

The Yateley Society

Newsletter

Issue 109 December 2012

www.yateleysociety.org.uk



*From our Chairman
Roger Coombes*

Yateley Society Christmas Social

8pm Thursday

20 December

Red Cross Hall

Monteagle Lane, Yateley
(plenty of parking)

*Come and join us for mince
pies, mulled wine and
musical entertainment*

*Genial company and
festive cheer!*



There is almost nothing that comes as close to stirring up emotions locally as Yateley Common. The question of the future of this

sizeable tract of open space has been open for discussion and speculation for the last year, and this is by no means the first time.

Members attending the October meeting heard arguments for and against grazing (with concomitant partial enclosure) as a means of managing the Common in the future. At the end of the meeting there was unanimous approval for a resolution supporting "the grazing proposals as a part of the future ... management programme for Yateley Common ...". This, I hasten to point out, was the view of the members present. It cannot yet be a resolution of the Society as there had been no formal advance notice to members. This would need to be part of the business of the AGM or an extraordinary general meeting. In the meantime, look out for an opportunity to take part in our first online members' survey.

I am aware of the passions which are aroused by merely mentioning the words "grazing" and "enclosure" to horse riders, dog walkers and those with official "commoners" status. Realistically, it must be understood that the total membership of this Society is also a minority within the population of Yateley. I believe that we need to recognise that the majority of the residents of Yateley are unaware or disinterested in the historic, social and legal significance and intricacies of the Common. That is why the issue needs to be approached with sensitivity and appreciation of all those who care about the Common, even though their aims and methods might differ. A satisfactory compromise ought to be feasible!



YATELEY CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

At our September meeting we were pleased to welcome Ouida Grant, who is CEO of Hart CAB, to talk about the history and work of the Bureau.

She started with a brief overview of the history of the Citizens Advice service explaining that Citizens Advice has been helping to solve problems since 1939. Initially there was no data protection or confidentiality agreements and bureaux were set up in all sorts of places such as converted horse boxes and village halls.

She went on to explain that Yateley CAB evolved thirty years ago and was initially set up in a portacabin where the police station is now situated. In the early nineties negotiations began with Hampshire County Council and Hart District Council for a more permanent residence for Yateley CAB and Councillor John Hurst officially opened the building on May 7th 1997 - this was purpose built for the bureau.

The audience was surprised to hear that despite Hart being promoted as one of the best places to live in the UK, the CAB hand out food parcels and many clients are unable to read or write. There was also surprise at the number of people that



Hart CAB sees in a year - about 14,000. This year for the first time in 10 years benefit issues have overtaken debt.

Clients come to the bureau with very different issues from what to wear to a Buckingham Palace Garden party to a client struggling in with a carrier bag full of creditor's letters they are too scared to open and even how to open a lap dancing club in Yateley!

There is sadness too - clients that have lost a loved one and don't fully understand what they should do now or relationships breaking down and trying to reach agreements for financial arrangements and care of children.

She was pleased to report that most people leave the bureau feeling better than when they came in as it is always good to talk but more importantly to be listened to and helped.

Ouida finished by praising the volunteers who are the life blood of the organisation, requiring a commitment to training which takes between 6 months and a year to complete.

<http://www.hartcab.org.uk/yateley-office/>

Roger Durdle

Hart District Council Planning latest:

Hart Council has published the latest version of the Core Strategy which will form the centrepiece of a new Local Plan.

The new Core Strategy will replace the current planning policies in the Local Plan and set the development principles in Hart until the year 2029. This new draft document dictates that at least 4253 homes are to be delivered in Hart between 2011 and 2029 of which 162 are scheduled for Yateley. It is not clear if this includes current developments such as Clarks Farm and the Care Village proposed at Sandhurst Road.

It is titled the Pre-Submission draft Core Strategy which was approved for consultation by the full Council on the 25th October.

http://www.hart.gov.uk/local_plan-council_25th_oct_inc_maps.pdf

Following a public consultation period, which ends on the 7th January 2013, it will be this Core Strategy that Hart Council submits to the Planning Inspector for acceptance and approval. Although there is great deal of rewriting from the original draft Core Strategy Preferred Approach, published last year, public consultation will be limited to commenting on whether it has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, it meets legal requirements and whether it is 'sound'.

Barry Moody

Yateley Common Management consultation—October meeting

The Society's October meeting was a forum for members to express their views from each side of the debate about the future management of the common. Earlier stages of the consultation have already determined that grazing should be employed to improve the ecology of the heathland. The present debate is about how this should be achieved. The consultation documents at <http://www.hwt.org.uk/pages/yateley-consultation.html>

Mike Mann, Yateley Society Conservation Coordinator, described the Lowland Heath habitat. It is very rare and has Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserve (NNR) and EU Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) designations. Hampshire County Council has made strenuous efforts, with the Society's help over several years to preserve and improve Yateley Common by reducing invasive scrub which rapidly re-grows if left unchecked, in order to keep these designations. Should management fail, the Common could fall victim to outside concerns such as mineral extraction and development. Tony Hocking spoke in support and Mike asked the Society also to support the proposals.

