

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY.

REPORT of the GENERAL COMMITTEE 1970/71.

INCLG. OPPOSITION TO  
INCURSIONS INTO GREEN BELT  
- SOME (e.g. OUTTOMUD LANE)  
REFUSED, OTHERS (e.g. the Cross  
Lane estate) ACCEPTED →

The Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Charles Potter have met 11 times during the year and a brief report of their main activities is given below.

SUMMER OUTING.

This year the village of Hunsden opened its doors to visitors and staged some most excellent exhibitions to show its history. Mr. Lorimer Green arranged a most successful outing and those who went greatly enjoyed the historical exhibits in the Village Hall going back to the times of Henry VIII and the conducted tours by their owners round many of the houses in the village.

AUTUMN MEETING.

Mr. John McEnery, the Lecture Secretary of the St. Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society addressed us in November on Conservation with particular emphasis on his Society's activities in the area. We found this illustrated talk so interesting that we hope that the two Societies will have more contact in the future.

JOINT MEETING with UNO and NCW.

A meeting in connection with Conservation Year was arranged jointly with the local committees of the United Nations Organisation and the National Council of Women on the theme "Our Living Space". The meeting was well attended and the interest shown by some of the schools was particularly gratifying.

PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE.

Mr. R. G. Dixon the Chairman of this sub-committee reports:-

" I consider this has been a year of progress, and that the Society is gradually becoming recognised as making its mark in influencing certain aspects of local affairs.

During the past year the Planning Sub-Committee has been regularly attending monthly meetings with the Harpenden U.D.C. Surveyor and a member of the Harpenden Design Group, to go through the list of plans to be considered at the next meeting of the Council's Planning Sub-Committee.

These meetings take the form of studying both outline and detailed plans of proposed developments, discussing them, and then submitting a written series of observations to the Council which are considered by the Council's Sub-Committee when making their decision on a particular application.

As a result of the observations made after our monthly meetings, quite a number of projects have been influenced; Sainsbury's, the Glen Eagle extensions, and the Proposals for the site adjoining The Cock Public House are but examples in High Street.

As a further example of the Society's active participation in local developments, the Sub-Committee asked for the views of members of the main Committee on the proposals for the re-development of The Welcome site (the Convent), and then submitted a series of comments to the Council.

" The Sub-Committee studies the proposals for the first review of the County Development Plan, there being three main alterations affecting Harpenden. These were:-

- (a) A proposal to re-zone as residential land, present green belt land between Cross Lane and Mud Lane.
- (b) Re-zone as residential, green belt land behind Roundwood Park.
- (c) Re-zone as residential land between Cross Lane and Coleswood Road.

The Society was represented at the Public Enquiry, when it expressed opposition to the first of the three amendments.

Following the public enquiry the Minister disallowed the first of these proposals, but approved (b) and (c), and I think the Society can justifiably claim that its opposition had some influence on the Minister's decision.

It is now Government policy that there should be greater public participation in planning matters, and I am very pleased to report that the implementation of this policy is being effectively operated in Harpenden by the monthly meetings referred to above, with, I feel confident, a very beneficial effect.

In conclusion I would like to put on record the Society's appreciation for the help and considerable time given by the Harpenden U.D.C. Surveyor, Mr. Pettingale. "

#### LEA VALLEY REPORT

The report of the joint committee with the Urban Design Group has been prepared and was submitted to the Urban District Council in February. The Report has aroused considerable interest and more details will be given at the Annual General Meeting.

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

In November a questionnaire was circulated to all the members asking for their views on the current activities of the Society and of various suggestions for additional working parties. About 40% of the members replied and we are very grateful to Mr. Hughes for the excellent summaries he prepared for the Committee's consideration. Varying degrees of interest were expressed in all the ideas for future activities but the Committee are fully aware of the danger of trying to do too much too quickly. A start has been made by some of the existing sub-committees and working parties getting in touch with members who showed interest in their subject and Mrs. Jones is exploring the possibility of starting a new working party dealing with footpaths etc. These matters will be reported on more fully at the Annual General Meeting.

#### CHANGES IN HARPENDEN

In co-operation with the Urban Design Group we have under consideration the Town Centre Development, the use of the Common, the traffic problem particularly in the centre of the town and many other matters which will affect everybody who lives in Harpenden. Reference to these will be made in the discussion after the business part of the Annual General Meeting.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

A number of members have told the Treasurer that it would be easier for them to pay their subscriptions by Bankers Order. It will also save him work and expense so he has made arrangements for it to be possible.

A card is enclosed for you to complete if you will use this method of payment. The Treasurer will refer to this subject in more detail at the Annual General Meeting and I am prepared to forecast that he will also mention the increasing cost of postage and stationery and that he will remind you that the subscriptions are "minimums" The completed Bankers Orders can be handed in at the Annual General Meeting (or cash if you prefer) or can be sent to the Treasurer or myself or left in the box at Mary Ellen's Cafe.

The Committee wish to thank its Chairman, Dr. Potter, for presiding at its meetings and to Miss Finney for allowing it to meet at Mary-Allen's Cafe. They also wish to record their appreciation of the help given to them by the Council's officials particularly Mr. Best, the Clerk and Mr. Pettingale the Engineer. They are grateful to the Council itself for its willingness to listen to their point of view and to the thoroughness with which it examines any proposal put to it by the Society.

For the General Committee

G.W. BOWRAN

Hon. Secretary.

3 Oakhurst Avenue,  
Harpenden.

8th March, 1971.