

Our Next Public Meeting

The Wirral Country Park.
an illustrated talk - by
Major F. E. White-Head Ranger
Parkgate Hotel. 8.0 p.m. 6th March.
(New Members can join on the night)

Chairman - Mr. S. J. Norris 336 1494 Vice Chairman - Mrs H. Wall Jones 336 2420

INTRODUCTION

As members who attended the A. G. M. will know, we have lost both Mrs R. Blok and Mr. Rupert Allan and now more recently Mr. Eric Howe all of whom have left the district.

The Society owes a great debt of gratitude to all three for their indefatigable efforts during the early days following the formation of the Society. We are pleased to report that the services of Mr. R. Allan are still available to us as a co-opted member of the Executive Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Trees - Mr. Leather - Chairman 336 1395

The committee is responsible for monitoring the safety of trees in Parkgate and is concerned in particular with any threat to them as a result of indiscriminate development where even the presence of a Preservation Order may not be adequate protection unless particular care is taken. Apart from this "emergency" activity, the committee is keen to extend the effect of these Tree Preservation Orders, which do provide a measure of legal protection, and would therefore be pleased to hear from any member who is aware of any trees particularly those on public or municipal property, which are felt to be worthy of conservation. Private property is not excluded, however, in fact applications have already been submitted to protect trees on private land, and here again, please do let us know. Neston U.D.C. is currently preparing a list of all trees currently covered by Tree Preservation Orders but please don't worry about duplication.

As 1973 is the "YEAR OF THE TREE" if any member knows of a public or private area which would benefit from tree planting, in particular on unsightly municipal land, would they please advise details to Mr. Leather as soon as possible.

Traffic - Mr. K. Cox - Chairman 336 1990

The committee's main function is again to monitor traffic activity in our area and to suggest improvements in parking arrangements, traffic flows and the like which would benefit both residents and visitors. In particular, the Parade is the Committee's first subject of study and proposals for improvement would be welcomed for consideration. Traffic control is a subject on which a great many members seem to have widely differing opinions, and it is in all our interests for each of these opinions to be examined as carefully as possible before recommendations to the County or to Neston are endorsed by the Society. You can help by letting your views and suggestions be known.

We lost the Chairman of the Litter Committee, Mrs Blok, who was also Secretary of the Society, when she moved from the area. It was rumoured that she had been lost amid the debris on the marsh, and whilst

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this may have been proved to be an unfounded fear, it is true that the Marsh needs constant clearing and that a single exercise such as the one carried out with such success by the Society in 1972 does not last for ever. Regular clearing by several very dedicated members of the Committee has taken place since, but more volunteers are needed. If you feel you or your children can give some time on Saturday mornings, please let Mr. Ellis know.

You will have seen reports in the local press of our conversation with the Council over the provision of litter bins on the Parade. The Society was largely responsible for the erection of the present bins and whilst we have no illusions as to their aesthetic value as pieces of permanent street furniture, the amount of litter which is regularly deposited in them leaves no doubt whatsoever as to their value. The Council are currently selecting an alternative design of bin, and as and when such a design is available the Society and the Council will meet to discuss the location and number required. It is unfortunate that the Press comment on our joint discussions gave the impression that the Society had committed funds to such a project, which is not strictly correct. In fact, we have said that we would be prepared to consider contributing an appropriate sum to ensure the right type of facility for the area. In the event that any major sum was required, and more importantly the committee were satisfied that it was not the responsibility of the local council to raise the full sum, then we will advise members accordingly before taking action.

Conservation - Mr. N. Adams - Chairman 342 5673

Progress on the preparation of the report by Cheshire County Council to designate Parkgate a Conservation area has unfortunately been delayed longer than we had anticipated.

The delay is due to pressure within the County Planning Department who are now working on a greater number of areas within Cheshire, which will all become designated areas at the same time as Parkgate. It is also because the planners were faced late last year with three schemes for Parkgate. Their original suggestions of the Parkgate "front", Neston Councils addition to this of the Cricket ground, and our own further addition of the approaches to Parkgate, which were felt to be most important for the well being of the area. The association of Leighton with Parkgate for its historical reasons was also thought important.

The County Council Planning Sub-committee eventually agreed upon the "middle" course i. e. their own plan with the addition of the Cricket ground. The Society would ideally have wanted a larger area, but it was felt that the County proposal provided an adequate measure of protection, and that it would be wrong to further delay any decision by raising objections which would be unlikely to bear fruit anyway. The County report will now apparently be ready in April.

The Society has given further comments to the planners recently on the listed buildings in the area to ensure that those of important historical interest are included in the report. We have also suggested that the Sea Wall be included under this heading so that its preservation and repair can be ensured.

A meeting with the members will be arranged as soon as the report is published so that its implications can be made known to all.

Dee Barrage - Mr. G. Edwards - Chairman 336 4744

As you will have no doubt read in the Press, the Water Resources Board is due to report this year on requirements for water supply up to the end of the century.

