

THE WARNHAM SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting at the Village Hall at 8 pm on Thursday 22nd October 1987

AGENDA

1 To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th October 1986 and discuss any matters arising. The Minutes have been circulated.

2 To receive and approve the Receipts and Payments Account for the period 1st October 1986 to 30th September 1987 – herewith.

3 To discuss the Committee's report on the year. The report has been circulated.

4 To elect a new Committee – see note below.

5 Any other business.

NOTE

The constitution specifies a Committee of not more than 12 and not less than 8. There are currently 13 (including one co-opted member) but two of these are not standing for re-election. No new nominations have been forthcoming in response to the Secretary's letter of 29th September.

THE WARNHAM SOCIETY

Annual general Meeting, 22nd October 1987 -

Report by the Committee on the past 12 months

Membership of the Society

In the course of the year there has been a further modest increase in the membership of the Society, from 120 to 128. This counts husbands and wives who are joint members as two which is reasonable considering they both have voting rights. The number of households in membership is 77 (72 a year ago).

The Conservation Area

In broad terms the Conservation Area of Warnham comprises Friday Street, Church Street and School Hill including the properties on either side of each, and Mayes Lane up to and including Old Manor. A proposition made by the Parish Council a year ago (with the support of the Society) that the area be extended to include Bell Road, the cricket field and the houses surrounding the latter did not commend itself to the planning authority. The Parish Council was then invited to make proposals for the enhancement of the existing area. Your committee has taken advantage of this invitation to make its own proposals to the planning authority with a number of practical suggestions aimed at maintaining the identity and special character of the village. Copies of this submission will be available at the meeting, or may be obtained from the Secretary beforehand.

Traffic Management for Warnham

The Committee's standpoint, which it has argued consistently over the last 2 years, is that the volume (and often the speed) of commuter traffic through Warnham is unacceptable and will get worse with the completion of the Horsham Northern Bypass. The modest traffic management measures the Society has argued for in unison with the Warnham Parish Council are designed to make the village less attractive as a high-speed commuter route.

The County Surveyor's long-awaited "Warnham Area Traffic Study" was issued in February. Disappointingly this report proved to be almost entirely negative in content and turned down for one reason or another every proposal for traffic management (except for signposting) put up by the Parish Council or the Society. Furthermore, all schemes for parking restrictions were said by the report to be in abeyance pending a consultation paper to the Highways Committee, but this was perhaps just as well as the report indicated the author's preference for double yellow lines down the whole of the west side of Church Street, a solution which has rightly been ruled out by the Parish Council and ourselves as conducive to speeding. The only chink of light came in the final paragraph which said that the need for any traffic management measures would be assessed after the completion of the Horsham Northern Bypass and the underpass on the A24 at the Farthings Hill roundabout .

The Committee's reaction to this discouraging document was that we should keep trying but at the same time we should test the views of members. It was therefore decided to make traffic the main topic for discussion at the annual spring meeting held on 21st May. About 80 people (including some non-members) attended this meeting and listened to Mr Roger Purcell's exposition of the situation. There followed a general discussion in the course of which several interesting and constructive suggestions were made from the floor, eg a "chicane" at the north and south entrances to the village, with an obligation on traffic entering the village to give way to traffic leaving it. In general the feeling of the meeting was supportive of the Committee's standpoint. Unfortunately the County Surveyor was unable to accept the invitation to be present but the Area Engineer did ask to be informed of the proceedings and has since promised to make a full comment – which however is not yet forthcoming.

Meanwhile, the newly-elected Parish Council took the initiative of inviting Mr Noakes, the Area Engineer, and Inspector Hoadley, the head of the traffic management division at Horsham Police to its opening meeting on 1st September, and also paid the Society the compliment of inviting Mr Purcell to introduce the subject. Nothing very positive seems to have come out of this meeting but there was sympathetic press coverage (County Times of 4th September) and some subsequent public reaction of a similarly sympathetic nature. A useful springboard, perhaps for the Society's next assault.

