



High Wycombe Society

SECRETARY: J SCRUTON 17 LONDON ROAD HIGH WYCOMBE BUCKS
Telephone 25933

NEWSLETTER NO. 30 - AUTUMN 1976

EIGHT YEARS OLD

Formed in November 1968, the Society is now eight years old, and we feel that we have achieved a good deal during that time. The Society has increased in numbers slowly, but surely, and has attracted considerable support from many organisations in the town. The work load has certainly increased, and we have become involved in a wide variety of activities. Perhaps our principal ones can be summarised thus:-

Widespread correspondence with many official bodies, Societies and individuals.

Frequent attendance at Public Inquiries.

Practical work for the community in clearing woodlands, rivers and ponds, and in carrying out projects such as helping with the preparation of children's playgrounds, creating gardens, and organising tree planting schemes.

Arranging group and quarterly meetings covering many topics associated with the work of the Society.

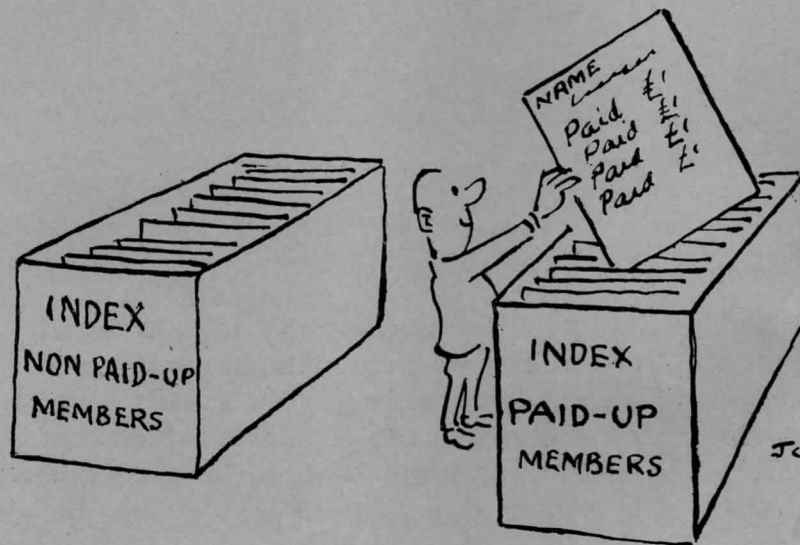
Work in separate Groups to deal with Planning, Trees and Woodlands, Rivers and Water Features, Historic Buildings, and Conservation Area problems.

Preparing a succession of highly successful exhibitions.

Preparing and distributing a quarterly Newsletter of high standard.

Arranging a series of social activities which have given great pleasure.

Although we seem to be a successful Amenity Society, your Executive Committee is rather worried. It will be impossible to keep up these activities and many others unless our financial situation is a healthy one. Ours is not! We depend almost entirely on the payment of subscriptions by members and affiliated Societies. The money is vital - and so is the confidence which a large paid-up membership can give to the Executive Committee.



PUT YOURSELF IN THE RIGHT GROUP.

With this Newsletter is enclosed a reminder to those who have not yet paid their subscriptions. We need this help urgently, so we ask all the members and affiliated Societies concerned to respond to this appeal, so that the Society can continue and expand its work for the community of High Wycombe and District.

Ted Kearney
Chairman.

PLANNING GROUP

Terriers Farm - Public Inquiry

The Public Inquiry into the recent application for permission to build 140 houses on some 11 acres of Terriers Farm lasted 4 days, during which 11 witnesses gave evidence, with the Chiltern and High Wycombe Societies appearing in support of the District Council, who opposed the application. The Report issued on the earlier H.7 Inquiry was not an easy starting point for the opposition, but it was pointed out that those who in 1973 clamoured for the release of ever more land in rural areas for the housing of Londoners have been proved wrong, in as much as the G.L.C. itself now wants its people back.

We were fortunate in having as a witness Mr. Jeff Hawkins, who spoke with supreme authority, and who pointed out that the land was good farming land, and that if there was a demand for houses, there was also a demand for farms; not to speak of the pressing National need for more home food production. The loss of 11 acres of farm land may seem insignificant on a National scale, but so is the addition to the National stock of a mere 140 houses. One must always compare comparables. What one must ask in this context is whether the loss of 11 acres of irreplaceable, good farm land can be justified by the gain of 140 houses, which in any case need not be built in that particular location.

One final point was the obvious fact that this proposed development would merely be a beginning, by establishing a bridgehead into the open country west of Kingshill Road, and there is no knowing where it might end.

We await the decision with grave concern.

Housing Development at Cressex

The District Council have published their new proposal for housing development at Cressex, and have circulated this to all residents of Cressex Road, inviting them to comment within 28 days. They do not seem to invite objections from anyone else. Nevertheless, the High Wycombe Society will object, in no uncertain terms. We are not only supporting the Cressex and District Residents' Association in this objection, but we think that the development as now proposed will be bad for the town. We also object to the procedure adopted, which, if allowed, would deprive the public of their proper rights.

