

Woking

AREA NEWS

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HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

TRAFFIC

Woking's problems and how the Council is coping

THREE million vehicles on the roads in 1939; sixteen million in 1970, possibly twenty-seven million in ten years from now. Eight thousand people killed every year—the population of Byfleet. Three hundred and sixty thousand injuries each year, the equivalent of inflicting wounds varying from cuts to amputations and blindness on every person in Southampton, plus Guildford plus Woking (still not enough), plus Haslemere. Sixty-three thousand children injured each year, more than the population of Guildford. Eight hundred and ninety children killed, three hundred under five years old.

Out-dated Roads

These are the terrifying statistics confronting highway authorities throughout the country. This is why we must aim for traffic-free shopping areas; why you cannot continue to park by the kerbside in towns, and why motorists are made to take annoying detours round one-way systems.

For it must be remembered that almost every small town in the country is struggling

with a pattern of roads laid down long before the motor-car age. Only in major commercial and industrial cities has finance been found for urban motor roads to be built. The rest of us must make, do and mend with our medieval or Georgian or Victorian layouts, and with a bit of widening here and some traffic lights there and a one-way street in between we manage, somehow, to keep the traffic flowing in defiance of all the textbooks.

Increasing Problems

Woking is more fortunate than most. We lie away from major traffic routes; our industries are light industries and small in number, and our late Victorian and Edwardian roads are wide by comparison with other older towns. On the other hand our car ownership rate is among the highest in Great Britain; we have the two great physical barriers of the railway and the canal running close together across the district, and because of the hasty growth of Woking the roads are very often nothing more than a thin skin of tarmac

adam laid upon the virgin ground.

Traffic in Woking presented very few problems until the mid-fifties, although our fathers rebuilt most of the canal bridges and widened Victoria Arch.

Town Centre Traffic

After nineteen fifty-five however, the traffic explosion began, and the Council undertook the building of the Parvis Road, the widening of Shores Road and the laying out of the six ways junction.

Dunford and Sheerwater bridges were rebuilt and widened, and the improvement of Littlewick Road began. No appreciable money, however was available for the Town Centre. In the early sixties it became clear from traffic studies and analyses that the capacity of the road pattern in the central area was approaching saturation, if traffic continued to grow and if traffic was allowed to continue to use the shopping streets in a haphazard way.

Although the Town Centre Relief Road was planned by this time it was realised that the national concentration on

motor roads would defer its construction until the seventies. The Woking and Surrey Councils therefore decided that an interim traffic management scheme would be essential and with the help of the London Traffic Management Unit, the body set up by the Government for traffic research, planned and carried out the construction work for the one-way system north of the railway.

This scheme was brought into use in March, 1969, and although much abused by the travelling public at the time (as infliction of traffic disciplines usually are) has been very successful in keeping the traffic flowing.

Although this has meant that the length of journeys has increased careful studies have shown that journey times have become shorter.

Car Parks

The main disadvantage of the scheme was the congestion caused by buses along the Broadway, but the Council have secured a disused siding from British Rail and are adopting it for a bus/rail interchange. It should be completed by Christmas.

Traffic north of the railway, in the town centre, could, with these fairly inexpensive schemes be expected to flow freely enough until the town centre relief road is finished in 1973. However, the enormous amount of building work which will take place in Woking during the next ten years will undoubtedly

create further problems. Indeed during the development of the Town Centre Commercial Road will again, for a temporary period, be the traffic link from Guildford Road to Chobham Road.

A most important part of any traffic plan (or indeed of any successful shopping centre) must be the provision of adequate off-street car parks, so disposed that vehicles visiting and leaving the shopping centre can be parked without causing congestion in the central area.

Three such parks are planned for Woking. The first of these, — the Boundary Road Multi-Storey car park — has now been completed. With a capacity of 970 spaces its immediate purpose was to take the place of the ground level car parks between Church Street and Commercial Road, and at Clarence Avenue, and for the time being to provide ample accommodation for the Town Centre as a whole.

Although only partly used at the moment it lies in an area which will be redeveloped intensively with stores, shops and large office blocks. The Boundary Road access to this car park is of course temporary; ultimately its access will be from the Town Centre Relief Road.

A second multi-storey park for 660 cars is now being built between Church Street and West Street, and when it becomes evident that further space is needed a third park with spaces for about 1,000, can be built at the west end

of Church Street, at the corner of Percy Street.

