



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 31

July 1995

AGM News

The Society's AGM was held on 22nd May 1995, in the Cringleford Playing Field Pavilion again. About 35 of our members attended.

I'm publishing the report of our Chairman, Elaine Tucker for the benefit of those of you who were unable to attend the meeting. It gives a good summary of the work of the Society over the past year.

Following the main business of the meeting, John Hovey JP, the Superintendent of Grounds at UEA and one of our members, gave us an illustrated talk on Environmental Issues in the UEA Landscape which was enjoyed by all of our members.

Some of our members pointed out that the date of our AGM clashed with that of the Eaton Residents, so we will try to liaise over dates in future years to ensure that this does not happen again.

Chairman's Report

During the past year, we have experienced both successes and disappointments in defending our beautiful Yare Valley from erosion by developers.

There have been comparatively few new planning applications involving land in the valley, but, sadly, the results of three earlier ones that had been refused by the City last year went against us at appeals. These were:

- The extension to Roy's Car Park
- A store extension at Bartram Mowers
- The Jehovah's Witness Meeting Hall at Harford Bridge.

By request from many of you at the AGM, we will be having a Guided Walk around the grounds of UEA in the Autumn.

John Hovey has agreed to conduct a walk on Sunday, September 3rd 1995, starting at 2.30pm. Meet at the Porter's Lodge. The walk should take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. However, we do need to know the numbers of people coming, because if the numbers are great, it may be necessary to run two walks.

For further details, and to reserve a place, telephone Pamela Ford on 01603 456021.

The decisions, of course, were final. Nevertheless, we wrote to the Department of the Environment voicing our concern that the officially designated river valley had been incrementally eroded in each case, in spite of its environmental importance being verbally upheld by

each appeal Inspector. In reply, the best assurance that the Department was able to offer for the future was to stress that any future proposals would stand or fall on their own merits and not on precedents.

This must serve to remind us of how vigilant we need to continue to be both as a Society and as individuals, in monitoring, assessing and tackling any proposals that could encroach on the valley.

We are grateful to those elected representatives that have written to tell us that they share our concern in this matter.

We have also been involved via the local authorities in the continuing process of formulating planning policy. In this, we have appreciated some strengthening of the policy that protects the river valleys, both in the Norfolk Structure Plan and in the Norwich Local Plan.

Also we have been pleased to see that the latter Plan now includes a policy seeking to contain future development at UEA within an envelope - providing a defined edge between it and the protected valley.

Our current main concerns include the proposed road improvements at the junction of Ipswich Road with Hall Road, which would detrimentally affect attractive views of the valley at this point both from the road into Norwich and the path along Marston Lane. Also, we are investigating the Bartram Mower excavations with their rather drastic affect on a right-of way as well as on the valley floor itself. (See page 4).

As you can see from the end of the list of activities, we also get involved in less contentious issues, such as the conservation of bats and a National Rivers Authority study. We should like to be more positive generally but our efforts to help improve the Yare Valley Walk, for example, have unfortunately not yet met with any active response from the City.

All these concerns involve quite a lot of work and I should like to thank each member of the committee for all their efforts and faithfulness. Last year, you will remember, John Thurman stepped down from the committee. You will not be surprised to know that we soon found it essential to co-opt him on to it. Each one of us is involved in a meaningful way and I am very lucky to have such a splendid group of people with whom to work. A real thank you to each one of you.

This year, because of business pressure, Tony Tilford has decided he must resign. He, of course, is our bat man (!), but has also looked after our literature, been involved in many an investigation and been very good at keeping a weather eye open for problems. I trust that we shall not lose all of these contributions. Thank you Tony, for all that you have done.

Thank you too, to all of you for being here tonight. Thank you for bothering to write letters to the planning authorities about development proposals in the valley - a very important activity.

Thank you for distributing Newsletters and encouraging people to become new members. And a special thank you to Peter Dillamore for typing and printing our membership list each year, not a small task when we represent 250 people.

Please keep up all this good work. And if you feel you can volunteer for more, please tell us. The Yare Valley Society needs you!

Officers Elected to the Society at the AGM:

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Yare Valley Society - Summary of Activities 1994/95

Comments on Planning Applications

- **Roy's Extension to Car Park**
Opposed by YVS at Public Inquiry but appeal allowed.
- **Bartram Mowers' Store Extension**
Opposed by YVS at informal hearing but appeal allowed.
- **Jehovah's Witness Meeting Hall at Harford Bridge** Opposed by YVS in written representations but appeal allowed.

Action taken on above decisions: letters of concern about the incremental erosion of the protected valley landscape written to the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment, local Euro MP, MPs and Councillors.

The DoE claimed that the latter two decisions did not harm the valley's landscape or open character, whilst the Roy's decision was based on special circumstances; future proposals would stand or fall on their own merits, not precedents.

Elected representatives were sympathetic to our concern.

