



Woodsman

The Booker Common and Woods Protection Society
Registered Charity No.289871 *Newsletter No.54 Spring 2002*

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Monday 27th May 2002

From 8pm at Booker Memorial Hall, Booker Common.

Guest Speaker

Frances Alexander

(Former Chairman of WDC and Mayor of High Wycombe)

A presentation on behalf of the Directors and Trustees of The Environmental Centre on Holywell Mead to highlight the objectives of the scheme, how it will affect and assist societies such as ours, and the advantages of such innovative enterprises.

The new Environmental Centre will open at what was the Swimming Pool Cafe on the Mead some time in July of this year, after many months of planning and hard work. Come along to the meeting for a comprehensive and very interesting picture.

Committee 2001/2002

All subscribing members of the society are invited to offer themselves for election to the new committee. Please phone nominations to 444824 before 26th May. The members of the committee are:

Rita Luxton, Claire Wylot (Hon. Sec), Paul Baker, Tony Hall, Colin Kennedy (Planning), Tim Speechley, Mike Stevens, Ron Walker (Chairman) and Vic West.

Chris Wylot (Hon. Treasurer) and HedleyLuxton (JCC Rep) are co-opted members.

The current Chairman will not be applying for re-election to the Chair, but will be pleased to serve on the committee if elected. Again it is pointed out that fresh minds and attitudes are desperately needed if the society is to continue.

Policy Statement

To protect and enhance the environs of Booker Woods and Limmer Common within Society resources.

To campaign against the intrusion of any development which may threaten the adjacent Green Belt and AONBs

To resist any development which may curtail the enjoyment of the freedom of access to fresh air and exercise which the Common affords.

Planning

On 27th September Wycombe District Council invited members of Amenity Societies and Residents groups to a seminar on how they address the planning function and keep the ratepayers informed. Colin Kennedy and Ron Walker attended. The consensus of opinion was favourable, and the facility to access everything on WDC web-site

is a great convenience. The Government Planning Green Paper published in December does give cause for concern to environmental groups such as ours. The intimation is that the government intends to centrally control planning, feeling that it is currently too *complex* to liaise with those who will be affected. Eh?....

Environment

The bi-annual litter picking took place in October and March. Attendance was poor in October, but in spite of our inability to collect due to foot-and-mouth earlier in the year, there was relatively little rubbish. Thanks to Jeff Harvey again, who did the final pick-up, and photographed the very assorted selection. March collection was much greater, thanks to Libby Hallows and her team from Marlow who were meticulous. Again Jeff did the pick-up, and in view of his experience with unwanted wheels, will be applying for a job with Quick-Fit when he recovers from his hernia. The west common was like the pit lane at Silverstone. From the variety was highlighted the concern people appear to have about waste disposal.....e.g. if you can't get rid of it and the council won't take it away, just chuck it in the woods or at the road-side. We recommend www.wasteconnect.co.uk which seems to have a method for everything disposable. Regrettably, it doesn't get out on a wet Sunday morning and pick up the rubbish. Of the nine notices put out for the March collection, only three were recovered from their original sites; the others removed by persons unknown. If anyone knows who is collecting these notices please send them round - I have a spare.

For those of you with access to the Internet, Wycombe District Council now has an on-line facility for the reporting of fly-tipping and the dumping of cars! Again it doesn't stop it happening, but it saves the phone call and can be reported immediately and out of normal working hours. Who knows what further pollution will come of the EU decision to recycle *all* electrical equipment.

Following an incursion onto the Common by itinerants and their vehicles, closely followed by what looked like a demolition derby with a car torched, representation was made to West Wycombe Estate to protect the common from further deprecation. The committee elected to contribute to the cost of installation of bollards and gates in accordance with our policy. Tony Hall handled the communication and planning with the estate management, and let's hope that's the end of the destruction. Access to the recreational area will be by lockable rails, and we hope no-one will feel too inconvenienced. Keys are available from the Hall committee (Beryl), the cricket club, and West Wycombe Estate Office.

Noise. There were several reports of gun-shots throughout the night during the month of January. Tony Hall and Rita Luxton, together with WDC traced the noise to a bird-scarer which appeared to have been set up for dark hours instead of daylight hours. Oops. We think it's unlikely to happen again in the near future

Ron Walker attended another presentation at Bassetbury Manor on the 29th January, about the Environmental Centre on the Rye (*See guest speaker.*)

Finance

As with all insurances, our cover through BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) has changed; in fact our agreement has not been renewed, "mainly due to the complex risk underwriting formula now being used.....". Shopping around for group-specific insurance is currently proving a nightmare and may result in increased costs to the society.

Gift Aid (replaces Deeds of Covenant)

A fantastic response, and we will shortly be making a claim to the Inland Revenue to recover the tax you have paid on your subscriptions. No, that doesn't mean you can have it back.

Volunteers

Thanks to all those who have offered to help with leaflet distribution/collection. It is very much appreciated... many hands, etc. We will be contacting you in due course.

Subscriptions for 2001/2002

Receipts should be attached. Any problem call Claire on 535071.