



December 1981

Road Safety

We are all reminded regularly of road hazards, either as pedestrians or drivers, but it is at the onset of winter that the message strikes clearest. The flashing headlights and the wet roads, the rush-hour traffic and the steamed-up windows create many high risk situations.

Sometimes it is not that silly 'other person' (or words to that effects!). Sometimes it is us. Sometimes it is because the road environment does not help us to anticipate danger. That is why the Road and Home Safety Committee of the Town Council regularly sends comments to the Dacorum District Council and / or County Hall on road, traffic signs and visibility improvement. Frequently these come from members of the Committee or letters to the Committee and often from a review of the road situation 'on the ground' and not from the vantage point of the Committee room.

A recent list compiled jointly by the Chairman of the Committee Mrs Hilary Rost, herself a County Councillor, and Norman Binks, Chairman of the Citizens' Association, covered the following points;-

- a) Darrs Lane junction with the
- b) Shrublands Road link with Durrants Road
- c) Shrublands Road / Cross Oak Road junction
- d) Lighting in upper Cross Oak Road
- e) Kings Road / Shootersway junction
- f) Shootersway / Darrs Lane junction

These are only a sample of a long list referring to potential and actual hazards both day and night.

Road and Home Safety Committee

This is one of several groups on which the BCA is represented. If members wish to draw attention to specific hazards in their locality, please refer these at Mrs Rost or via the BCA Chairman or Secretary. Any advice should be in writing and accompanied by A DIAGRAM to show accurate location of the hazard area. Although it is a Town Council Committee, it is one of the few on which non-councillors can sit and participate. So as well as the Citizens' Association schools, police and fire brigade are represented. It is therefore an appropriate group to write to on safety matters. No instant action can be guaranteed because the wheels grind slow but smooth (inevitably alas). Nevertheless, nothing ventured, nothing gained, so don't be too cynical please.

Mrs Hilary Williams

It is appropriate in more ways than one to report to you with pleasure that Mrs. Williams (known to some by her professional title of Dr.) is making excellent progress after her serious road accident. Mrs Williams is the wife of the previous BCA chairman Norman Williams. The accident occurred in October on the Tring - Dunstable Road when a car crossed the central reservation to collide with Mrs Williams' car.

Other Representations

The BCA has representatives on the Crime Prevention Consultative Group, the Committee of the local Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Library Committee and the Town Hall Trust. In addition we have links with the Arts Trust, Beaune Society and Chiltern Society and the National Trust. As you can imagine this involves your committee in work extra to the direct operation of the Association, but it is essential to have these links which help communication and influence. That it why membership of the BCA potentially gives you contact with so much of the local institutions and organisations.

Library

One of the best local resources is the Town Library; strictly speaking it is the County Library as it is run by Herts County Council. Anyway, it belongs to us all (doesn't it?) and whether or not you use it, you pay a contribution. There is a school of thought that says that those who use it should pay and those who don't - shouldn't. That is a philosophy that sits uncomfortably with the basis of many local authority provisions. Maybe the better solution is that in some cases users are actually asked to pay a small premium eg. membership fee for the library. Many of us actually do pay a fee that supports the library - its called fines for late books!

The hours of the library (if you need Reminding) are:-

Monday and Friday	10 am - 5.30 pm
Tuesday and Thursday	10 am - 8.00 pm
Saturday	9-30 am - 1.00 pm
Sunday and Wednesday	- closed

The present librarian is Mr S.J. Gear and no doubt he would be delighted to show you what the library has to offer in addition to just lending books. They actually have a reference library that could put W.H. Smiths out of business (only joking Mr Smith!).

Advisory Pamphlets

The library is a splendid source of information on local societies, groups and organisations and the entrance hall will be a newcomers delight. No sleepy town Berko! So much going on both for enjoyment, learning and helping the less fortunate,

It is also a source of advisory leaflets. Try this for size:- eg. Package Holidays abroad, Legal position on buying goods, Credit and Hire Purchase - all produced for you by the Office of Fair Trading.

Local Ombudsman

You may all heard of the Ombudsman, but did you know you have a local one? Well, you have and he/she is alive and well and living at the house of 'The Local Commissioner, 21 Queen Anne's Gate, London. SW1H 9BU.'

However, any complaint must be in writing and forwarded via a local Councillor or a local representative of the Authority / Body concerned. If the member fails to refer the matter to the Commissioner, you should send the complaint directly (in writing) to the Local Commissioner.

Further information is available in a pamphlet at.....the Library!

Christmas Carols

You are warmly welcomed to our Christmas Social to enjoy good company and the singing of the 25 strong choir led by the Rev. Llewellyn-Jones from Potten End. This is the third year they have joined us and seem to be getting even better. So is the Citizens' Association singing!

