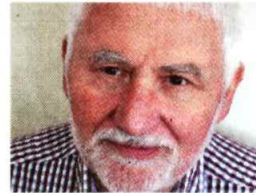


Horsham Society

with Malcom Willis



We are a voice to be heard

I was recently stopped in West Street by two ladies who thanked me for challenging them. Somewhat confused, I asked them to explain. It turns out that they regularly read this section of the County Times and find that the articles make them stop and think, as well as encouraging them to participate in Horsham District Council consultations. They then wanted to know what Horsham Society actually is, and what else it does.

So, to answer their question:

Horsham Society is frequently referred to in the pages of the West Sussex County Times and other local publications, and we can often be heard speaking out at HDC meetings.

With more than 1,100 members, we are one of the largest town societies in the country. We are concerned about the heritage of Horsham, what is happening now, and what will happen in the future.

Our Executive Committee is elected by our membership and meets monthly to consider all aspects of our town. We have sub-committees who focus on planning, membership and new initiatives, and we are all volunteers.



The Horsham Riverside Walk

Within our committees we have a wide range of experience to hand and it is this that enables us to comment with knowledge and understanding. Our expertise includes architecture, planning, building, design, ecology, finance, education, media and business. In addition to this there is a great deal of local knowledge and an understanding of the impact change can bring to a town.

Our Planning Committee reviews every planning application and comments to HDC where appropriate. We meet with developers to discuss designs, making

constructive comments. We are in the process of publishing our own 'Design Brief' with the intention of assisting developers and HDC in achieving good future design. Recently we were able to present a Design Award to Croudace for developments in Blackbridge Lane and Kings Road.

The Society has been instrumental in the compilation of a 'Local List', recording properties and street furniture of interest so that their preservation can be monitored. In addition, we have an ongoing involvement in the 'Twitten Project' which involves ensuring that footpaths are registered and protected for future use.

It is important that our Society does not work in isolation. To this end we have representatives on a number of initiatives such as Horsham District Heritage Forum, Remembrance Gardens Project, Blue Print, Horsham Heritage Walks, Horsham Town Community Partnership including the Riverside Walk, to name but a few. This involvement enables the Horsham Society to have an understanding of a wider range of views and gives us the opportunity of supporting a variety of events.

Earlier this year the Horsham Society

commissioned a special piece of music for the Horsham Festival, and as Chairman I was delighted to present an award to Tom Walker, a pupil at Christ's Hospital, for his excellent composition 'The Horsham Festival Fanfare'.

There are many other initiatives that we are involved with. More recently we have been successful in the registering of five green spaces, affording them some protection. At the moment we are attempting to act as an intermediary in resolving the issues over the Groundsman's Cottage in the grounds of Horsham Cricket Club.

So, I hope that this has answered the ladies' question. With the expertise of our committees, and the support of a large membership, we are a voice to be heard. Of course, more members would add further weight. Have you considered joining?

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website www.horshamsociety.org or phone 01403 259038.