

The Lymington Voice

The Newsletter of the Lymington Society Autumn 2009

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Chairman's Note



Society Chairman
Clive Sutton

Dear Members

This time you will be glad to know that my Chairman's Note will be shorter because of the greater input from our committee members on their special subjects in relation to planning, the ferries and other matters.

Can I repeat again my thanks to the Committee for the

amount of work that they do which I can leave entirely in their individual hands.

Ferries

Don Mackenzie will give a detailed position on the ferries but from a general perspective the Society is very pleased that its initial concern that the question of a

Contd. on page 7, Col. 1

Inside this issue:

Chairman's Note	1
Planning Special	1
AGM Report	1
Local Distinctiveness	2
River and Foreshore	4
Ferries Latest	4
Social Events	5
Wellworthy Club Site	8
Civic Trust	8

Planning Special—Newsletter Concentrates on Planning Lymington Society Invited to Increase Involvement in Planning Process

This edition of the Lymington Voice reflects the committee's recent activities concerning planning in Lymington and Pennington. When Jonathan Hutchinson joined the committee last year, he took a fresh look at developments over the last few years in the area, and analysed the planning process. His analysis is rather

too lengthy for this newsletter, but it is published on our website lymsoc.co.uk. In summary, it exposes the overwhelming difficulty in getting planning applications from major developers rejected.

As well as checking every planning application for Lymington and Pennington, your planning representatives

have also been working at the structure of planning in the area. We suffered so much from PPG-3, the notorious government initiative to maximize building density, which defined urban gardens as "brownfield sites". It has now been replaced by PPS-3, which recognizes that context is a significant factor in the

acceptability of new development.

Following our difficulties in getting parts of the area designated as Areas of Special Character (AOSC), we are at the vanguard of a new initiative: "Local Distinctiveness". More on Page 2, and on the website.

www.lymsoc.co.uk.

The 2009 AGM

About 70 members attended the AGM on 18th March 2009

The President Lt.Col. Chitty welcomed the Mayor, Cllr. Martina Humber and Deputy Cllr. Jan Hawker.

Apologies. Richard & June Webb, Sir Robin Craufurd, Derf Paton, Major Monckton.

Dr. Johnston also apologized for Sally Fear, who was unable to give her

presentation of the New Forest Drift.

Minutes of the 2008 AGM were accepted unanimously.

Mr. Sutton gave the Chairman's Address, which is published on the website.

Treasurer's Report was given by Mr. Sheffer. Approval was proposed by Cllr. Adrian Evans and seconded by Georgina Craufurd..

There being no nominations from the floor, re-election of members of the Executive Committee: Clive Sutton,

Derek Sheffer, Ivor Johnston, Jonathan Hutchinson, Nick King, Donald Mackenzie, Nigel Seth-Smith and co-opted member Marion Jakes was proposed by Cllr. Elizabeth Lewis and seconded by Cllr. Anna Rostand and passed unanimously.

A power-point Social Secretary's Report was given by Dr. Mackenzie with details of past and future events

Dr. Mackenzie then gave a further presentation on the new ferries, giving details of

statements by the Harbour Commissioners and Natural England, and of the current Judicial Review. A possible outcome is that over-riding national interest may be invoked to allow the ferries to operate in spite of the resulting damage to the environment.

A presentation by Jonathan Hutchinson, Developments in Lymington was followed by considerable discussion.

Cllr. Elizabeth Lewis

Continued on page 8, Col. 1

Planning— "Local Distinctiveness" and the Core Strategy

Jonathan Hutchinson

The Tide of Development

A regular theme in these Newsletters has been the apparently unstoppable tide of redevelopment and its effect on the character and appearance of the town. The process takes a familiar form: developer makes irresistible offer for house with large garden, applies to demolish existing house and garden and build four or more on stripped site; is refused by NFDC; appeals and wins; result: taller, cramped buildings quickly become the precedent for further inappropriate development.