Planning Applications

In the course of the year the Society has made representations against two planning applications. The first was an application for change of use at Field Place Farm from existing agricultural buildings to builder's workshop, where we considered that such a quasi-industrial use would be quite inappropriate in this rural setting. And the second was in the case of an appeal against the Council's refusal to grant approval for the erection of two houses and garages on the north side of Rowhook Hill where we acted in support of the Rowhook Amenity Society. Planning approval was granted in the first case and refused in the second.

The Society also wrote to the developers, Courtyard Historic Properties, in connection with the development of Stanford's Yard which was then at the stage of outline planning application, to ask that generous provision be made for parking. The Committee will look carefully at the detailed planning application when this is submitted. This will also apply to the land adjoining Newmans Cottage, Friday Street where the Committee considered that it was not appropriate to make representations at the outline stage.

Best Kept Village Competition

No prizes were won this year although as much effort was put into it as ever. As we have said before, the biggest prize of all is the enjoyment of living in a cleaner village for which our thanks are principally due to Olive Thornton, but also of course to the many (not all members of the Society) who have helped in various ways, not forgetting Miss Milford and the children of Warnham

Primary School for the customary anti-litter posters which brightened the scene in June until the rain played havoc with them. Those who are interested will find the Assessors' detailed comments in the September Warbler.

It was decided to spend last year's prize money (£150) on two more litter bins bearing the Society's name, one to go at Deerpark Gate, Robin Hood Lane and the other on the south side of Hollands Way near the junction with Church Street, is on the opposite side of the road from the existing one.

Land for new housing

As part of the process of approving a North Horsham District Local Plan, the Horsham District Council published in December its consultation document "Land for New Housing – the next 10 years" and the Society registered its comments by letter on 27th January. The consultative document proposed that the greater part of the land required for the plan (enough for 1,750 dwellings) would come from the area between the existing northern boundary of the town and the new Horsham Northern Bypass, and there were only two proposals in the document which affected Warnham, one closely and the other somewhat less so. The first was for the erection in due course of 30 dwellings on a three acre site west of Tilletts Lane - and more or less opposite Lucas Road which had been offered by the late Mrs Gregson to the Council for housing purposes. The Society's comment on this proposal was that it could not be objected to in principle but that a lower density was appropriate in this rural setting. The second was that Field Place should be considered as a possible site for "limited development". Your Committee remains strongly opposed to any housing development at Field Place and so informed the Council.

Apart from the reactions of the Society and others, the other thing which will determine the Council's decisions on these and related matters is of course the West Sussex Structure Plan. The County Council's First Alteration to that plan which rolls it forward to 1996 was under review with the Secretary of State for the Environment from January 1985 until the end of July this year when he eventually published his proposed modifications. As far as housing is concerned he has settled an overall provision for West Sussex of 37,900 dwellings, an increase of 3,600 on the County Council's figure in the First Alteration (on which the Horsham District Council was basing the North Horsham District Local Plan), and has further specified that 500 of these 3,600 extra dwellings shall be provided in the Horsham District. The statutory period of six weeks for objections and representations to the proposed modifications has now elapsed.

It will be for the Horsham District Council to decide what impact the Secretary of State's decision is to have on the North Horsham District Local Plan, the draft of which will be produced by the Council for consultation at the end of this year. The Society will have another opportunity of commenting at that stage.

