

When the Harpenden Society was formed in 1930, it was

"to exert a strong local influence to safeguard the amenities of Harpenden and its environs and to preserve, develop and improve the features of Harpenden which are pleasing and those which promote the well-being of its inhabitants".

The Society continues to care for the amenities of today's town and, through its membership, seeks to represent the interests of the residents. It makes representations to the local Council, the County Council and other Authorities as to what should or should not be done to preserve the town's distinctive character and to improve on that character where appropriate.

It pays special attention to building development, roads, footpaths, open space, the prevention of disfigurement by badly placed advertisements, the unnecessary destruction of trees, the preservation of buildings of architectural or historic interest and to the amelioration of any circumstances which detract from the amenities of the locality.

The Society's work is not restricted to criticism but is directed to positive proposals and planning. It has a close working relationship with the Harpenden Urban Design Group and undertakes joint studies of the many problems which arise from the town's rapid growth and continuing urbanisation.

The local Council often seeks the views of the Society, as the representative amenity body for Harpenden, and we, in turn, support the Council where it shows determination to preserve the good features of the town. The Society is usually represented at local public enquiries.

The Society's affairs are conducted by a committee of officers and up to twenty-one elected members. Sub-committees are responsible to the main committee for the various aspects of the town's amenities which they are set up to deal with. The main committee and its sub-committees meet regularly and keep the members informed of their activities through an occasional newsletter. In addition, the committee arranges:

- (i) Annual and Special General Meetings. The formal business is usually followed by a speaker.
- (ii) Lecture meetings which are open to the public.
- (iii) An annual visit to a place of historic or architectural interest, or one associated in any way with the objects of the Society.
- (iv) An annual dinner: the first to be held this year.

SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Over recent years the Society has set up several small groups or working parties to study specific matters of local concern, with what professional or expert guidance qualified members are able to give. The members of the groups are not necessarily members of the main committee.

This policy is beginning to bear fruit in that, through the groups, the Society is able to offer qualified and responsible advice or opinions which are of value to the Authorities or the community generally.

1. Harpenden Urban Design Group

This is an independent body which consists of qualified architects, engineers, town planners and members of allied professions. For the most part they live in Harpenden but practice further afield. They are the professional arm of the Society.

2. Plans Sub-Committee

This was formed as a result of what seemed, at times, to be regrettable planning decisions by the Authorities. It is the Society's planning watchdog. Its members scrutinise the local Authority's monthly list of planning applications (which are submitted for approval), and the Society's representative and a representative of the Urban Design Group look at the plans, examine questionable applications in detail and then submit comments in writing to the Council.

3. Upper Lea Valley Group

The Society and the Urban Design Group prepared a joint report in 1971 entitled "The Lea Valley in Harpenden". Subsequently a public meeting was called and an "Upper Lea Valley Group" set up. This now functions as a virtually autonomous body with the support of the Harpenden Society.

In addition to concerning itself with the amenities of the valley the group is active in a number of ways. It is advocating the use of the former railway line as a public footpath to link with other public rights of way in the district. It has also undertaken, at the direct request of the local authority, a study of the Council-owned lands bordering the river. Implementation of this report is now under way, some of the work being done by the Council itself and some by voluntary labour, in work parties organised by the steering committee of the Upper Lea Valley Group.

4. Town Centre Working Party

This group consists primarily of Urban Design Group members but includes a representative of the Harpenden Society. It is studying the future of the town centre in relation to buildings, traffic, shopping, greens and trees, street furniture and general amenity. The group consults with members of the Herts County Council's Planning staff who are responsible for the town centre proposals and discusses developments in the Conservation Area with them and with the local authority. Probably the biggest single threat to the character of the town is/

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY

QUESTIONNAIRE

In the preceeding paper the present work of the Harpenden Society is outlined together with some projects it is hoped can be undertaken.

Please tick YES or NO

1. Are you a member of the Harpenden Society at present?
(membership form attached)
2. Would you be prepared to help in any of the groups listed below?
 - a) Harpenden Urban Design Group
 - b) Plans Sub-Committee
 - c) Upper Lea Valley Group
 - d) Town Centre Working Party
 - e) Harpenden Common
 - f) Footpaths
 - g) Local History Society
 - h) Newsletter
3. Would you be prepared to help in any of the groups listed below if they were formed?
 - i) Trees and Landscape
 - j) Rothamsted Park
 - k) Natural History
 - l) Historic Buildings
 - m) General Amenities
4. Have you any further suggestions for groups which the Society should consider?
(Write below)

Questionnaire Page 2

5. Have you any special qualifications, talents or interests which might be beneficial to the Society (e.g. Arboriculture, Architecture, Town planning, Photography, Cartography, knowledge of Local History, etc.)? (Write below)
6. Have you any suggestions for topics or speakers for the:
 - (a) General Meetings of the Society;
 - (b) Lecture Meetings.
7. Have you any suggestions of places to which the Society might make its Annual Visit?
8. Do you have any constructive criticism or comment on the general work and organisation of the Harpenden Society?

Signature

Address.....

.....

Telephone No.

It would be appreciated if this questionnaire, when completed, could be returned to the Hon. Secretary of the Harpenden Society (Tel. No. 3980)

Mr. Guthrie W. Bowran,
'Chesters',
Oakhurst Avenue,
Harpenden,
Herts.

February, 1973.

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO :

MRS D.A. BROWN,
Hon. Membership Secretary,
The Harpenden Society,
4 Wheathamstead Road,
HARPENDEN.

I/We desire to join the Harpenden Society and enclose.....as my/our subscription for the coming year.

Name (Capitals).....

Address

.....

.....

Telephone No

Date.....Signature.....

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

The minimum subscription is 50p for an individual and 75p for a joint/family membership.

For those over 65 or under 18 years (or receiving full-time education), the minimum subscription is 25p for an individual and 38p for joint membership.

The subscription for members joining the Society on or after 1st September in any year will be deemed to run until 31st December the following year.

THE HARTMAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HARTMAN SOCIETY AND YOUR NAME WILL BE PLACED IN THE LIST OF MEMBERS.

NAME (Last, First, Middle)
Hartman, William
The Hartman Society
4 West 10th Street
New York, N.Y.

I am desirous to join the Hartman Society and to receive my subscription for the coming year.

Name (Last, First, Middle)

Address

City

State

Telephone No.

Date

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

The minimum subscription is \$50 for one year, \$100 for two years, and \$150 for three years.

For those over 65 or under 18 years of age (including time and a half), the minimum subscription is \$25 for one year, \$50 for two years, and \$75 for three years.

The subscription for members joining after January 1st of each year will be deemed to run until December 31st of the following year.