The decision of the Board is obviously highly relevant to the proposed Dee Crossing which contrary to many peoples' appreciation is not an integral part of the same scheme. It is still possible that even if the Water Resources Board concludes that there is no need to store water in the Dee Estuary,

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the Road planning may still go ahead and for this reason we are continuing to monitor any information from Whitehall or from the County which may indicate the eventual route that the crossing would take. You may remember that the County proposals suggested a Burton-Flint crossing and you will know that the Burton Residents Association representing Burton, Puddington Ness and Shotwick have suggested counter proposals supporting the view that the road should be pushed further towards the Queensferry Crossing so as to avoid the despoilation of this beautiful area of the Wirral.

The Society was asked to support the Burton Residents' suggestion but although we feel very considerable sympathy for them, we feel that our support should be confined to stating that we think the Burton Residents scheme contains a great deal of value and was, broadly worthy of further consideration, we feel it right to preserve our own independence in this matter because Gayton-Greenfields is still a possible route and it may be necessary for the Society to employ all its resources in opposing that scheme should it ever be suggested in the future.

Historical - Mrs H. Wall-Jones - Chairman 336 2420

Work is proceeding on material for our book on the history of Parkgate which it is hoped will be published by the Summer of this year.

Planning. -

No word is more emotive or disturbing in a lovely semi-rural area such as ours than the word "development". We try to take the view therefore, that not all development is necessarily prejudicial to our environment and we by no means necessarily object to every development suggested. There have been a number of instances locally however, where we have registered our objection to a proposed scheme. In the case of residential schemes, such as Ardmore in Wood Lane and Brook Hey, in the Looms, the Local Council's Planning Committee's views have concurred with those of the Society and we trust this will continue to be the case. The Society has currently also registered an objection to the proposed change of use at Broadbeams Cafe on the Parade, and more importantly to the proposed "leisure Centre" on North Parade which would in part be constructed on land owned by a building development company. The site is in the proposed Green Belt area, and would of course be adjacent to the Parkgate Conservation Area. For these, and many other reasons which are too lengthy to elaborate in this Newsletter, the Society thought the Scheme unsuitable. The Society is affiliated to the Wirral Green Belt Council who, on hearing of the proposal from the Society's representative on the Council also wrote to the Local Authority confirming our view that the Scheme should be refused.

All planning applications are regularly scrutinised by a Committee delegate, and wherever possible a Society member attends Council Committee meetings. The local planning Department at Neston are most co-operative and we are consulted invariably in the event that proposals are made; nonetheless we would be grateful for advanced warning of any planning scheme which a member feels prejudicial to our area, and any member of the Society hearing of any such scheme is asked to contact Mr. Norris (336 1494).

Constant pressure from the Society should ensure the removal of the WALTON sign in Boathouse Lane by 26th February following Neston Council's official notice to the developers.

GENERAL.

(i) Pollution on the Parkgate Foreshore.

The local Press featured prominently a report which the Chairman thought worthy of further examination by Public Health Authorities.

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It must be stressed that the report is not conclusive evidence of any epidemic danger from the foreshore and indeed many of the features of the bacteriological life on the Marsh are no different from those found in any similar location; nonetheless it was felt most strongly that the proper authorities should investigate the situation thoroughly with particular reference for example to the possibility of there being untreated sewage on the Marsh emanating from one of the many rivulets which empty into the foreshore. The local Public Health Inspector, Mr Carr, has been tremendously helpful and we are happy that he will do everything possible to satisfy himself that no unreasonable danger to health exists.

The Society is also interested in investigations which are currently being carried out by Liverpool University into the whole ecological nature of the Marsh, including of course the gnats and mosquitoes which can be such a plague in Summer. In view of members' remarks at our AGM, we will be interested in the results of this work in case it suggests any economical and practical way of removing the inconvenience without unduly affecting the bird life on the Marsh.

It is important to remind members of the large volume of work undertaken by the committee and sub-committees on their behalf - to maintain the character of Parkgate, much of which is quite unspectacular and does not "hit the headlines" - although we do get our fair share of coverage in the local Press - but which is essential in the furtherance of the aims of the Society.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - Treasurer Mr P Taylor - Earlecroft. Earle Drive
336 4321

It is an important even if unpleasant fact that our Society cannot carry out its functions without your continued financial support. Subscriptions are due on 1st April and payment for the year 1973/4 can be made at the illustrated talk on 6th March or at any time now. As a reminder these are:-

Life - members	£10
Life - Joint subs for married couple	£15
Full members	£00.50
Full members - Joint subs for married couple	£00.75
Junior Student member	£00.50

Just send a cheque or postal order payable to THE PARKGATE & DISTRICT SOCIETY to the Treasurer at the above address and indicate which class of Membership you require.

That was the bad news! Now for the good -

The bar will be open to members on the 6th March in the reception room where the meeting will be held!

February 1973

F W French 336 3113
HON. SECRETARY