Government Policy

This tide has for the past few years been driven on, as in a storm surge, by the nature of Government policy, which has encouraged the compressing of ever more "dwellings" (itself a vague term embracing everything from a one-bed flat to a million-pound-plus mansion) into "brownfield" sites (which are defined to include existing gardens) more or less regardless of the consequences. There has been some relaxation in the strict interpretation of this central government policy since April 2007, but local authorities have few defences against the central Planning Inspectorate, which decides appeals, and against whose decisions there is no appeal.

Conservation Areas and AOSCs

Such defences as there are, are embodied in the local planning policy, which defines for example the NFDC's Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Character, in which stricter limits may be applied to what is acceptable. Lymington's Conservation Area has been fixed for many years, and we have only one Area of Special Character, an apparent anomaly we have for long sought without success to correct. Furthermore, there is no agreed view of what makes the town's essential character outside the Conservation Area,

and there has never been a policy for how it might best be preserved or enhanced. Provision exists for Town Design Statements which do define these things, but Lymington has never had one.

Core Strategy

Every few years local authorities are obliged to re-write their local plans under central government direction. The result is examined in public by the Planning Inspectorate and, when approved, becomes the template for following years. We are going through this process at the moment and the approved rewrite is expected to come into force later in 2009. The Core Strategy, as the new policy document is to be known, is spread over 104 pages and has four appendices covering another 15 pages. (One may have views as to whether the words "strategy" and "104 pages" can belong in the same sentence, but this is not the place to express them).

Local Distinctiveness

The Society was invited to participate in the public examination of the new strategy and did so both in writing and at the public hearings. One of our aims was to try to strengthen our defences against the tide of dense redevelopment by establishing a clear definition of the town's historic character and extending the boundaries of those areas which best embody it. These thoughts are reflected in the approved Core Strategy by the phrase "Local Distinctiveness", which occurs 13 times in its pages. One such is **"Key Issue 4 - Character of towns and villages: How can the Core Strategy best protect and enhance the character of the Plan Area's towns and villages and ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to improving their character and the quality of life of their residents?"** This is followed by **"Core Strategy Vision: By 2026 . . . The**

character and local distinctiveness of the towns and villages will have been protected and wherever possible enhanced." These abstract hopes are later articulated in proposed policies as follows:

. . . All new development will be required to contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features . . .

. . . Development proposals must protect and, where possible, enhance sites of recognised importance for nature and heritage conservation. Working with local communities, features of local heritage value which contribute to local distinctiveness will be identified. New development proposals should maintain local distinctiveness and where possible enhance the character of identified features . . . The special characteristics of the Plan Area's natural and built environment will be protected and enhanced through . . . ensuring that new development protects and enhances local distinctiveness . . .

We are doing all we can to ensure that these statements are given real meaning. We have also been assured that we shall be invited to participate in the process of drafting a local distinctiveness policy for the town - in effect a design statement - which is to follow the anticipated approval of the core strategy document later this year.

The progress of the drafts of the Society's contribution to local distinctiveness policy can be seen on the website www.lymsoc.co.uk, following the links to [Planning and Development](#) and then [Local Distinctiveness](#).

Your Committee Members

In the finest journalistic tradition, page 3 of your newsletter has intimate insights into the lives of your committee members. In this edition: Clive Sutton, the Society's chairman and Dr Ivor Johnston, the Hon. Secretary.

Clive Sutton—Chairman



Clive's face is familiar to you from his regular byline in newsletters, including page 1 of this one.

Clive came to Lymington as a solicitor with his wife Jenny in 1977. They bought Buckland Manor and they have lived there ever since. Clive has been Churchwarden, Trustee of the Lyndhurst and Lymington museums, one-time chairman of the Citizens Advice Bureau, a school governor, and a member of the Hospital Appeal Trust, which is now wound up having paid for the new hospital scanner. He says it was his interest as a Hospital Appeal Trustee which led him to be involved in the Lymington Society with a view to ensuring the building of the new hospital.