The Ex-Gregson Estate

The sad death of Mrs Molly Gregson on 10th November was the prelude to very major changes on

the land which she owned and which has now passed to the Lucas Family Trust. This is the land around Ends Place which is bounded by Warnham Village on the east, the A29 on the west, Strood Lane to the south and Sands Farm to the north, all of which is a favourite walking area for the people of Warnham. Early in the year and starting at the western extremity of the estate on the A29 the Trust embarked on a thoroughgoing programme of restoration of the farmland, using mechanised earth movers to clear overgrown hedges and coppices, with ensuing drainage works. The speed with which these machines can change the face of the landscape is phenomenal and already (end-September) perhaps half the agricultural land on the estate has been transformed and one must anticipate that the remainder will follow suit in the course of the coming winter. As to trees, judging from correspondence in the local press impressions differ widely. The woodland blocks on the estate have not been touched and the writer's impression is that all or nearly all the big trees in the field hedgerows have been retained. There was however some felling in the "roundels" in the fields near Byfleets Lane which have been ruthlessly cleared (no doubt they harboured many rabbits) and which are now a shadow of their former massive selves. On the whole, public rights of way (and there are several across the land) have been scrupulously preserved, and where this does not appear to be the case the Society will pursue.

Your Committee whilst appreciating that the farmland had been allowed to deteriorate and that major changes were therefore inevitable, was taken aback at the wholesale disappearance of nearly all the hedgerow and its substitution by fences. On 5th May the Chairman wrote to the Trustees to the Lucas Family Trust to express concern on behalf of those people of Warnham for whom this land constitutes a major amenity and to express the hope that a more sensitive treatment (and one less destructive of wildlife) might be adopted as the work proceeded eastward in the direction of Warnham village. Mr Lucas's reply defended the reclamation work as essential for good husbandry but did indicate that some thorn hedge would regenerate. The letter prophesied that "if people are patient they will see Ends Place restored to how it once was, a thriving and economic farm, with much timber, predominantly oak, within its woodland and field boundaries". There is to be management of the woodland areas with underplanting and some new planting with hardwoods. Also, certain areas (it is not known which) are to be retained with conservation in mind.

Be all this as it may, it has to be faced that what we have seen in the short term is the transformation, over a large part of the estate, of an intimate landscape of meadow, hedge and coppice rich in wildlife but admittedly short on productive quality, into wide open fields with fences and a few isolated trees where sheep are the only living creatures you are likely to meet with.

It is understood that Ends Place itself, i.e. the house and its immediate environs, has been bought by Mr. Pritchard-Jones. Here again there could be considerable impact on local amenity since the woods close to the house are particularly attractive and the access drive from Byfleets Lane (now a quiet secluded lane but for how long?) is a favourite Walk.

Relations with other bodies

The Society has continued to keep in close touch with the Warnham Parish Council, and members of the Committee have attended meetings of that Council throughout the year. We have maintained our membership of the Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies, and as forecast at the last AGM, have have duly registered with the Civic Trust. The Society has also joined the Gatwick Airport Conservation Campaign at the expense of making a small donation, with the object of keeping abreast with matters connected with the airport. At the invitation of the Parish Council we have taken their place on the Crime Prevention Panel, Mr Bensted-Smith being the Society's representative in this respect.

The Committee

The Committee has met six times since the last Annual General Meeting, under the chairmanship of Mr Gerald McMullen. Mr McMullen has indicated that he is unable, because of increasing business commitments, to continue with the chairmanship and it will be for the new committee to appoint a new chairman. It will also be necessary to find a new secretary since Mr Richard Overton will have completed three years in April 1988.

Members may like to be reminded of the names of the present committee members which, with their addresses, are as follows:

Rosemary Ashton	5 Station Road	66723
Dick Bensted-Smith	5 Friday street	63199
Patrick Board	53 Friday Street	67648
Robert Courtier	11 Friday Street	65053
Elizabeth Cox	Glebe End, Church Street	61711
Rosemary McLaughlin	Park View, Bell Road	65018
gerald McMullen	Little Broomhall, Goose Green	64922
Reginald Melhuish	Ramblers, Friday Street	65605
Richard Overton	5 School Hill	53679
Roger Purcell	7 school Hill	67605
Michael Smith	Brookhouse Farm, Kingsfold	Oakwood Hill 257
Olive Thornton	44 Church Street	63365
Jo Walker	35 Friday Street	53289

Mrs Walker has served as Honorary Treasurer, having been co-opted to the Committee after the last AGM when she nobly volunteered for the job. Mr Melhuish is the Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

Of the above, Elizabeth Cox and Rosemary McLaughlin are not standing for re-election.

