

Yare Valley Society Newsletter



The objects of the society are to protect the natural landscape and wildlife habitats of the Yare Valley south and west of Norwich, principally between Harford and Bowthorpe. We oppose any development that would detract from its natural qualities and support projects which would preserve the valley for the benefit of all.

Issue 100 May 2017

A Message of Alarm from the Committee

The Society has existed for over 50 years and has a long record of action with the objective of the protection and maintenance of the valley as a valued environmental asset. Over the years there have been pressures for development encroaching on and diminishing the character of the valley and, until last year these have been resisted by the local authorities, backed by government, all with the support of the Society. Changes in national planning guidelines and last year's disastrous decisions show what we have to face. We are now active in monitoring and seeking to mitigate the effect of those decisions, but, while the City council continue to maintain their policy, South Norfolk and the University have clearly demonstrated that the conservation of the valley is not their priority.

The pressures to develop on parts of the valley will continue and, with the river dividing the City and South Norfolk, the Society is the only organisation which looks at the valley as a whole.

The committee are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain an effective approach, still less to widen the activities as we would wish. Retiring committee members have not been replaced despite calls to the membership every year and the present committee are feeling the limitations of advanced years and/or other commitments.

We are approaching a point where unless new and active members join the committee the Society will not be able to function effectively, if at all.

Please treat this seriously and consider whether you can help.

Brief News Update

Rugby Club: We continue to work to limit the damage to the valley of the Rugby Club development. Together with Cringleford Parish Council and Colney Parish we are supporting an initiative by Professor Tim O’Riordan (our speaker at last year’s AGM) which involves a team including the UEA Estates Department, the Sportspark, and the UEA Biodiversity Group. Already there are welcome plans to move 55 parking spaces away from the body of the valley to the periphery on Colney Lane. The amenity aspects are important to the team, and the team are keen to get the views of users of the valley on landscaping the building and the river valley walks. Send your ideas to the Yare Valley Society at yarevalleysociety@gmail.com . The team will also be examining the possibility of additional funding for landscaping and path improvements.

Bartram Mowers: We are following progress here, including the provision of additional public access to the River, and public access/landscaping of the Strawberry Fields.

Development adjacent to A140/B1113. Changes have been made to the original plans, mainly relating to highway changes and arrangements for cyclists. We are again objecting to what is proposed, because of its incursion into the valley, and the inadequate attention being given to the needs of those who use the valley for informal recreation. The plans can be viewed on the South Norfolk District Planning Portal, ref: 2016/0764. Do have a look at the plans and tell the Planners what you think. The deadline is 17 May 2016. If you miss that date, ring the planning department to ask them if your comments can still be accepted. It can be the action of individual members that makes all the difference.

Making the difference: You have probably noticed the tree felling that took place on the Norwich bank of the Yare on the stretch between the A11 flyover and the UEA, and the unsightly and hazardous pile of timber and branches that were left behind. As a result of determined action by one of our members, a meeting with the Norwich Senior Arboricultural Officer, local residents, and a Yare Valley Representative took place to review what had been done. The meeting was most satisfactory. It was agreed that all had not gone as it should, and undertakings were given to put things right with additional clearing and possibly planting. We await the final outcome with optimism.

Annual Maintenance of river: Work will start in July on clearing the river channel. Work will be carried out using motorised weed boats, hand tools and a hydraulic excavator to cut vegetation from the channel.

More News: Come to the AGM to hear more news of what the Society has been doing on your behalf. In recent years there have been a number of changes to the terms on which planning consent can be obtained. As we have seen with the permissions for building on the Bartram’s site, and on the University Playing Fields, no part of the Yare Valley is safe. We must act together as a strong and active Society to resist the ever-increasing number of threats to our valley.

AN OPEN INVITATION TO THE **AGM** OF THE “YARE VALLEY SOCIETY” FOLLOWED BY :

AN ILLUSTRATED TALK BY PROFESSOR MALCOLM WAGSTAFF

“THE YARE VALLEY & ME”

Wednesday 7th June 7.30pm Cringleford Pavilion Oakfield Road

Enjoy a chat and refreshments after the talk

This is your opportunity to hear about the History of the Valley and what you can do to help to preserve the wonderful landscape features and access, for future generations to enjoy.

Annual General Meeting & Talk
Wednesday 7th June at 7.30 pm
Cringleford Playing Field Pavilion

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 11 May 2016
4. Matters arising
5. Motion:

The constitution of the Yare Valley Society be changed so that the following sentence in paragraph 3:

“The Society shall be managed by a Committee of not more than eight members consisting of a chairman, an honorary secretary and an honorary treasurer and not more than five other members”

will read:

“The Society shall be managed by a Committee of not more than nine members consisting of a chair, a vice chair, an honorary secretary and an honorary treasurer and not more than five other members”

6. Review of the year
7. Treasurer’s report
8. Membership secretary’s report
9. Election of Officers for 2017/2018:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair (only if motion at Agenda item 5 is passed)
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Committee members
10. Any other business

The AGM will be followed by a talk to be given by Professor Malcolm Wagstaff

The Yare Valley and Me

The View of an Historical Geographer

We can expect to hear about the relicts of past land use to be seen in the valley and its immediate surroundings today. The talk will include water management, grazing, cultivation, and the siting of villages. It will explain what historical geography is about.

Look forward to gaining a deeper appreciation of the landscape around us.

Refreshments will be available