South of the Railway About six years ago it became clear that the area south of the railway would also require attention. From the environmental point of view the un-made lengths of Heathside Crescent and Oriental Road had become unacceptable. From the vehicular point of view the traffic to and from the large commuter car parks and the station was being held up by lack both of proper roads and traffic management.

Before any action could be taken the two private streets were made up and taken over by the Council, and the commuters' car parks in Heathside Crescent enlarged and improved. It then became possible to prohibit car parking on the streets and to enable traffic coming from the car parks and station to flow freely at peak hours. To improve matters further a one-way system has been introduced in Heathside Crescent and part of Oriental Road. Traffic problems were also being experienced at peak hours in Guildford Road between Victoria Arch and Hillview Road and between the station and Guildford Road. At the same time the number of accidents in this area showed a serious upswing. A further one-way arrangement was put in last August and appears to be extremely successful. Both these schemes are experimental.



Boundary Road Multi-Storey Car Park.

Photo. by permission of John Laing & Son Ltd.



Guildford Road Experimental One-Way System

Photo. P. T. Baker

Proposals for New Council Set-up

Between now and Christmas the Government will introduce a Bill into Parliament which will radically reorganise the Local Government administration in this Country. The number of Authorities in England will be reduced from about 1200 to 370. This will mean a tremendous upsurge in the number of local authorities in the country not only local authorities but also their staffs. Some idea of the size of the task that is being faced is that in West Germany, which has a population and area not dissimilar from that of this Country, there are 25 counties and 24,000 communities.

Even Sweden with a population of 7 1/2 million will have 900 primary authorities.

Effect on Woking

How will it affect us in Woking? Until the terms of the Bill are published and eventually it receives the Royal Assent (probably in July 1972) it is impossible to say with any degree of certainty.

However there are some things we can expect now. The Local Elections to be held on the 6th May 1972 will almost certainly be the last to be held for the present Woking U.D.C. The County Council Election due in April 1973 will almost certainly not be held. Instead a new County Authority will be elected at that time and a new District Council to cover the final area within which the present Urban District falls will be elected in November 1973.

Both the new County and District Authorities will take over control in April 1974.

The membership of the new Council will be smaller than at present.

New Functions

Which Authority will look after your road? At present the proposal is that all roads (maintainable at public expense) will be the responsibility of the new County Authority.

Education will become a County function. Woking Dis-

trict Authority will cease to have any concern over the Education of the children within its boundaries.

The new Woking District Council will probably collect your refuse, but it will most likely be disposed of by the County Authority.

Housing will continue as a District Council responsibility.

This will include the management of the new rebate scheme announced by the Government last summer. The District Authority will remain responsible for the creation grounds and the new swimming pool, the Civic Hall, allotments, and recreational and cultural facilities generally. The Library however, will probably continue as a County service.

Finance

How will the money be raised? The Government Green Paper published last summer refers to various suggestions but it is almost inevitable that the rate will continue to be the mainstay and that it will still be collected by the District Authority.

All will be affected

The change, however, will be profound. Every one of the 2m people employed in the Local Government will have a new employer on the 1st April 1974. Each one of us makes use of the service of local government every day even if it is only walking along the street. In less than three years' time a different authority will be responsible for every service provided by local government.

It is the wish of all concerned that the new system will bring its improvements in the service rendered to the community at large, but in the period between now and then a lot of additional work will be thrown on local government officers throughout the Country. Woking and Surrey will be no exception and it is bound to be some time before whatever benefits there may be will be felt.



Work starts on the foundations.

Photo: P. T. Baker

TOWN CENTRE PROGRESS

Full advantage has been taken of the summer months to carry out much of the heavy construction work at or below ground level for the Swimming Pool and the shops and offices complex. On the shops and offices site, about 1,700 tons of earth have been excavated and 350 piles, 25ft. long, have been driven. The weights to be supported by these piled foundations are immense. The 15-storey office block alone weighs 27,000 tons.

This contract is enormously complicated and requires a 2-storey wooden office block to house the technical and administrative team. (The lady who phoned her congratulations at the remarkable speed at which the "2-storey flats" had been erected was of course mistaken!). Very shortly, probably in February, one of the largest cranes in Europe will be erected on the site and will remain there for most of the construction period. It will be 230ft. high and able to lift 64 tons and deposit the load anywhere within a diameter of 100ft.

