEMS ABSURD now, but when we first contacted Wycombe Abbey about the feasibility of holding a Golden Anniversary Celebratory Event on their premises, we worried about whether we would be able to sell enough tickets to make it worthwhile, and what we would do if it was teeming with rain. To justify the reservation of 'Big School', the hall that was built by the third Lord Carrington as a playroom for his daughters, required a sizeable attendance. The staff at Wycombe Abbey worked with us to ensure we had plans for most contingencies, but we all relaxed when the tickets went on sale and started selling well.

Once the level of interest became apparent, we chose also to offer welcoming pre-lunch drinks in the Fisher library, a room named in honour of Miss Fisher, whose portrait hangs there. Appropriately enough she was the headmistress of Wycombe Abbey at the time of the Rye Protection Society activities. The road which would have crossed the corner of the Rye, would also have passed very close to the front of Wycombe Abbey school.

Among those who bought tickets for the event were some who could remember our town from 50 years ago. Lorna Cassidy had been present at a meeting of the Wycombe Arts Association held in the Guildhall on 27th November 1968 which could be said to be the official moment the Society came into being. A copy of her sketch from that meeting was one of the exhibits on display; an embroidered Society banner of uncertain age, preserved over a number of decades by Lorna, also greeted guests as they entered Big School for lunch.

The Society Timeline, first created by Ann Simone to celebrate our fortieth anniversary, and extended to include more recent events, was laid out on exhibition boards along one side of the hall. Sadly, Ann could not attend the event as she was detained in hospital.

Old photographs of High Wycombe from the Society archives were projected onto a screen, and the strains of Glenn Miller's music in the background reminded attendees that his band had performed at Wycombe Abbey in 1942 shortly before his disappearance.

The caterers had devised an imaginative menu to fit the theme of the occasion, with food

elements drawn from each of the past five decades culminating in the dessert, a so-called "Wycombe Tidy", a deconstructed Eton Mess.

After lunch, I invited the Mayor of High Wycombe and our President, Stuart King, to cut our Birthday cake, while our pianist, Clifton Hughes, himself a former resident of High Wycombe, challenged all present to recognise the various composers whose styles were included in his medley on the theme of "Happy Birthday".

Taking a keen interest in the music at the event was local legend, Peter Goodwin, whose career included the production of dozens of operas and concerts in High Wycombe. I had rehearsed and played under his baton on two occasions in my teens.

All attendees were invited to take part in a singsong, with familiar tunes but with words adapted by the late Eric Alexander. It was a special moment for long-standing Society member, Frances Alexander who took the microphone to lead the singing of "Coming

Through the Rye", a tribute to our Society's founding Secretary, Jack Scruton. Our President then introduced and led the singing of another local song "Jurkins of Wycombe", a cheerful lament of a disgruntled chairmaker.

By then, the organisers were aware that we were running badly behind the intended schedule and would not be able to fit everything in as planned, but participants seemed to be enjoying themselves. There was a very high take-up on offers of short guided tours of the school and there were other sources of entertainment for those who remained in Big School.



Above: In the Fisher library with the portrait of Miss Fisher.

Photo: Peter Sadd

Below: 'Big School' with the Shelburne Pew at the far end - Timeline down left hand side; .

Photo: Stuart King



I had intended, if time permitted, to give a guided tour of the ceiling in Big School, a subject which has fascinated me for some time, but I had also produced a leaflet for people to study at their own pace. Spare copies of this leaflet will be available at future Society events.

Photos of various highlights from the past 10 years of the Society were projected onto the large screen. Souvenirs of Wycombe Abbey were on sale and, thanks to David Snoxell's research for the Wycombe Pioneers of Progress project back in 2011, there were exhibition panels about a former Wycombe Abbey Resident, the 2nd Lord Carrington.



A Birthday Cake made by Gemma Brittain

Photo: Stuart King

A "poetry corner" displayed a number of contributions from Society members, including a poem written specially for the occasion by Eileen Walters, reproduced below. There was also an opportunity to take part in a challenging "fun picture quiz" previously displayed at one of our public meetings.

The afternoon concluded with tea and cake back in the Fisher library, where five lucky ticket holders were to discover they had won prizes in the draw. The organisers judged the event a success by the reluctance of people to leave.

