



THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY

Objects, Aspirations and Achievements

The Harpenden Society was formed in 1930. At its first public meeting Clough Williams-Ellis said, "You are shareholders in Harpenden's heritage"; its aims and objects are defined in the Constitution as follows:

"To exert a strong local influence to safeguard the amenities of Harpenden and its environs and to preserve, develop and improve the features of Harpenden which are pleasing and those which promote the well-being of its inhabitants.

"To these ends the special attention of the Society will be directed to zoning schemes, particularly including open spaces, building development, roads, footpaths, rights of way, to the prevention of disfigurement caused by ill-placed advertisements, by the unnecessary destruction of trees, by smoke or by other nuisances; also to the preservation of buildings of architectural or historical interest and to the amelioration of such conditions as tend to detract from the amenities of the locality."

The Society's affairs are conducted and managed by a committee of three officers and twenty-one elected members. An executive committee of five, deals with urgent matters of business as necessary. The Society is affiliated to the Council for the Protection of Rural England, the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Society, the Keep Britain

Tidy Group, and the Hertfordshire Society, and is registered with the Civic Trust.

The Society is vigilant in its care for the amenities of the town in the interests of the residents. It makes representations to the local Council and other authorities on what might be done and what should not be done to preserve the town's distinctive character. With the help of an expert sub-committee and the co-operation of the Council's officers it scrutinizes all planning applications for development and makes known its objections to any which are out of character with the surrounding area. The Society is represented at local public enquiries. We keep in close touch with members of the Harpenden Urban Design Group, undertaking joint studies of the town centre, the Common and elsewhere, and submitting our views to the Council on any developments which seem likely to become disfigurements and nuisances. The Council in its turn often seeks our views as a representative amenity society which will support its determination to preserve the good features of the locality.

The Society influenced local opinion towards the purchase of Rothamsted Park for the people of Harpenden, and presented the design for the entrance. It has given to Harpenden its Village Sign on the Common, and has planted trees and provided benches on the Common and elsewhere.

For the interest and entertainment of members and friends the Society arranges each summer a half-day outing to a place of historic or architectural interest, and an Autumn Meeting at which documentary films and slides are shown and a visiting speaker addresses us on a topical subject.

Since 1950 the population of Harpenden has increased from 15,000 to more than 21,000. The County Council intend to limit it to 26,000. In resisting the spread of residential building into the surrounding countryside, they have the support of the Harpenden Society and of all the residents who

appreciate the character of the town and its natural features. The Society has no powers but it demonstrably has influence, and that influence would obviously increase in proportion to the membership. To quote a founder member of the Society and a former President, Capt. K. H. Bond, M. C.: "A watchdog with no teeth must seem to be a big dog and have a loud bark. It is members, not money, that we want." Harpenden deserves a strong amenity society. If you care for Harpenden as an attractive residential town of distinction and character, will you join us? The minimum annual subscription is five shillings (seven and sixpence for two members of the same family).

M E M B E R S H I P F O R M

To the Hon. Membership Secretary,
The Harpenden Society,
27 Milton Road,
Harpenden, Herts.

I/We desire to join the Harpenden Society and enclose
..... as my/our subscription for the current year

NAME.....

ADDRESS

DATE.....

The minimum annual subscription is 5/- for individuals, 7/6 for two members of the same family. Subscriptions may also be left in an envelope (with the member's name and address clearly written thereon) in the box which Mary Ellens Café kindly allow the Society to keep at their cash desk. Cheques should be made payable to The Harpenden Society.