



THE BILLERICAY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Headquarters
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Billericay
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Affiliated to the Campaign for the
Protection of Rural Essex

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Annual General Meeting

The 74th AGM of the Society, and my 6th as Chairman, was held on 18th March 2009. On behalf of the committee I thank all those who made the extra effort to attend the early start for the AGM at this Wednesday meeting.

I started the meeting by giving my sincere thanks to the serving committee members for all their support and help during the last year and to those members who regularly attend the Wednesday social meetings. Your numbers are growing.

A resolution that there should be three newsletters a year: to be published in February, June and October was passed at the meeting. Due to an oversight by me, for which I apologise, this resolution was not itemised in the agenda. I did remind you that I was an engineer not a bureaucrat. Naturally, if any important matter arises concerning the Society or Billericay I shall of course mention it at the Wednesday meeting.

I put this proposal to the meeting primarily due to the effort and costs involved in writing, collating and distributing the newsletters. Some of these costs and claims for expenses the members of your committee do not usually present to the treasurer, unlike our erstwhile 'leaders' who have become very skilled at creative accounting. The main costs in Society terms is in personal time and effort that has to be expended by a very few conscientious members in preparing, collating and distributing the Newsletter. A few stalwart members who do the distribution, and often have to collect your subscriptions, carry out the delivery of the Newsletter to your door. To whom I extend my sincere thanks.

The general lack of any response from members to items or issues raised in the Newsletter is another reason to reduce the annual output.

The AGM also approved the election of our past Chairman Roy Mizen to Vice-President of the Society. Our congratulations and thanks go to Roy for his continued architectural and planning support to the Society.

Our other Vice-President, Alec McGregor, from Inch, Aberdeenshire continues to keep a weather eye on the Society and me with a wee missive or two a year. He also sends his regards to all the members who remember him.

The Society thanks and wishes continuing good health to Kate and Tony Gilbert for five efficient, competent years as Membership Secretaries.

The existing committee, as recorded in the last Newsletter, were re-elected at the AGM, with the addition of Doug Smith, as fire marshal, and new Membership Secretaries: Lesley and John Humphries, who were warmly welcomed.

Once again there were no volunteers to be vice-chairman. In my absence at any Wednesday, social meeting Marion Thilo takes the meeting in addition to arranging excellent speakers and organising the refreshments with Ivy. Have you the members no compassion?

NHS consultation

I have mentioned the Primary Care Trust public consultation questionnaire several times at our Wednesday meetings. I want to remind you to be sure to add a caveat when replying to the cunningly worded questions in the 'Health and Well-being in Billericay – Choices for the future' section. You should state that it is difficult to agree to four new premises for GPs' if we do not know where they are to be located'. Of course we want good surgeries but not at inaccessible locations.

We need to know the proposed locations for these surgeries and if they can be reached by bus. How else can patients keep appointments? Especially since public transport is nothing to do with the NHS. Mayflower Hospital in Blunts Wall Road is for older people and those with complex long-term physical conditions. It must be accessible and provided with good public transport. Why is there no address given for Mayflower Hospital?

In the present government financial crisis what is their budget allocation for this exercise? What are the cost benefits to Billericay? What is the planned phasing of the closures and the timing