Buckland Manor

Ivor Johnston—Hon Sec'y



Ivor came to Lymington as a GP in 1963, via Wallasey Grammar School, Cambridge, Guy's Hospital and the RAF. Medicine must be in the family genes. Ivor's father was a GP and anti smoking pioneer. His son and granddaughter are doctors, and a grandson is in his final year as a medical student.

Ivor's interest in local houses perhaps stems from the practice he joined, first in the coach house of 48 High Street (now Moore Blatch) then in Chawton House where the practice moved in 1982.

He has lived in Hollywood Lane since 1964 in a house originally built as a cottage for the granddaughter of Sir Harry Burrard of Walhampton, the poet Caroline Bowles, later married to Robert Southey. A contemporary watercolour of Buckland Cottage has recently been purchased by the St. Barbe Museum.



Ivor joined the Committee on retirement from full-time practice in 1999 and soon became hon. Secretary.

Civic Trust Closes - but may Return

Was it something we said?

No sooner does the Lymington Society join the Civic Trust than it is disbanded.

You may have heard the Trust's President, Griff Rhys-Jones, on the radio lamenting the end of the Civic Trust, and listing its many achievements.

There are moves to revive it though. The following letter was sent to the Society's hon. sec. on August 12th, by Shaun Spiers of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE):

Dear friends

I am writing with important news about the civic society movement following the recent collapse of the Civic Trust. I know that your group has supported both CPRE and the Civic Trust. Your support for CPRE is hugely appreciated. But while CPRE has its own distinctive aims, we share a great deal in common with the civic societies' movement, which is why we have played a major role in setting up the Civic Society Initiative to help find a secure future for the network of civic societies around the country. The Civic Society Initiative is being run by Tony Burton - previously at the National Trust and former deputy director of CPRE - and we are hosting Tony in our London office.

There is information about the work the Civic Society Initiative on its website, www.civicsocietyinitiative.co.uk. This also provides opportunities for you to participate in the debate over the future of the civic society movement. May I encourage you to participate and to support the work of the Civic Society Initiative. As your group has shown - the work of CPRE and civic societies campaigning for a better environment in both town and country strengthens us both and we need your support now more than ever.

River and Foreshore Matters

Marion Jakes (Foreshore and River representative)

In these times of climate change, sea level rise, disappearing saltmarshes and erosion, not to mention other man-made damage to the river, we could sometimes have reason to believe that there are just far too many agencies with overlapping responsibilities – NFDC, National Park, Harbour Commissioners, Natural England, DEFRA, the Environment Agency, to name a few - and none apparently with enough individual power to reach joined-up decisions and deal effectively with the issues.

Some of this may change soon when the Marine and Coastal Access Bill becomes final legislation later this year.

The Bill covers a wide set of objectives including a new marine planning and licensing system under the proposed Marine Management Organisation (MMO) which will coordinate all marine matters throughout the UK. New Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) will be established to protect habitats and species increasing the level of protection to 22% of UK waters from the current 2.2%, and there will be increased powers to modernise fisheries management and enforce regulation policies.

Last, but definitely not least, is the provision for the completion of a Coastal Access route round the entire UK coast, including privately owned land. This topic has been covered in the national press and is a delicate balance between providing for the interests of walkers to enjoy a “coastal experience” at first hand, and those of landowners who may be keen to preserve the privacy of their land and its stability from the extra pressures of walkers leading to further coastal erosion. Consultation on the Coastal Access issue is currently underway with a stated possible exemption for parks and gardens.

Locally the draft North Solent Shoreline Management Plan is being finalised for consultation in the coming weeks and provisions are being made for recommendations on coastal defence

policy for both publicly and privately owned land. These include ‘no active intervention’ and ‘hold the line’ designations. Our area of the north Solent is particularly sensitive due to the large extent of saltmarshes, river habitat and wide extent of private land ownership. We will be commenting on the consultation document so do let us know of any strong views you have to counteract suggestions for ‘no active intervention’, currently thought to be areas eastwards from Elmers Court to Sowley.



