

## THE WARNHAM SOCIETY

### Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Committee held at Glebe End, Church Street on 2nd April 1987

PRESENT: Mr G. P. McMullen (Chairman)  
Mrs R Ashton  
Mr R B Bensted-Smith  
Mr P A Board  
Mr R H Courtier  
Mrs A. E. Cox  
Mrs R. R. McLaughlin  
Mr R. C. Overton (Secretary)  
Mr R H Purcell  
Mr M V S Smith  
Mrs O G. Thornton  
Mrs J M Walker

#### 1 Welcome to Mrs Mary Bond

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Mary Bond, the Vice Chairman of the local branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, who had been invited to attend for item 4.

#### 2 Apologies for absence

An apology was received from Mr Melhuish.

#### 3 Minutes of the last meeting held on 5th March 1987

In the list of those present the name of Mr Purcell had been accidentally omitted. Under Treasurer's Report (item 5 of the minutes) it was a petty cash float which had been set up. The date of the Parish Council elections (item 10(1)) was 7th May and not 6th April. With these amendments the minutes were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Secretary said that as a result of his letter of enquiry regarding the fate of the Society's letter of representation against the Field Place Planning application (item 2 of the minutes) it had emerged that that letter and representations had in fact been recorded and taken into account by the Horsham District Council.

Mr Bensted-Smith had attended the meeting of the Crime Prevention Panel and was prepared to continue doing so if desired. It was agreed that the Chairman would raise this at the Parish Council meeting on 13th April.

#### 4 The Ex-Gregson Estate

The removal of the hedges in a considerable area of land east of the A 29 – ie the most westerly part of the estate – was discussed. The Secretary, who had witnessed part of the removal, had circulated to members of the committee a draft letter to Mr Charles Lucas which reflected (1) his own concern at what he had seen (2) his apprehension that similar treatment would be meted out to the more easterly part of the estate which was separated by a river from that cleared to date and (3) his view that Mr Lucas as the owner of all this land was, in however qualified a sense, accountable to the people of Warnham for its husbandry by virtue of the many rights of way which traverse it and the high amenity value it had for the village. This particularly applied to the easterly part of the estate which was much walked by the people of Warnham. Introducing the subject the Secretary said that in his view this was as serious a threat to the local environment as recent planning applications at Field Place.

From the discussion which followed it was evident that those other members who had visited the site of the clearance were equally concerned at the effect on the landscape. However, the majority of members took the view that it was not appropriate to write to Mr Lucas in the terms suggested or indeed in any terms since a letter coming out of the blue was bound to be resented and, having regard to his influence in the village, the effect would be to turn public opinion against the Society. However the Chairman said that he was willing to go and see Mr Lucas to try to find out the reasons for what had been done to date, and also to enquire what was planned for the future. It was agreed that this personal approach was preferable and that to main object in the first instance should be to seek information. Mrs Mary Bond was invited to accompany the Chairman but said she would need to take advice first from her Council. The Chairman would go ahead and make the necessary arrangements.

#### 5 Warnham Area Traffic Study

All members had copies of this report by the Surveyor's Department of the County Council dated February 1987, and also of Mr. Purcell's comments on the report dated 25th March which he further elaborated at the meeting. The report, though very long-winded, was almost entirely negative, every proposal (apart from sign-posting put up by the Parish Council or the Society being turned down for one reason or another. All parking restrictions were said to be in abeyance pending a further consultation paper to the High Committee, but this was perhaps just as well since the report (Para 7.5) indicated the author's preference for double yellow lines down the whole of the west side of Church Street, a solution which had rightly been ruled out by the village as conducive to speeding. The only chink of light came in the final paragraph of the report 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. Apart

from that the report in Mr Purcell's phrase, provided "little comfort for the Society".

It was agreed, despite the promise in the final paragraph of the report, to maintain the pressure on the County Surveyor in an effort to goad him into a more responsive attitude. The public meeting on Warnham's traffic problems proposed for 21st May was one way of doing this and should go ahead.

#### 6 Spring Meeting - Thursday 21st May 1987

The following was agreed:

- (1) The first part of the meeting would consist of a talk on traffic in Warnham by Mr Purcell who would review the problems under various topics, the efforts made by the Parish Council and the Society to make progress, and the disappointing report from the County Surveyor's Department.
- (2) This would be followed by an open session in which the Chairman would take each topic in turn and invite discussion. Finally suggestions would be invited as to future tactics.
- (3) The Parish Council should be formally invited to the meeting.
- (4) Mrs Brenda Dick should be formally invited .
- (5) The Press should be invited.
- (6) The session on traffic would be followed by a video on burglar-proofing a house (about 12 minutes) which Mr Bensted-Smith would arrange to procure from the Police.
- (7) There would also be a photographic exhibition mounted by Mr Courtier along the lines of last time but incorporating material offered by members.
- (8) Cheese and Wine would be served on a contribution basis. Mr Parr would be asked if he would kindly organise again, but if not, Mr Smith thought he would be able to do so.
- (9) Letter to members would issue as soon as the Secretary could manage after returning from holiday on 23rd April. Publicity would also need to be by poster.

#### 7 Best Kept Village Competition

Mrs Thornton said that despite a false alarm the judging would be in June and July as last year. There would have to be a clear-up in early May and another in June. It was agreed that Tuesday at 7 pm was as good a time as any and Mrs Thornton would announce the dates in the Warbler.

## 8 Any other business

### (1) Planning application for redevelopment of Stanfords' builders yard

It was noted that this had been submitted.

### (2) Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies – informal area meetings

Mrs Thornton, Mrs Ashton and Mrs Walker said they would like to receive the details.

### (3) The Sussex Oak

It was reported that a change in management and style was imminent.

## 9 Date of next meeting

It was agreed to meet again on Thursday, 30th April at 8 pm at Ramblers, Friday Street.