



Woodsman

The Booker Common and Woods Protection Society

Registered Charity No.289871

Newsletter No.56 Winter 2002/3

Annual General Meeting

An average attendance enjoyed a presentation on The Environmental Centre at Holywell Mead with visual aids by Frances Alexander. It was the customary enthusiastic delivery by the former Chairman of WDC and Mayor of High Wycombe. We hope to encourage and participate in the Centre's success.

At the meeting Ron Walker announced his retirement as Chairman due to other commitments but he is to remain on the committee and continue his invaluable practical work in and around the common.

Claire and Chris Wylot advised us they were moving from the area so we lost both our Secretary and Treasurer. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude for all their help over the years and enthusiasm in working for the society and wish them both well.

Committee

Rita Luxton was elected to the Chair. Ron Walker was re-elected to the committee and Tony Dunford from Limmer Lane was elected to the committee.

We welcome Tony as a new member, he has considerable experience of environmental groups, and will obviously be a great asset to the society. He is also a Trustee of the Holywell Mead Environmental Centre.

The other members of your committee remain as follows: Colin Kennedy, Vic West, Paul Baker, Tony Hall and Mike Stevens, with Hedley Luxton as co-opted member to the JCC of the Air Park.

Tim Speechley takes as over as secretary, Tony Dunford as Membership Secretary.

New committee Members would be very welcome, *to introduce new blood*, we would also appreciate more female representation on the committee.

Planning

Bucks County Council has applied for permission for a Biodegradable Waste Collection and Treatment Centre at High Heavens, *just as we thought the site was about to close*. The treatment bins will be 22 concrete and metal bins, each 1.5m x 7m x 3.6m high, *yes that's the size of an average bungalow*. BCC deems this 'not obtrusive' on what is still Green Belt and ANOB. There appears to be no plan for what is to happen to the product of the treatment plant, except an obscure suggestion that local farms may use it, if not it will be for 'landscaping' of the previous tip area. This contradicts the plan for raising the level of the site, which was rejected only a couple of years ago. Besides a dangerous stock pile of freezers and refrigerators at High Heavens, we are now to be subjected to lorry loads of smelling waste from all over the county, both being transported to and from the site. In principle the society does not dispute the requirement for some method of waste compacting, but the society has objected to the practical effects of this project as a development into the Green Belt and its location adding to an already congested area.

The society is also investigating the possible dangers of this activity taking place on a newly completed landfill site, ie. Damage to the capping intended to seal in gas from decomposing material.

Good News for Sands in the Wycombe Plan

The inspector's report on the Wycombe Plan for development in the Wycombe area has been published and the good news is that the Lane End Green Field Site has been set aside, for the time being, with recommendation that it should remain as Safeguarded Land (formerly Areas of Special Restraint).

Environment

Some of you may have seen the effort by Lynn Andrews (no that's not Lynn) to enhance the common with a rustic chair. It has been welcomed by those shorter of breath, and is an attractive and novel attempt to make the woods more hospitable. Thanks Lynn.



Litter was cleared on a re-scheduled 2nd November collection. The re-schedule was due to the inclement weather which brought down some old trees and branches on 27th October. It is difficult to inform volunteers when such cancellations become necessary, but "the usual suspects" turned up and Jeff Harvey did the final collection. Due to fly-tipping, he had almost to fight for space in the re-collection area we agreed with WDC. The waste situation is not improving, but we think our contribution to the common bollards may have helped to protect the grassed area, and the council collectors are very aware and supportive of our local problems. The problem of car dumping has been addressed, with new legislation allowing councils to remove them more quickly.

Booker Air Park Noise Complaints Procedure

All general complaints relating to aircraft noise and nuisance should be addressed to Wycombe Air Park and/or the Environmental Department of Wycombe Council.

Aircraft thought to be inside the Noise Abatement Zone, over Booker and High Wycombe Town Centre, taking off from Runway 07 (towards the North-West) should be reported immediately the incident occurs by telephoning the Air Park on 01494 529261 and if possible giving the Aircraft Number and time of incident.

Complaints can be followed up via our representative on the Air Park Consultative Committee Telephone 01494 436807.

Finance

As a result of the Gift Aid claims prepared by Claire and Chris, we received a refund of £113 from the Taxman.

The members present at the AGM voted to continue with a subscription of £3.00 until the next AGM which will be held on Tuesday 20 May 2003.

We are late collecting 2002/3 subscriptions but Collectors will be calling soon!