



The Dulwich Society

TO FOSTER AND SAFEGUARD THE AMENITIES OF DULWICH

Newsletter 81
Summer 1988

SUMMER 1988

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Could contributions for the Autumn Newsletter please be sent to the secretary, Robin Taylor, by the end of August?

NEWS

WORDLESS ON THE WOODS: Despite the estates governors' proclaimed intention to say more and do better - one achievement of the public meeting in February - enquiries about their fresh planning application for Beechgrove in Sydenham Hill Woods received short shrift at the latest meeting of the advisory committee. Reg Collins reports on a meeting that was "full of abrupt differences of view and extraordinary decisions". The governors, he says, are not yet cured of complacency. But the coordinating committee of amenity societies called for by the public meeting has been formed and has had a constructive first meeting.

LOFT LINES: Concern has arisen recently over the design of loft conversions in the Dulwich area. Southwark council and the Estates Governors are producing a joint design guide. Discussions between the council and the governors have led to agreement on several points for inclusion in the guide. The general approach is that loft conversions should:

- * Use dormer windows only at the back.
- * Not require the raising of the ridge height of the roof
- * Use dormer windows of modest size
- * Not rise straight from the back wall of the house but should have the roof slope continuing below the sill
- * Have the roof slope continuing above between the top of the dormer and the ridge where possible
- * Be of a style compatible with the existing house
- * Be directly below the ridge of the main parts of the roof and not extend into the hip end

The design guidance is likely to go on to note that many houses in Dulwich have lofts with ample height for conversion but also have back additions which do not. Loft conversions involving dormers should, in these cases, be restricted to the main roof and the height of the back addition should not, in general, be raised. There are also in Dulwich many large detached houses which would have a great deal of scope for the introduction of dormers and there may be circumstances where side and front dormers may be acceptable. Closer control of design may, however, be necessary in the Dulwich Village and Dulwich Wood conservation areas.

CEDAR FALL: Members will be delighted to hear that the estates governors will be replacing the Cedar of Lebanon tree that was such a feature of the forecourt of the Old College before it was blown over and uprooted in the October 1987 storm. A suitable replacement has been tracked down but in order to ensure that the replacement tree has every chance to become well established, it will not be planted until the autumn.

BARS BAR: A proposal by the Crown and Greyhound pub in Dulwich village to create two new bars at the rear is being strongly opposed by residents.

NEWS

SADDLE UP SHANKS: For too long, planners and engineers have ignored the needs of people on foot in favour of the more obvious problems associated with motor traffic. The end result is that one in four people consider conditions for pedestrians a problem in their neighbourhood. Particular problems are the state of the pavements and the lack of crossings on main roads. The National Consumer Council has published an excellent 150-page report subtitled A consumer review of the pedestrian environment which is easily the most significant publication on the topic since the Policy Studies Institute's 1979 report Walking is Transport. The NCC has also produced an action guide for local residents to encourage them to campaign for better facilities. What's wrong with Walking? is available from HMSO for £4.95. Pedestrians, the action guide, can be obtained from the National Consumer Council, 20 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH for £3.00.

TREES WALK: This was due to take place on Thursday 7 July, following the Queen's Jubilee Tree Trail first published in 1977. After starting at 7.30pm at the Dulwich Village end of Gallery Road, the trail goes along Gallery Road, takes the footpath through to College Road, goes up to the crossroads and then back down to the Gallery Garden and includes the best trees in Dulwich. It was due to be led by the trees inspector for Lambeth who so ably led last year's walk.

ANCIENT WOODS: The Southwark group of the London Wildlife Trust have produced a handsome booklet describing the history of the Great North (Surrey) Wood, a nineteenth-century name, that formerly covered Norwood and surrounding areas, but is now reduced to a handful of woodlands such as Sydenham Hill Wood. It is generously illustrated by 22 historical prints and present-day photographs, the latter taken by Amrit Row who also drew the centre-spread map. The story of how such woodlands were managed, and of the effect of enclosures from Norman times to the present, make it of interest to a wider readership than South London. It is available from the Southwark Group, c/o Kingswood House, Seeley Drive, Dulwich, SE21 8QR, price £2.50.

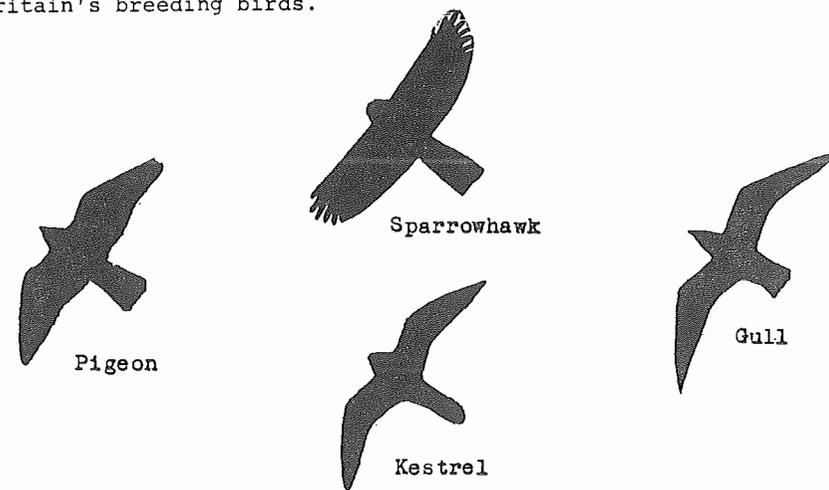
PALACE FACELIFT: Bromley Council is spending £350,000 on landscaping the south-western corner of the Crystal Palace park (Anerley Hill and Crystal Palace Parade), £600,000 on providing a new access road to the sports centre and a further £50,000 landscaping the access road. All this work will be carried out in the financial year 1988-9. To enable the landscaping to take place the motor-cycle training area is being relocated within the park.