Lymington River

Ferries Latest

Donald Mackenzie

The Latest News on the W Class Wightlink Ferries.

As is now well known, despite objections from the authorities, Wightlink brought the new W Class ferries into service on the Lymington to Yarmouth route earlier in the year.

Whilst recognising the vital importance of the Lymington-Yarmouth ferry service to the community, the position of the Lymington Society has been to ensure that all aspects of this proposal were subjected to proper scrutiny before the service started. We expressed concern at the time, that the service had started before the Appropriate Assessment (A.A.) process had been completed and that no-one seemed to have the legal authority to stop this happening.

Since then the Society has continued to take part in the A.A. process and to discuss the situation with Natural England, DEFRA (the Government Department responsible for the environment), the Harbour Commissioners and other stakeholders to try and ensure that the situation was resolved.

Eventually Natural England advised that the ferries were likely to continue the fairly extensive harm the old ferries had been causing to the river and that “mitigation” (reduction in some form) to control or minimise the damage was needed. On the basis of the damage forecast by Natural England, the NFDC refused Wightlink permission to make changes to the terminal and so foot passengers continue to use the vehicle ramp at this time.

Wightlink are now negotiating with Natural England to mitigate the harmful effects of the ferries on the river by proposing a “mud-recharge” (mud dredged from the marinas) to be added to the saltmarshes at the eastern end of Pylewell Lake to compensate for damage in the river and inner harbour. Wightlink have indicated that a trial scheme would be carried out first to assess the feasibility of the plan.

Whilst in favour of any effective scheme to stop the loss of saltmarshes in the

Continued on page 6, Col. 3

Recent Events

"Call of the Sea" Exhibition at St Barbe Museum October 14th

This fantastic exhibition included many paintings from the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich the Tate Museum in London, and was opened by Director of the National Maritime Museum Kevin Frewster.

Mr Frewster praised the exceptional quality of the exhibition, and of the St Barbe Museum generally, saying that Lymington was exceptionally fortunate to have such a museum.



The Exhibition featured 40 pictures, including many of the most important works by Brookings and Monamy and some of their peers. Brookings and Monamy were both hugely influential in establishing a distinctly British school of painting that paid attention to atmospheric effect and the power and beauty of the sea as well as the ships themselves. Indeed many feel that they were an important influence on Turner.

To Purchase Tickets for social

Events, Please Contact:

Solent House Dental Surgery,

Cannon Street, Lymington.

01590 672986

Upcoming Events for your Diary

The Lymington Society AGM

17th March 2010

7:00 for 7:30

The Lymington Society AGM is the main business meeting of the year when Members get a change to stand for the Committee or nominate fellow members to the Committee. Election of officers takes place for the year ahead and following a report from the Chairman on the Society's activities in the year, current important issues are debated and discussed.

To lighten the necessarily serious nature of a AGM the second half of this meeting usually consists of a talk by a local speaker on an topic of note.

Keyhaven Nature Reserve

This year's talk will be by Pete Durnell, Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service Warden for the Keyhaven Nature Reserve.



The Lymington-Keyhaven Coastal Nature Reserve is internationally recognised for its wildlife. Whilst best known for its populations of wading birds and specialist flora, it also has plenty to interest the butterfly observer. The area has its own special sense of place with salt marshes, shallow lagoons, mudflats and views of two lighthouses – one across the Solent at the Needles on Isle of Wight, the other nearer to hand at Hurst Castle, which can be reached on foot from Keyhaven or by ferry (summer only).

The area is also historically significant having been used since Roman times (until the mid-1800s) for the extraction of salt from sea water using "salterns".

Continued on page 6, Col. 1

With autumn upon us once again, thoughts at Lymington Society have turned to the Social Programme.

