



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 29

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Seasonal Greetings

To all our readers, I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and the New Year, 1995, will be full of pleasure and joy.

Results of Recent Appeals

We have been very disappointed and even amazed that three recent appeals against refusal of development by the City in the Yare Valley (including the extension to Roy's car park) have been allowed by the Department of the Environment.

We have taken action by writing to the DoE, as well as to our local MPs and councillors, expressing our concern, seeking support on the issue of principle involved and asking for comment. Replies from the MPs and councillors are all sympathetic to our case.

The DoE, of course, takes a totally objective view but points out that, in fact, the value of the Yare Valley was clearly upheld by each appeal inspector. In two cases, the inspector concluded that the proposed development would not harm the valley's landscape and open character, whilst, in the case of Roy's the inspector decided that special circumstances justified development contrary to local planning policies. The DoE also assures us that any future proposals would stand or fall on their own merits and not on past decisions.

You may also have seen our letter on this subject published by the EDP at the end of October. We hope to follow this up with an article featuring the beauty

and environmental value of the Yare Valley, so promoting our aims in a positive way.

Norfolk Structure Plan: Norwich Policy Area to 2006

In its roll forward of this plan, the County has made at least one significant change that is of benefit to the Yare Valley. In a relevant policy protecting the area, the word "normally" has now been deleted from the phrase "inappropriate development will not normally be permitted".

However, the greater protection that could be afforded by a Green Belt around Norwich is still not included at this stage, in spite of considerable public support for one.

Also, because overall transportation policies for the Norwich Policy Area have to be reassessed in the light of change in government policy, the plan has been adopted by the County Council only as an interim one. This could give rise to problems of interpretation unless Local Plans reflect its policies (but see next item).

Norwich Local Plan

In response to our representations to the City's draft plan the environmental policy that particularly affects the Yare Valley has been amended in line both with the change referred to above and our suggestions. Clearly, this means that our efforts are worthwhile!

We are still in negotiation with the City about one other matter.

The next stage is that further modifications to the Plan will be placed on deposit and there may even be another public inquiry into objections before the Plan is adopted.

Planning Applications

Bailey Bridge over Yare at Colney

Decision on this has been deferred by the City as there is no application to renew permission for the sand and gravel extraction area it would serve. (NB - the current Norfolk Minerals Plan Deposit Version includes a policy opposing mineral extraction in the river valleys).

Cycle Path, Cow Drive, Blackdale Plantation

A member of our committee is investigating this proposal with a view to making comment to the City. We believe the naturalness of this path needs sympathetic treatment.

As for the sign above the Dragon Palace in Eaton Street, we have been told that it is in the hands of the City's Planning Enforcement Officer. It might be a good idea for concerned individuals to write directly to the City Planning Officer about it.

Membership and Recruiting

We have added some new members to our number through our efforts following the last newsletter and also as a result of our recent letter to the EDP. Thank you to all who have taken the trouble to promote our Society.

Special Offer!

The Council for the Protection of Rural England has recently made a special offer to Yare Valley Society members in the shape of a special price individual membership of £10 instead of the usual £15. Plus a free T-shirt if wanted! This offer lasts until the end of February 1995. Contact Elaine on 458657 if you want to know more.

The CPRE is the only conservation body which strives to protect the totality of England's countryside, not just certain aspects of it. Our Society is a Local Organisation Member and some of us already belong to it individually. Why? Because it is vital to uphold and encourage such a national voice at a time when

developers of one kind or another are continually seeking to make inroads into our beautiful heritage. Likewise, the CPRE supports us in our efforts to protect our corner of England. It is a worthwhile membership from both points of view.

Advance Notice of AGM

The Society's AGM will be held in the Spring, probably in May. There will be a speaker (we trust) and light refreshments of tea or coffee and biscuits. We will keep you posted about the date, time and location - another Newsletter will be sent to you well before the date.

We have been considering offering transport to those of you who might find it difficult to get to the meeting. Let us know if you would welcome a lift. Contact Janet on 452271.

Treasurer's Report on 1994

The subscription was once again held at £1.00 per household for 1994, and income amounted to £194, significantly above that for 1993.

The increase came about as a result of some new members joining the Society during the year, and because some membership subscriptions outstanding from previous years were paid with the current year's payment.

In this context, can I please ask members to try to let one of the committee members have their subscription for 1995 promptly or alternatively send a cheque made payable to the Society. Retaining members (and numbers can be extremely important when the Society is arguing on planning matters) can otherwise be an exhausting process!

Expenditure during the year held steady at about £95, made up of room hire for the AGM, the cost of planning reports, membership of the CPRE and printing, together with postage and other small expenses.

The Society finished the year with a balance of £356.83, about £90 above that at the end of 1993. While this position is a comfortable one in the current circumstances, it will quickly be reduced if work needs to be carried out for a major planning decision at any time.

Steve Dawson

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