

# Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 41

October 1998

## Into the 21st century

**Who are the keepers of the Yare valley? Developers? Or those who seek to preserve its natural beauty?**

**Norwich City Council is committed in its Local Plans to protecting the Yare valley from inappropriate development.** In April last, when in full possession of the facts about Bartram Mowers' proposed residential and related development, its planning committee of elected councillors unanimously refused permission for it.

This decision was supported by 74 written objections from the public, 66 of these from individuals - and all based on the full facts of the case after organised meetings and distribution of videos by the developers. An additional 60 people signed a petition against the development. Only three wrote supporting the scheme.

**Recently you may have received a pamphlet** through your door from the developer of this proposal asking you to choose between what they call "further retail development" or "low profile residential development" on the Bartram Mower's site. Some of the information provided about these developments could be misinterpreted and you need to know far more before you can answer.

Do you think that those in the City who are responsible for the Yare valley would have turned down the latter proposal so decisively if they thought it better for its future? No! **It is the developer who favours suburbanising the valley with residential development** rather than continuing something akin to its past use through a valid planning permission for a garden centre.

If you want to know more, we should be pleased to let you see our letter to the City Council objecting to the proposal, please contact Elaine Tucker on 458657 or Alison Ward on 452330. The Council's reasons for refusal of permission may be seen at City Hall.

**Like the City and County, we intend protecting the Yare valley into the 21st century.**

*Yare Valley Society Committee*

## Plan Inquiries

The examination in public into the Deposit Norfolk Structure Plan will begin at County Hall on 17 November. The Yare Valley Society has accepted an invitation to participate in this examination between 17 and 27 November on matters relating to the environment. The South Norfolk Local Plan Inquiry, to which we have also submitted representations, starts on 27 October.

Both inquiries will last for many weeks and results will not be out for several months. These plans, of course, become the basis on which future planning decisions are made.

*Elaine Tucker*

## Colney Hospital

The NHS Trust has applied for planning permission within the Colney Hospital site to build 144 residential units for doctors and clinical staff (probably in a three-storey building), together with three single storey buildings for a residential common room, an occupational health unit and a children's nursery, all with related car parking space. The site is adjacent to the John Innes Institute and though away from Colney Lane, encroaches, of course, on the landscaping of the hospital.

*Elaine Tucker*

## Vodafone Mast

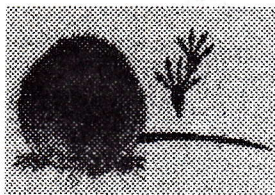
Planning permission is also being sought for a 65 foot high Vodafone mast on land belonging to the Riding Stables at The Loke, Cringleford. It is in the river valley and an Area of High Landscape Quality and would be seen from many angles both from within the valley and outside it.

*Elaine Tucker*



## Wildlife Sightings

In response to the paragraph about wildlife in the valley (July newsletter), a member has written to say that last



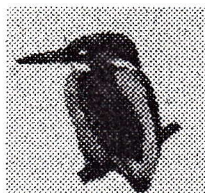
year from the footbridge on land near Waitrose car park, he saw water voles feeding and swimming in the dyke leading to the river. He also spotted a water vole basking in the sun on a floating log, further up-

stream, adjacent to Bartram Mowers.

The same sharp-eyed member on several occasions has observed from Marston Lane, a kingfisher perched on vegetation overlooking several pools within the nature reserve. In addition he has seen a pair of kingfishers flying along the course of the river between Bowthorpe Marshes and BUPA and a single one feeding along the edge of the UEA broad. *Thank you Mr Jim Moore.*

Keep your eyes open! We should like to hear of other observations.

*Alison Ward*



## South Norfolk Landscape Assessment

South Norfolk Council has commissioned Land Use Consultants to undertake a detailed landscape assessment of the southern outskirts of the City, land which is currently protected by policies in the Norfolk Structure Plan and South Norfolk Local Plan. The area studied included the Yare valley (part of which is also protected by the City Plan) and the Southern Bypass protection zone.

The 42 page report describes the geology, topography, drainage, archaeology, agriculture and landscape characters of the area together with access, Nature Conservation sites and Historic Parkland. The area studied was divided into 9 local character areas and the characteristic of each assessed in relation to possible development pressures.

Among the main conclusions of the study are:

- (1) The principal role of the area covered by Local Plan Policies RUR2 and RUR4 is to provide an appropriate historic setting to the City of Norwich.
- (2) Strong support for the defined Areas of High Landscape Quality that protect the unique historical, aesthetic and ecological quality of the river valleys.
- (3) Local Plan Policy RUR2 does not protect all the land of the Norwich Fringe, only that area visible from the Southern Bypass. The protection zone should be extended with the emphasis on the setting of Norwich not the Bypass.
- (4) Some confusion may be caused by overlap between Policies RUR2 and RUR4. Reference to AHLQ should be confined to the supporting text for RUR2, or alternatively the wording and policy areas of RUR2 and RUR4 should be combined.
- (5) Special attention should be given to the definition and detailed design of the Local Plan allocations for new de-

velopment to the west of Cringleford and to the south of Colney as these areas form a significant part of the historic setting to Norwich.

(6) A working arrangement should be established with Norwich City Council to ensure that those areas to the north of the South Norfolk boundary (ie, the river Yare) that form an important part of the historic setting of the City should be equally protected. Thus the two parts of the relevant character areas making up the Yare Valley Urban Fringe should be treated as one.

The report is therefore a welcome boost for the protection of the Norwich Fringe including the Yare valley area covered by the Society.

*Graham Hussey*

## What is the Yare Valley Society?

On this occasion, volunteers from the 300 members of our Society are distributing this newsletter on a slightly wider basis. It may be that you are reading this and are not a member of the Yare Valley Society, so it is perhaps appropriate to reiterate the importance of the Yare valley and to identify the aims of the Society.

The Yare valley is recognised both locally and nationally by statutory authorities, voluntary bodies and individuals as an area of high landscape quality and ecological importance that should be protected from the strong pressures for development in the Norwich area. It presents attractive and accessible open countryside within easy reach of Norwich and its environs and as such, it is a valuable recreational and visual asset. Vigilance and action on the part of all concerned are needed to protect it.

The Society was established in 1967 as a voluntary group and now has over 300 members. The aims are to protect the Yare valley south of Norwich, principally between Harford and Colney, against any development that would detract from its natural beauty, and to encourage any development which would preserve its outstanding natural landscape for the benefit of all. In order to achieve these aims, the Society represents members' views and concerns, by commenting regularly on planning applications and policies which affect the valley. Evidence is given at public planning inquiries and MPs and councillors are lobbied. Members receive a newsletter several times a year and the wider public is informed by means of letters and articles in the local press.

If you would like to join the Society, please contact the membership secretary on 01603 456021. The current family membership costs £1 for the calendar year.

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*Articles, comments and letters for possible publication in the Newsletter can be sent to:*

*Alison Ward, 20 Brettingham Avenue, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 6XG*