Jackie Kay

Caring about our Town A Poem by Eileen Walters

FOR FIFTY YEARS through joy and tears

They've kept an eye upon the Rye
And rail and road and traffic load.
As Council met they'd screen and vet
Plans and schemes on assorted themes.
Giving their views in many hues.
Brownfield or green, much planning seen.
Select, approve, object, remove.
Keeping the best, veto the rest.
Playing this part is from the heart.

Past

Before they came and made a name,
Heritage lost at dire cost.
But since, much saved, the losses staved.
To contemplate a different fate
For our dear town would make us frown.
So let's rejoice that with loud voice
They cried "Restore that mill of yore!"
With Sparky's aid a start they made,
Rebuilt Pann Mill and work it still,
Make wholemeal flour by water power.

Present

So much to do for me and you.
Are river and air foul or fair?
Footpaths to ply or say goodbye.
Conserve what's left or be bereft.
That lion of red needs care ahead.
One way or two? Please give your view.
Some may still try to spoil the Rye.
Fearlessly dare to show we care.
Let's shout aloud and say "We're proud
of this, our town don't run it down."

And Future

Though re-arranged and members changed.
Worthily named, forebears acclaimed,
If days ahead bring joy or dread,
Courageous, strong, fighting the wrong.
Following through, resolve anew.
That watchful eye as time goes by.
Still gives this place a fairer face.
For years to come may High Wycombe
Remember you, give credit to

**THE HIGH WYCOMBE
SOCIETY!**

Walking with Willie

TO MARK our 50th anniversary celebrations I thought it would be interesting to offer short history walks of High Wycombe to primary schools in the local area. Four schools took up the offer, sending a total of 6 classes comprising Years 5 and 6.

What really impressed me was the fact that all four schools walked the children to the start at Pann Mill. And for Loudwater Combined that is a fair distance. It was also notable that the same three teachers from Godstowe were present for the three walks that school did on the same day on one of the hottest days of the year.

Their reaction was very positive: that the walks had been fantastic, enjoyable and informative and that the children enjoyed learning about

their local town. And one teacher went as far as to say that though she had lived in Wycombe all her life she was shocked at how little she knew!

My last scheduled free guided walking tour of High Wycombe for all ages this year will be on Saturday 20th October, leaving from the museum in Priory Avenue at 10.15. No need to book - just turn up!

Willie Reid

Society Nostalgia – Can you help?

FOLLOWING OUR RECENT event at Wycombe Abbey, I spoke with Bucks Free Press Nostalgia Columnist and Society Member, Mike Dewey, about the possibility of covering our “real” Society Golden Anniversary later this year in his Nostalgia column.

Readers of Mike’s weekly forays into aspects of our local heritage will know that, as well as his regular Nostalgia page, he now assembles a “PicMontage” page with five pictures typically of groups of people. These often provoke readers to write in with their reminiscences of the occasions on which the photographs were taken.

Prompted by Mike I have been searching through our Society archives to see what images we hold of Society members doing things together. Sad to relate, we only have to step back a few years to find a frustrating and disappointing situation in which very few images have been captured and preserved. We have a relatively good narrative record in the form of our newsletter archive and of course, not all activities lend themselves to visual images, but even those photos that

have survived, such as this delightful picture of a tree-planting, are not well documented. I recognised Jack Scruton and a couple of the onlookers. But where and when did the event take place? Are you in the picture or do you know more about it?



Jack Scruton plants a tree, observed by other Society members. Where? When? And Were you there?

Photo: SWOP ref. HWS:50006

I would like to offer some material to Mike for both his nostalgia page and his “PicMontage” page, but I need your help. Do you have photos of past activities of the Society in which you have been involved which you would like to share more

widely? What in your opinion have been the main achievements of the Society in the past fifty years? Are any of them caught on camera?