Planning Control

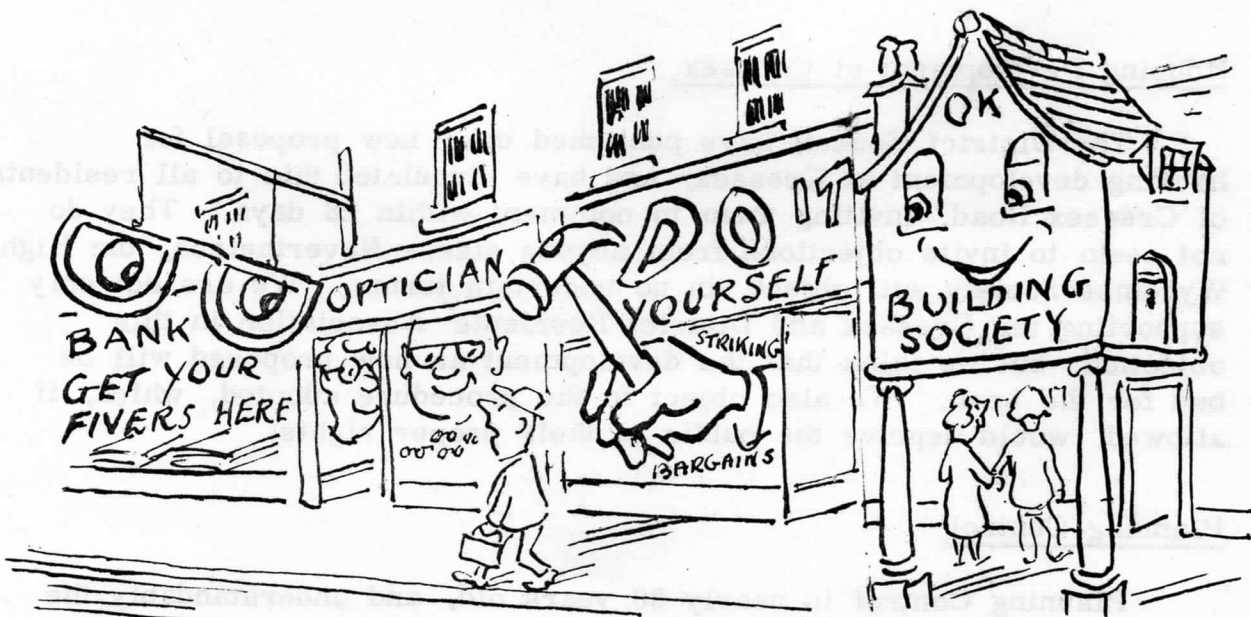
Planning Control is nearly 30 years old, and understandably the mandarins are getting restless. They commissioned Sir George Dobry Q.C. to review the system, hoping, no doubt, that he would infuse some fresh excitement into a job which must to some of them seem as dreary by now as issuing dog licences. To his credit, Sir George did not propose any brilliant and suitably expensive innovations, but observed that on the whole the system worked satisfactorily. To work off their frustration, some other initiative was called for. There can be no other explanation for proposals recently issued by the Department of the Environment for discussion to amend the General Development Order.

These proposals certainly stirred up some excitement. The Civic Trust collected comments from many interested parties, including the High Wycombe Society, and submitted a memorandum to the Department of the Environment collating the replies received. They were uniformly unfavourable to the main proposals.

The details are rather forbidding, but the objections are obvious even to the inexperienced. Two examples must suffice:-

It is proposed that planning control over new shop fronts should be scrapped, even in Conservation Areas - for administrative convenience, and;

that District Councils may declare - by local Development Orders - that any specified type of development (or, as I read it, and if they so wish, all types of development!) shall be allowed in their area without the need of planning permission - again for administrative convenience.



What a scenario!

Walter Kraft.

West Central Area, High Wycombe

The District Council, looking ahead to the new Local Plan which will determine the character and pattern of the town, have made proposals to control the situation in the West Central Area until such time as the Plan is in use. The Council feel that this area needs priority of attention, and we think most people would agree with them. The area concerned stretches from the edge of the Octagon to Chapel

Lane, and from West Wycombe Road to the edge of the newer residential development on the valley sides to the south.

They have divided the territory into four zones, and they have suggested a policy for each one. They hope to achieve a relatively harmonious balance between industry and housing, to improve the housing stock, and to improve environmental conditions generally, especially where there are noise and other industrial problems. The main aim is to prevent any further deterioration in the area, and to bring about improvements where possible during the interim period before the creation of the Local Plan.

They hope to succeed in these aims by the monitoring of planning applications, ensuring that they conform with the interim policy. We feel that it is a sensible plan, but we have suggested that in some instances more positive action may be needed, especially in places which are under Council control. We have drawn particular attention to the River Wye which runs through the area and could be improved. We have also drawn attention to the need to screen the ugly open car parks. We have asked that the mammoth open car park against the Octagon be included in the scheme and that serious consideration be given to the establishment of housing there, especially for old people in view of its central position.

