



# Woodsman

## The Booker Common & Woods Protection Society

Registered Charity No.289871

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### Society News

At the AGM of the Society on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, Chairman Allan Duggin announced his retirement. This was probably one of the worst kept secrets since Watergate. A bulwark of the Society for 16 years, at times a one man army; Allan will be seriously missed, though I am reliably advised that for specific liquid remuneration he may undertake "consultancy" work. Allan was presented with an oak-mounted brass plaque declaiming his long and valuable service, a second inscribed "ECO-WARRIOR 1" and suitably lauded by the committee, members and guests. (It was suggested that some of the councillors present - those with red ankles - may have been a little over-enthusiastic at Allan's retirement.) Allan may be best remembered for not calling a spade a gardening implement, but in some contests he attacked with such disarming subtlety, that the battle was won before the rules of engagement had been agreed.

As a consequence of this retirement, and an inability to duck, owing to a bad back from strimming and digging bollard holes, the new temporary chairman is Ron Walker. He apologises in advance for being

unable to follow such an act as Allan, but promises to try.

The committee remains basically the same, with the addition, or return, of Colin Kennedy as our Planning representative. Colin was a founder-member of the Society, and is thus aware of our values and aspirations which have changed little since the Societies inception. We know we can rely on Colin's expertise and connections with the Ramblers Association to protect our flanks from planning attacks.

At the AGM, Dr David Cook, the Water Resources Manager for Thames Water gave an excellent presentation on the current situation in our area, and fielded some searching questions from the floor. The basic message was "Don't panic". The trees will survive for a few more decades on present predictions.

### Committee Actions.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, Tony Hall and Ron Walker attended what turned out to be the *Concluding* Annual General Meeting of the Bucks Council for Voluntary Service, a society with which we have been associated for some years. This group has metamorphosed into Buckinghamshire Community Action (yippee), with a permanent Director and a fixed Annual

Budget. One of the reasons for this course of action was attributed to "protection of the Trustees" of the former BCVS, a highly commendable action, which this committee will be watching carefully. We were members of the sub-group known as the Countryside Conference, a group intended to make councillors aware of the presence of such minorities as rural communities and their particular problems. (Being only semi-rural, this may have been a bit of a fraud but we felt less than Urban so it was a forum that we better understood and associated with). There was some concern with the transfer of accounts and the brevity of opportunity the attendees had to peruse the same; in fact, there were a couple of votes against accepting the Statement. No prizes for guessing who. We await developments in order to assess the value of our continuing association with Community Action.

Colin Kennedy and Ron Walker attended the Wycombe Local Area Forum covering Booker and Castlefield, Cressex and Frogmoor, Oakridge and Tinkers Wood, and West Wycombe and Sands, which convened at the Oak Room on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July. There were presentations from the Anti-Deprivation Officer and Waste

Management Officer of Wycombe District Council.

Interesting facts from the first. Wycombe DC is the eighth richest District Council in the country. Booker and Castlefield is classified as a deprived area. Facts from the second presentation in "Environment".

Topics for discussion in the Open Forum included:

1. Transport and Parking.
2. Western Sector and Town Centre.
3. Leisure, Youth and Environmental Protection
4. Community Safety.

Colin held the Transport brief, while Ron contributed to the Environmental discussion. While nothing was determined, it was an opportunity to state one's case, and discussion became a little heated at times. The next Public Forum will be on 20<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm and is recommended as an opportunity to voice an opinion, and listen to others' points of view. We would like to participate in all future forums.

The Joint Consultative Committee of Wycombe Air Park held on 16<sup>th</sup> July was attended by Brian Petty (the BCWPS representative) and a number of members of the Society. It was conducted in a civilised manner and Minutes of the meeting will shortly be available. It is reiterated that Specific complaints of breaches of the noise abatement zones or perceived dangerous flying should be reported directly and immediately to Wycombe Air Park with details of the aircraft involved, including identification letters and times. Tel. 01494 529261 or 523426 and/or WDC on 01494 421743.

General complaints should be funnelled through Brian Petty. On a more enviro-sensitive note, we welcomed the planning application for a new reception building at the Air Park. The approach (non-aerial) is looking a little tired. Nobody, on the other hand, expects Terminal 5, but with the agreement to widen the Heathrow corridor of the M25... no don't even think about it. As for the advertising at the entrance to the Air Park - what advertising on green belt I hear you ask - it's obviously from the same art school as that on BA aircraft - yes, the good old Kindergarten School. When mentioned at the JCC, did we detect a blush from management, or was that just the pain from tongue-biting?

Tony Hall attended a meeting of the Chiltern Commons Group at Downley Common on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. A valuable contact, and according to Tony, a useful and constructive discussion.

### Environment

Since there has been little of note in the local scene, the Common looking after itself more or less, here is a little from the wider environment.

From the local Forum: WDC hopes to increase it's waste paper collection to fortnightly in spite of the depreciating value. If you want to help the recycling of the persistent junk mail which comes through your letter-box, you can write to :

Mailing Preference Service,  
Freepost 22, London W1E 7EZ.  
This won't stop all of the unsolicited mail, but will probably mean you have 1 bag less to put out for collection.

The writer recently purchased a shirt (the other one was in the wash) from a local store. Packaging consisted of , 2 cardboard stiffeners, 2 plastic collar stiffeners, 1 paper tissue wrap, 3 adhesive labels and 1 tie-on label 3 plastic clips, 7 pins and a transparent envelope. The packing and packaging probably cost more than the shirt.

The reason I mention this, is that landfill is the way we dispose of most of our rubbish, and we are running out of space. Bad news is that the introduction of wheely bins has increased waste by around 18%. "Compost it".

The good news is that High Heavens was and is not regarded as a hazardous waste tip in the recent frightening government report. It still needs careful managing in the long-term.

The other bad news is that although we are relatively the best paid area in Britain our living environment is the worst.

### Finance

David Crowther has prepared our financial statement for the Fiscal year 1997-98. We are still poor but solvent and honest.

### Subscriptions

Volunteers will be collecting your 98/9 subs in October, so please give generously.

### Exhibition

Frieth Natural History Society is staging a Local Wildlife Exhibition in the Village Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> Oct from 12noon to 5pm. Admission is £1 for adults, children free. Enjoy an informative day out.

**STOP PRESS :-** Next Litter Blitz will be on Sunday 8 November at 10.00 a.m. starting from the usual places. Make a note in your diary now.