A similar letter was also written to the EDP, resulting in some new members.

- **Retail warehousing at Dairy Crest**
Appeal was withdrawn. Existing buildings to be demolished and Tesco Store built.
- **Extension to UEA Chemistry Building**
No comment necessary.
- **Bailey Bridge over the River at Colney** in connection with proposed extraction of sand and gravel. Opposed by YVS, decision deferred by City.
- **Alterations to Earlham Bridge** No comment necessary.
- **Cow Path Alteration to Cycle Track** YVS discussed environmental implications with City Landscape Architect, Development passed by City.
- **Ipswich Road/Hall Road Junction Improvements**
Original draft plan opposed by YVS. County Hall

will be preparing a scheme taking environmental considerations into account.

Comments on Statutory Plans

- **Norfolk Structure Plan, Norwich Policy Area, Review to 2006** Adopted by County on interim basis because of need to re-assess transportation policies pending review of Plan to 2011. No Green Belt. Environmental policy affecting river valleys strengthened.
- **City of Norwich Local Plan**, yet to be adopted: environmental policy affecting river valleys has been strengthened, partly in response to our representations.
- **Norfolk Minerals Local Plan** Includes policy against sand and gravel extraction in the river valleys. Proposal to investigate Intwood area (101) for mineral extraction opposed by YVS at Public Inquiry into Plan. Result awaited.
- **Norwich Area Local Plan** Now adopted by South Norfolk Council.

Comments on Other Matters

- **Dragon Palace Sign in Eaton Road** Validity queried via City's Planning Enforcement Officer. Allowed to remain.
- **Dumping on Yare Valley Walk alongside Bartram Mowers' site and, also, litter on section from Bluebell Road to UEA Broad** Responsibility for removal queried with Norwich Fringe Management services. Reply awaited.
- **Bartram Mowers' Excavation on Flood Plain**
Letter to City Council expressing concern about maintenance of right of way, affect on wildlife, landscape and river. Reply awaited.

Other Activities

- **National Rivers Authority** is undertaking a study in which YVS will be involved.
- **Anglian Water** - cleansing of Yare Valley Trunk Sewer. YVS informed that this would happen.
- **Yare Valley Walk** YVS continues to be in contact with City about practical ways it can help maintain and improve the Walk.
- YVS continues to belong to CPRE and Norfolk Society.

- YVS continues to participate in **South Norfolk Conservation Forum and Environmental Liaison Group**. Also, **Norwich Environmental Forum**. In touch with **Friends of the Earth**.
- **Norfolk Bat Group** YVS registered interest in discussing proposals for the conservation of the **Eaton Chalk Caves** which had already been visited by some members.

Marston Marshes

Earlier this year parts of the marsh, including some reed beds, were severely cut back. This destroyed the habitat of many small rodents and potential nesting sites for the warblers. Many flowers were cut down before they seeded.

On behalf of the Society, we complained to the appropriate Department of the City Council and I gather we were not alone!

We are grateful to our members for bringing this matter to our attention.

Pamela Ford

1995 Subscriptions still wanted

Your subscriptions have been coming in slowly this year, so can I remind you to let your Newsletter Distributor have them.

Post them to the Membership Secretary, Pamela Ford, 35, Brentwood, Norwich NR4 6PN if this is easier, or drop them through my letter box if you come to the Chalfont Walk Shopping Parade.

I live in the flats above the shops - you need to find the middle staircase. Just put your subs in an envelope with your name, into no. 21. The cost is £1 per family, but we like to register all the family members on the sub, so let us have all the names, please.

Janet Johnson

Proposed Road Improvements at Ipswich Road/Hall Road Junction

The County Council Planning and Transportation Committee decided on 15th June to reduce the

earlier scheme to the strengthening and widening of Harford Bridge. It is now looking at the various options available.

Update on Bartram Mower Excavations

We have recently received a letter saying that the earth-moving operations in the flood plain are currently being investigated by the City Planning Officer.

Elaine Tucker

Norwich Fringe Countryside Management Project

A consultation draft on a strategy for the Norwich Fringe (which of course, includes the Yare Valley) has been prepared by the Norwich Fringe Management Group. Our Society is supporting the draft but stressing the need for resources to allow the project to progress more quickly.

Elaine Tucker

Proposed Hospital at Colney Lane

We have written to the Chief Executive of the Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust asking for an update on current plans for this project and for an assurance that, as promised after earlier discussions, we shall be consulted in an environmental impact assessment about traffic and other matters.

You will remember that we made a number of comments and held a members' meeting about these matters when a public consultation exercise was being held in 1992.

John Thurman

Don't forget to telephone Pam Ford if you are interested in the Walk around UEA Grounds! Hurry, now, to reserve your place.

End of Newsletter 31 - Editor Janet Johnson, 21 Chalfont Walk, Eaton, Norwich NR4 7NH Tel: 01603 452271.