Noise

As mentioned in our last Newsletter, we hope to publish information about the means which are available to combat noise. Local industry is often in conflict with nearby householders and the following extract may be of interest to those who suffer from industrial noise.

Applications for Planning Permission

The Department of the Environment has asked local authorities to take into account the probable effects of noise when considering applications for planning permission. Permission for any form of development can be the subject of conditions to prevent or minimise noise disturbance. Working can, for example, be restricted to particular times, the use of noisy tools can be regulated and requirements about noise barriers can be made.

All applications for planning permission are recorded in the local planning register, which is open to public inspection.

Local authorities are required to publicise some applications for noisy developments. In other cases where new developments will substantially affect neighbouring property, local authorities have been asked to notify neighbours of the application, either individually, or by posting of site notices.



" FOR GOODNESS SAKE TURN IT DOWN. I CAN'T TELL WHETHER THERE'S ANY OUTSIDE NOISE OR NOT. "

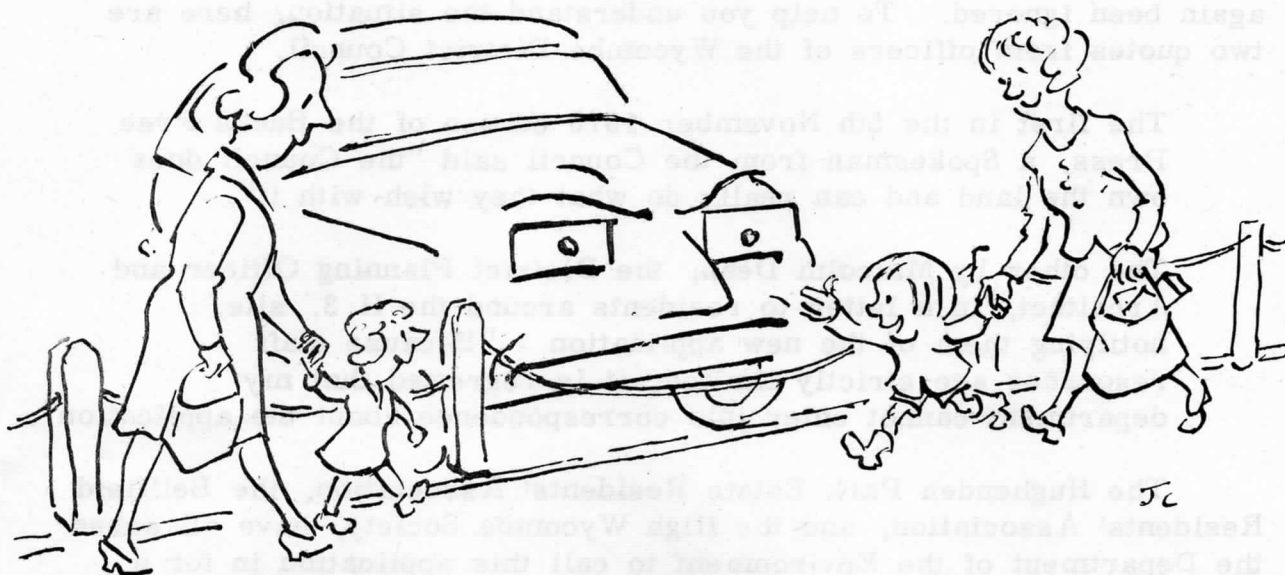
Any objections to a proposed development should be sent to the local planning department. If permission for the development is refused and the applicant then appeals to the appropriate Secretary of State against the refusal, the local authority will advise you how to make your objections known to the Secretary of State.

Traffic in the Town Centre

Members of the Society and of Affiliated Societies will have seen the publicity about the current proposals to restrict traffic in the Town Centre, and some may have made their comments to the County Engineer.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is the pamphlet explaining the scheme, and a reply form for comments. We urge all our members and Hon. Secretaries of Affiliated Societies to complete and return the reply form to the County Engineer as soon as possible. If you have already made your comments, please pass the pamphlet and reply form to a friend or neighbour.

The objectives of the schemes are very much in line with the Society's proposals, and we hope everybody in the town and district will support them. It is time our Town Centre became a more civilised place, with greater freedom to walk and shop. It has been shown that in the numerous schemes carried out in this country, and throughout Europe, that the whole community benefits, including the shop keepers!



Planning Watchdog

Mrs. Cassidy is now unable to carry on as our Planning Watchdog. We need someone urgently to continue this vital job! If any member with a little spare time would like to help in this way, I would be most grateful if he or she could get in touch with me. Any volunteer could sample the job for a limited period before making any commitment.

Rosemary Shooter
Tel: High Wycombe 26964.