All the 200 piles for the swimming pool have been driven, and about 1,000 tons of earth carted away.

The earthworks for the new church hall are also completed and the steel frame of the structure erected.

The plans of the Civic Halls are progressing rapidly. They are being prepared by the firm responsible for the redevelopment of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

A great deal of care is being given to the design of the small auditorium which will be used extensively by the many Woking drama groups. The advice of theatrical consultants has been sought and visits have been made to other towns to study small theatres and civic halls.

The design for the landscaping of the new town centre is also receiving the most careful attention. In this connection, the town is fortunate in being the home of many world-famous nurseries and nurserymen, whose advice is freely available.

A tender has been accepted from one of the country's leading contractors for building the dual carriageway Town Centre Relief Road, linking Victoria Arch, Chobham Road and Chertsey Road, including a pedestrian over-bridge and subways. The Government is being urged to give consent for the construction work to start as soon as possible.

While these extensive operations are progressing, every opportunity will be taken to improve the general appearance of the Town Area. A face lift has been given to the car parks in Stanley Road and along The Broadway. The Council will continue its policy of providing flower beds and amenity areas wherever space can be found, and will gladly co-operate with any traders or landowners who are interested in similar schemes.

with Woking Council

Many different careers are open to young persons entering the Local Government service ranging from Engineering and Accountancy to Social Workers and Child Care officers.

Young persons engaged by the Council are encouraged to study for a career whether professional, technical or administrative, and are given facilities for studying on block release courses, day release or evening institute at the Council's expense.

Help and advice on career selection and training is given by the Council's Establishment Officer.

Salaries paid to staff undertaking career training depend upon age and qualifications. A person aged 17 with 3 GCE 'O' levels would receive £684 per annum, or aged 19 with 5 GCE's (including two at 'A' level) would receive £843 per annum.

The Council's policy is to provide good training facilities to enable each employee to learn to do his job effectively and to prepare himself for promotion.

Opportunities are also available for four year apprenticeships in crafts in the Building Industry, Highways and Parks Sections.

If you are interested in a career with Woking Council you are asked to contact the Establishment Officer at the Council Offices, Woking.



"ONE LUMP, OR TWO CHARLIE P"

COUNCIL PERSONALITY... No. 1

Woking's Surveyor and Director of Technical Services
Mr. T. W. N. Ward, C. Eng., I.C.S., F.I.A. and F.R.S.



Photo: P. T. Baker

Mr. Ward joined Woking Council in 1965 from Salford, Lancashire where he was Deputy City Engineer and Surveyor and Town Planning Officer. Formerly he worked for ten years on the post-war redevelopment of Coventry.

Mr. Ward originally hails from Suffolk.

During the war he served

in the Royal Artillery and was a prisoner of war in Germany and Italy for three years.

As surveyor of a large district authority Mr. Ward's duties and responsibilities are many and complex. The most important of these relate to town planning, highways, refuse disposal and collection, recreation

grounds, drainage and construction and maintenance of Council housing.

He is also the Council's principal officer concerned with the technical design planning and construction of Woking's new Town Centre which includes the new swimming pool, civic hall and the proposed Town Centre Relief Road.

Answer to Picture Quiz:
Chobham Road, Woking opposite Victoria Hospital.

WOKING'S ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

When you refer fresh fish to a domestic refrigerator, it should be returned home and put in the fridge. You should eat these sausages within 24 hours because in that short 30 minutes in a warm car deterioration will have undoubtedly begun and to keep them any longer might be dangerous. Fresh sausages do generally contain small amounts of preservatives and under ideal cold storage conditions, are safe to eat up to three or four days after manufacture.

Remember cooking will not always kill germs.

Here are some hygiene hints concerning such foods as cooked meats, sausages, pies, dairy products, ice cream, shell-fish and deep frozen foods:—

1. Get your food home as soon as possible, do not leave it in the car for long periods.
2. Do not handle unnecessarily but remove packaging before putting in the fridge.
3. Some cooked food and

fish should be eaten immediately. If you do not eat it immediately, it should be covered. This is not dangerous but it does not look very palatable.

4. If you haven't a fridge, store food in a cool larder. To keep off flies, insects, dust and dirt, cover it carefully with muslin which should be clean.
5. Never use the same cutlery or utensils for preparing you pet's food as you do for personal use; give him his own bowls.
6. Remember germs which cause food poisoning increase most rapidly at room temperature. They are less active below 50°F or above 145°F. Signs of decomposition are not always obvious but with reasonable care this need not occur.