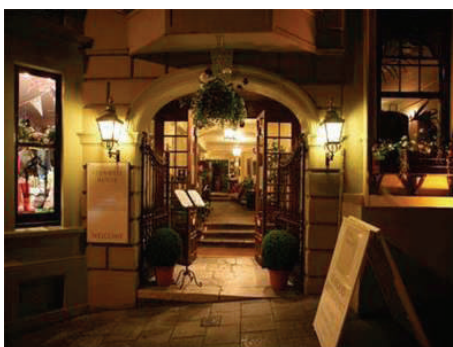
We normally try to arrange about five or six meetings a year to include our highlight Christmas Drinks Party at Stanwell House and the Summer Garden Party which are always very popular usually attracting the attendance of 60 to 70 members.

In addition to these Drinks Parties we organise talks on interesting local topics as well as a visit to one of the main exhibitions held at St Barbe Museum which proved so popular each time. This year will follow a similar program



Christmas Drinks Dec 15th

The Christmas Drinks Party will be held at the Stanwell House Hotel on the 15th of December from 6 p.m. -- 8 p.m.



Stanwell house will be serving their usual high quality of canapés as well as a choice of wines, soft drinks etc.

The Committee looked forward to meeting as many members as possible and engaging in discussion about any issues that members might wish to discuss.

Please feel free to bring friends as guests to help make this the usual sparkling occasion helping to kick-off the festive season.

Tickets £7.50

Upcoming Social Events continued from Page 5

We should therefore expect a fascinating talk on this wonderful wildlife reserve right on our doorstep.

No charge for this meeting.

Refreshments from 7:00pm

Meeting starts at 7:30 pm

Illustrated Talk by Stephen Akester: "Alice 3" The Creation of A Sailing Legend.

21st of April 2010

Lymington Community Centre

6.00 – 8.00pm



One of the most striking and original boats to come out of Lymington's amazing boatbuilding heritage, Alice 3 is truly a legend not only in Lymington but far and wide.

On the surface a traditional gaff rigged ketch with all the romance of bygone years but under the surface her hull form is more akin to a modern racing boat, with a lifting keel and rudder, seven carbon spars and an upwind sail area of 132sq. m, she is undoubtedly a boat to watch out for.

In 2008 she completed a round Britain tour in six weeks, and has been as far a field as France and Spain

More remarkable is the fact that most of

the work in creating this 38 ft boat was done by three local people in their spare time. Steve Akester one the three and he will describe the building and sailing of this wolf in sheep's clothing.

Cost is £5.00 to include refreshments. Tickets from Solent House Dental Surgery, Cannon Street or Call 672986

to reserve a Ticket. - Limited Tickets also available on the Door

Summer Garden Party Wednesday June the 9th 2010 6.00 – 8.00pm

Garden of Moore Blatch

48 High Street, Lymington

As a change from our previous venues at East Grove and Buckland Manor, this year's garden party will take place at the glorious and amazing gardens behind the imposing premises of Moore Blatch the local lawyers who now also have branches in Southampton and Richmond

For those who have not seen this garden it truly is an amazing sight going back for considerable distance with garden upon garden all within the confines of the original Georgian borders. We hope to have a short talk from the current head gardener on his management of this beautiful garden.

In addition this year we hope to have a hog roast and music. Details to come later in the year

Tickets £10 to include hog roast, refreshments/drinks etc.

For Latest Dates and Times

Please check the website

www.lymsoc.co.uk

**We sometimes have to change dates or
venues for our events. Please check
the website before coming if possible.**

Ferries Latest Continued from page 4

Solent, the Society objected to this plan when it was debated by the NFDC Cabinet, on the basis that it was very speculative and completely unproven and that it would be better not to allow the damage to the river to occur in the first place. The design and viability of this "mud-recharge" scheme is still being debated and it will need the permission of the New Forest National Park Authority before it can take place.

As this "mud-recharge" plan would also have the possibility of causing an "adverse effect" on the EU protected sites, it may also need to be the subject of an Appropriate Assessment or an Environmental Impact Assessment, before it can be approved.

If Wightlink cannot get permission for this "mud-recharge" mitigation plan or any other form of mitigation - such as reduced sailings - then under EU law, alternatives such as smaller ferries, may yet have to be considered by the authorities.