Jackie Kay

HALIFAX CRASH 1942 - Update

THE ACCOUNT in the Summer Edition of the Society Newsletter of a crash of a Halifax Bomber in the vicinity of Green Farm in 1942 prompted Society member Ann Hildesley to get in touch. Although too young to have a first-hand recollection of the incident, her parents were living in Green Lane at the time and were able to talk to her about it. Apparently, there was a sound just like ripping fabric, Ann’s father donned his ARP helmet and went down the lane to investigate but could not approach the burning wreckage as bullets were firing off. Dr. Woods-Brown who was there, said nobody on board could have survived the crash. The only casualties were some sixty chickens owned by farmers Len and Fred Asprey. Some years later when Deans built property there they did find some small pieces of aeroplane windscreen.

Information supplied by Ann Hildesley and Dave Scott

A problem with your underwear?

IF YOU'RE LIKE ME, you buy most of your underwear at our local M&S store at the Eden Centre. Too much information? Sorry – but there's a reason I mention this! What if the M&S store closed? It might be one of the two 'anchor stores' at Eden, which is industry slang for the biggest, most important and visible shops in the retail centre. But nonetheless, neither is immune from the chronic influenza that's afflicting the British High Street.

At the time of writing, Sports Direct entrepreneur Mike Ashley has swung into action and bought House of Fraser. He's announced that the flagship Oxford Street store will remain open, and time will tell if the High Wycombe branch will also survive.

Meanwhile, profits fell at M&S as a whole by 64% last year, down to £176.4m. Chairman Archie Norman wants to sell at least one third of its stock online within five years, and plans to reduce costs by closing 100 stores by then. Seven closed this August, including Northampton, which boasted a M&S shop for a whopping 111 years.

I explain this so that we understand that High Wycombe is vulnerable. The above stores in our town are pretty empty during the week, when I tend to pop in. This won't encourage the would-be cost-cutters to keep their doors open.



When did you last visit Slough? I did, just for fun, a few months ago. It was dire. M&S closed

its doors a couple of years back, and the High Street is home only to tat and bargain shops now. As Betjeman once remarked, "it isn't fit for humans now".

At the risk of sounding like I'm being paid by these retailers, I beg you to think about shopping in person, from these (and other) shops

in our town. What we really don't want, I promise you, is to become like Slough. Think twice about ordering your undies, or books, or anything else online if you're able to support our local hard-pressed retailers. HWBIDCO often promotes the independent shops and cafes in town, and rightly so. But please support the big boys too – or they won't be there to supply that underwear that you and I like so much!

Heather Morley

MAKING THEIR DEBUT at our Pann Mill Open Day in September will be a couple of new designs of cards for sale. They depict the most well-known architectural features of our High Street: the Guildhall and the Little Market House, as captured in water-colour paintings by Tony Mealing. Short narratives on the back of each card give some details about the buildings and their respective architects. Tony has painted many scenes of the Town Centre and has given the Society permission to reproduce them. It is hoped to bring out a booklet at a later date. Our thanks both to Tony Mealing for his creative contribution and also to Heather Morley, who has undertaken the necessary work to bring this first offering to fruition. All proceeds will go to the High Wycombe Society.

Algernon's Autumnal Challenge

HIGH WYCOMBE residents will be celebrating the promotion of our football team, Wycombe Wanderers, to the Football League Division One.

Those who choose to follow our team to away matches, will have the opportunity to visit some places around the country with interesting historic and cultural connections.

Here is a quiz, to extend your knowledge of some of the towns where our mighty Chairboys will be playing this season.

1. The products of which town's brickworks were used in the construction of the Empire State Building?
2. Which town boasted the first Wurlitzer theatre organ in Great Britain, and has a concrete hippopotamus on public display?

3. Which town's football ground is named to reflect the town's industrial heritage and the past use of the actual site?
4. On which town's coat of arms are the devil's toenails depicted?
5. Which town is twinned with the birthplace of King Henry VIII's first wife?

The answers are all towns (or cities) that have a football team in the English League One.

Algernon

(Answers at the foot of Page 10)

Footpaths – Find them or lose them

ANYONE WHO has tried to walk round Wycombe recently will know what a nightmare the current road works and redevelopments are. Along Suffield Road pedestrian crossings have been closed and footpaths diverted, so at the time of writing there is no safe walking route to the hospital from the centre of town. I hope this situation will be speedily resolved.