H.3. - Land to the north of the A.40 at West Wycombe Road

The District Council have recently applied to themselves for permission to build on part of the H.3. site. The application states that 301 houses with associated roads are to be constructed on approximately 10 hectares of the site at its Western end.

We are very unhappy with this application, as piecemeal development of this very important site will almost certainly result in yet another planning disaster. In preparing this plan, the District Council have ignored the important conditions on the outline document, together with the recommendations made for the site in the High Wycombe and District Planning Review. This application has angered the people of Downley and Bellfield because, if passed, it will mean that the heavy construction traffic will have to gain access to the site via their estate roads, as the A.40 access will not be available until later, if at all.

In reading this report you may wonder why public opinion has again been ignored. To help you understand the situation, here are two quotes from officers of the Wycombe District Council.

The first in the 5th November 1976 edition of the Bucks Free Press, a Spokesman from the Council said "the Council does own the land and can really do what they wish with it".

The other by Malcolm Dean, the District Planning Officer and Architect, in a letter to residents around the H.3. site, notifying them of the new application - "Because staff resources are strictly limited, it is regretted that my department cannot enter into correspondence about the application".

The Hughenden Park Estate Residents' Association, the Bellfield Residents' Association, and the High Wycombe Society, have all asked the Department of the Environment to call this application in for a Public Inquiry.

Ian Stone
Chairman,
Bellfield Residents' Assn.

The Place of Bucks in the South-East Planning Strategy

The Society has received a booklet from the Department of the Environment, notifying us of a report just published by the "South East Joint Planning Team", which updates the 1970 Strategic Plan for the South-East. The Society intends to buy a copy of the report, on which comments have been invited by 14th January. As summarised in the booklet, the report should be of interest to people in Wycombe in the following respects:-

1. The strategy now assumes minimal population growth in the region as a whole, within which context it seeks to stem, if not reverse, the outflow from London to other parts of the region.
2. It reiterates the growth areas proposed in 1970 - Milton Keynes and Aylesbury, but not Wycombe.
3. It similarly re-affirms the 1970 "areas of restraint", which include the Chilterns.
4. Regarding other areas, the following quotations give an indication:-

"Development.....should so far as possible take place within the growth areas indicated in the original Strategic Plan..... Nevertheless, it is recognised that some development will occur outside the growth areas indicated. This is partly because of commitments already in the pipeline, and partly because of the need to allow greater initiative to industry. Applications involving employment growth, whether of manufacturing or service industry, should have sympathetic consideration where there is a strong case for allowing such development and provided it is not inconsistent with other planning objectives".

There are also some comments on the transport network, on airport development and on planning organisation, which may be of interest to our members.

It will be interesting to see what effect the publication of this report will have on the preparation of the County's Structure Plan. The County Council set up a panel to revise the draft plan, and judging from the Bucks Free Press article on October 22nd, their revision gives the Society something to worry about, insofar as it proposes:-

- (a) that the population of Wycombe should be allowed to expand by 6,500 more than originally planned;
- (b) that housing provision should be increased by utilising "small sites of between one and four acres, which were not included in the draft plan";
- (c) that provision of council housing (the only way so far suggested of obtaining low-cost housing) should be left to the discretion of the District Councils (Wycombe District Council has just reduced its house-building programme from 600 to 230 per annum);
- (d) that there should be less drastic restrictions on the introduction of new employment - "The policy has been modified to allow manufacturing industry to prosper - providing it is specifically related to the needs and resources of the local community".

To my mind, this adds up to a "carry on as before" policy, i. e. lots more houses will be built, without even having the virtue of housing local people in need.

The panel's recommendations for revision of the draft Structure Plan go for approval to the full County Council meeting on November 25th.

Eric Alexander.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

Coltman's Old Shop - 29 High Street

We have considered what has happened to this old shop. The restorers found it was in a really shocking condition, and in the end the 18th Century front elevation was demolished. Of course, it had already been altered by means of 19th and 20th Century shop windows, but nevertheless, and in spite of the really excellent rebuilding that has taken place - a fine piece of reproductive craftsmanship - we regret the passing of the old colour washed building. We are glad to see that the attractive oil jars have been replaced; these are a survival from the past which are unique outside London. We are advised that the building needs washing over with cows' dung, as this has a mellowing effect and encourages the growth of lichens. The building certainly looks raw and new. Strangely, it seems to affect the appearance of Hamnett Raffety's next door.

Widmer Farm - Widmer End

Members of the Committee examined the farm and the plans for its restoration. The proposals are excellent. The new owner is expected to submit plans for the restoration of the barns and their conversion to housing of character.

5, 5A and 6 Paul's Row

We are pleased to see the Antiquarian Bookshop in Paul's Row. Its derelict neighbour is to be rebuilt in a style that will blend in with the bookshop.

No. 9 Castle Place

We have strongly opposed the application to alter the use of this house to offices. This little row should be kept for housing purposes. If the Parish Church is the Cathedral of South Bucks, this row is almost the Cathedral Close and just as important.