The Lymington River Association (LRA) has continued its legal action involving a High Court Judicial Review against both DEFRA and against Wightlink for introducing the new ferries without proper assessment or approval. The LRA High Court case will now be heard in mid December.

The basis of the claim against DEFRA was that they had failed to properly protect marine environments by not putting into place the necessary legal structure to properly reflect the European Habitats Directive. This "hole in the law" has now been admitted by Defra who have amended the law from the 1st of October this year to give themselves power, for the first time, over harmful activities taking place on water.

DEFRA now have the power to order Wightlink to stop the ferries operating if the "mud-recharge" mitigation scheme is turned down and alternative mitigation or other alternatives to the W Class are not put in place instead.

The Society will continue to keep a watching brief on the situation to try and ensure that any damage to the river is carefully monitored and that if necessary Wightlink are made to modify its operations or bring smaller ferries to the river if ordered to do so by the authorities.

Chairman's Note (contd from page 1)

larger ferries was being pushed through various organisations, and the implications of those larger ferries swept under the carpet without proper scrutiny, has now been resolved by all the relevant bodies being fully engaged and the actions of some of those bodies being scrutinised in the formal judicial review brought by members of the Lymington River Association.

The Society's position continues to be that as long as the due process is seen as fair and reasonable, then the result will have to be accepted, but that the obvious unfairness in the approach to this decision, by Wightlink building the ferries and then introducing them as a fait accompli without full and open consultation, must be challenged.

Development

The pace of development proposals has declined in the recession and what I can report is a wish by the planners and ourselves, reinforced in a recent meeting, to take stock of the character of Lymington as it now is, given recent planning permissions and development. The past intensification of development has been very much led by Central Government guidance adopted without sufficient complaint by past councillors and planners.

The Government guidance has changed recently, and given the support of new councillors concerned about the pace of development, planning officers have started to look at scope for controlling the worst excesses of planning applications and ensuring that they are appropriate to the location and the character of the area in which they are sited. This was previously to be on the basis of "areas of special character" which implied that areas which were not so designated were not special.

Local Distinctiveness

The current formula is more inclusive using the current buzzword of "local distinctiveness", and a wide-ranging

consultation with interested parties including ourselves, will shortly be started to be completed hopefully in the autumn, as to a full appraisal of the "local distinctiveness" of Lymington leading to the results of that appraisal being put into a definitive planning guidance which can direct inspectors on appeal, where most controversial decisions end up, to apply those views to individual planning decisions.

We have continued to have a good relationship with the planning officers, with the possible exception of the issue of the loss of the Canon Street School, which is of course now some time ago. We continue that relationship, particularly so in cooperation with the current NFDC planning councillors for Lymington who are sympathetic to the Society's, and the public's, concerns as to planning. It is clear from our discussions that episodes in the past such as the big public meeting on planning organised by the Society a couple of years ago, had a profound effect on the thinking of local councillors and planners.

I can add that the Society has recently hosted a meeting involving the chief planning officer, two town councillors including the Town Mayor and three district councillors to discuss the question of local distinctiveness.

We have also expressed our concerns as to the dominant building on the corner of Buckland Road and Avenue Road, dubbed by others as Rapunzel's Tower, which, having been refused on appeal was subsequently passed in an amended form, without any input from elected representatives.

The lesson to be learnt from that example is that there needs to be a formula whereby on such potentially controversial developments as that, there should be a formula for the safeguarding of elected representatives involvement. We are making representations to the Council to ensure that such an

unapproved and generally disliked development cannot proceed without proper democratic scrutiny in the future.

Talking of our own members democratic involvement and the invitation to members in the last edition for their views on the developer's proposals for the former Wellworthy Social Club site, I have to say that the number of responses was seven. The application has now been turned down by the planners, and an appeal has been heard following which the developers have drawn up fresh plans in anticipation of rejection.

