

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the committee meeting held on Thursday, 22nd November
at 8.00 p.m. in the Public Library

1973

Present: In the chair - Mr. Brown
Messrs. Booth, Borthwick, Crumplin, Derrett, Squires,
Usher, Dr. Bowden
Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Elliott, Mrs. Goss, Miss Pratt

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Brandreth, Mrs. Johnstone,
Dr. Potter, Mrs. Russell, Mr. Savage.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Scowen to this evening's meeting at which the
Tree Group were to present their preliminary report. He was sure that
Mr. Scowen's expertise would prove immensely valuable in their activities.

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th October were approved with the
following addition: that Messrs. Crumplin and Usher were in fact present
at the meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Cross Lane planning applications

Mr. Dixon had submitted written comments to the first enquiry along the
lines discussed at the last meeting. The second public enquiry had
been postponed.

(b) Crabtree Lane/Piggottshill development

We understand unofficially that the Department of the Environment has
informed the council that the matter is back in their hands.

(c) Gorselands

The committee were very concerned that no action had yet been taken by
the council to have tree preservation orders placed on certain trees on
this site. The Chairman agreed to bring the matter to the attention of
the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Fulton.

(d) Footpaths

Mrs. Jones would be attending the conference at the end of the month and
had been invited to report on it at the January committee meeting.

(e) Spotlight on Leisure exhibition - 14th-16th March

John Crumplin expected to be leaving for Australia early in the new year
and would not, therefore, be able to organise the stand. Mr. Borthwick
offered to take on this task, unless he should find himself in Germany
next March.

3. TREE GROUP

Two major points had arisen out of the first meeting of the Tree Group Committee. The first concerned the relationship between the Tree Group and the other groups of the Society, especially the Plans Sub-Committee. The Group anticipated that they will be working very closely with the Plans Sub-Committee, and, with the expert help of Mr. Scowen, will, if necessary, seek preservation orders on trees in the 'soft' areas - two suggestions for early consideration were around St. George's and Gleneagles.

The second main point discussed was how best to involve members interested in the Group's activities in certain specific projects. Initially members would be asked to supply information about trees in their own locality which they felt should be preserved; this would also serve to make them interested in looking more critically at trees within Harpenden. Later volunteers might be asked to act as wardens to keep a watch on events in a particular area which might impinge on the work of the Group. Mrs. Goss had kindly agreed to act as co-ordinator and collate this incoming information. Mr. Derrett had offered to be convenor for the new Group, and the committee agreed that he should purchase the large-scale maps which the Group would obviously require for their work.

The Group had not dealt at this first meeting with the question of planting new trees. Again this would involve discussion with other groups, especially the Common Sub-Committee.

The committee felt that the new Group had got off to a good start and would no doubt make good use of the Newsletter and the Spotlight on Leisure exhibition to inform the membership and the general public of their existence and to enlist support for their activities. Mr. Haynes of the Herts Advertiser and Mr. Smith of the Review may also be interested in these projects.

4. HOW DO YOU SEE HERTS?

Mrs. Elliott and Mrs. Goss attended a recent meeting arranged by the Herts Federation of Amenity Societies at which the speaker was Mr. Steeley, the deputy county planning officer. Arising from this meeting it became obvious that the county were not seeking detailed comments on local aspects of their proposed Structure Plan but wanted responses on the general questions set out in the consultative document - questions such as the desirability or otherwise of an east/west route, provision of public transport v. provision for private motoring, the need for increased housing to be balanced against retention of the green belts, etc.

The following course of action was then agreed. In order to meet the objective of having our considered view ready to submit to the country planning office by the middle of January, the finalised draft must be available for discussion by the beginning of the month. To this end a meeting would be held on Tuesday, 11th December at 4, Wheathampstead Road to consider the questions involved, after which the Chairman offered to pull together a paper to be considered at a special committee meeting on Thursday, 10th January (time and place to be arranged).

To facilitate discussion at the meeting on December 10th, members were asked to make brief notes on their views and Dr. Bowden kindly offered to photocopy and circulate these beforehand. If possible, parts of the final draft might be included in a Newsletter in January.

5. CONSTITUTION SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chairman regretted that he had not yet drawn together the comments of the sub-committee, but hoped these would be available for discussion at the January 17th committee meeting so that any alterations can be put to the A.G.M. in March.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Questionnaire/membership leaflet

An updated version is being prepared; it is hoped to include notes on the projects currently planned by each of the sub-groups.

(b) Hertfordshire 1981

The committee agreed that the Secretary should purchase two copies of the Hertfordshire 1981 document together with the relevant maps. These would not only be useful during the current exercise on the Structure Plan, but would also be valuable for the Town Centre Group and the Planning Group.

(c) Status of the District Council

The committee had no strong views on whether the new District Council should seek city status and therefore have a mayor; but did feel that the present name was preferable to some of the conglomerates which had put forward.

(d) Bus shelters

We understand that a report is being prepared.

(e) Arrangements for future meetings

December 5th - Paul Usher, Chairman of the Upper LeavValley Group, would be giving an illustrated talk 'The Upper Lea Valley: Neglected/ Resurrected' at 8.15. Mrs. Elliott kindly agreed to arrange for coffee and the Chairman to arrange for the distribution of posters.

March 12th - The A.G.M. to be followed by a presentation by the Common Sub-Committee on their draft recommendations for management of the Common.

May 6th - The committee felt that it would be appropriate to invite Mr. Overton or his deputy to talk to the Society, especially as some come-back on the town centre study should have been made public by that time (surveyors had been seen examining the Station Road junction).

Members might like to make a note of these dates in their 1974 diaries, and also of the annual dinner on April 3rd. It was agreed that

Miss Pratt
Marguerite

Mr. Hislop, the newly appointed countryside officer, should be invited to be the after-dinner speaker. He might also be interested in coming to the Lea Valley meeting.

(f) Football Club pavilion

It was agreed that the Chairman should write to Mr. Fulton, Chairman of the Council, saying how disappointed the Society was that the Parks & Open Spaces Committee had reverted to their original decision on the siting of the pavilion and car park without any further discussions taking place.

7. NEXT MEETING

As had been agreed, there would be no committee meeting during December. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 17th January, 1974 at 8.00 p.m. in the Public Library, and the following meeting was provisionally arranged for February 21st.

In addition there would be a special committee meeting to discuss the final draft of the Society's comments on the Hertfordshire Structure Plan on Thursday, 10th January. *at 8.00pm in the library*

28th March:
