



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

A new Chairman always takes a little time to find his feet - in my case it may take a little longer with the drastic clean-sweep in local government that took effect on April Fool's Day. There are still so many uncertainties surrounding our new local authorities that it is difficult to judge whether they will be better or worse than their predecessors. Will our Parish Council be better able to represent our interests now that their executive responsibilities are less onerous ? Will Dacorum be able to overcome that instinctive feeling of Berkhamsted people that they will be ruled by and from Hemel Hempstead? What is the effect (if any) of the new County Council structure? And there will surely be many specific issues affecting everyone of us - will we pay our rates in Hemel or can we still pop into the Civic Centre ? Where can we have our vaccination validated before our holiday abroad ? Where can we inspect local planning applications ? Whom do we tell about that dangerous hole in the pavement ? And perhaps the most burning question of all - who will pay for the Town Hall ?

The Committee will do their best on your behalf to keep an eye on these and many other problems that will doubtless occur - but something is sure to escape us unless YOU bring it to our attention. Telephone one of us at the numbers below, or, if you prefer, drop a line to our Secretary, Megan Peplow.

I hope to see many of you in the months ahead, If we haven't met before, please introduce yourself.

O HAPPY BAND OF PILGRIMS

How do we see ourselves ? As one put it - not a member - are we a band of 'sans culottes'? With our guillotine ever sharp, Megan at the knitting needles, a Council Flowered-Hat rolling down the Lower King's Road? Quite a thought, but not a true picture surely ? A correspondent in the Gazette writing on the 'Where-have-all-the-tea-shops-gone' theme tells us that 'Despite brave attempts by the local citizens' association the place I knew and loved has been desecrated by Philistines', Putting aside the aesthetic question the important thing is that the efforts are made for the interests of the town. We number just under five hundred paid-up members in a town of 16,000. It may be that you can help to increase this number by inviting a friend to one of our meetings. Beryl Edwards (2013) is Membership Secretary, or you can fill in the slip at Lloyds Bank in the High Street.

ANCIENT AND MODERN

St. Peter's Parochial Church Council are undertaking the restoration of the Court House, home of the former Manor Court and of the Vestry until the nineteenth century. The Committee have decided to be associated with this appeal in that our constitution commits us to supporting works' for the preservation of historical interest', and we shall watch its progress with interest. Remember that the Citizens' Association is committed to support the Community Council's bid, later this year, for the lease of the Court House's nearest neighbour, St. Peter's Hall; an appeal for this second venture is planned, we hear, for the Autumn.

ARTS TRUST

The Berkhamsted Arts Trust, which has members representing the cultural societies in the town, is at present discussing the formation of a Dacorum District

Arts Trust which would coincide with the jurisdiction of the Dacorum District Council area, just at the present Trust covers the Berkhamsted area. There are many advantages in the idea and the officials of the Trust are to report on their deliberations at their annual general meeting in May. It is difficult to see ourselves as 'Dacorumites' : this is nevertheless what we now are and have been since April 1st. As the Chairman reminds us, instinctively we see Berkhamsted as 'us' and Hemel as 'them' ; perhaps a wider cultural umbrella will break down the more parochial attitude.

..... AND ENVIRONMENT FORUM

On a similar theme we have been invited to link with the new Dacorum Environment Forum. More about it later when we've found out ourselves

"WILL YOU WALK A LITTLE FASTER ?"

