



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 58

February/March 2003

STOP PRESS – URGENT Cross valley street lights

UEA has applied for consent to erect a mix of 6m and 5m high streetlights on both branches of the cross valley link, ie. the route towards the Food Research Institute and the direct route to Colney Lane via the cricket pavilion. This would transform the area to an urban landscape. The security of pedestrians and cyclists could be adequately dealt with by means of upgrading low level bollard lighting, such as exists on one side, extended to both sides of the path. This application falls into two Districts, so objections to it need to be sent both to Mr J Andrews, Principal Planner, City Hall, NR2 1WP by 20 March, reference 4/2003/0122/F, Lighting on cycleway/footpath, UEA to Colney Lane and also to Mr C Trett, Planning Dept, South Norfolk District Council, Long Stratton, NR15 2XE reference NW07/03/0230/F by 14 March. Remember every letter counts if we wish to protect our valley from urbanisation.

STOP PRESS – URGENT Bartram Mowers site, Bluebell Road

In March last year, we issued a special edition of the newsletter concerning Bartram Mowers' request that their site in Bluebell Road should be considered for housing or high technology industry in the Norwich Replacement Local Plan. In our last newsletter we reported that the City Council had turned this down.

We have just heard that the **Bartram Mowers is going to appeal against this decision at the Public Inquiry.** We strongly support the City but can only do so at the Inquiry if asked to by the City. We can and will write in the City's support and invite you to do so also. The protected river valley designation of this site has been consistently upheld in statutory plans and numerous planning appeals over the past thirty-five years. Nothing has changed to alter those decisions. The value of the valley becomes more and more important as pressures for development increase.

From past experience, we know how vital individual letters are. **If you wish to write supporting the City's**

decision, please address your letter to **The Inspector, Public Inquiry, City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan, reference Bartram Mowers site, Bluebell Road.** On this occasion, the Programme Officer for the Inquiry has asked that the letters are **NOT sent to City Hall but to our secretary, Alison Ward (address at end of newsletter)** to be gathered together and forwarded with the Society's letter. Letters have to be with the Programme Officer by 31 March, so please let us have them before that date. **Each letter counts!**

Advance notice of Annual General Meeting

Our annual general meeting will take place on Tuesday 13 May 2003, at 7.30 pm and will be held at St Andrew's Church Hall, Church Lane, Eaton (adjoining Waitrose car park). There is car parking to the rear of the Hall.

After the business part of the meeting, there will be a talk by Mike and Carol Blackwell entitled *'Reflections on rivers from the Yare to the Amudarya and back'*. Mike and Carol left Eaton in the 1970s and have just retired to Cringleford, having lived and worked in places as far afield as Moldova, the USA and Turkmenistan. They have kept a lively interest in the Yare but have encountered some rather more extreme environments in their travels.

Natural History Group—Walks

Our first spring walk has been arranged for Sunday 27 April starting at 9.30 am and lasting 2-3 hours. Mike Freer will be taking a group to Colney Hall to visit the heronry there. Numbers will be limited to 15, so please pre-book from 1 April with Mike on 01603 458084. No dogs please.

On Sunday 18 May, one of our members Tom Green, author of 'Birds of the Yare Valley' will be leading a morning guided walk around the UEA. Meet at the Cringleford bridge car park at 10.00 am. First spring migrants as well as resident birds could well be in the area, so bring binoculars if you have them. No need to book, just turn up.

Glen Collier will lead an afternoon walk at Bowthorpe Marshes for birds and other wildlife.

Meet at 1.30 pm on Sunday 15 June at the lay-by on Watton Road by St Mary's Church, Earlham. Please ring Glen on Norwich 451193 for further details and to book a place.



Would volunteers willing to lead small informal walks later in the year on butterflies, wild flowers, etc as well as birds, please contact the co-ordinator Elizabeth Groves on Norwich 454782.

Visit to the Archives at the John Innes Institute

In October last year, 15 members made a visit to the archive collection at the John Innes Institute, where we were introduced to the exhibits by Ken Dix, the librarian. Some remarkable books and prints are on display, stretching back five centuries and including volumes from before the introduction of printing. If there is a demand, it would be possible to repeat the visit. So if any other members wish to see such delights as the first known illustration and description of the potato plant, please leave a message with John Thurman (455329).

Lakenham Way Ramble

The walk with Matt Davies last autumn was an interesting and enjoyable revelation (to many of us) of the Lakenham to Trowse part of the Yare valley, an area that does not come under the remit of our Society. The day was fine, the walk was varied and we each took home a beautiful Howgate Wonder to bake! Thanks to Matt for yet another excellent walk.

Norwich Replacement Local Plan

This is now in the state of preparation for a Public Inquiry starting in May at which unresolved objections to the Plan will be considered by an Inspector.

Our Society made several objections to various aspects of the Second Deposit Plan, all but one of which have been resolved, either by acceptance of our suggestions by the City or by a certain amount of give and take. Only one remains outstanding. We were grateful for the hearing we were given.

Norfolk Structure Plan

The government is currently in the process of abolishing the planning responsibilities of the County Councils in favour of regional planning. Until the legislation is changed, the counties still have a legal obligation to produce Structure Plans for their areas. Consequently, Norfolk County Council has recently produced an 'Issues Report' as the first stage in the next review of its Plan which will extend to 2025.

The Society was pleased to have the opportunity to comment on many of the forty-four questions it raised,

particularly in relation to the environment of Norwich. The report actually states that 'it will be vital to safeguard the environment of the (Norwich) area' which is, it goes on to say, together with the quality of life, 'among its most important assets'. We endorse that wholeheartedly!

UEA Farm Site Development

The Society was represented at both the site visit and the two meetings of the City planning committee that considered this development. It was strongly opposed by us and also by the Norwich Society. However the committee eventually approved it by eight votes to five.

Fridge Dump

Some of you may have noticed old refrigerators dumped in a compound on the hospital side of the valley near the UEA playing fields. The Society discovered it to be a planning infringement and the fridges are now being removed. We understand that the compound will now be used (legally) for storing UEA Grounds implements.

Colney to Bowthorpe Bridleway

The part of this ancient bridleway from the north side of Watton Road to the north side of the river Yare, crossing the river originally by means of a ford (there is no ford at present), has now been recognised by means of an Order confirmed by Norfolk County Council, there being no objections. One of our members **Jim Moore** has been very active in seeking to restore the status of this bridleway and others in the area. He is to be congratulated on the results of his efforts.

Colney Park

A biomass plant producing heat and hot water for the Hall and new offices is being proposed in an area of open space and at the pivotal point of the drive from the main road serving these buildings. We have objected to the situation of this development, which is also an incremental extra to the buildings shown on the master plan for Colney Park.

Three Score, Bowthorpe

We have had the opportunity to comment on the Brief for the new 'village' being developed in this area and were particularly pleased with the retention of the ancient Grass Road and the inclusion of a green 'buffer' strip between the development and the river valley. We hope that the development will go ahead as suggested in the Brief.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2003 ARE DUE

Please give your £1 either to your newsletter deliverer, or to a committee member, or send it to the Membership Secretary, 42 Bluebell Road, Norwich NR4 7LG

Articles, comments and letters for possible publication in future newsletters can be sent to Alison Ward, 20 Brettingham Avenue, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 6XG