



HANHAM DISTRICT GREEN BELT CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Founded 1981

Defending our green fields and the Avon Valley

Newsletter No 154

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These are challenging times for us who enjoy the benefits of the Green Belt. These precious areas are under threat from the understandably urgent need to increase the nation's housing stock. Unfortunately, from the lack of imagination by our politicians and Local Planners - their "easy" option is to fill-in the areas between towns and village communities, with new-built "off the shelf" house units, without attempting to meet the chronic shortfall in truly affordable housing, whilst destroying the unique character of these areas!

We as a committee, have advocated that previously developed "brownfield" sites ought to be developed now — principally in our area, the suitable development of the old Kleeneze site, into "urban" living accommodation — providing the type of homes that today's younger generation require. At the same-time, this type of dynamic development would add a lift to our local High Street and community.

In addition to monitoring planning applications, during this year, your committee has challenged a series of proposals from the Government, South Gloucestershire Council, The West of England Combined Authority as well as developers, to impose **their** view of our needs, upon **our** area. The process of examining and responding to these weighty and often vaguely drafted proposals, is time consuming and at times we are uncertain as to whether, or not our views will be given the credence we feel necessary!! The joint Spacial Plan for the whole of the Combined Authorities area, is being reviewed by an inspector, appointed by the government, and is expected to produce their review later this year.

We are all aware that Local Authorities have been stripped of their traditional budgets and are clearly facing difficult times in supplying the services they have been expected to provide. With the pressure on the staffing levels within Councils, we feel that our role as scrutineers of the long-term (30yrs) proposals being produced, is crucial to shed light on

the sometimes fanciful proposals and funding sources. It is essential that we, as a committee, represent the views of our membership and therefore, we ask that you familiarise yourselves with our email address, our website, and our twitter and facebook contact details, in order to let us know your views, opinions and inform us of any issues in your neighbourhood that causes you concern. You may wish to consider joining our committee, or perhaps bringing a particular issue to one of our monthly meetings — we meet every first Wednesday of the month (except January and August) at 19.45, at a meeting room in Christchurch Hall, Church Road.

Meetings are kept to approximately an hour and a half. To ensure we can manage our agenda, please give notice of your interest to *Gill Forward*, ahead of the meeting.

Mikes Retirement

With regret, Mike Camm has unfortunately decided he needs to reduce his many commitments and has resigned from our committee, after more than 30 years, which included time as our Chairman. Mike has given us tremendous support and direction and his retirement will be a loss to our committee work. However, he and Jean will carry on their stalwart work, by continuing to lead the Bottle Stall at our future Fayre events. The committee thank both Mike and Jean for their great assistance and wish them both continued health and enjoyment.

AGM

To be held on 7th November at 7:15 pm in Hanham Hall. With our Green Belt and green spaces under so much threat, at this year's AGM, we propose to assemble a group of our representatives, to seek-out their views on the dangers to our green areas. This will give us all the opportunity to exchange views, not only between ourselves, but with those at the forefront of determining the implementation of the current demands from developers and Government policy.

Hanham Common Fayre

This year's Fayre was another busy day, resulting in a very successful event, attracting a number of new membership enquiries and generally set-out our current concerns with Government Policy. Financially, thanks to the continued support from our local traders, we raised a total of £629.90, which will contribute to funding our challenges against any planning proposals affecting our Green Belt and green spaces. Great thanks go to those who worked tirelessly through the day, the support we received from you our members and local traders, together with those who attended this centre-piece celebration of the Hanham Community.

Is Hanham Green Belt rich in Wildlife?

People who do not support our Green Belt have been known to state that there is little or no wildlife inhabiting it; some have even suggested that perhaps brown-field areas provide better homes for wildlife. Do you agree? We don't.

Perhaps we should all be recording the diverse wildlife that we know thrives in areas in and around Hanham, Willsbridge, Longwell Green and Keynsham? From pollinating insects and flowers, birds of prey, newts, bats, and deer, tigers, to name just a few.

Please record any wildlife sightings, no matter how insignificant or common they may seem, as this helps to demonstrate what a fantastic place the Green Belt is for wildlife, as well as for the health and well being of us humans.

How do you record? There are lots of national and local organisations that would like people to record sightings via their websites, for example :-

- the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) - <https://nbn.org.uk/record-share-explore-data/start-recording-wildlife/>
- the Biological Records Centre (BRC)'s iRecord website - <http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/>

iRecord is also available as a mobile phone App. The aim of iRecord is to make it easier for wildlife sightings to be collated, and made available to others including <http://www.brerc.org.uk/> here in the west of England area.

BRERC also allows you to record directly via their website.

Not sure what you have seen? There are lots of websites that produce guides to help you identify flora and fauna for example :-

- Woodland Trust's naturescalendar.org.uk has a range of straightforward and interesting 'fact packs'
- or try iSpot which is a website aimed at helping anyone identify anything in nature, you can add a photo, location and get help with identification - <http://www.ispotnature.org/communities/uk-and-ireland>

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) are now in force. We collect from our membership forms your contact details and also record any offers of help that you can give. The information is stored securely and will never be shared with any third party. You have the right to see, correct and/or withdraw any or all of the data.

The Society will ensure that changes notified are implemented and any problems dealt with promptly. Our contact details are hanhamgreenbelt30@gmail.com

Membership Subscriptions

Thank you to all members for your continuing support. Your subscriptions and monies raised from the fayre now comprise our "fighting fund" which will be necessary to obtain reports and opinions for us to combat the pressures to build on our Green Belt areas.

Subscriptions due in October can be paid preferably by standing order or to Gill Forward at 88 Whittucks Road. Cheques must be made out to Hanham District Green Belt Conservation Society.

Chairman: Mr A Jones

Treasurer/Secretary : Mrs G Forward Phone : 0117 9677658

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