The Windsor Chair

Mr. Stuart King makes model Windsor chairs - that is, miniature reproductions of the many varieties of the chairs that have proved so popular over the past two centuries. On 27th September he brought them to the Friends' Meeting House, when he talked to the Group about the History of the Windsor Chair, linking it with the work of the Chair Bodgers and the use of many simple tools. Stuart is a master of his subject, and we were all fascinated by his talk and the beautiful examples of his work.

Jim Cottrell.

TREES GROUP



"THAT'S WHAT COMES OF PINCHING THEIR TREES"

Trees have had a critical year. Their two major difficulties have been the drought and treatment by man.

Established trees have found their own answer to the first by early leaf drop in many cases, thus having fewer leaves to feed and transpire from. How many leafless trees are actually dead will only be known next Spring. For many mature trees, last year's weather appears to have benefited them as is shown by the very heavy beech mast this year and abundance of nuts on hazel and oak. Many holly trees, Yew and Hawthorn are rich in berries. Ash and Horse Chestnut appear to have fruited less heavily than usual.

The second difficulty, man, trees are powerless to cope with and need all our protective help. Despite our strong protests, the Wycombe Abbey School, District Council and County Forestry Officer found no reason to object to the felling of 249 trees in the Abbey grounds, 57% of which were aged 50 years or more. These trees were felled in order to provide three additional lacrosse pitches to compensate the Abbey for loss of pitches when they sold an area of their land at Daws Lane for prestige housing. The matter has several disturbing aspects:-

1. The trees concerned were dismissed by the three authorities as being largely self-set, and therefore of no importance. Why? Self-set trees have grown in situ from seed, and therefore make fine, strong specimens at a young age. Transplanted trees of the same age take years to make good growth, needing all their vitality for many seasons to establish themselves. Witness weak saplings in plantations and street plantings.
2. Ignoring our protests, the District Planning Officer insisted on this planning application being placed on the non-controversial list, and as a result it was dealt with at a very late hour by a small number of very tired Councillors, the rest having gone home.
3. A Covenant was established when the Warren Wood estate was built behind the Rye on land sold by the Abbey to protect the grounds from further abuse. This Covenant appears to be a flimsy document, as it does not provide any protection for the trees in the Abbey grounds.

Mr. Roger Parker-Jervis, Chairman of the County Planning Committee, has implied that we prefer "the dead hand of Bureaucratic Preservation" to a proper rotation of trees. We pleaded for the retention of the trees, as they were part of a proper rotation. To destroy them was a piece of vandalism. What is needed urgently is a blanket Tree Preservation Order covering the Abbey woodlands.

Another area of grave concern is the H.3. area designated for housing north of the A.40 along West Wycombe Road. The Planning Application states no trees will be felled. The whole area is covered by young woodland emerging out of scrub. The Planning Application has not yet been heard, but a vast sweep has already been cleared in anticipation of approval. We have requested that the District Arboriculturalist be called in for advice on the trees remaining. Even small trees left in Groups will grow more quickly into trees of stature than semi-mature trees planted after the building of houses.

The Trees Group have had two delightful outings. The first to Langley Park, Slough, when we followed the excellent Nature Trail provided by the Bucks County Council. We were impressed by the stately line of Sequoia Wellingtonia, approximately 90 years old, by the many fine Turkey Oaks with their bristly acorn cups, and by the variety of birds, including Nuthatch, Bluetit and Coal Tit, which entertained us while we picnicked.

Cliveden was also a joy to visit and here the Pyramid Oaks, Lebanon Cedar in flower, and lines of Blue Atlas Cedar were a delight.

Both of these visits will be repeated next Spring. If you are interested, please get in touch with me.

We were very pleased to take part in a large scale planting of trees at Cressex School on Friday, 5th November. The trees came from our Nursery bed, and were paid for and planted by the pupils of the School, the whole operation superbly organised by Mrs. M. Stokes, a teacher at the School, and also a member of the Society. When fully grown they will do much to provide a wind break on this high terrain, and to break up the solid brick appearance of the buildings.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. Reg Davies for giving us the use of a plot of his land at Magpie Wood, Loudwater, for a Nursery bed. Understandably, Mr. Davies now needs this land, and we shall be glad therefore to hear if any of our members have a plot of land to spare for use as a Tree Nursery.

Progress continues with the small garden in Paul's Row. The wire netting is now moved from the front of the garden, thus opening the garden for public use. Our Plant Sale in September raised £18, which will be used to purchase a seat for the garden. The response to the Plant Sale was most encouraging, and the variety of garden plants available was surprising. We are very grateful indeed to Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Osborn and family, for generously giving us the use of their garden and their own time for the day, and to all who donated and bought plants.

