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# THE YARE VALLEY SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3, SEPTEMBER 1989

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Welcome to new members who have joined since our last newsletter.

Almost 200 people were members of the society when our last Newsletter came out in July. The numbers have now risen to over 200. A special welcome to Mike and Carole Blackwell from Virginia, USA (they lived in Eaton ten years ago) and to the Cringleford Society and the Keswick/-Intwood Parish Council, both joining as corporate members.

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A lot of 'behind the scenes' activity has been going on this summer and I am most grateful to members of the committee and others, for all their support and hard work on the public enquiry, responses to Structure Plan Consultation meetings, etc. We now feel that the time has come to involve our members in less technical (and more enjoyable?) events. To begin with, we have arranged a walk - details as follows.

*John Thurman, Chairman*

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### GUIDED WALK ON MARSTON MARSH NATURE RESERVE

ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 15th

starting at 2.30pm

Our guide is George Ishmael, City Landscape Officer

Please join us - everyone is welcome

Make the most of the daylight before the clocks go back!

Come suitably dressed!

- Meet at Danby Wood -

At the Ipswich Road end of Marston Lane  
(opposite Harford Millis House)

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Norwich City Council has produced this very attractive booklet with the aid of a generous grant from English Nature under the Community Action for Wildlife Initiative. For anyone interested in the wildlife and the open spaces of our city, the book is a valuable addition to our books on Norwich. Of particular interest to us in the Yare Valley Society area are the Bowthorpe Marsh, Eaton Common, Marston Marsh, University Campus, Earlham Park Woods and Danby Wood.

All the open spaces are summarised and the wildlife present is detailed. Every page has its illustrations, which are maps, drawings or photographs. The book is most pleasing either to read carefully or to browse through. The five watercolours by Betty Woodley for the chapter dividers and the front cover are of particular merit. It could be said that the book is worth the money for these alone. It would make an acceptable gift (despite a misprint in the foreword) and YVS members are encouraged to buy one, as ventures such as this deserve our support.

*Andrew Salisbury*

(In the last newsletter this book was referred to as 'Nature in Norfolk', price £3. Apologies for the error - Sec)

### **Projects for the Millennium**

At a well attended public meeting about the Earlham Millennium Green on 25 November, it was agreed that it 'was an exciting project and something to be involved in'. As we said in our last newsletter, we too support this project as it benefits the Earlham Marsh area without changing its character. Currently paths are being improved and soon the copse should be cleared of dead wood and have additional planting. The next stage will be provision of a limited amount of seating and some signposting.

Your committee believes that the Yare Valley Society should also seek to mark the Millennium in some useful way. We have already asked for suggestions in earlier newsletters and would be very pleased to receive some from you. The year 2000AD looms nearer all the time!

One idea is to help improve the Yare Valley Walk in some way, notably by contributing to better signposting which, we have been told, could incorporate our logo. We are in touch with George Ishmael of Norwich City landscaping department about this possibility, and about other ideas such as planting mature trees in acceptable areas. Please let us know if you approve, or have other ideas.

*Elaine Tucker*

### **Norwich Fringe Countryside Management Project**

The Norwich Fringe Project was established in 1990 as a partnership of local authorities, the Broads Authority and the Countryside Commission. Norwich is situated at the confluence of the rivers Yare, Wensum and Tas, thus providing a natural area rich in landscape and wildlife. The ever increasing activities of the City, however, and pressure for continued development outwards, put the surrounding rural fringe, with its river valleys, woodland and commons at risk. The Fringe Project has now published a Management Strategy to guide its work of conservation and education over the next three years. A Business Plan will provide a programme of works and the means for the Project to seek funding and support to achieve its policies.

The document sets out the aims and purposes of the Fringe Project together with its policies in relation to the many authorities and organisations involved. These include the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, District and City Councils, County Council, Parish Councils, Public Utilities, Environment Agency, Norfolk Wildlife Advisory Group, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and local landowners and farmers. There are detailed sections on the physical and landscape features of the fringe countryside, the many species of wildlife, local archaeology, opportunities for recreation, public education and community involvement. There are a number of clearly set out and informative maps. With regard to our section of the Yare Valley there is not much detail beyond the obvious desirability of managing the river valley in relation to wildlife and landscape. The water levels and condition of adjacent dykes is to be maintained in consultation with the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Board. The wildlife of the valley pasture should be enhanced with appropriate management. The Society has a responsibility to liaise with the Project to see that these aims are realised.

The ambitions of the Project are considerable, and with minimal staff and limited resources it is going to be an uphill task to have a real impact in counteracting the inexorable march of urbanisation around the City. The Project deserves the support of all those who value the green areas remaining.

The Society's copy of the Document (pp128) may be borrowed on request. Copies are available from the Project Officer, Ber Street, Norwich NR1 3EP, price £10.

*Graham Hussey*



## THE NEWS PAGE

### A GREEN BELT FOR NORWICH?

The City Council has invited views from individuals and organisations as part of a process of consultation leading to a new County Structure Plan. One of the important questions is whether Norwich needs a green belt. This is far from straightforward, even though the idea appears attractive: green belts take a long time to establish, because of all the legal formalities, and they lead to increased pressure for development on land just outside their boundaries. We need urgent action to protect sensitive areas such as the river valley, **NOW**, with the full force of statutory control, and this is best achieved by means of Local Plans (currently being developed by the City and SNDC).

Your committee discussed the issues and decided to back the idea of a green belt as a long-term solution, but in the meantime we are pressing for Local Plans to be drawn up quickly to give the valley more protection than it has at present. All this has been set out in a letter sent to County Hall. Any one who wishes to see a copy of our comments should contact the secretary, Anne Girling.

### THE UEA ROAD

There is mounting opposition to the new road proposed in the UEA development plan, across the river and marsh north west of the Sainsbury Centre. We understand that the University was advised against this road by the City planners, and that a solid body of opinion among staff and students at UEA is against it. We have supported a campus pressure group in a lobbying campaign and petition.

### COLNEY HALL LEISURE COMPLEX

Our last newsletter, and the local press both wrongly reported that South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) gave the go-ahead for the leisure development at Colney hall. Here is an extract from the letter that SNDC sent to Colney Parish Council, in response to their representations about the proposed development. Colney also thought that outline planning permission had been granted.

"Having had the proposal explained and heard the nature of the consultees responses and local views the Members resolved that they considered that it was possible to accommodate a development of this nature and scale on this site on the lines indicated on the latest plans.

The application was therefore deferred for further negotiations on the detailed form and design of the buildings, car parking, future management of the woodland and open areas of the site and the detailed configuration of the access. Any revised or additional plans received will be forwarded to you in the usual way and when I am satisfied that all the details which are required have been received the application will be re-presented to the Planning and Environment Committee. Contrary to the report in the Local Press, Outline Consent has not yet been granted to this proposal."

### MEMBERS' VIEWS

We would love to hear from you! Please write to me, Janet Johnson, Yare Valley Society Newsletter Editor, 21 Chalfont Walk, Norwich NR4 7NH.