

Newsletter No. 17.

What have we achieved in the past year? A browse through the minute book shows four sorts of activity:-

We do our serious work according to the aims and objectives of our constitution. There is a vast network of planning law and regulations and many experts, but all the regulations are generalised, and only we are expert in the local knowledge and concern which can breathe life into planning.

We do our chores around the village, when these fall outside the responsibilities of owners and authorities yet still need doing if Sutton Poyntz is to look its best.

We educate ourselves on planning, design, history, style and the achievements of the many other societies springing into existence.

Last, but not least, we amuse ourselves, a whole series of social events, with some having become "traditional" in the nine years of our existence. Our Calendar of events for the past year as follows:-

April 1976	Social, A.G.M., and film show.
June	Midsummer Eve Ladies' Walk.
July	Tea on the Lawn.
September	Casterbridge Singers.
November	Bonfire night and Autumn Social.
December	Carol Singing.
January '77	Children's Party, and Film Evening.
February	Coffee Morning and Talk on Conservation.

All this plus two splendid productions by the Sutton Poyntz Players, whose astonishing successes bring local history alive before our eyes.

Something for everyone, a chance for each to contribute. We have all to be grateful for the fact that there are always willing volunteers for cake making, chair stacking, poster painting, Christmas Card designing and all the thousand and one tasks involved. So many members give generously and anonymously of their time and talents for love of the village.

As usual, the pond has provided its list of chores this year. Did you see the splendid display of Sutton Poyntz manhood installing the stones? Just in time to prevent the remainder of the verge being destroyed by intruding cars when the dry grass was most vulnerable. Also in time to protect our elegant new bench seat, which provided a popular point from which to view the astonishing flow of water, during a summer of historic drought. The constant waterflow was not an achievement of the Society, but a fortuitous side effect of the Water Authority switching to another water supply requiring machinery testing. It made a pleasant oasis in an arid countryside and enabled nearby gardeners to save their runner beans.

Kindly cottagers also quenched the thirst (though not with water) of the working party which cleared some of the verges of unsightly and inflammable summer litter, and we hear that the gang of tree planters who have established a grove of saplings on Mr. Diment's bank were not allowed to return home dry.

The serious work is not so much fun, but, we believe, is a vital responsibility if we are able to maintain our heritage. The fact that the Council's full committee reversed the decision of its own planning committee in regard to Old Bincombe Lane was a reminder to us that we must never relax our vigilance. The past few weeks have seen a rash of planning applications and your committee has continued to oppose those which would overwhelm the village and change land-use categories, and to use its influence to the full in the acceptable proposals for in-filling.

We have submitted our Suggestions towards a Conservation Policy to all concerned, and hope this document will stimulate the Authorities to compose an official village policy, setting the standards to which development plans could then be referred.

Road Safety is another serious concern. Our fears about Sight Lines in Plaisters Lane are now being considered and we are pursuing our request for the warning to heavy traffic to be placed at the top of Plaisters Lane, rather than quite ineffectively at the Borough/County Boundary half way down. Our representation resulted in the 30m.p.h. limit being extended up the Lane and we were cheered by this success after some years of agitation.

Summer parking in the village lead to the temporary loss of our bus service, with threats of permanent withdrawal. Our suggestion that buses could continue to run to the Old Cart Shed, a somewhat easier turning point than the alternative by the Ship Inn, may yet be accepted. It should never be assumed that we are all motorists. Not everyone is a car owner and the young and the old value their independence and mobility.

Future Events:

- Tuesday April 26th. A second Coffee Morning, this time with Bring and Buy.
10.30a.m. - Mission Hall
- Friday April 29th. A.G.M. 7.30p.m. - Mission Hall.
- Saturday May 14th. Jubilee Supper Dance - Scutt Hall. Tickets from committee members in April.
- June Jubilee Celebrations to be formulated.

Several committee members are taking a well earned rest after April and nominations have been received for Mr. Harold Hanscombe, Dr. John Crisp and Mr. Mike Smith. Further nominations please to your Secretary, Mrs. Molly Hanson.

P.S. If all the aspirations of the committee on your behalf should come to fruition, the next proposal for the new committee might be:-

"Anyone unfortunate enough to leave the village should endeavour to sell their house to a most senior planning expert, and only on condition that he becomes a hard working committee member".