Mr. R.H. Mills, of the National Trust, informs us that a clearing operation is planned for Little Tinkers Wood this Autumn. Mature Beech and Cherry will be taken out to promote the growth of younger saplings, in order to continue the life of the wood. Diseased Elm will be taken out and existing paths improved. Young Beech and Cherry will be planted as replacements between existing paths. The ride in the valley bottom will be widened and a new path created along the eastern edge to form a circular path back to the Disraeli Monument. The trees will be taken out via Coates Lane.

Barbara Rippington.
Tel: High Wycombe 26616.

WATER GROUP

The Group met on Saturday, 18th September, to take advantage of the dry river bed to clear Back Stream along the Rye from the waterfall to Keep Hill Road. The sun shone on our activities, and the job was speedily completed. The Council have recently dredged this very attractive section of the river and removed a fair quantity of reeds, and now, happily the stream is flowing again. Incidentally, the fresh water springs further down Back Stream did not stop erupting throughout the drought, and more than one gardener took advantage of the fact!

This last clearance had whetted our appetite and further clearances are being planned. Volunteers are always welcome!

We were delighted to hear that the sum of £60 had been allocated by the High Wycombe District Council for the repair of the sluice gate at Pann Mill. We look forward with great hope to seeing the River Wye turning this fine water wheel again in 1977.

Sheila Latimer.
Tel: High Wycombe 30389.

HERITAGE GROUP

Members of our Group have continued looking critically at the Conservation Area, and are achieving small successes with shops and offices. Has anyone noticed that the large spots of white paint daubed over the upper storey windows of MacFisheries several years ago have now disappeared. We hope further improvements will be made. Over the last six months correspondence has been sent to the London Co-operative Society (following up an original letter sent by the E.A.H. Y. Committee) concerning the architectural design and exterior decoration of their premises, which the Society has always considered to be an "eyesore" in a key position in the town.

A fresh approach was made to the London Head Office recently, and we are now actively working with the Management and the Wycombe District Council Planning Officer to help implement a new scheme for this very prominent building. Other projects on our agenda over the last few months have been concern over the shabby appearance of 25 to 27 High Street, and we hope to be involved in the redecoration of these buildings in an advisory capacity! Another one of our projects is 25/26 Easton Street, and we have had an exchange of correspondence with the Property Services Agency regarding this. Hopefully, we now wait for them to take some positive action to improve this building.

We are currently looking at a recent book issued by the Design Council called "Street Scene". It is certainly full of interesting ideas and suggestions for improving our environment, with plenty of illustrations. One aspect we felt we could take further was street signs, which we usually take for granted but often are unsightly, repetitive, and obscure, or mar views of interesting buildings. Perhaps some of our members can provide examples, especially in the Town Centre. Another theme we will be looking into is advertising clutter. There are certainly some new and pleasant ways of presenting this.

The fine plaque for the Hospice of St. John ruins in Easton Street is now firmly in place. The brief history depicted has added a great deal of interest to these important ruins. We are grateful to Martin Kipping, who made the plaque, and to Mike Hammett for fixing it in place on two sturdy posts.

If anybody feels interested enough to come and join our small, but energetic band - who meet every six weeks on a Monday - please contact the undersigned.

Rita Langton.
Tel: Bourne End 21443.

DOGS

The Government is studying the report of the Working Party set up in 1974. At the moment it has not decided on any definite course of action to deal with the various problems connected with dogs. The Department of the Environment would like to hear what the general public has to say, before coming to any decisions.

