

*C. Williams-Ellis*

*M. Hyslop - Presbury Chapter*

The Harpenden Society was formed in 1930 with the principle objective:

"To exert a strong local influence to safeguard the amenities of Harpenden and its environs."

Further aims and objectives are expressed in the Constitution as follows:

"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, and rights of way. The prevention of disfigurement caused by ill-placed advertisements, by the unnecessary destruction of trees, by smoke or by other nuisances. The preservation of buildings of architectural or historical interest. The amelioration of such conditions as tend to detract from the amenities of the locality."

The Society cares for the amenities of the town and seeks to represent the (interests of the) residents. It makes representations to the Local <sup>Authority</sup> Council, the County Council and other authorities as to what should and what should not be done to preserve the town's distinctive character.

Through an expert sub-committee and with ~~the Council's~~ <sup>the</sup> cooperation of ~~Council~~ <sup>the Council</sup> and its officers, it scrutinizes all planning applications and raises objections if these are thought to be undesirable or out of character.

The Society is represented at local public enquiries. We have a close working relationship with the Urban Design Group, undertaking joint studies of the town centre, the common, the Lea Valley and elsewhere. Recommendations and views are submitted to appropriate authorities on any development which appears to be undesirable. 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 Harpenden Society is affiliated to:

The affairs of the Society are conducted by a committee of three officers and 21 elected members. An Executive committee deals with urgent matters as necessary.

Since 1950 the population of Harpenden has increased from 15,000 to more than ~~24~~,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 in proportion to the membership.

We arrange events of three kinds.

1. Open meetings (open to the public, that is) on subjects of local importance.
2. Smaller meetings, open to members and their guests on subjects of local interest.
3. An annual visit to a place of historical or architectural interest.

Harpenden deserves a strong amenity society.

If you care for Harpenden as an attractive and distinctive town, will you join us?