In spite of the difficulties, we have walked all the footpaths in another part of Wycombe this Summer. We have covered the area to the South and East of the town centre, including the paths down the hill from Daws Hill Lane past the new developments, and those around Kings Mead and the Retail Park, Mickfield and Totteridge. Our furthest excursion involved taking the bus to Penn and then following the public Rights of Way back across Cock Lane and through Gomms Wood. While last year the weather was kind to us, recent outings have either been in torrential rain (May) or searing heat (June/July). We dripped dry in Pizza Hut at the Retail Park in May and enjoyed being cooled down by the ferocious air conditioning on the first floor of The Vanilla Pod more recently.

In our travels we have seen much wildlife, including clouds of butterflies in the fields near Abbey Barn Lane, identified some rickety stiles and found a water leak which we reported on our return.



A white marbled butterfly encountered near Abbey Barn Lane.
Photo: Peter Sadd



An all-too familiar sign during roadworks

Photo Peter Sadd

While the routes have all been walkable, we have identified other paths which are clearly in regular use, but are not included on the definitive map. Some of these are on open spaces and may not be at immediate risk, but could be vulnerable to changes in ownership or policy in the future. Several form essential links between recorded Rights of Way and may need protection. I have a list of possible anomalies

to follow up over the winter.



Confusing signs in the vicinity of Saffron Road

Photo: Jackie Kay

On Saffron Road there are several Right of Way notices which appear to encourage you to walk through a locked gate into a private garden. My first thought was that the main signpost had just been turned round, but checking old maps it seems that the situation is more complicated than that and the wooden signs could refer to an old path which was in use before Easton Terrace was built. It became redundant following the development of various streets in the area, which provide a much easier walking route.

Val Hinkins

Answers to Algernon's Autumnal Challenge (see p9)

1. Accrington, Lancashire – from the town's NORI (iron) brickworks.
2. Walsall
3. Sunderland – the Stadium of Light, on the site of the former Wearmouth Colliery.
4. Scunthorpe – these are fossil remains of oysters found in the rock strata from which ironstone was quarried.
5. Peterborough, twinned with Alcala de Henares in Spain, birthplace of Catherine of Aragon.

Trees – Ancient and Modern

TREES ARE SUCH a defining feature of our town that they are forever topical. We are told that Disraeli liked to plant them. The local furniture industry was dependent on their abundance in our local woods. And our own archives show, that tree-planting used to be a regular activity of the Society even if we seem to have lost track of some of those we planted. (see p8)

In Planning, special consideration is given to mature trees with preservation orders, while past projects have encouraged people to identify trees of special interest.

Wycombe recently made national headlines when developers, keen to increase the density of new developments in our town, challenged the value of stipulating a target tree canopy coverage (of 25%).

Also regularly featuring in planning matters, most recently up at Terriers, are appeals for protection of areas of Ancient Woodland.

In November, we will join Wycombe Wildlife Group in welcoming Ted Green, Founder and President of the Ancient Tree Forum, as a speaker who can be expected to tell us why this is so important.

Do you know which are the most ancient trees in or near our town? The answer is not straightforward as different species are deemed to become ancient at different ages. Disraeli's Wellingtonia may be some of the tallest around but they are still in their youth.

Jackie Kay

High Wycombe Film Society Films

AT OUR AGM, our President, Stuart King, explained how we have recently become the guardians of a collection of films which used to belong to the now-defunct High Wycombe Film Society. Most of the films are in 16mm format. Stuart has been consulting a number of experts on the best way forward to conserve the films and also to utilise their contents.

He has compiled a list of the films (based on what it says on the tins) and now has a rough idea of the likely cost involved in producing digital versions of them. The trustees will soon be considering the best way of financing any future actions and would be interested to hear views from members.

Some of you will remember the regular "History of High Wycombe" film shows which John Smithson used to run, so will have some idea

of some of the contents. We are particularly interested in those that clearly have a direct bearing on our town's history and heritage.

We are also keen to establish if there are any duplicate copies of any of the films that may already have been digitised. If you have any information that you think would be useful to Stuart in his ongoing work, please get in touch.