WARNHAM SOCIETY
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1987

<u>RECEIPTS</u>			<u>Year to 30-9-86</u>	
Subscriptions	166.00		156.00	
Donations	1.00		10.00	
WSSC Superclean Award	150.00		-	
Coffee Morning, less expenses	-		131.52	
Bank Deposit Interest	8.32		4.86	
Sundry Income	<u>11.92</u>		<u>9.23</u>	
	337.24		311.61	
<u>PAYMENTS</u>				
Hire of Village Hall	12.00		12.00	
Postage & Stationery	38.37		33.37	
Poster Prizes	19.90		10.00	
Sussex Amenity Soc. Sub.	10.00		10.00	
Gatwick Conservation Campaign Sub.	10.00		-	
Litter Bins Sponsorship	128.80		-	
AGM Expenses (net)	6.87		13.27	
Sundry Expenses	2.26		10.79	89.43
		<u>228.20</u>	-	<u> </u>
Excess of Receipts over Payments		109.04		222.18
<u>Add: Funds brought forward:</u>				
Bank Account	270.82		64.51	
Cash in Hand	<u>31.06</u>	<u>301.88</u>	<u>15.19</u>	<u>79.70</u>
<u>Funds Carried Forward:</u>				
Bank Account	366.66		270.82	
Cash unbanked	30.50		-	
Cash in Hand	<u>13.76</u>	<u>410.92</u>	<u>31.06</u>	<u>301.88</u>

I have prepared the above Receipts and Payments Account from the books and records produced to me by the Hon. Treasurer Mrs J M Walker, and confirm that the account is in accordance therewith.

15th October 1987

J D MURRAY AC.I.S.

THE WARNHAM SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in the Village Hall on 22nd October 1987

Present: About 45 members and others

Chairman: Mr G. P. McMullen

1 Introduction

The Chairman welcomed all present.

2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th October 1986

All members present had a copy of these minutes which were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

3 Receipts and Payment Account for the year ended 30th September 1987

All members present had a copy of those accounts. The Chairman invited questions but there were none. On a proposition of Mrs Jean Burnham seconded by Mrs Olive Thornton the accounts were approved.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Jo Walker for her professional contribution as Hon Treasurer.

4 Report by the Committee on the past 12 months

The Chairman said the report gave a good indication of the variety of matters which had engaged the Committee's attention during the year, and thanked the Hon Secretary for its preparation, which was endorsed by members. The report was then discussed section by section, the following being the salient points raised:-

Traffic management for Warnham

Mr Robin Morton wanted "sleeping policemen" in Friday Street. Mr Roy Boud, supported by Mr Robert Southgate, considered that the junction of Friday Street with Church Street was dangerous, particularly for cars turning right into Church Street. Could the Society press for the 30 mph sign to be moved further out of the village? The Chairman however explained that the highway authority had consistently resisted this. Mrs Henrietta Goring thought there should be repeater signs along Church Street. Mr Bill Bousfield, reiterating a point he had made at an earlier meeting, said that Warnham's accident record was not as immaculate as the highway authority made out and Mr Roger Purcell said that this point had already been taken up and would be pressed. Mrs Jean

Burnham wanted the Society to continue to press for the closure of the right turn off the A24 at Knob Hill and this was supported although Mrs Dulcie Kup had reservations, speaking as a resident of Bell Road.

Mr Roger Purcell read the County Surveyor's latest letter (6th October) which did indicate, in the Chairman's phrase, that the Society was "getting somewhere slowly". The feeling of the meeting was that it was worth persisting in the effort to bring in traffic management measures for Warnham.