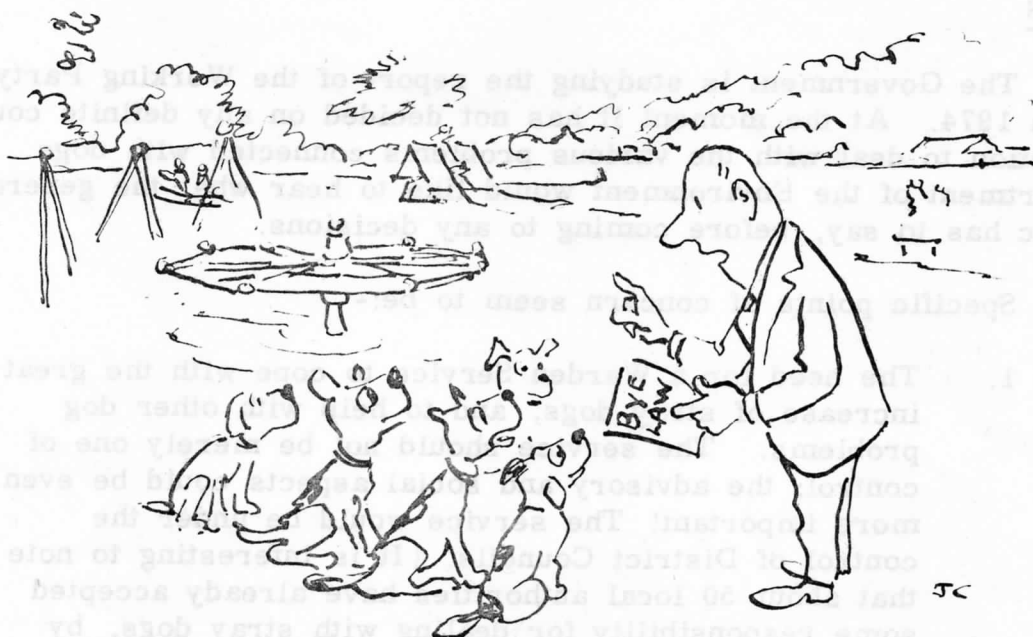
Specific points of concern seem to be:-

1. The need for a Warden Service to cope with the great increase of stray dogs, and to help with other dog problems. The service should not be merely one of control: the advisory and social aspects could be even more important! The service would be under the control of District Councils. (It is interesting to note that about 50 local authorities have already accepted some responsibility for dealing with stray dogs, by setting up dog warden services).

2. The need for a realistic licence fee of £5 (at 1975 prices), the money to be used to finance a Dog Warden Service. Dogs for the blind to be excluded.
3. The minimum age for holding a dog licence to be 18 years.
4. The need to identify dogs for which a licence is held. A coloured tag on the collar could be used.

It is estimated that there are a million stray dogs in the United Kingdom. In High Wycombe there is an increasing problem! Between 1st January 1976 and 17th September 1976, 186 strays were taken to the High Wycombe Police Station. It is known that stray dogs are more liable to be diseased, suffering from toxocara canis, roundworms and salmonella (food poisoning organisms), and they carry the greater risk of spreading rabies to man if this terrible disease should obtain a foothold.

The fouling of footpaths gives rise to very strong feelings, and there are many people who are also worried about open spaces and parks. The Rye area is a good example of this conflict. Many dogs and their owners enjoy themselves immensely in the wide expanse, but sometimes leave behind a mess which is unpleasant for children and adults using the open space. The Home Office has argued that local authorities should make use of their existing powers to make Byelaws prohibiting dogs from children's play areas, and from other places in a park where they might cause inconvenience or discomfort to other users of the park. It was felt that a Byelaw making it an offence to foul parks, other than footways in parks, would be unreasonable since a person having a dog in such an area would have no way of preventing the occurrence once the dog began fouling.



What do you think about these and other dog problems? The Department of the Environment is anxious to have comments and suggestions. If any member or Affiliated Society has any, please let me have them soon.

Jack Scruton.

CIVIC TRUST NEWS

Waste Lane Project

In our last Newsletter we mentioned the Waste Land Project, which has just been launched by the Civic Trust. All Amenity Societies have been asked to provide information about waste lands throughout the country. The Trust will produce a report in 1977, based on material from Societies and other sources. It will explore why waste land is formed and remains barren for so long, and what measures could bring about its exploitation. Examples of action, particularly by voluntary bodies, to make use of waste land sites will be illustrated in the report.

We have responded to the Trust's appeal. We have surveyed the waste areas of the Western Desert and forwarded brief details with photographs. We have also sent details, photographs and slides of our garden in Paul's Row, as an example of action which has taken place.

Extracts from the latest Civic Trust News

- (i) A recent Press release from the Conservation Society may be of interest to our members:-

"Sales of our 'Re-use Paper, save Trees' envelope labels are fast approaching 10,000,000. Their dramatic popularity suggests that there is a growing awareness of the need to conserve the life-support systems of spaceship earth".

Envelope labels may be obtained from Conservation Books, 228 London Road, Reading, Berks., RG6 1AH. Price: 50p for 100, or £3.75 for 1,000.

- (ii) Dr. William Burns, Chief Department of the Environment Planner, speaking to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors:-

"The requirements of financial discipline and the present aspirations of people at large lead us to the same general conclusion, namely that it is right to stop the headlong rush for expensive new development and redevelopment and instead concentrate much more on making use of our existing resources".

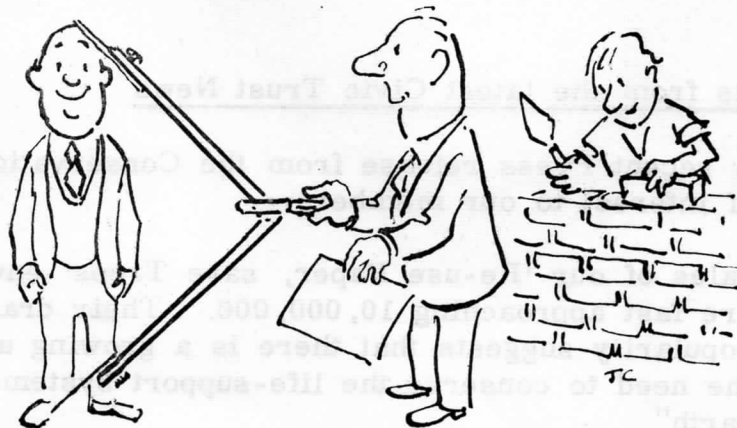
(iii) Editorial in "Municipal Engineering":-

"The anti-motorway case is now being argued with unprecedented intellectual vehemence. The amenity movement has an important role in the environmental debate, and the more professionalism it can bring to bear the better for all, including those engineers who have in the past sneered at the amateurism of the amenity movement".