Jackie Kay

Hughenden Gardens Village

IN THE AUTUMN 2016 edition of the *Newsletter*, Chris Woodman outlined the developments which were set to transform the so-called 'Hughenden Quarter'. He observed the "daunting steelwork" of a new construction, destined to become a 'Retirement Village'. A copy of that edition of the Newsletter was donated to ExtraCare to be preserved in a Time Capsule buried within the surrounding garden. Since then, we have all seen the building take shape and the 'village' opened its doors to residents on schedule earlier this year.

While some Society members have not yet had occasion to venture inside, others were among the first to move in as residents. We also had the pleasure earlier in the year of welcoming some residents as new members of the Society.

On **Wednesday 12th December at 2 p.m.** there will be a special opportunity for Society Members to join with Hughenden Gardens Village residents in an informal pre-Christmas get-together with mulled wine and mince pies. First-time visitors to the village will have an opportunity to take a guided tour of the

complex to see at first hand what it is like to live there. Residents who may be new to the area will have an opportunity to meet members of the High Wycombe Society, and to have some fun while learning about the Society and our town.

There is a free on-site car park and a nearby bus stop in Hughenden Road. (300 route to Aylesbury) or level walk from the bus station. If driving, the entrance is in Hughenden Boulevard just past the Spindle and Thread pub.

Notices

Free Park and Ride – did you know?

While the Works Compound is in Railway Place carpark, the Park and Ride service from Cressex is free of charge to help compensate for the reduction in parking capacity?

Until further notice, you can enjoy free travel from High Wycombe Coachway to Wycombe Town Centre all day on Mondays to Fridays. This is jointly funded by WDC, BCC and TVLEP. The offer is available for single or return trips from the High Wycombe Coachway bus stop only. Normal fares apply from other stops along the route and on Saturdays. Parking is also free of charge at High Wycombe Coachway.

Just ask your driver for a “zero value ticket” for your journey. Concessionary pass and rail ticket holders should present their passes as normal.

Wycombe Lotto

Just a reminder that the Society is registered as a good cause with Wycombe Lotto, WDC’s online Lottery. See www.wycombelotto.co.uk for further details of how to take part, or phone 01494 578444 if you would like to take part by setting up payment over the phone.

Volunteering Opportunities

We have recently revamped the Volunteering sections of our Society website and encourage you to take a look. Just go to:

www.highwycombesociety.org.uk and click on “Volunteering” on the top ribbon.

If you think you could help with any of the roles described there, please either follow the instructions to contact online – or speak to one of the organisers at any of our events.

Contributions Please.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue of the Newsletter. Please send material for the next edition addressed to me, Jackie Kay, as The Editor at 19 Hepplewhite Close, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 6BZ (Tel: 01494 534876), or preferably by email to:

newslettereditor@highwycombesociety.org.uk

All contributions to the next edition must be received by **20th November 2018**

You can also get in touch with the Editorial Team via the Society’s facebook page.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Put these dates in your diary now!!!

2018	
Sunday 16 th September	Pann Mill Open Day
Saturday 28 th September	Bucks Local History Conference – a Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society event. The theme this year is the archaeological finds along the route of HS2. The Society will have a small display at this event.
Friday 12 th October The Riverside 7.30 p.m.	Talk – by Dave Scott on George Holt Thomas’s contribution to aviation. Copies of the recently published book about George Holt Thomas reviewed in the Summer newsletter will be available for purchase.
Saturday 13 th October Aylesbury Town Council Offices, Church St 10 a.m.	ANTAS AGM The Association of North Thames Amenity Societies.
Saturday 20 th October 10 15 a.m. start at Wycombe Museum	Last chance in 2018 to take part in one of Willie Reid’s Guided walks around High Wycombe. All welcome. No need to book. Note: any proceeds from this event go to www.streetkidsdirect.org.uk
Monday 19 th November Trinity United Reformed Church 7.30 for 7.45 pm	Co-hosted by Wycombe Wildlife Group. Guest Speaker: Ted Green MBE, Founder of the Ancient Tree Forum. (See p11) Please note there is a small charge of £2 for attending this meeting.
December	The Society’s planned trip to Leighton Buzzard light railway has been postponed until the Summer of 2019.
Wednesday 12 th December Hughenden Gardens Village 2 p.m.	Pre-Christmas get-together with mulled wine and mince pies. See p11 for further details of this event, which is at an early stage of planning. Would-be volunteers to help at this event should contact Eileen.