

# Yare Valley Society Newsletter

## Issue 92

## October 2015



*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.*

### **Bartram Site Bluebell Road**

McCarthy & Stone builders of retirement homes want to build on only part of the site, that is the green field between number 11 and number 33 (the old Morse nursery house). They consulted local residents many of whom explained to them this did not accord with the Local Plan. Subsequently they put on an exhibition which showed that they had made a few alterations but still their plans did not fit the Norwich Local Plan. Below is the Yare Valley Society response to McCarthy & Stone to the exhibition plans.

### **Consultation on Bartram Mowers site Norwich proposals**

I write on behalf of the Yare Valley Society in response to the consultation exhibition about the Bartram Mowers site. While we welcome the opportunity to enhance the Yare Valley walk by allowing public access to some of the open space adjacent to the site, we object to the current plans shown in the exhibition.

Our main objections and concerns are as follows:

1 Lack of detail about the Masterplan and the Management Plan for the open space.

The draft Masterplan does not accord with the Norwich Site Allocations Plan. The development of the management plan for the public open space needs to be concurrent with the McCarthy & Stone development. The outline plan for the non-McCarthy and Stone development to the north is too speculative to be meaningful.

2 Visual impact

As shown at the exhibition the site is greatly over developed. We would urge a rethink about the density of the buildings on this prominent site in the valley.

None of the landscape and visual assessments, nor topographical and ecological surveys which Norwich City Council requires to inform the Masterplan were available at the exhibition. We do not understand therefore how the design put forward at the exhibition has been shaped by

such assessments. The Council's Policy R42 is clear that the development must be "sensitively designed to minimise effects on important views to and within the Yare Valley" (p292 Norwich Local Plan).

However, the proposals for the two large blocks effectively cut out all cross valley views from Bluebell Road, ignoring this requirement. The Council also requires that it should "minimise impact on the landscape and preserve the character of the area"; and that it will "complement the site's role as a gateway to the city" (p292). The two large blocks will not only dominate the landscape but will impact negatively on the character of the area.

### 3 Environmental assets.

The City Council policy R42 requires the development to "protect and enhance environmental assets within and adjacent to the site, including retaining tree belts". We were surprised therefore that your plan proposes the removal of the impressive tree belt with its Tree Preservation Orders, between the two proposed blocks. This clearly does not accord with the planning requirements and we see no case for their removal.

### 4 Access points.

We are strongly of the opinion that there should be only one access point for vehicles and that this should be the existing one. This, and any additional pedestrian access points, need to take account of safety on the heavily used Bluebell Road cycle path, where there have already been fatalities.

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We realise that the exhibition was only putting forward tentative ideas which are lacking in some aspects and would ask that McCarthy & Stone will seize the opportunity to take note of our comments and provide environmentally sensitive and imaginative designs to enhance the area.

*Andrew Salisbury*

### **Social Events**

A family event with Matthew Davies who directs the Fringe Project was planned for August. It was to be based on the Marston Marsh where the Fringe volunteers were going to be Cutting and Haymaking and constructing environmental habitats for wildlife. Unfortunately, a heavy deluge 12 hours before and up to the 9am start meant that it had to be cancelled.

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We are hoping to arrange some more family activities during the following school holidays. We will circularise all schools and other interested parties when something had been arranged.

*June Gentle*

### **Yare Valley Green Infrastructure- A Plan for a Linear Park**

A major step towards a masterplan for the Yare Valley has been taken with work put in hand by Norfolk County Council for mapping of the Valley. In early September YVS Committee members met with the intern responsible for the mapping to provide information and ideas. He was very positive and responsive to the suggestions we made.

The committee has a list of items and projects for inclusion in the master plan. The list includes existing and potential wildlife assets, architectural, historical, cultural and catering assets, existing and potential recreational assets such as the Yare Valley Walk, other bridleways and footpaths, pedalways, water routes for unpowered craft, (which are all part of the "Green Infrastructure" for the Valley). It is hoped there will be supporting documentation about, for example, wildlife data, future public access to land including the Bartrams Mowers site, Harford Tip, and the Bowthorpe Lakes and projects to complete Yare Valley Walk.

YVS has been told to expect a series of reasonably complete maps showing existing green infrastructure and future opportunities to be available shortly.

The Yare Valley Green Infrastructure Delivery Team being set up by Norfolk County Council, on which YVS is represented, is scheduled to meet to discuss the maps in mid-November.

YVS will be looking for an early identification and detailing of projects likely to attract funding.

Where is the money coming from?

Money is available from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Local authorities use the CIL to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The CIL can be used to fund infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes roads, flood defences, schools, hospitals and social care facilities, park improvements, green spaces and leisure centres.

The local governments with areas in "Greater Norwich" recognise the importance of safeguarding and extending the green infrastructure of the Yare Valley to cope with the pressures due to the residential development in the vicinity of, and within, the Valley. The completion of the mapping

exercise should enable sound arguments to be made for green projects for the Valley.

### **£8.4 million for the Blue and Yellow Pedalways**

The Norwich blue and yellow pedalways connect local residents (and those further afield) with the Yare Valley, and are a means of reaching the Valley without having to use the car. No dates are available at the moment, but consultations on various projects for improving the pedalways are expected this Autumn. Please keep a look out for consultations on the Norwich City Council website.

*John Elbro*

### **Memorial tree planted in the University**

A tree was planted in 2008 in the University grounds close to the river in memory of Elaine Tucker who was for many years the Society's chairman. Elaine was tireless in her concern for the valley of the Yare and was especially interested in the river flowing through the university grounds. Unfortunately the tree has died due it is thought to having its bark stripped by deer.

We have been consulting with the University ground staff who are as keen as we are to have the tree replaced. The University will suitably protect the tree which will be a rowan about two metres high. The cost of around £50 will be provided by the Society with possibly contributions from individual society members. It is expected that the planting will take place in the autumn.

*John Thurman*

### **NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

If any members who usually receive a printed copy want to change to receiving the newsletter by email, please contact me with the details.

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It is a great help to us if most of our members receive their newsletters by email.