

THE WARNHAM SOCIETY

Minutes of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Committee held at Ramblers, Friday Street on
14th June 1988

PRESENT: Mr R E Melhuish (Chairman)
Mr R B Bensted-Smith
Mr P A Board
Sir James Dalrymple-Hay
Mr G. P. McMullen
Mr R C Overton (Secretary)
Mr R H Purcell
Mr M V S Smith
Mrs O G Thornton
Mrs J M Walker

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Ashton and Mr Courtier.

2 Minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd March 1988

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

Mrs Thornton and Mr Overton reported respectively on "Granny's Lane" and "Three Stile Lane" (paragraph 2 of the minutes). The one or two householders along the former were agreeable to the change, but Mr Overton said that at least one resident on "Three Stile Lane" was opposed to the use of that name since he was using "Knob Hill" on his letter heading. After some discussion it was agreed that the Society should drop this one and should concentrate on Granny's Lane. The Secretary would pursue.

The Committee congratulated the Chairman on the excellent talk he had given at the Spring Meeting (paragraph 11 of the minutes) and the latter thanked the various members who had contributed in one way or another.

The Chairman had drafted a letter to Seeboard urging the burying of electric cables following the experience of the storm, and it was agreed that this should be sent.

3 Treasurer's Report

Mrs Walker reported a bank balance of £294.68. The position on subscriptions was that 36 had been paid or renewed, 38 were outstanding. It was agreed that the next step was for the Treasurer to write to the defaulters. The Secretary undertook to distribute.

4 Membership

The Secretary suggested that one way of bringing the Society into the public eye and thus, possibly, of increasing membership would be to offer an annual prize for the garden which in that particular year had done most to improve the street scene. This was thought to be a good idea but not one which could be brought into effect before 1989. It was agreed to discuss in detail at the next meeting.

Mr Purcell said that he did not think the Committee should push too hard to increase membership. The Society was not short of funds and could do a job on the existing membership base, modest as that was. This was agreed to be good sense, but at the same time opportunities of increasing membership, eg by approaching particular individuals believed to be interested, should not be lost sight of.

5 North Horsham District Local Plan (Consultation Draft)

The Chairman and one or two other members had read the document. It was agreed to write in general support of it and to express the hope that the District Council would strictly enforce the policies therein. The Chairman would write.

6 Warnham Conservation Area

The Chairman said he was keen that the Society should contribute in a positive way to the enhancement of the conservation area. He had attended a meeting of the Parish Council on 23rd May at which Mr Curtis, the District Council's Chief Planning Officer, referring to the District Council's stated commitment to drawing up schemes for the enhancement of conservation areas, had indicated that a local input, eg by way of a photographic survey, would be helpful and might speed things up. This had not been taken up very enthusiastically at the meeting, but with the expertise which the Society had through its professional members he thought that there was scope for a joint approach with the Parish Council possibly through the formation of a joint working party. He had drafted a letter to the Chairman of the Parish Council along these lines and another to Mr Curtis, and these were tabled. He envisaged that the survey which so far as the Society was concerned would actively involve the professional members of the committee, would take about 18 months.

This idea was well received by the Committee but Mr Purcell expressed the view that 18 months was too long since interest was bound to wane within that period. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Chairman of the Parish Council along the lines of his draft and would also in due course call an ad hoc meeting of the planning subcommittee to take matters further.

7 Proposed development at Tickfold Farm, Kingsfold (WN 20/88)

Mr Smith explained what was involved: this was a proposal to tip hardcore etc from Horsham town centre development over a very large area of farmland and woodland (some of it of high landscape value) and to do so intensively and over a period of years. Though it was said the land would be restored eventually, there would be massive disturbance meanwhile.

It was agreed to add the Society's representations against the application to those being made by the Parish Council. The Chairman would write.

8 Proposed development on land adjoining The Banks, Church Road, Warnham (WN 20/88)

This was an application to erect a single dwelling between The Banks and Bailing Hill House, and the objection to it was that the land (and The Banks itself) was outside the Built-up Area Boundary. The Committee discussed the application at some length. There was an argument for saying that the Boundary ought to have been drawn south of The Banks, ie the southernmost house on the west side of Church street but the balance of opinion was that since it had been drawn where it was it should be respected and the Society should register a formal objection to the planning application. The Secretary would write.

9 Land adjoining the Village Hall

Mrs Thornton said she understood it had been reported to the Parish Council that a small piece of land had been sold to the developers of Stanford's Yard for car parking. Though it might be desirable to use this land for car parking for the village, she could not understand why it had been necessary to bring in the developers of Stanford's Yard, nor was it clear whose land it was to sell.

Mr McMullen undertook to ascertain the facts.

10 Traffic in Warnham

The Secretary read out the correspondence since the last meeting - Mr Purcell's letter of 9th April to the Area Engineer and the reply dated 25th April - and Mr Purcell made observations on the visit to Bramber which he and Mr Overton had made on 23rd April. They had both formed the impression that the experiment of the chicanes had not been a success and in fact that the same (only better) effect was achieved in Warnham by the cars parked on the roadside. However, it was evident that the County would want to persevere with the Bramber experiment for a reasonable time. Apart from this, it was noted that the County was to carry out a classified traffic count in Warnham on the completion of the Farthings Hill underpass.

11 Best Kept Village Competition

The Committee authorised the expenditure of £7.23 on writing materials for the school posters and also £10 for prize monies. The painting of the telephone kiosks was well in hand thanks to the efforts of Mrs Thornton and Mr Courtier.

12 Annual General Meeting

It was agreed to hold this on Thursday, 27th October and to discuss the form of it at the next Committee meeting.

13 Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Prevention

Mr Bensted-Smith had written to the Crime Prevention Officer, Horsham Police on 16th May to resign from the Horsham and District Crime Prevention Panel following his move to Slinfold. He had gone on to suggest that representation of Warnham on the Panel should revert to the Warnham Parish Council and had asked the Crime Prevention Officer to approach the Parish Council direct with this request.

The Committee noted the position and considered that so far as Neighbourhood Watch was concerned (where Mr Bensted-Smith had also terminated his responsibility - see minutes of last meeting) this should await the outcome of matters as above.

14 Date of next meeting

It was agreed to meet again on Thursday, 15th September, same venue.