Planning applications

The Chairman said that since the preparation of the report Courtyard Historic Properties had put in a detailed planning application for a three-storey development at Stanford's Yard. The Parish Council had come down strongly against this. Mrs Jean Burnham expressed the view that the planning authority would never approve a three-storey development for this site. The general feeling of the meeting was strongly against such a development on account of the sheer scale, and Mr Roger Purcell suggested that those who felt this should write individually as numbers always carried weight in these cases, which was endorsed by Mrs Jean Burnham. Mr Robin Morton, a potential member, felt that the Society should be prepared to adopt unconventional methods in opposing such undesirable developments and the Chairman supported by Mr Bill Bousfield, suggested that it should be open to the Society to take or encourage any action in such cases, short of breaking the law.

Best Kept Village Competition

one or two members felt the society could play a more active part in discouraging the dropping of litter. Mrs Sheila Dutton wanted a litter bin near the war memorial but it was explained that the British Legion were opposed; she would also welcome more regular emptying of the bin on the opposite side of the road.

Ends Place Estate

Sir James Dalrymple-Hay said he had written personally to Mr Charles Lucas to express the hope that the restoration of farmland in the remaining north-east corner of the estate, ie the part nearest to Warnham village, would be carried out less drastically and more sympathetically than in that restored to date. Mrs Jean Burnham said that as district councillor she had received a very large number of complaints about the clearance and she had tried to suggest to the Trustees that a meeting of interested bodies including the Society would be helpful, but she had to recognise that they were legally entitled to do pretty well what they liked with the land. Mrs Brenda Dick said that the County Council had been approached by a number of people, but for the same reason had no power to act in the matter. Mr. Reg Melhuish said that most farmers now recognised that they had to temper efficient husbandry with regard for the countryside, and Mr Richard Overton said there was evidence that the Lucas Trust was not wholly unresponsive to public opinion. Mr Laurie Ashton said he thought the Society should not be inhibited from expressing its views again on the subject.

Relations with other Bodies

Alluding to the Society's membership of the Gatwick Airport Conservation Campaign, Mrs Olive Thornton said she thought the Society should declare its opposition to the extension of night flying.

Election of a new committee

Mr Gerald McMullen said that he was obliged to step down as Chairman of the committee but that Mr Reg Melhuish (now Deputy Chairman) had said that he would be prepared to take over if this was the wish of the new committee. He also said that Mr Richard Overton would complete his three-year term as Secretary in March 1988; it was therefore fairly urgent to find a successor and it would be very welcome if there were someone who felt able to take the job over in due course. Such a person could be co-opted to the committee meanwhile. He went on to say that the agenda explained the position relating to nominations to the Committee. Eleven members of the existing committee were offering themselves for re-election and there were no new nominations. On a proposition of Mr Bill Bousfield, seconded by Sir James Dalrymple-Hay, these eleven were duly re-elected, there being no dissenters. Their names are as follows:

Mrs R Ashton, Mr R B Bensted-Smith, Mr P A Board, Mr R H Courtier, Mr G. P. McMullen, Mr R. E. Melhuish, Mr R C Overton, Mr R H Purcell Mr M V S Smith, Mrs O G Thornton and Mrs J M Walker.

6 Any other business - the effects of the hurricane on the night of Thursday, 15th October 1987

Mrs Jean Burnham said that Council officials had now briefed members and the Press on the extent of the damage in the Horsham area and she gave the meeting a resume. Mrs Jennifer Pearce, speaking for the Social Services, said that many elderly people and others were quietly suffering hardship as a result of the storm and the Department would like to be informed of any such cases.

Mr Dick Bensted-Smith proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring chairman, Mr Gerald McMullen, for his valued services to the Society since he took over the chairmanship in November 1985.

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The formal business of the evening thus being concluded, there followed an informal get-together during which refreshments were served.