Tickets are attached to this Newsletter.

Place: Victoria School. Prince Edward Street (by kind permission of the Governors and Headmaster Mr Michael Hart)

Date: Thursday 17 December

Time: 8pm

Other Events

1 January 1982	New Year Ramble to Ashridge and Frithsden (A short walk in the circumstances - but what a joy.)	Meet 10.30am at the station
26 January	'A potpourri of Theatrical Anecdotes' - by Robert Goldman- Director of Pendley Arts Centre	Civic Centre 8pm
11 February	AGM	Civic Centre 8pm
16 March	A talk by Mr R H Davis - Chief Executive Dacorum district Council	Civic Centre 8pm
27 April	Trekking in the Himalayas - by Mr Donald Lockhart	Civic Centre 8pm

Tree Planting

After many months of planning, we are now getting action. The first of the Town sites (Queens Road / A41) has been tackled, with more to come in the Spring. Other planting already underway is the Canal site by the end of the Industrial Estate. Although we have already discussed the matter in outline with local authorities we are to present details shortly to representatives of the Town Council. If you have small saplings, or ideas on sites worth improving - let us know.

Meanwhile thanks to those people contributing to our Tree Fund which now stands at £60. We are not paying for all the trees as some come from the County Tree Bank. Special help has been given by Woods Garden Centre and Broadwater Nurseries - in the form of special rates for trees supplied in such a good cause.

National Council of Women

We have offered a number of organisations help by making reference to them in our Newsletter. One such is the above organisation. This is involved with a wide range of social problems eg. Women and Pregnancy, Problems with Children, Marriage, Illegitimacy and Film Censorship. The National Council of Women has over 80 affiliated societies which provide expert knowledge on many subjects. Local Branch Chairman is Mrs J. Tookey (Berk. 3951) and the Secretary Mrs I. Johnstone (Berk. 7377).

Meetings are held at Northchurch Social Centre at 2.30pm on the last Thursday of each month. Subscription is £5-50 per annum or 50p per meeting for non-members. The next meeting will be on 26 January 1982 when Mr Gordon Benningfield will give a talk about his work.

Dacorum District Plan

The Inspector's report, regarding his views on the many submissions, has now been published and we are very pleased that our submission to change planning boundaries at Berkhamsted Place Woods has been accepted by Dacorum. This effectively prevents the northern skyline of trees being interrupted by buildings. In general we supported the District Plan as it contained principles and policy statements which if acceded to will protect the Town areas from encroachment.

The Inspector's report is not binding but we hope it will be accepted in creating the definitive District Plan for the foreseeable future.

Planning

The Association has always been strong in its concern for and interest in the impact of planning decisions of whatever scale, on the environment of Berkhamsted. Concern has been expressed on a number of occasions at the apparent lack of concern by the planning officers and Development Control Committee of the impact of infilling. By this we mean the steady run of successful applications for building on the large gardens of houses - both large and small - to create a new density pattern. This is why we objected to the development at Bridge Street and are delighted that the efforts of the local residents have met with success. We continue to review all planning applications and make our views known. On the credit side, congratulations and thanks are due to Councillor Terry, Chairman of the Development Control Committee, for inviting representatives of local Councils and Amenity Societies to a series of meetings with him and his planning officers. To do so showed foresight as well as courage! Much has been learned by all concerned and we hope there may be more of these occasional gatherings.

Berkhamsted By-Pass

The steady drip of successful planning applications has increased the Berkhamsted pond. In other words we now have more people in the town. The Dacorum Year Book quotes the population of Berkhamsted as 16,500 and Northchurch as 1,100 (in 1979). The next census will show significant increase both in population and rateable value. Two large developments at Tunnel Field and at Northchurch have now been implemented in spite of originally being rejected until the by-pass was built. Two other developments at St. John's Well Lane and Lower Kings Road will decant more traffic on to junctions with the A41. Not a happy prospect as the High Street is already regularly over-loaded with traffic. Both local pedestrians and drivers know about this! The by-pass has been down-graded, ie. not Motorway status, so it will not cost as much. The impending increase in overall maximum tonnage for lorries will also create further problems because as an apparent sop to environmentalists (not a dirty word!) there is to be a change in axle spacing and axle weights. This could mean longer lorries.

The by-pass is currently on the so-called Reserve List. Goodness Knows Why. Herts. County Council are making strong efforts to get the by-pass on to the 'active' list and are being supported in this by the Town and District Councils.

The difference between being on a stand-by list and on an active list is the amount of fuss people are prepared to make. Otherwise other towns will get the limited money available.

The Chairman and Committee wish all our members a Very Merry Christmas

and a Happy New Year

(but not too merry! Take Care.)