



A P R I L 1 9 7 7

The calendar tells us that Sprig is here even if the weather seeks to deny it. Nevertheless it is time we all stirred ourselves and prepared for all that good weather to come. Your new committee has met and is busy getting on with their new jobs - meanwhile, as you will read later, we shall need your help.

#### Report on the AGM

There was a very good turnout out the Annual General Meeting in the Gable Hall. Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby stays on for her second year as Chairman, with Norman Williams as the new Vice-chairman. After eight years as Treasurer, Stuart Rosser has retired and his place has been taken by Roy Doe, also of Lloyds Bank, Another loss to the Committee is Michael Day, who was Chairman in 1968 and 1969. In thanking them the Chairman paid tribute to Stuart Rosser's good sense and good humour and to Michael Day's outstanding contribution to the committee and the Association as a whole. Two new members on the committee are Mrs. Lavender Loxley, J.P., past Rural District Councillor, Chairman of the Northchurch and District Association Management Committee, and Maurice Brown, architect, and lecturer in Town Planning at London University.

Two more Life members were elected in recognition of their services to the Association: Hugh Gardner, who first joined the committee when it was resuscitated after the war, and was on it continuously until 1959 (Chairman 1954 and 1955) and George Cameron, who was elected in 1955 and only resigned in October 1976 (Chairman 1962 and 1963). They join the other two life members, Neil Cowan and Arthur Mayling.

#### It's that Town Hall Again

The future of the Town Hall still remains obscure. While the Town Council, the present Trustees, seem to be anxious to hand over to new Trustees to do their best to repair it and put it into use again, the legal complications are many and it may take many months, if not years. Meanwhile deterioration continues and the present Trustees will only allow volunteers in after a strict legal agreement has been signed. The Citizens' Association committee Chairman wrote asking the present Trustees either to carry out first-aid repairs or to re-allow access to those able and willing to effect them and the answer was that "the Trustees consider that the Town Hall and Market House premises are beyond repair". But there are still people who believe that the Town Hall can be saved, but months of delay now with no slates replaced, windows left open etc. will add considerably to the cost and perhaps jeopardise the whole project.

#### Car Park Charges

Car parking charges are to be re-introduced in Berkhamsted. The Committee wrote protesting at the level of charges and suggesting that a limited period should be free. The reply we got was that it was unlikely that the Council would now change their minds. Nevertheless as the subsequent public notice in the Gazette asked for objections it looked as if the issue was not completely cut and dried and so we wrote again, this time suggesting free parking on Saturdays, when there was no long term parking problem, and a 5p 2 hour parking charge in Lower Kings Road Car park to bring it into line

with the Water Lane Car Park charge instead of a minimum 10p for anything up to 4 hours. Although we have not had a further reply all the indications are that the charges will be as originally stated. But we shall continue to protest that these these ridiculous fees penalise the housewife who wants to pop in and do a small amount of shopping.

### Crime Prevention

The Dacorum Crime Prevention Panel have a number of projects in hand which are intended to stimulate interest in the prevention of crime.

It is is proposed to promote in the schools in the area a Poster Competition for which cash prizes of £30, £20, £10 will be awarded. The competition will take place during the period from 1st May to 30th June.

Elderly people who wish to provide greater protection for their homes may obtain chains for their doors from the W.R.V.S. at Hemel Hempstead, (telephone number Hemel Hempstead 68700 at the almost nominal price of £1.60 for each chain. Where a person is unable to fit a chain, arrangements can be made by the Panel for it to be fitted free of charge.

The Association, in conjunction with the Panel, have arranged for a lecture by an expert on crime prevention to be given at the Gable Hall, Berkhamsted, on Tuesday 3rd May starting at 8 p.m. A number of firms will be invited to demonstrate their locks and other devices, and the lecture will be followed by a short film which will show some of the methods used for breaking and entering houses.

The Panel will arrange exhibitions at the Berkhamsted Fête on 6th June and also at fêtes at Tring on 21st May and 9th July.

In addition, leaflets will be distributed which contain advice on ways to safeguard your homes, and which draw particular attention to the need to lock all doors, fasten windows, lock ladders away, check callers, bank money, leave a light on when absent for a short period and to inform the police if one sees or hears suspicious.

The Police have asked us to warn members that there have been a number of cases in the recently where elderly people have been persuaded to employ two men to dig over their gardens and then have been charged amounts which have borne no proper relationship to the work done. People are advised against engaging casual callers to carry out such work.

### Six Day Trading

The Dacorum District Council have received a request from Waitrose Limited for an order to be made under Section 1(4) of the Shops Act 1950 in respect of shops in Berkhamsted of the same class removing the restriction which requires shops to close on one afternoon each week.

The Council propose to carry out a survey among grocers and provision merchants in the town to ascertain their views It is not known what steps will be taken to determine the views of consumers, but, the Council will, no doubt, obtain this information before agreeing to make an order which might result in the shops in question being closed at some less convenient time in the week. If there is to be a change it must be one that is clearly defined and which is made known to consumers.

We should be very interested to learn our members views, so do please telephone or write to any member of the committee.

### Help Wanted

We had concluded that the piece headed "Do it yourself" in our Autumn Newsletter had made no impact, but no, a member has come up with the idea

that we might do something about the little that accumulates in parts of the town which, it seems, it is nobody's business to clean up. In the next few weeks we shall be selecting a number of "black spots; at which to make a beginning; we hope that the idea will then catch on and others will join us or do it themselves independently. We need a couple of dozen volunteers to make a start. Anyone willing to help in this way to make the town one we can feel proud of in Jubilee Year, please get in touch with Mr. Peter Ashford, of 1 Greenway, Berkhamsted.

