



**Berkhamsted
Citizens
Association**

NEWSLETTER

N O V E M B E R 1975

'There's a gude time coming' we are told yet again, but the winter has yet to embrace us in his icy grip - or perhaps since it is International Women*s Year, it would be fair to say, her icy grip? - and as we splash through Sharlands Channel and trip over the paving stones in the High Street - one merit at least of tarmacadam is that you don't trip over it - we are well aware of the grimness yet to come. But, God rest ye merry, we have the festive season to enjoy, and early as this Newsletter is, let it bring you advance note of good tidings to you and yours.

Local Planning

The Association has taken a stance on these three matters:

1) Tunnel Fields

We believe that the present Stage 1 development is acceptable. Further considerations, such as the provision of A41(M), are needed before the development of Stages 2 and 3 in our opinion. We are concerned at the building of a new road giving direct access to Bridgwater Road - which as far as we are aware was not provided for on the plans submitted to the local authority. Anything which contributes to an increase in the traffic flow into the Bridgwater Road is to be deprecated.

2) Billet Lane

We are concerned about the appearance of Billet Lane since the completion of the new Bridge. Its present alignment reminds one of a cork screw. Even more important it constitutes a traffic hazard especially in the dark or in the fog and the new white lines are of relatively little help.

3) Sewerage, Works

Our representatives met officials of the Thames Water Authority at the Sewerage Works with Mr. Holborn, a member of the Association, and talked about the overflow last winter which polluted the Canal and about the present capacity of the Works. We are assured that the Works can at present cope with the input.

Tree-planting - your chance to help

Would you like to see more trees in Berkhamsted instead of - less? Here is your chance to help : the eastern end of the gas-works site, alongside the canal below Billet Lane, has long been an eye-sore. We now have sufficient young stock of low-growing trees and briars, and permission from the Waterways Board, to plant a screen along the canal bank. We propose to do this on Saturday afternoon, 29th November, weather permitting, and if not, on the following afternoon. About 30 volunteers are wanted, accustomed to wield a spade and fork, which they are requested to bring with them. We will provide the plants, and a limited quantity of peat moss, but if anyone likes to bring his own sack of leaf mould to enrich the mix and make sure of a good plant, he is welcome to do so.

Meet at the site at 2 p.m. To reach it by car or on foot, enter Billet Lane from either the A.41 or Bridgwater Road and turn in at the gas works entrance; go down the drive as far as you can and you're there. Intrepid walkers may also reach the site from the tow-path by crossing the first lock below Billet Lane. If the weather is doubtful, consult Robert Allen, The Grey House, Kitsbury Road Berkhamsted 5212.

Meeting with Robin Corbett, MP

Mr. Robin Corbett, MP our local Member, recently met the Chairman and Secretary and Chairmen of the sub-committees to talk over matters of local interest and the role played by the Citizens over 50 years. This innovation is welcomed, not least because

one feels our Member is making an effort to orientate himself towards the constituency as a whole and not, as some of our more cryptic members might suggest, only Hemel. A fruitful discussion ensued covering such matters as housing; transport and the improvement of the canal.

Town Hall

The final version of the Action Group's Report has been studied by a sub-Committee and on their recommendations the Committee has agreed to send letters to the Dacorum District Council, the Berkhamsted Parish Council and individual Parish Councillors recommending careful, consideration of the proposals. We now await the decision of the Trustees - hoping that they will take proper note of the wishes of the citizens of the town whom they represent.

Activities

Please note: Annual General Meeting, Civic Centre, 12th February. Further details in the New Year.

On NEW YEAR'S DAY the annual ramble will be held - if you need fresh air, this is your opportunity. A footpath walk via the Bourne Valley, Spencer's Farm: and a Roman Camp to the Lamb at Whelpley Hill. Meet at Augustus Smith School at the top of Swing Gate Lane, at 10.30 a.m. All are welcome and there is a special room for children. If you wish sandwiches at the pub, please telephone Berkhamsted 4345 by 31/12/75. Back around 4 p.m.

On 21 at January (8 p.m.) the Beaune Society is to be launched at the Civic Centre: such was the success of the school exchanges. Last year that a separate body is to be formed to foster and extend these activities. During the evening there will be an opportunity to see slides, hear records and find out more about our French 'twin'.

In recent weeks we seem to have been conservation minded with two very successful talks from Richard Mabey on 'Food for Free' and William Darling J.P. on Farming Wildlife and Conservation. On our ramble in October we were joined by ramblers from Tring to visit Tunfield Nurseries in Hog Lane, Ashley Green. One item not on the main Citizens Diary was the Chiltern Society conference at Pendley Manor on November 1st/2nd which your Chairman attended and which covered a variety of subjects including a most fascinating lecture by our own member John Stobbs on 'Berkhamsted Common'.

Information

Did you know about the new Berkhamsted Gardens Association? Secretary Mr, J. Maddox, 56 Valley Road, Telephone 6356.

Membership

Do you know anyone wanting to Join the Citizens? If so why pass them a copy of our new publicity leaflet which is available at all our meetings, and will shortly be available in the Library and at the Civic Centre. Remember that it is important that, we have a wide membership representation of all citizens in the town. Please help.

A lot of talk goes on nowadays about 'participation'; when the Dacorum District Councillors came to Berkhamsted, which is after all, like it or not, part of Dacorum District, opportunity presented itself for direct questioning of those in authority over us (but only there at our behest) and for petitioning by voice as in those grace and favour times long ago. But how often have you been to listen to the monthly Council meeting in Hemel Town Hall? It is instructive; local party leaders playing the Westminster game, and trying, feebly, to emulate the invective; opportunity for scoring petty party points; for boring the pants off other members (but as long as he belongs to your party, what does it matter?) and meanwhile, in the cold, the District is being run by its officials whilst the Councillors play their dedicated games. What can I do, you may say? Certainly not carp and mutter negative thoughts in the four-ale bar or over the coffee cups. Do you, for example KNOW who is the member for your Ward? Have you ever needed to communicate with YOUR councillor? If you're not prepared to make an effort to use the channels of 'democracy' (Oh! that maligned word!) then you do, dear reader, get the Council - and Councillors'- you deserve.

But meanwhile, Happy Christmas from your Chairman and from your Committee.