



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 79

March 2009

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday 12 May 2009
7.30 pm
St Andrew's Church Hall, Church Lane, Eaton

Followed by an illustrated talk by the
well-known local historian
CHRIS BARRINGER
'EXPLORING THE NORFOLK VILLAGE'

Application to extend Colney Woodland Burial Site (No 2009/28)

On account of its success and prior to submitting a planning application, James Boddy came to see two committee members to talk about his proposal to extend the land for burial by about an acre. When the YVS committee considered the application, some were in favour and others against the plan. After some discussion, we responded to SNDC as follows:

"The aims of our Society are to preserve the valley against any detrimental development and to encourage development which enhances the valley for the benefit of all. We acknowledge the care with which this application has been put forward. We are also aware from a meeting with Mr Boddy that he has a keen interest and concern in environmental issues.

"The extension of the burial site by about an acre is not controversial. The press report in the Eastern Daily Press on 20 January gave an area of nine acres but we assume this is poor reporting. We would appreciate being assured by you that the actual extension of the burial site is about one acre.

"We do, however, have some concerns and reservations about this proposal.

"We assume that there will be some very unobtrusive method of preventing the soil from sliding down the slope?

"We are not convinced that digging soil from near the river would be a better solution than importing soil in from elsewhere. We are unclear whether this has been considered as an option.

"We understand the desire to have a small stream flowing through a series of shallow lakes but are unsure if there is a plan to use the land for fishing.

"We would also wish to know how this proposal fits in with the District Council's planning guidelines adopted in May 1986. Much of the area has been identified as a County Wildlife Site protected under policy ENV 13 and reflects the value that the whole site has for nature conservation.

"Could we be informed whether it is planned to have this land as a part of the Yare Valley riverside walks? Does this planning application provide an opportunity for installing a section of the walk along this stretch of the river? It is essential that the proposed development in no way prejudices the continuance of the Yare Valley Walk in this area.

continued

CENTRAL NORFOLK HEALTH WALKS

DATE: Tuesday 24 March, 11.00 am
MEETING POINT: BOWTHORPE MARSH, Shopping Centre Car Park, next to medical centre
Map 237; TG093177; NR59HA
LEVEL: 3
WALK: Rural walk around Bowthorpe Marsh and Bowthorpe Southern Park
MILES/GRADIENT: 2.3 miles, 25% soft surface, one stile, moderate to steep gradients. Boots recommended.

DATE: Thursday 26 March, 11.00 am
MEETING POINT: MARSTON MARSH, Waitrose Car Park
Map 237; TG201061; NR4 6NU
LEVEL: 3
WALK: River valley walk around marshland
MILES/GRADIENT: 2.8 miles, 60% soft, some steps and stiles and medium gradients. Boots recommended.

For more details on the walks, please contact Kate Colman-Pipe, Health Walks Co-ordinator, 01603 423377

“There is also a concern that the development of a stream and the lakes may not be completed and suggest that a condition is imposed on any given approval that the development should be completed as stated in the application.

“However the biggest issue, together with the river walk provision, refers to the overall view of the area on both sides of the river. At present the north side is left untended and appears to be a fairly 'natural' area. The obviously contrived stream and series of lakes which is being proposed is not so 'natural' and could visually detract from the generally 'natural' aspect of the valley on both sides of the river taken as a whole.”

At the time of producing this newsletter there had been no response from the South Norfolk Council. We understand that the Planning Department has been very busy.

Norwich Research Park Development Framework

South Norfolk District Council asked for the Society's comments on the accuracy of their framework. We were able to point out some discrepancies.

Firstly the term “Norwich Research Park” is not used consistently throughout the document. On some occasions the UEA is clearly included within the definition but diagrams show it separately from the Research Park, and the Planning Policy section deals only with the area west of the river. They also say that there are no waterways in the Research Park area but this is only partly true if the South Norfolk part of the Research Park is considered. We were also at pains to point out that we feel that it is important that any planning policy framework for this area recognises that the Yare valley is an important environmental feature that is properly identified and protected. Of course we recognise that it falls within two separate local planning authorities but this makes it even more necessary that it should be treated as an entity to ensure consistency in the operation of planning policies. There were also other statements that required correction.

Most importantly we were concerned with the approaches taken regarding the cross valley road link. The suggestion

of an “improved” or “enhanced” cross valley link is a matter to which both the Society and other interests are opposed and we said so very clearly.

We had on previous occasions expressed our concern that development at Colney Hall could intrude upon the Yare valley and were pleased to see the stress in the Framework on the need for strict control in accordance with a masterplan, with guidelines clearly provided for a limited area for development and the retention and enhancement of a substantial tree screen.

As a general point we felt that where the planning authority changes its view and sees the achievement of environmental objectives as a necessary requirement of developers the policy document should state this firmly rather than as a subjunctive aspiration that the development should tread lightly with regard to these sensitivities. Environmental protection will require firm and clear guidance and a stronger approach than that given in this development framework.

Subscriptions

The New Year means that subscriptions are due for those members who pay annually. The current subscriptions (per household) are £2 per year; £8 for 5 years and £20 for life membership. Please send a cheque made payable to the Yare Valley Society to the treasurer, 9b Poplar Avenue, Norwich, NR4 7LB

Bluebell fiasco comes right

Some of you will know that the Society was unable to go ahead with the bluebell planting planned for late November. However it is very pleasing to report that the bluebells and snowdrops were actually planted in the designated places towards the end of last year by the City Council.

Compost Corner This item will be held over until the next newsletter. (John T says thank you to everyone for their good wishes. He has finished a course of radiotherapy and is well on the way to recovery.)

Articles, comments and letters for possible publication can be sent to Alison Ward, 20 Brettingham Avenue, Norwich NR4 6XG or e-mail yvs@talktalk.net