



**Berkhamsted
Citizens
Association**

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1976

It is always pleasant to look forward, and on this, the first Newsletter of a new Committee year, it is doubly pleasant to do so since, not only does it seem that we shall have a very active and lively year, but we welcome a lady chairman. All of us wish her and the Committee well. Already we have had two highly successful meetings under our belt and we are very grateful to Robin Corbett and Geoffrey Ede for their exceptionally interesting and amusing talks and to you, our members, for your support.

We have come in for a certain amount of criticism about our position over the gypsy site. It will serve no useful purpose to rehearse again the past Chairman's decision to cut short the debate at the A.G.M. Sufficient to say that our guest speaker was waiting. We had decided to hold a meeting in May to allow a full discussion of the question but it does not appear to be necessary at the moment in view of the fact that, as we understand it, there is to be an open meeting of the Gypsy Support Group on April 30th at the Civic Centre when it is hoped that all points of view will be heard, and discussed.

However this is a matter we are keeping under review. The subject is obviously of great interest and we must be ready at any time to give people a further chance for discussion.

FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

There seems to be some controversy between walkers and riders over the use of certain paths and tracks, especially those over Berkhamsted and Northchurch commons: but before getting into an argument it is well to define one's terms. The Highways Act 1959, s.295(1) defines a bridleway as "a highway" (yes, footpaths and bridleways are highways confined to particular users) "over which the public have the following, but no other, rights of way, that is to say, a right of way on foot and a right of way on horseback or leading a horse ...": and a footpath as "a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot only" Thus only walkers are entitled to use a footpath, but neither walkers nor riders can claim exclusive use of a bridleway, so it is up to both to display tolerance and good manners to one another, as we believe they almost invariably do. This does not solve the problem of horses cutting up the turf and churning the ground into mud in wet places, but that must have been a problem for as long as we have had bridleways.

From the definitions it is apparent that some argument at least can be eliminated by getting footpaths and bridleways distinguished both by signposts and on maps. We have undertaken to make this distinction in the next edition of our footpath map. Signposting is one of the preoccupations of Dacorum District Council's footpaths inspector, Mr. Waddell, Hemel Hempstead 3131, ext.334, who can also show members of the public the definitive maps which do distinguish rights of way which are bridleways from those which are footpaths only.

HELP WANTED

Would you like to do something for the Citizens' Association? Perhaps you have no taste for sitting on Committees, but you may enjoy getting around and meeting people, doing a job on your own for which you have entire responsibility. If so, what about taking on the post of Map Secretary?

A large slice of our Income comes from sales of our Footpath Maps - many through small stationers and newsagents in Berkhamsted and the surrounding district. They need to be reminded to replenish their stocks, and we have found this is best done by a call from our "travelling salesman" - the Map Secretary. Will anyone interested, please contact either Robert Allen (Berkhamsted 5212) or Stuart Rosser (c/o Lloyds Bank, Berkhamsted 71271)

TOWN HALL

We shall continue to watch developments in this and Ken Sherwood heads up a sub-committee of the Association which will co-operate with the Town Hall Rescue and Action Group at the Public Inquiry on 11th May.

CAR PARKS

It is a matter for history that the Council Car Parks are now free. You may be surprised to learn that we have received a number of complaints about this and consequently your Committee has decided to keep a close eye on developments. When things have settled down we shall take a car census but in the meanwhile we should like to have your views since the Council is, as we understand it, 'monitoring the situation over the next six months'.

CRIME PREVENTION

A member of the Committee of the Association has been co-opted as a member of the Dacorum Crime Prevention Panel.

There are about 130 such panels in England and Wales. The first two were set up in 1968 when the Home Secretary commended to chief officers of police the establishment of crime prevention panels primarily in towns of a population exceeding 100,000, though smaller towns were not excluded.

The general objects are to establish close and continuing contacts in the community providing a two way channel of information about matters of local concern and of police activity on the crime prevention front, and to enlist local effort and enthusiasm for crime prevention. The intention is that such panels should be broadly representative of all local organisations which have a positive part to play in improving local 'crime prevention.

At the recent meeting of the Dacorum Panel consideration was given to projects for 1976. It was decided to create two community group committees in Hemel Hempstead to assist resident police officers and in Berkhamsted it is proposed to organise a "Crime Prevention week" which will be held during the period which includes Whit Monday, when it is customary for a fête to be held in the Castle grounds.

Posters warning against vandalism will be exhibited in the town, and at the fête itself there will be a stall containing items of crime prevention and literature on the subject and in the vicinity a car which has been fitted with a large number of anti-theft devices. Later in the year literature will be distributed to householders advising them on the precautions that should be taken to protect their homes.

Recent publications issued by a Home Office working group on vandalism recommend that all damage no matter how minor should be reported to the Police so that more effective action may be taken.

THE GREEN BELT

Have you noticed how, little by little, our beautiful countryside is being given over to more and more houses. Of course, we must build homes but not surely at any cost. A favourite trick of developers these days seems to be that once they get planning permission on a particular site they then go back for further permission for more houses. We shall watch this carefully.

PUBLICITY

We do our best to publicise our activities and we are grateful to the Press for their co-operation. We try particularly hard to bring to your notice and indeed to the people of the town anything of importance or concern to those living in Berkhamsted and the district around. We do ask, however, if only for the sake of consistency that, should any member wish to publicise anything to do with our Association, that he, or she, first gets in touch with a member of the Committee.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday, 3rd May Dacorum and Parish Councillors candidates election meeting at St. Peter's Hall at 8 p.m.

Monday, 31st May Participation at Bank Holiday Fête by providing and manning a Roll-a-Penny Stall.

Sunday, 6th June Guests of Major and Mrs. Hadden-Paton at Rossway (Rhododendron display) Meet at Junction Cross Oak Road/Shootersway at 2.30 p.m.

Friday, 18th June Wine and Cheese Party at Victoria School - 6.45 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Friday, 9th July We are hoping to arrange an Architectural walk in the town with Michael Tollit as our guide, starting from the Library at around 7 p.m. More details later.

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

Chairman:	Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby, Edgeworth House, Northchurch	5882
Vice-chairman	Ken Sherwood, Rhenigidale, Ivy House Lane	5158
Hon. Treasurer	Stuart Rosser, c/o Lloyds Bank Ltd., High Street	71271
Hon. Secretary	Sheila Walton, 11 Murray Road	5988
Hon. Mem,Secretary	Enid Slatter, 27 Greenway	3245
Committee:	Robert Allen, The Grey House, Kitsbury Road	5212
	George Cameron, 34 Castle Hill Avenue	3774
	Valerie Clark, 329 Bridgewater Road, Northchurch	01 836 2741
	Michael Day, Snelston, Shrublands Road	2716
	Henry Fisher, Fairlight, Meadway	4527
	Roger Ford, Ardraccan, Cross Oak Road	5027
	Alan Havelock, Linden House, Barncroft Road	2140
	John Seamark, 51 Bridgewater Road	2775
	Bill Snelson, 49 Cedar Road	3857
	Max Struthers, 51 Cedar Road	4345
	Norman Williams, Brecon, Castle Hill Avenue	5291
	Chris Wilson, 16 Oakwood, Shootersway	6921

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION

No Association can stand still and ours is no exception. We need to continue to grow and want your help, please. If you have a friend who is interested in the Association and all that it stands for, please let any member of the Committee know and we shall do the rest.

Finally, if you have not yet been able to pay your subscription, please help us to help you and keep the Association alive by letting Stuart Rosser have the money as soon as possible. Thank you.