



**Berkhamsted  
Citizens  
Association**

# NEWSLETTER

June 1991

## Editor's musings

As I take over the Newsletter, perhaps a few thoughts of a philosophical or general nature might be in order.

At the time of writing the spring blossom is resplendent and the newly formed leaves delicately outline the trees. By the time the Newsletter appear the trees will be in full leaf and the summer flowers will be appearing.

There are few parts of the town not blessed with greenery and colours. Even from the areas not so fortunate, the open countryside is but a few steps away.

The town is reasonably compact and while not a beauty spot like one of the Cotswold villages is quite attractive. There are some fine old buildings along the High Street. There are some, to my mind, attractive new developments also. There are some which are less so. The town has a feeling of being lived in.

Overall the old, the middle aged and the new are reasonably harmonious. Nothing however is static. There are proposals afoot which will have an impact. The by-pass is coming for certain (I think), the Kingsgate development may well come about. What will this do to the shape of the town? One hopes that the changes will be beneficial. There may of course be side effects.

Later in the Newsletter there is an item on a preliminary dialogue between the Council and the Association on these effects. I am sure more will be heard on these topics in the months to come.

Not mentioned in the Newsletter but beginning to receive some attention is the enhancement of the High Street. By enhancement is meant the harmonising of all developments. A similar proposal in Tring is based on the nature of the buildings which are mainly late Victorian. It will not be so easy to find a common theme in Berkhamsted.

As they used to say - watch this space.

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### Cultural sabotage

A copy of a letter from the Mayor to Richard Page, M. P. has been received. He is concerned that listed buildings are being allowed to decay by neglect: the implication being that this is a prelude to some change of use. He asks whether some way in law can be found to protect such buildings.

Councillor Sherratt does not mention similar tactics employed on vacant land subject to planning restriction. One can think of a few such areas which are becoming eyesores in our locality. It would be nice to think that any proposed legislation could embrace these situations as well. We look forward to our M. P.'s response.

### Monogrammed Leisurewear

Attractive sweatshirts and pullovers with the Berkhamsted Citizens Association logo are available, but we have to have a minimum order of twelve. Anyone interested should contact any member of the committee who will make the necessary arrangements.

### Book of local walks

The first book of local walks produced by the BCA has been very successful. The first printing was sold out inside three months. Copies are still available of a reprint however.

Work is due to start on a second book. There have been some discussions with the Friends of Ashridge offering collaboration on a book they are thinking of producing. They, however, prefer at the moment to go ahead on their own. This will not prevent the BCA from producing its own second book. Volunteers are needed to check the various walks and write about 1000 words on each. An editor is also required to co-ordinate and publish it.

### Chiltern Society

The Association is a member of the Chiltern Society and is to step up its liaison with them on country amenities.

### Planning

Planning permission has been granted for a household domestic dump in Billet Lane. There is currently a query concerning the Eagle Star development in Stag Lane as the outcome of an appeal is awaited.

A meeting has been held with the Mayor to discuss improvements to the High Street when the by-pass has been completed. The County Council has already agreed to road improvements at the junctions with King's Road and with Castle Street. Other possibilities are to be discussed at subsequent meetings.

The impact of the by-pass and the Kingsgate development is also the subject of discussion. For example, the relocation of shops would probably focus activities differently with consequent side effects.

### Future Programme

The 1991/92 programme has now been sketched out in outline. It follows a similar pattern to previous years with traditional events like the Christmas party with carols at Berkhamsted School and the New Year's Day walk included. An interesting programme of talks is also planned and details will be promulgated in due course.

### Town Meeting

At the recent Town Meeting, to which all voters in Berkhamsted invited, a meagre 14 citizens attended, of whom five were from this Association. They were very nearly outnumbered by the councillors. What price local democracy!

This compares badly with the comparable event in Tring, when 130 people attended. The Association pointed out that Tring's success might well have been the result of better publicity and a copy of the Tring Town Crier was produced. This is a well prepared publication outlining the Tring Council's proposals. Clearly this invited discussion and stimulated interest. It was widely circulated and cost the community charge/rate/whatever payers not a penny. It is entirely financed by advertisements.

Berkhamsted Council agreed to consider this approach for future occasions.

Matters discussed included proposals to build low-cost housing on allotment land and the refurbishment of the old swimming pool site. In the latter case the Association suggested that a play area for the under-sixes might be preferable to present proposals for a paddling pool.

### SUMMER GARDEN PARTY

Friday 21st June at 7.30 p.m. at The Bothy, Berkhamsted Place. Drinks and refreshments will be served in the Victorian vinehouse.

Members are asked to park cars at the top of Castle Hill and in Murray Road and walk up to The Bothy as there is no space for parking any closer. It will be possible to run a shuttle service for those finding the walk up difficult. Please contact a committee member to arrange this. Sensible footwear is advised - no stilettos please!

*Eric Hoey*