Members' Comments

I take it from that limited response that a request for your comments should be more prominent, and if a development arises over which we would like your views again I will make a Kitchener type appeal rather than a muted suggestion! With the current recession there is nothing particularly substantial in the wings, except for the fact that Redrow at the old chicken factory site are seriously looking at a revision to the original 300 units and reducing this to something in the region of 120 which will be much more acceptable on that site. The Society is actively involved in discussions on those new proposals.

Social Events

Our programme of social events continues and I do hope you will continue to support the new social events circulated in a recent calendar.

Please check the website

www.lymsoc.co.uk

It is slowly improving, and does often

have up to date information as events

unfold.



AGM, Continued from Page 1

announced a study of the distinctiveness of New Milton, which would be repeated in Lymington next year. She pleaded for objectors to state their views and attend appeals.

Mr. Knight differed from Mr. Hutchinson's view and stated that undesirable ribbon development was the problem and higher densities the answer.

Mr. Hobson disagreed emphatically.

Cllr. Rostand stated that mixed residential areas are desirable socially.

Mrs. Flanagan deplored developments in Waterford and suggested that their residents' association amalgamate with the Lymington Society.

Dr. Mackenzie defended the NFDC and pointed out that they had appointed an Appeals Officer.

Jacqueline England and Clifford Jakes then gave a presentation on the Town Forum with forum members Graham Hill, Mike Fanstone and Peter Hebard.

Discussion confirmed concerns about car parking. Jenny Sutton pointed out that rents in Angel Court are too high to allow small businesses. Daphne Johnston expressed doubt about the role of the proposed Town Manager as there are already many effective voluntary bodies organising events in Lymington and Pennington.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Wellworthy Social Club



We opposed the proposal to develop this site with a striking Art-Deco style building and dense housing. The application was refused by the NFDC. The developer duly appealed and an informal hearing took place at the Town Hall on 17th September.

The proposal obviously aroused considerable local opposition and it was pleasing to see several local residents at the hearing. The informal hearings are not daunting affairs and we would encourage members to come and have their say about proposals which concern them.

The appeal was dismissed by the planning inspector, and the developer has sought the views of the Society before submitting an alternative proposal.

Look out for the application and let us know what you think – preferable by E-mail to info@lymsoc.co.uk.

Ringbarking

Buckland House, the former Conservative Club by the traffic lights, is the subject of applications by Coltens to demolish and build 12 flats.

These applications were refused by Lymington Town Council and the NFDC, but the developers appealed.

We are delighted to learn that the Inspector has dismissed the appeals. While he found the proposed replacement building "has some merit", he found "the inadequacy in the proposed layout to accommodate trees is so profound" that he dismissed the appeal.

Demolition will only be sanctioned when a suitable replacement is ready.

Trees are an important feature of this corner of the Conservation Area, and a sensitive subject since a magnificent copper beech near the corner of Eastern Road was mysteriously ring-barked and felled to be replaced by a bungalow some years ago. This Society planted the trees in front of the Police Station in 1980, and there is a similar row of hornbeam trees along the Eastern Road boundary of the proposed site. These too have been mysteriously ring-barked. The inspector was told on behalf of the developer that this had happened before the site was purchased, but this is firmly disputed by a neighbour.



Hornbeams on Eastern Road

Ringbarking has occurred before in connection with planning applications and if the Society have any clear evidence that ring barking is taking place to promote a planning application or minimize the effect of trees on a planning application, they will give every publicity to it both to the public and to the planners

99p

We welcome the arrival of the 99p store in the High Street. Lymington has a good social mix and a low price store to replace Woolworths was a real need.



The 99p sign has polarised opinions, though not as fiercely as local media suggest. We have received exactly one letter from a member who dislikes it. However there is the issue taken up by the NFDC that the sign was erected without a planning application, and it is illuminated, which is against the Conservation Area policy.

Like the sign or hate it, Mr Lelani, the owner of the 99p store, has given Lymington the opportunity to design a better one for him. Get your drawing board out, or get your design conscious relatives to take up the challenge. Keep Lymington High Street's individuality. We don't want it to look like a clone of every other high street.