(iv) Peter Shore, Environment Secretary, in his speech to the U.N. Habitat Conference at Vancouver:-

"The Government was placing a new, strong emphasis on public participation as an integral, not incidental part of the planning process".

It was pensioning off the bulldozer, and replacing the general policy of comprehensive redevelopment by a policy of gradual renewal and rehabilitation.



It was determined henceforth to build on a human scale.

It had decided that the problems of our inner city areas must be tackled with renewed vigour. Britain's inner city problem is no longer over-population, but unbalanced depopulation!

It was taking building land into public ownership.

(The Civic Trust had anticipated the first four of these points in the March issue of "Civic Trust News".

A BOOK ABOUT THE RYE

Local people and visitors are always asking about the Rye Area, and in order to make a visit there more enjoyable, we have published a booklet called "The Rye, High Wycombe - A Priceless Possession". This is our second publishing venture, and we hope it will be as successful as our Town Trail. Various knowledgeable people have provided information, and Jim Cottrell, who once worked for Punch, has provided delightful cartoons and illustrations. The cost is only 25p, which is very low in view of current prices. It is obtainable from the Bookshop in Castle Street, or from the Information Desk, Municipal Offices, Queen Victoria Road.

Any profits will be used for a good cause - they will be used to support our Heritage Centre in Easton Street, and the environmental education of children in High Wycombe. We hope all our members and their friends, and members of Affiliated Societies, will buy the booklet. It is just the thing if you are looking for inexpensive Christmas presents!



Jack Scruton.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS

Our last Quarterly Meeting was held in the Guildhall on Wednesday, 8th October, when Mr. Elliot Viney, Chairman of the Bucks C.P.R.E., spoke about the historic buildings of Buckinghamshire and the problems of retention and restoration. He showed a very fine collection of slides and was most eloquent and informative in his description of buildings and the constant threats to our heritage.

However, his talk included a message of hope for the future. Much good restoration work has been carried out in the County, and there is obviously scope for much more.

A well attended meeting obviously enjoyed this very interesting evening. It is noticeable that although we have good attendance at our Quarterley Meetings, many of our members have not attended one, and the response from Affiliated Societies continues to be most disappointing. We appeal to all our members and Affiliated Societies to attend future meetings if at all possible.

Our next Quarterly Meeting should certainly keep up the high standard. George Perkin, A.R.I.B.A., will talk about "Towns on Foot" on Wednesday, 26th January 1977. In view of the Traffic Scheme for central Wycombe, which is now coming to the boil, his talk will be especially relevant. Mr. Perkin was granted a Travelling Scholarship which took him on foot through more than 70 towns in Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany and Switzerland. The object was to see how these towns were being improved for pedestrians and for motor vehicles as well.

Ron Sims.

TASK FORCE

We recognise that some members do not like Committee work and may be unable to attend meetings and other events. However, they may feel that they could make a valuable contribution in other ways. They might like to join a Task Force, which could tackle a variety of outdoor activities for short periods at weekends. Such things as clearing rivers and woodlands, transforming eyesores, Conservation Area projects, and so on, spring to mind. If sufficient volunteers are forthcoming, they could be asked to help in rotation.

If you are interested, please contact either Barbara Rippington, (Tel: High Wycombe 26616), or the Hon. Secretary (Tel: High Wycombe 25933).

PROGRAMME OF COMING EVENTS

We believe the following programme will be of interest to members and Affiliated Societies. The speakers are expert in their own field, and all the topics are very relevant to the work of the Society.

Friday, 10th December 1976:-

7.45pm at the Friends' Meeting House, 25 London Road. Dick Amsden of the Chiltern Society will give an illustrated talk about the work of the Chiltern Society Historic Buildings Group, including the creation of an Open Air Museum.

Wednesday, 26th January 1977:-

Quarterly Meeting at 7.45pm in the Guildhall. George Perkin, A.R.I.B.A., will show his slides taken in towns and cities in various parts of Europe, which he visited on a travelling scholarship to study this topic. This meeting is particularly relevant to High Wycombe.

Friday, 18th February 1977:-

Frank Peers, Hon. Secretary of the Amersham Society, will talk about Old Amersham, using his delightful slides of old photographs. 7.45pm in the Friends' Meeting House.

Thursday, 24th March 1977:-

"Glimpses of Old Beaconsfield" - an illustrated talk by John Broadbent, A.R.I.B.A., A.A.Dip (Hons), in the Friends' Meeting House at 7.45pm.

Wednesday, 20th April 1977:-

Annual General Meeting of the Society. Timothy Cantell of the Civic Trust will speak about some aspects of the Trust's work. Further details later.