NEWS

GOOD WOOD GUIDE: Friends of the Earth has launched the latest stage of its campaign to persuade timber traders in Britain to support the conservation and sustainable use of tropical forests: the Good Wood Guide. The guide is a list of all those traders (retailers, DIY stores, manufacturers, architects and importers) who are already doing this. In return for agreeing not to supply tropical woods from forests that have been destroyed to produce the timber, to offer for sale alternative temperate woods, and to write to their national representatives supporting this approach, timber traders will be awarded a seal of approval from FOE in recognition of their efforts to help preserve the rainforests.

After lengthy discussions, the National Association of Retail Furnishers has agreed to endorse the scheme, which should go a long way to generating further support for this initiative. Shaping market forces can be a very effective way of protecting the environment by persuading industry to act responsibly and think ecologically. The Good Wood Guide is FOE's latest attempt to give power to what it calls the "ethical consumer".

KESTREL COUNT: Most people love hawks and particularly kestrels. To tap this rich vein of potential membership and interest, the London Wildlife Trust is launching, in the spring, KESTREL COUNT, a campaign to assess exactly the status of this popular hawk in London. The sightings sent in will be passed to the British Trust for Ornithology to use in its next major scientific survey of Britain's breeding birds.



Kestrels have adapted well to urban living - exploiting motorway verges and patches of waste ground to hunt mice and sparrows. Local groups will be organising many kestrel-related events. Contact the trust (278 6612) for further details.

WATCH-ING NATURE: The East Dulwich Watch group now has over 30 members and meets every other Saturday afternoon. Its outings this year included a bird spotting tour of Dulwich Park (the winners spotted 16 different species) and a guided tour of Sydenham Hill Wood with the warden, Bob Young. At the end the children planted 20 hazel trees near the Crescent Wood Road entrance. The group has also studied Dulwich's past using old photographs. It has started an aluminium can recycling project. So if you happen to see a child rifling through rubbish bins with a magnet (in order to discard the steel cans) you will know he, or she, is from the East Dulwich Watch group! Anyone interested in joining us, either as a child aged 6 - 10 or as an adult helper, please phone Sara King on 693 1742.

BUBBLE AND STEAM: Plans have been put forward for 97 Dulwich Village, a listed building, for extensive underground work lasting 65 weeks, to build a swimming-pool, a jacuzzi, a sauna, gym and laundry. The application is being examined by the transport and planning committee.

MIDDLE-AGE SPREAD: Medieval fields may lie across the preparatory school's playing fields opposite the main entrance to Belair. Brian Green, of the local history committee, is investigating.

DULWICH SOCIETY CALENDAR: On page d of the calendar, published in the Spring Newsletter, the telephone number of Mrs S Daniel, secretary of the horticulture sub-committee, should be 274 9907 NOT 670 9907. Please amend your calendars.

MORE FROG FACTS: Did you know that:

* The pitch of a toad's croak is related to its body size. Toads can tell by the pitch of a croak whether it is worth engaging in combat with the croaker, since deeper equals larger.

* The Chinese government once ran a campaign to get women to swallow live tadpoles as a means of birth control. The tadpoles proved unreliable.

* A meal of frogs' legs requires the legs from 15-20 frogs. The Worldwide Fund for Nature has a campaign to stop the trade which often involves live frogs being chopped up.

* Bufotoxins, the poisons secreted by toads on their skin, are about as poisonous as strychnine or curare, and 20 times more dangerous than cyanide.

* On a good day, a frog can jump 24 inches which is six or seven body lengths, ie the human equivalent of 36-40 ft.

AMENITY GROUPS GET TOGETHER

In accordance with the directive given by a meeting called by the society on 29 February a coordinating committee of the three amenity societies - the Dulwich Society, the Dulwich Residents' Association and the Dulwich Village Preservation Society - was set up and had its first meeting on Monday 9 May.

I opened the meeting by stating that the committee would be regarded as a working party and that the chair would be taken in rotation. Secretarial backup would be provided by the society in the chair at each meeting.

We then turned to the important matter of the DVPS application to be admitted to the estates governors' advisory committee. This had been referred to us by the advisory committee and I asked Peter Whiteman to present his case for admission. After discussion the following resolution was passed unanimously: "That the coordinating committee recommends to the estates governors that any amenity organisation which is sufficiently representative of the Dulwich estate area by having a membership of at least 150 householders and represents geographically at least half of the area within the Dulwich estate, be admitted to membership of the Advisory Committee. Accordingly we, being the representatives on the coordinating committee of the Dulwich Society, the Dulwich Residents' Association and the Dulwich Village Preservation Society, hereby recommend to the advisory committee and the estates governors that the Dulwich Village Preservation Society be admitted to membership of the advisory committee as soon as possible with the same rights and privileges on that committee as are presently enjoyed by the Dulwich Society and the Dulwich Residents' Association".

I transmitted the motion to the chairman of the estates governors and settled a few points that he had raised. Now we await the further action in this matter.

Secondly the committee looked at the present advisory committee, discussed how it could be improved and agreed to bring together points raised for future discussion.

Thirdly it was agreed that the three societies would each produce a paper covering those four points it felt were of real concern and give suggestions for improvement. It was agreed that these should be sent to me and compiled into an agenda to be the basis of our next meeting which was due to be held on 27 June.

I felt this was a good constructive meeting where we avoided useless posturing and were concerned to advocate those matters which could lead to a better channel of communication between ourselves and the estates governors.

More to come. Watch this space!

Those present were: Reg Collins, chairman, and Patrick Darby (Dulwich Society); John Chilcott and Julia Hancock (DRA); Peter Whiteman and Paul Harmon (DVPS); and Marjorie Eager (recorder).

Reg Collins

PROTEST OVER INFILLING IN COURT LANE GARDENS

Court Lane Gardens is a crescent of 22 semi-detached Edwardian houses built in 1910. For many years they remained unchanged until a flying bomb in the last war destroyed a pair in the middle. These were rebuilt in a similar semi-detached style though they were updated inside and included inbuilt garages which none of the original houses possessed. The estates governors later approved the conversion of the front rooms of some of the houses into garages and in recent years, following fashion, the reconversion of some of these garages to front rooms. And, inevitably, there were converted attics with dormers or relux roof lights.

A resident recently applied to build a replica of one half of a house - as a detached house - on the side garden. This was approved by Southwark Council (though another design was rejected by them in 1987) but strongly opposed by the Dulwich Society, the Dulwich Residents' Association and the Dulwich Village Preservation Society. When it became known that the governors were to consider the application on 14 May, over two thirds of the other residents of Court Lane Gardens wrote to the governors opposing it, together with residents of Court Lane and Woodwarde Road - a veritable flood of protest. We are happy to report that the governors turned down the application.

The most recent policy document of the governors, dated May 1988, provides "Notes for the guidance of freeholders and lessees making application under the terms of the scheme of management or their leases for consent for alterations and temporary structures". In this document it says, inter alia, (para 3): "It is the policy of the estates governors to seek to conserve elements of individual buildings and groups of buildings which are visually prominent and which currently are relatively unchanged from the original, especially those elevations which are visible from the street. Consent will not, therefore, normally be given in respect of those aspects of proposals which are considered to be visually obtrusive and contrary to this policy".

Court Lane Gardens is certainly visually prominent, relatively unchanged and visible from the street. Application of this clear policy would certainly lead to refusal. No doubt the governors also took account of the very strong feelings of the residents in the immediate neighbourhood and of the strong opposition of the three amenity societies.

BUTTERFLY SPOTTING: Fifty people attended a meeting organised by the wildlife sub-committee on Thursday 5 May in St Barnabas Hall, when beautiful coloured slides of British butterflies were shown. These had been taken by the late Christopher Benwell while on holiday in Dorset. Stella Benwell was able to give some personal reminiscences relating to the photography and habitats.

Britain has 60 species of butterflies, and Dulwich, with its wealth of gardens and flowers, can provide some of these. After the excellent commentary given by Brian Jones, members left the meeting feeling more knowledgeable and capable of identifying these particular species during the coming months. The Kent Trust for Nature Conservation provided a stall of interesting goods for sale, and appreciated the friendly welcome given. On 16-17 July, there is a butterfly festival at Juniper Hall, near Boxhill in Surrey. The official opening is at 2.30pm on Saturday 16 July by Gordon Beningfield, the famous wildlife artist.

RESTORING DULWICH WOODS

After the damage caused by the October storm trees in a dangerous condition were felled and paths made clear. The second phase of remedial work has now been completed by the tree surgeons.

Initially brushwood from the felling was burnt on site but this has now been stopped to prevent smoke nuisance to residents nearby and to avoid the dangers of fire in the woods and damage to plants and animals. This phase was completed in April and the next step is to improve the condition of the paths.

The trees and wildlife sub-committees will be meeting the governors shortly to discuss what else should be done. We are proposing the filling in of the pond which is surely an eyesore, the removal of the many young sycamores and the putting up of notices stating that the wood is a nature reserve and should be treated as such.

Stella Benwell

NEWS

BROCKWELL BMX: Permission has been granted for a BMX track to be built on one of the derelict football pitches in Brockwell Park, despite many local misgivings. The Friends of Brockwell Park said: "In theory this seems a good idea. Despite urging, the council has done nothing to maintain the three redgra football pitches properly for over 15 years and consequently their use has declined. To use the bottom one as a BMX track would at least make one of the pitches properly usable for a sport". The Herne Hill Society said: "All of the Society's reservations on the new activity being introduced into South London's premier park were put forward (to the council) but permission was given in principle, subject to satisfactory plans being presented. No real endeavours had been made to find an alternative site, for an activity we believe is already declining in popularity. No public consultation has taken place or none is planned. The BMX Club has obtained money from the Department of the Environment for this. Our objection is not to the club but to its siting in Brockwell Park".

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BEST BUYS IN PLANTS: The horticultural autumn lecture will be held in St Barnabas Hall on Thursday 6 October at 8.00pm when Dr David Barker, founder and director of Hopleys Plants, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, will give an illustrated talk on 'The Selection of Good Perennials'. All are welcome.

FLORAL MEADOW: The Horniman Museum has sown a flower meadow on the infilled site at the Langton Rise end of the Horniman railway nature trail. The cost of the seed has come from a Shell "Better Britain" grant. It was planted in March.

STOP PRESS

Many of you already know Jim Davis has been suffering from ill-health for some time. At its Meeting last month, the Executive Committee accepted his resignation as Treasurer with the deepest possible regret.

During the necessary inter-regnum before his successor is named, would you please send all correspondence/queries to me in the first instance? If financial problems arise, I shall refer them to Jim!

My address and 'phone no. are given i/c all Newsletters, but I will include them here for immediate reference:-

Mrs RFU Taylor
Secretary
30 Walkerscroft Mead
Dulwich SE21 8LJ
Telno: 670 0890.

If you hear of anyone wishing to apply for membership, or wanting to bring a particular matter to the society's notice, please would you refer them to me also?

Many thanks for your help at an awkward time.

Robin Taylor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From the secretary of the Crouchmans Close Residents Association

Dear Sir,

There was a general feeling amongst those present at the recent first annual general meeting of this, the Crouchmans Close Residents' Association, that we should bring the formation of our association to the notice of your members.

It is unnecessary for me to rehearse the objectives of the association which are those shared by similar residents' organisations concerned with the Dulwich estates. Furthermore our aims coincide with and are encouraged by much of the current activities of the Dulwich Society.

However, it is to be hoped that by your publication of this letter, we may hear from other similar organisations to our own. We are already in touch with the two neighbouring associations but we should like to extend the hand of friendship to any residents' association which cares to make contact with us. This would be in addition to the already apparent increased interest in the Dulwich Society amongst our members which the formation of the Crouchmans Close Association has engendered.

Yours sincerely,

Douglas A Jordan CMG
10 Crouchmans Close
Sydenham Hill
London SE26 6ST

Tel: (01) 670 9638

CLOSET POET: John Marsh, CBE, who has poetry in this issue of the Newsletter, is a Dorset man by birth now living in Dulwich. He is a former director general of the British Institute of Management and has held a number of professional and voluntary appointments, including part-time member of the National Coal Board, chairman of Voluntary Service Overseas, and chairman of the British National Conference on Social Work. He has visited over fifty countries. He was a British Member, Commonwealth Team of Industrial Specialists. He was a major in the RASC during the Second World War, with Campaigns before Dunkirk and Singapore. His publications include: books of essays on work; lectures including The Cult of the Self Made Man and The Pursuit of God (1968) - lessons in belief centrally influenced by experiences in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps on the Burma-Siam Railway, 1943-45. Of his poetry, he says: "The writing of verse has been a closet hobby for some fifty years". The Oxford Book of Modern Verse was "a tremendous support while a prisoner of war in those appalling Japanese camps in Thailand; I still have my battered copy, from which extracts when read aloud to sick and dying men, gave such glimpses of home and hope". He learnt about poetry through Horace Budd, a second hand book dealer at the Horsefair, Birmingham, in the 1930s. Mr Marsh adds: "I spent many escapist hours browsing in his shop, in the lunch breaks when attending the Birmingham Central Technical College, where I failed all exams as consistently as I have throughout life. Failing school certificate in English I won the school English Prize the same year. However, Horace Budd introduced me to Whitman, Francis Thompson; Edward Thomas, Siegfried Sassoon and other Georgian poets. I have not strayed far since then".

YUPPIES INVADE: Yuppies are poised to flood into South London armed with a new home-hunters' "bible". The guide, entitled Where to Live in London, rates areas in three categories, "prestigious", "becoming desirable" and "worth a gamble". Even areas such as Peckham are rated as worth looking at despite its "air of dereliction". The guide says, "If SE5 is for the brave, SE15, centred on Peckham, is for the positively heroic. However, there are a few pockets of real hope and the increasing demand for housing near the City makes the place a good one for some splendid, if isolated, bargains". The guide, edited by journalist Elizabeth Vercoe, also casts its eye over local facilities including schools, transport and restaurants. The 224-page book, heralded as the first independent guide to choosing a London home, is published by Sidgwick and Jackson Ltd, price £6.95.

By Martin Heath

Many conservation campaigners would agree with poet Ted Hughes when he wrote of rhododendron's "detestable evergreen sterility". The garden escapee spreads, where left unmanaged, shading out native flora, and is, therefore, not to be encouraged in its invasion of our woodlands. It is a real problem.

Unfortunately, anti-Rhododendron fervour whipped up by some conservation campaigners has boiled over into irrationality. One walker in Sydenham Hill Wood insisted that Rhododendron was as dangerous as nuclear waste. A newspaper has claimed: "Killer plants stalk Queen Mum - royal in deadly danger... They kill anything that comes into their path".

Not surprisingly there has been controversy about Rhododendron removal in Sydenham Hill Wood. The London Wildlife Trust favours large-scale clearance. In contrast, such eminent ecologists and foresters as Dr Peter Moore and Alan Mitchell caution that clearance is not automatically beneficial.

The LWT Southwark Group Newsletter for Autumn 1984 declared that in one cleared area "work carried out last winter has this year allowed the spread of bluebells, wood anemones and primroses and new undergrowth has provided additional nesting sites for birds". This, alas, was an enthusiastic guess. I observed this site with several associates, notably Dr Brent Elliot, for a period of years. It remained uncolonised by ground flora, and soil was being washed away to expose patches of underlying clay in 1985. Saplings were planted, but the scar remained unhealed in summer 1987. Primroses, incidentally, were found to be absent in three previous detailed surveys. This raises the question of how much conservation work proceeds with no real feedback from observations by the organisations concerned. Here, clearance helped soil erosion.

Clearance continues at present. Work is neat, purposeful, and the creation of new entrances, paths and steps has been very popular. Regrettably, however, it ignores the useful role of Rhododendron in small urban woods. They provide windbreaks preventing wind from penetrating and damaging woods, and vital cover for birds and animals. Provision of new paths, and a very substantial increase in visitors, has accompanied a drastic reduction in cover. Again, Rhododendron assists slope stability, and this wood lies on a steep slope. Removal may actually speed up soil erosion and loss of exposed wild flowers. The isolation of Sydenham Hill Wood was always an illusion, and the destruction of formal stands of evergreens, planted to ensure privacy when the site was a string of back gardens, will help destroy the illusion, and open up the wood to the sights and sounds of adjacent busy roads.

An alternative approach, used successfully for years, leaves Rhododendron and other exotic evergreens around the edges of a wood and in clumps within a wood. This preserves cover and wind protection. An excellent example is seen at Dulwich Upper Wood, managed by the Trust for Urban Ecology.

LOCAL HISTORY: WOODLAWN AND GLENLEA

More than 100 members enjoyed a visit to Woodlawn, 105 Dulwich Village by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Andrew Rutherford on Thursday 2 June. After viewing this mid-Georgian house with its lovely garden the evening continued at St Barnabas Hall where a panel of members of the local history group each gave a brief talk on a period of the house and its occupants. We learned that the house had earlier stood in grounds of 36 acres, with a garden of six acres!

In 1985 a visit was made by the society to Glenlea, Dulwich Common, and one of the serving Dutch agents who stayed at the



house before being parachuted into German-occupied Holland in 1943 gave a fascinating account of his life in Dulwich and his experiences as an agent.

A commemorative plaque has been fixed to the exterior

of the house. Mr and Mrs Costa who have lived at Glenlea for 50 years are reluctantly selling and retiring to Italy.

The local history group has been working with local schools recently. Guided walks have been given to pupils from JAGS and Rosendale schools and William Penn school has prepared an interesting exercise in course work on the houses in Elmwood, Beckwith and



Ardbeg Road from material supplied by the society. Mr Griffin, history master of William Penn, reproduced maps, plans and the copy of the will of Thomas Lett who owned the Dulwich House estate which was sold and developed in 1898 after the death of his wife. The boys were encouraged to consult old directories to find who lived in the houses built on this old estate.

Brian Green

ARTIST SEARCH: The biographer of a south London artist has asked the society's help in her researches. Geraldine Beskin is researching the life and works of Austin Osman Spare, an artist who lived in Kennington, Brixton and Walworth from the 1920s until his death in 1956. She would like any members with information on Spare to contact her. Like most artists, she says, he was hard up and paid for his food and beer by drawing the people in the shops, markets and pubs locally. He would paint on anything - including plates and the baffleboards from discarded radios. "Perhaps that would help identify him to some people". He had exhibited at the Royal Academy and numerous galleries in the West End in his youth and then sank into relative obscurity. Ms Beskin's address is 118 Peckham Park Road, London SE15 6UZ.

By Duncan Tyler

Many important sites have been developed for industry and housing in south London in recent years. These sites typically contain a wide variety of wildlife, sustaining both native and introduced species. Wild campion, common toadflax, black medick, willowherb as well as many fine grasses support a wide range of insects which in turn attract small mammals and birds. At the Surrey Docks, until recently, skylarks could be seen.

Such sites may not be as evocative as Sydenham Hill Wood yet they are an important feature of the urban landscape and are in fact more typical. The needs of wildlife are often neglected during the design stage of development. Instead of including already well established sites in plans, planners and developers believe that creation of new sites is better for wildlife and people. They do not yet appreciate the value of wastelands and seem to wish to provide new sites as a sop to those groups wishing to protect local wildlife.

Is habitat creation such a bad thing? Does the creation of new habitats fulfil the same role as those that already exist?

The 'creation versus conservation' argument is well established in the conservation movement, yet it is still not understood by those who matter - planners, developers and politicians. Below are the main arguments against habitat creation as a method of conservation, where it is used to replace a naturally colonised site.

Loss of typicality. Often created habitats do not recreate the previous habitat typical of the area. In Docklands, for example, an essentially dry grassland has been replaced by large ponds, for example Lavender pond, and an acid heathland, at Rotherhithe ecopark.

Ideal habitats. The creation of ideal textbook habitats gives a false impression of the true wildlife of an area, effectively reducing the appreciation of the more subtle look of naturally colonised sites which support a wider variety of wildlife.

Loss of wildlife. Having developed a site one has destroyed an established ecosystem only to try to design another with no guarantee of success. Why not be certain of success and integrate existing sites into new developments as the London Wildlife Trust has proposed at the Bricklayers Arms in North Southwark?

Time and money. The latest Ecological Parks Trust (Trust for Urban Ecology) site has cost over £140,000 to develop, to which running costs will have to be added. An established site will not need such a large initial input, although paths, fences and so on will need funding. An existing site has a character already developing on its own. Created sites take many years to reach such a state. In the meantime the latter provide little shelter, food or breeding sites for displaced wildlife.

Local variation. Created habitats have tended to stay with proven habitat composition, using ideal species, losing any local variation in species diversity. At Bricklayers Arms, for example, if the site is developed and a new habitat created, would toadflax be incorporated? Will the black redstart once more take up residence? Probably not. Another tendency is to design according to desire, which used to be called gardening.

Establishment. As stated before, created sites are not always successful. Often created meadows do not achieve the designer's expectations. Because of local soil conditions, vigorous plants will compete. Also many habitats simply cannot be recreated. The place and age of a site contribute to its importance: an ancient woodland cannot be 'designed' and established in 10 years! A new lake not fed with a natural stream may not support the complex communities of a long established one.

Created habitats, to sum up, should not be used as a substitute for an existing site. There is a desire to create habitats usually to enhance formal open space (parks). This could and does provide an opportunity for wildlife to occupy a normally rather sterile environment. However, this landscape design approach to encourage wildlife should complement conservation rather than supplant it.

Duncan Tyler is a local conservationist and naturalist. This article first appeared in Wild Southwark.

TAKEOVER - THE RAPE OF LOYALTIES

They shall not grow poor

As we that are left grow poor

Greed shall not weary them

Nor crimes condemn,

At the selling out of the company.

With failure at the top

So strange their golden handshakes.

In the dole queue

We shall remember them.

John Marsh

SOUTH LONDON'S RAILWAY PROSPECTS

Last October saw a well attended meeting which demonstrated the demand for new and improved rail travel gathering force in South London.

Colin McKenna, passenger transport liaison officer for Southwark council, set the scene. Rail was the only practicable way to give disadvantaged South London adequate transport which would be rapid and reliable. The council was urging BR to make better use of the existing rail system, specifically through three new stations (near Camberwell Green, in Walworth, and in Union Street, Southwark) with access to the forthcoming ThamesLink services, and through improved orbital services on the South London Line (SLL), possibly extending from Dartford to Clapham Junction. From LRT it wanted southward extension of both the Bakerloo and East London Lines.

The council had powers, but limited resources, to contribute capital or to support revenue. It was, however, active in advocacy, and the Department of Transport (DTp) had agreed to consider the case for a Camberwell Green station on the basis of a joint BR/LBS submission which was nearly ready. Mr McKenna acknowledged the contribution of the Camberwell Society, which organised the meeting.

Nick Illsley, London projects officer for Network SouthEast, gave an optimistic report of progress since NSE was launched in 1986 as a "brand name" for marketing the London commuter services on which the deficit in revenue from fares is made up by Government grant. That grant is falling, as Government insists, but so are costs, partly through new investment now at twice its level in the 1970s. Commuter numbers are up. So is revenue. With renewed trains and stations we should by the mid 90s see a modern system like those in other European cities. BR, we were assured, did care for the inner as well as the outer suburbs. There would be investment in the inner city too.

Turning to more immediate concerns he said the case for a new station at Camberwell Green was the strongest of the three advocated by the council. Estimated annual revenue of £170,000 would cover running costs. Capital cost would be greater at the Walworth Garage site (over 11m) than at the pre-1916 site in Station Road, but it would be more attractive, give greater potential for bus interchange, and have engineering advantages since it would use the outer two of the four tracks instead of the inner pair to which an island platform at the old location would be limited.

If a Camberwell Station were so sited as to force stopping trains to use the inner tracks the desired stops at Walworth and Union Street would become impossible. A minimum of four ThamesLink trains an hour in each direction, off-peak, and up to six at peak hours, would stop at Camberwell. There would be some non-stop trains on the inner tracks, but if demand grew the number of stopping trains could be increased. Through trains would have various destinations in the north-west, beyond the main interchanges at Blackfriars, Farringdon and King's Cross, but some peak-hour services would continue to branch into and terminate at Holborn Viaduct. Purley, Orpington or Sevenoaks would be the normal southern destination.

Mr Illsley seemed hopeful that a DTp grant would overcome the obstacle of capital cost. He endorsed what Mr McKenna had said about the value of pressure from amenity groups. It would take about a year from approval to build a Camberwell Station. ThamesLink services would assuredly start in May 1988. So a new ThamesLink station would be by far the quickest way to get a rail service to Camberwell Green.

About the shortcoming of the SLL - "a very sad case" he called it - Mr Illsley was disarmingly frank. The best hope lay in BR's willingness to run an all-day Dartford-Victoria service, maybe from May 1989, if the boroughs of Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark and Lambeth would jointly underwrite the estimated revenue shortfall of £250,000 a year, or if DTp would give limited support grant. All such trains would stop at Denmark Hill, and new stops were possible at Brockley (interchange with London Bridge - East Croydon line) and Brixton (interchange with Underground, and already in Lambeth council's bid for inner city money). Such a service would run initially to Victoria (not, a questioner was assured, Battersea Park), for engineering and driver operating reasons. Developing a Clapham Junction service as well would take a further 18 months. Introduction of a Dartford-Victoria service would not entail withdrawal of the existing peak-hour service to London Bridge on which, it was gratifying to learn, demand is considered satisfactory.

After this account of what BR are eager to provide - if the financial circle can be squared - a more disappointing note was struck by Richard Meads, marketing and services development manager for London Underground. Despite having more passengers than they can cope with on some existing lines, and approvals for investment in trains, stations and much else, they still have difficulty in getting any major extension in South London to meet DTp criteria. Extension of the Bakerloo Line southwards is still one of the two basic possibilities under examination, but the calculations apparently show the other - extension via the Bricklayer's Arms to New Cross Gate - as giving more "social benefit". So Mr Meads agreed with Mr Illsley in urging a service through ThamesLink. A large volume of transfers at its interchanges with the Underground would strengthen the case for more Underground investment in South London.

There are possibilities of extending the East London Line, perhaps to Peckham and perhaps converted to light rail to be integrated with the Docklands Line. A "modest extension" of the Northern Line from Kensington "into South London" was a more distant possibility: they want to increase the capacity of this line. But a questioner was told it was impossible to increase the capacity of the Victoria Line, so ruling out its extension.

A rush of questions underlined deficiencies in services, particularly on the SLL, and inept failure to market even those we have. BR lines appear on the Underground map - on which travellers so heavily rely - only where there is "fare interchangeability". That of course led to the question why BR stations could not be fully integrated into the zonal fare structure. The unconvincing reply was that it had not been recommended by the recent Monopolies Commission report on Network SouthEast.

Other questions probed the way traffic was forecast and costs spread when the DTP's investment criteria are applied, and whether there was any movement in DTP's hitherto unyielding attitude. It is evidently going to be useful to exchange views on such matters with the rail planners as well as with the council in representations to DTP and its ministers.

This is a shortened version of an article which first appeared in the Camberwell Society newsletter.

A WINTER'S WORK IN THE WOODS

By Bob Young

At Sydenham Hill Wood it has been a busy winter, clearing up the damage after October's hurricane. Over 50 mature trees were blown over including many stout oaks and hornbeams which were left strewn across paths; while a massive poplar lay in the pond and numerous weighty boughs were left precariously entangled hanging from the crowns of trees.

The paths were cleared within a week of the storm, but many other tree works have continued throughout the winter. Although the storm wrought such havoc, Sydenham Hill Woods has not been devastated and the storm has given us the opportunity to open up glades, widen ridges and diversify the age structure of the trees, while increasing the amount of deadwood, so important for fungi, insects and birds.

One of the projects brought about by the storm has been the removal of some oak trunks by two Ardennes heavy working horses (see Spring Newsletter) owned by the East Sussex Working Horse Trust. These powerful horses were ideal for removing timber from difficult woodland terrain without damaging soils and plants. The whole operation gave us useful publicity on TV and in the national press, and a chance to raise some much needed funds from the sale of timber.

Other projects have been underway - such as the bat cave (hibernaculum) sited in a demolished greenhouse, using the remains of the greenhouse underfloor heating system to provide a cave. Bats hibernate from late autumn until spring and require a cool, even-temperated, humid roost, free of disturbance. The building work took trust staff and volunteers just over a week and it is now ready to provide bat accommodation for next winter.

Great progress has been made in the reserve, with an increased number of visitors using the site, while two new members of staff, Dave and Dave, have joined the trust as assistant wardens to help in the expansion of the woods as an educational site. The reserve has also greatly benefited from increased volunteer involvement with workdays every Sunday.

Unfortunately, the woods are again under threat of housing development by Dulwich College Estates on the Beechgrove area. A new "Save the Wood" campaign is underway. Now is the time we need your help.

Bob Young is the London Wildlife Trust Warden at Sydenham Hill Wood.

...OF ARGUMENT

What's wrong with having rows?

Nothing I say, when temper allows.

Have one, when out of sorts,

But eschew expletives with your retorts.

Swearing is a lazy man's reply

To a well constructed corner, cunningly

Put together by a cooler brain

To entrap you first, and then again.

If you fail to shift opposition

In a war of acid, verbal attrition

Don't say much

When they provoke such.

A door to be slammed

A point to be rammed

Right home - do it slickly

Very quickly.

One word

Can make absurd

Their case

When the row is over at last

Say goodbye and get out fast;

So I say

That's the way

To employ it

Enjoy it.

John Marsh

Treasurer's Report, 1987

The audited Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1987 and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended that date are shown in full in this issue.

As I noted in my report last year, to continue the level of activity of recent years the Society has needed to increase the subscription to £3 from the £2 per annum, which it had maintained for the five years up to 31st December, 1987, and from the deficit of £379 for 1987 the necessity for this is now obvious.

The Local History Committee has now produced three booklets, 'Kingswood', 'Belair' and 'The Bell House', and new members in particular are advised that these are available from either Brian Green at The Art Stationers or myself at £1, including postage.

Despite my pleas in the April and July Newsletters and over 500 reminder letters sent in August 1987, over 80 members have still not amended their bankers orders to £3. The excessive cost of this change-over is reflected in the increased charge for stationery and postage in the accounts. If you are one of the eighty, or of those who have not yet paid for 1988, would you please act now to avoid the Society incurring yet further unnecessary costs.

On a different note, since the end of the year the Society has received from the Estate of the late Gerald Fairlie, Esq., a legacy of £500, a very generous gift from one whose interest in Dulwich inspired so many. Part of the legacy has been used to purchase the projector which he wished the Society to have for its meetings.

I do thank all those who have sent new Deeds of Covenant for the £3 subscription. It will be necessary to write to you during the year for Inland Revenue forms R185 to be completed in this first instance only.

The movement of families to and from the area continues unabated, and I would again ask members to do their best to enlist new residents as members to maintain the support the Society needs to continue its work for Dulwich.

A. J. DAVIS, FCA.

THE DULWICH SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1987

<u>1986</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>1987</u>
1,968	Subscriptions received	1,963
128	Tax Recovery - Deeds of Covenant	115
498	Interest Received	503
43	Donations and Sundry	29
2,756	Sale of Books	44
		2,654
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
1,446	Newsletters and Broadsheets	1,664
403	Local History Booklets	443
203	Printing, Stationery and Publicity	272
143	Postage and Telephone	254
236	Hire of Hall and Meeting Expenses	260
44	Subscriptions and Sundries	59
(63)	Social Events	76
2,420	Bank Charges	5
		3,033
<u>£ 336</u>	(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS	<u>(£379)</u>

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1987

<u>NET ASSETS</u>		
	Investments	
4,373	4,352	National Savings Investment Account
	21	Barclays Bank Deposit Account
		4,151
		4
422		Cash at Bank
	510	387
	91	<u>Less: Sundry Creditors</u>
	100	Subscriptions in advance
		123
		Specific Donation - New Projector
		100
	701	699
(573)	128	Deduct Sundry Debtor
		-
<u>£4,222</u>		<u>(699)</u>
		£3,843

3,886	REPRESENTED BY:	Accumulated Fund as at 1st January, 1987	4,222
336		Less: Deficit for Year	379
<u>£4,222</u>			£3,843
		<i>D. J. Davis</i>	
		A. J. DAVIS	
		CHAIRMAN	
		<i>A. J. Davis</i>	
		TREASURER	

REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE DULWICH SOCIETY

The above Accounts show a true and fair view of the financial state of the Society and the results for the year ended 31st December, 1987.

21 February, 1988.

K. A. G. Jeffries
K.A.G. JEFFRIES
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT.

CAVEAT EMPTOR ARBORIUM - OR LEAVE THE TREES ALONE

The Estates Governors are the freehold owners of the Perifield amenity land and the Rosendale sports ground, the latter being on lease to the ILEA. There has been considerable pressure on the governors to carry out pruning to trees in this area in order to reduce the shading caused by the trees to the houses nearby.

There was some confusion in the instructions issued and the pruning that took place was exacerbated by some unauthorised pruning by persons unknown. Some weeks ago the trees looked rather a mess but on inspection on 14 May it was agreed that, as the trees that were heavily pruned seemed to be bursting out again and did not look too bad, nothing further would be done except to keep an eye on the area later in the year.

Many people seem attracted to houses in Dulwich by the lush green around them. They buy the house and within a short space of time apply to have trees nearby pruned or felled because, they say, they keep out the sunshine.

Generally the governors take the view, as we do, that those who buy houses because they like the way they are surrounded by trees, must not expect much sympathy if, after moving in, they ask for the trees to be cut down. Caveat Emptor Arborium is the motto if you are thinking of buying a house in Dulwich.

Ronnie Reed

WHAT'S ON

7 July, Thurs 7.30pm	Gallery Road, Dulwich Village end	Trees walk (see News)
24 July, Sun 2.30pm	Belair car park	Historical walk, Spies, traitors and their houses, two hours
6 October, Thurs 8pm	St Barnabas Hall	Illustrated talk, 'The Selection of Good Perennials', Dr David Barker (see News)
3 November, Thurs 8pm	St Barnabas Hall	Victorian and Edwardian Dulwich, illustrated talk by Brian Green

Please submit contributions to What's On in the above form: it helps production greatly.