Barry Moody put forward, on behalf of Peter Tipton (who couldn't make the meeting) a somewhat different view that grazing was accepted as a good technique, however permanent fencing was feared to change peoples' perception of the Common such that outside interests could then apply for fencing for commercial reasons and parts of the Common would be lost. Moveable, temporary fencing was seen as a preferable idea, although the Commoners were generally against any fencing. Peter stressed it was essential that everybody was properly consulted.

Philip Todd suggested less intrusive electronic methods of restricting cattle movements; commented on a lack of financial information on management and felt that grazing was only one possibility, a full range of techniques was needed, and consultation on all aspects must reach all interested parties.

Ian Stoneman, Senior Ranger and Alex Cruickshank, Grazing Project Manager for the Hampshire Wildlife Trust (HWT), stated that grazing was but one of the range of techniques essential for the work and that the Trust has wide grazing experience, grazing helps with scrub control and also improves soil structure. Public access was also a vital factor. If fencing was used there would be gates at all popular entrances to the Common, only closed when cattle were actually present, which would be rotational in two out of four areas, and some gate-free bridleways would be kept. Plentiful signage and news on all popular media would keep the public informed. They said that funding for the project would be provided by Natural England.

Questions from the floor were answered that the possibility of animal escape could be addressed by the fence design; children would still be able to ride bicycles in popular areas, and deer would not be constrained because the fences would not be too high for them to jump.

Since the October meeting the Society has received an email from HWT stating:

I can confirm that we are at stage 5d of the Common Purpose consultation process.—We have 'harnessed stakeholders' views (Stage 3) with the questionnaire, 'examined management options' (stage 4) and we are now in the process of 'selecting the most appropriate management option(s)' (stage 5) following the publication of the proposals.

The next stages are as follows:

Consider stakeholders' views on the proposals and revise them, if required. If it is decided that an application to PINs is appropriate this will be done in the new year, when stakeholders will have another chance to submit any representation directly to the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspectorate may call a public inquiry at which stakeholders can give evidence.

The first 5 stages are designed to 'iron-out' any potential conflict before an application is submitted.

At the end of the October meeting, Roger Coombes stated that the Society would endeavour to come up with a form of words for a resolution at the AGM in February 2013!

The AGM resolution will be too late to influence the outcome of stage 5 of the consultation, but should enable the Society to be able to submit its evidence to the Planning Inspectorate, and decide whether to take part on any Public Inquiry. The Public Inquiry would be entirely about the fencing issue and not a forum to approve the management plan for Yateley Common.

To help gather views prior to the AGM, an on-line members' survey will be carried out.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Thursday 20 December 2012	Yateley Society Christmas Social. Join us for mince pies, mulled wine and musical entertainment. Genial company and festive fun!
Thursday 17 January 2013	Nick Godwin and Richard Quarterman of Yateley Urnfield Residents Action Group (YURAG) will be telling us why and how they started and developed YURAG and explaining some of the planning issues around the Urnfield Urnfield site —the Bronze Age burial site found during gravel workings in the fields, now known as the Urnfield, between Moulsham Lane and Chandlers Lane.
Thursday 21 February 2013	It's our AGM! Come along for a glass of wine, lively discussion and make your opinion count.

Membership Subscriptions

We would like to remind all members that subscriptions for 2012/13 were due on 1st October.

Subscription fees are unchanged at:

Individual membership £10
Household (2+ adults) £15

Electronic payment can be made or standing orders set up to:

Account Name: The Yateley Society
Bank account No: 70989371
Sort Code: 20-16-99

www.yateleysociety.org.uk/membership/

Standing Orders

Would all those members who pay by standing order please ensure that their bank have instructions to pay the correct amount as noted above.

Please support us by paying subscriptions promptly – thank you.

Roger Durdle

VENUE

Our monthly meetings are held at

*the Red Cross Centre,
Monteagle Lane, Yateley
(Unless otherwise stated)*

Members and non-members welcome, admission free.



EXERCISE THE BODY AND

CONSCIENCE!

The Conservation Group normally meets at Wyndhams Pool, Cricket Hill 10 am — last Sunday of each month.

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun. The aim is to help the Yateley Rangers in all sorts of tasks in the upkeep of Yateley Common. To find out more, please call Mike Mann on 01252 877741

We have been asked if any of our members would be interested in giving some time and expertise to a local primary school which is looking for a governor to attend meetings and offer advice and guidance in the governance of the school, (particularly but not exclusively in the area of finance!) Contact Jo Hill for more information about this worthy and rewarding position.

Editor – Jo Hill

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