On the 6th February, we heard that our idea of a footpath along the south side of the A41(M) between Chesham Road and Harriots End Lane had been accepted. As this was our only suggestion, we're feeling quite pleased,

BITS AND PIECES

Are the clocks of Berkhamsted rather like the ungodly - faces have they and tell not, bells have they and chime not, ticks have they and tick not ? If you have looked at or listened for the local public clocks you'll know what we mean The pedestrian crossing west of the Rex cinema seems to be now accepted - apart from an embroidery of skid marks : take care to look both ways before you cross we saw a pale-looking fox just before midnight two hundred yards short of the 'Berkhamsted' sign at the east end of the town the other night ; nature in the High Street, particularly in the form of the trees opposite the Civic centre seems not so flourishing, perhaps because of different predators : such things matter, and we hope like Hardy you 'notice such things' will the well-meant artificial nature hanging outside the 'Swan' last the summer like the swans on the canal opposite the station - give them a look when you next pass, and protect them have you noticed the concrete wilderness fronted by insipid wire at the west end of the town and the noble effort in providing a new building next to the Town Hall which tries to scale down the massive new edifice to the Victorian proportions - architects do try and have you ever thought, as I have so often on a Saturday morning how much the Wilderness deserves the name, treeless as it is ? Keep looking, and if you see any part of our town which you feel about, write !

FUTURE EVENTS

With the very successful joint meeting with the National Trust addressed by Major Hadden-Paton now past, we combine with the Berkhamsted Council of Churches for a meeting, ramble to Great Gaddesden, occupy the castle, and drink in the longest day. Details are:

Ramble to Great Gaddesden - Start 10.30 a.m. Berkhamsted Station; the route crosses the Common via Frithsden Copse, thence to Nettleden and over the top to Great Gaddesden. Lunch (for those who have booked) at the 'Cock and Bottle' Great Gaddesden. Please ring Beryl Edwards (2013) by Good Friday sunset if you want the pub pie and sandwich.

10th May at 8 p.m. in the Baptist Church - (yes - not the Church Hall) a meeting in conjunction with the Berkhamsted Council of Churches to give the Dacorum District Councillors (your very own) opportunity to meet citizens of Berkhamsted. We understand that it will be possible to ask a question or two ; let's hope that there'll be no sermonising.

Whit Monday, 27th May - Citizens' Stall in the Castle grounds. Last year this was a successful venture. We need serfs to man the stall and others to flog maps publicly. Volunteers to Megan Peplow please (3089).

Longest Day, 21st June - Wine and Cheese Party in Victoria School at 6.45 p.m.

The Activities Sub-Committee have already begun work on next season's programme. Do you have any views to offer them? Speakers are already being sounded out - who would you care to hear? A bridge evening has already been suggested. Please let the Secretary (3089) know if inspiration strikes in the bath or elsewhere. But, pray, don't streak to Millfield!

Chairman:	Ken Sherwood, 42 Gaveston Drive.	5158
Vice-Chairman:	Alan Havelock, Linden House, Barncroft Road.	2140
Treasurer:	Stuart Rosser, c/o Lloyds Bank, High Street.	71271
Secretary:	Megan Peplow, 20 Millfield.	3089
Mem. Secretary:	Beryl Edwards, Amberley, Graemsdyke Road.	2013
Mrs. Hilary Talbot Ponsonby,	Edgeworth House, Northchurch.	5882
Mrs. Anne Sanders,	4 Little Heath Cottages, Potten End.	4142
Mr. Norman Binks,	22 Lombardy Drive.	6300
Mr. George Cameron,	34 Castle Hill Avenue.	3774
Mr. Michael Day,	Snelston, Shrublands Road.	2716
Mr. Henry Fisher,	Fairlight, Meadway.	4527
Mr. Roger Ford,	6 Cedar Road,	5350
Mr. Ken Gilmour,	4 Crossways.	6479
Mr. Ray Miles,	17 Ashridge Rise.	
Mr. David Sherratt,	Dean Incent's House, High Street.	
Mr. Max Struthers,	51 Cedar Road.	4345
Mr. Peter Taylor,	84 Cross Oak Road.	3227

SAY THE BELLS OF OLD BAILEY

Forms did not go out this year with the Chairman's Report. Subscriptions are due : we are sure that you, gentle reader, have met your obligation. If it has slipped your mind, please let the Hon. Treasurer have the amount at Lloyds Bank, High Street, before the next sunset.

Name

Mr. Mrs. Miss

Address.....

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Subscription enclosed

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(signature)

.....

(date)