The Guardians of the Countryside, who make a fine job of keeping the Common free of litter, have been ably led from the beginning by our member, Sidney Quin. Sidney now feels he has done his stint and his colleague, Chris Wilson, has taken on the job under the aegis of our Association. Anyone interested in helping to keep the good work going should get in touch with him (Dr. R.C. L. Wilson, 16 Oakwood, Berkhamsted 6921).

#### This and That

The Ashridge Local Committee of the National Trust have arranged a social evening at which films made by Hemel Hempstead Photographic Society will be shown, illustrating the natural history and activities of Ashridge, and coffee will be served. Members of the Citizens' Association will be welcome (Civic Centre, April 21st, at 8 p.m.)

We are concerned that newcomers to the town have difficulty in locating the Civic Centre and we have asked the Council whether they can provide a simple inexpensive name-plate to identify the building. Although their funds are very restricted the matter will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Our attention has been drawn to the state of Brownlow Road between the junction of Bridgewater Road and Lower Kings Road, particularly under the Station Railway Bridge and we have written, to the Council asking if this can be repaired.

#### Letters

We are very grateful to Councillor P. A. Mayo, Chairman of the Dacorum Housing Committee, for writing and pointing out that his Committee's budget is "taking capital works into consideration in the sane league as the Leisure Committee's." He wrote as a result of our piece in the last Newsletter on our Evening with the Big Spenders.

Did you notice how much of your money the Committees will spend this year: it is like this:

|    |          |            |
|----|----------|------------|
| 1. | Leisure  | £1,206,770 |
| 2. | Salaries | £ 935,970  |
| 3. | Works    | £ 713,080  |
| 4. | Housing  | £ 592,420  |
| 5. | Health   | £ 278,160  |
| 6. | Planning | £ 265,610  |
| 7. | Policy   | £ 199,870  |

It all adds up to £4,191,880

We, and I am sure, all the Councillors would like you to tell us if you think you are getting value for money.

One more point from Councillor Mayo's letter should be mentioned and we should all hang our heads in shame. Only three - yes, 3 - people bothered to turn up on 4th January last to a meeting in the Gable Hall arranged so as Berkhamstedians could question the Housing Committee. Councillor Mayo we apologise !

For Your Diary

Tuesday, 26th April, 7 p.m. Civic Centre

Public meeting of the N.W. Herts Community Health Council, by invitation of the Citizens' Association. Questions answered at the end of the meeting.

Tuesday, 3rd May, 8 p.m. Gable Hall

Lecture on House Protection in conjunction with the Crime Prevention Panel. There will also be exhibits of locks and other devices and a film shown of methods of breaking and entering houses.

Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, Castle Grounds – Jubilee FETE

Also in JUNE : Wine and Cheese Party – date and venue to be arranged.

Wednesday, 13th July from St. Peter's Church at 8 p.m.

Architectural Walk (Part 2) led by Michael Tollit.

List of Committee Members 1977

|                            |  |             |                      |
|----------------------------|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Chairman:                  | Mrs. Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby,                 | 5885        |                      |
|                            | Edgeworth House, Northchurch, Berkhamsted    |             |                      |
| Vice-Chairman:             | Norman Williams - Brecon, Castle Hill Avenue | 5291        |                      |
| Hon. Treasurer:            | Roy Doe - c/o Lloyds Bank Ltd., High Street  | 71271       |                      |
| Hon. Secretary:            | Mrs. Sheila Walton - 11 Murray Road          | 5988        |                      |
| Hon. Membership Secretary: | Bill Snelson - 49 Cedar Road                 | 3857        |                      |
|                            |  |             | <u>Chairman</u>      |
|                            |  |             | <u>Sub Committee</u> |
| Mr. Robert Allen,          | The Grey House, Kitsbury Road                | 5212        | Environment          |
| Mrs. Jenny Brown,          | High Garth, North Road,                      | 6434        |                      |
| Mr. Maurice Brown,         | 5 Fern Court, Montague Road                  | 6022        |                      |
| Miss Valerie Clark,        | 329 Bridgewater Road, Northchurch            | 01 836 2741 |                      |
| Mr. Henry Fisher,          | Fairlight, Headway                           | 4527        | Planning             |
| Mr. Roger Ford,            | Ardbraccan, Cross Oak Road                   | 5027        |                      |
| Mr. Alan Havelock,         | 7 Barncroft Road                             | 2140        | Mem. Publicity       |
| Mrs. Dennis Hart,          | 15 Whitewood Road                            | 2110        | Road Safety          |
| Mrs. E. L. Lesley,         | Boswick House, Dudswell                      | 4223        |                      |
| Mr. Ken Sherwood,          | Rhenigidale, Ivy House Lane                  | 5158        | Finance Rates        |
| Mr. Max Struthers,         | 51 Cedar Road                                | 4345        | Activities           |
| Dr. R. C. L. Wilson,       | 16 Oakwood                                   | 6921        |                      |

Also: Town Hall Sub Committee: Mrs. Talbot-Ponsonby

Amenities Sub Committee: Mr. Norman Williams

Representatives:

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Citizens' Advice Bureau                       | Jenny Brown            |
| Road Safety                                   | Dennis Hart            |
| National Trust                                | Robert Allen           |
| Chiltern Society                              | Michael Day            |
| Berkhamsted and Northchurch Community Council | Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby |
| Crime Prevention Panel                        | Norman Williams        |
| Library                                       | Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby |
| Silver Jubilee                                | Roger Ford             |
| Ladaccan                                      | Peter Taylor           |
| Beaune Society                                | Roger Ford             |