N.B. A pamphlet giving fuller details on this subject can be obtained through the local libraries or from the Council's Health Department.

WOKING'S LIBRARY SERVICE

The Woking Central Library is still housed in the building in Commercial Road which was originally built as a chapel about 1894. This is the busiest library in the Surrey County Library system, and the inadequacies of the old building have been apparent for a long time. Its replacement is a top priority for the Woking Council. However the library is provided by the County Council and the two authorities are discussing ways and means to ensure that this important project is achieved with the least possible delay.

While the three branch libraries at Knaphill, West Byfleet and Byfleet average about 5,000 readers each, no less than 20,000 people use the antiquated building in Commercial Road. Every year they borrow half a million books from it. The staff perform wonders to make the building attractive and to provide such a service but the deficiencies of the old building are highlighted by the plans for the new one. It will be four times the size and will carry five times the book stock of the old one. Located in Church Street amid surroundings changed out of all recognition, where the pedestrian routes converge from the shops, the car park and the civic hall, it will be at the heart of the town. Surely all will say — the sooner, the better!

All Woking's libraries are part of the Surrey County Library service which is the fact one of the largest public library systems in the country. The Woking Council is responsible for the management of the libraries on behalf of the Surrey County Council. Altogether these libraries are open for 155 hours a week. In addition a travelling library stops at 15 different places away from the main centres for a total of 16 hours a week.

All the libraries from the largest to the smallest aim to provide the same standard of service, the difference naturally being that the larger ones can offer a wider choice of books from the shelves. Qualified librarians are regularly on duty and available at all libraries for advice and assistance.

The feature around which all libraries revolve is of course the book stock, and lending for home reading is the most obvious activity. The libraries endeavour to provide not only the best books but books in great variety and generous quantities so that whatever subject enquiry is received there is a reasonable chance that a book can be produced either immediately or at short notice to meet it.

In addition to books of a serious nature, a very wide selection of fiction books, mainly for recreational reading is provided. Classic fiction in modern print and books by established authors are well represented while more modern fiction of both solid and the lighter variety are ever popular. The selection of stock from today's torrent of print is no easy matter for the staff.

With such a diversity of book needs required by so many readers and to cater particularly for students there is a regular delivery service to each library. Delivery vans make at least two calls weekly at every library and three at some.

Intercommunication between the chief libraries in the County is achieved through Telex and the adoption of this system has halved the time taken to produce a book compared with former methods.

All books apart from recent fiction can be reserved and even if they are obtained from outside the library where they are requested, the



Woking's existing Central Library.

fee remains at 5p. On a still wider scale when books are not available in the County Library stocks they can be borrowed from other libraries through the national inter-lending system.

As well as lending books, all the libraries possess varying numbers of reference books normally used only in the building. The basic stock of the reference libraries consists of an encyclopedia, dictionaries, atlases and some annual publications of which Whittaker's Almanac is most frequently consulted. Combined with the reference library or in some branches in a separate room are displayed current periodicals and newspapers, the more important ones being filed for long or short periods according to the demand.

One of the more important parts of the library service is of course the needs of the children. There is a children's department at the Woking Central Library and the other branches also have children's sections. These are popular throughout the year and in holiday times are especially well used. One fifth of the total number of borrowings

RATE REBATES Do you qualify?

Have you heard about the government's rate rebate scheme? Very probably, but — do you realise that it could apply to you?

This scheme enables domestic ratepayers who are in receipt of low incomes to receive help with their rates. This can amount to almost two thirds of the rate in certain circumstances.

To be eligible you must live in property on which you are claiming rate rebate, and the property must be wholly or mainly used for domestic purposes.

Response to this scheme since it began in 1966 has been encouraging, but it is

felt that there are more people who are eligible for rate rebate who have not applied. Particularly tenants who pay a rent inclusive of rates to their landlords, are the ones who may be missing out. If you are a tenant and not merely a lodger living in with the household, you are just as eligible for a rate rebate as if you paid your rates direct to the Council. Your landlord is not involved.

If this has aroused your interest and you think you could benefit ask for further details from the Treasurer and Director of Financial Services, Council Offices, Woking. (Tel. Woking 5931 Extn. 23).

A picture from Woking's past

Do you recognise it? Answer on page 3



is made by children.

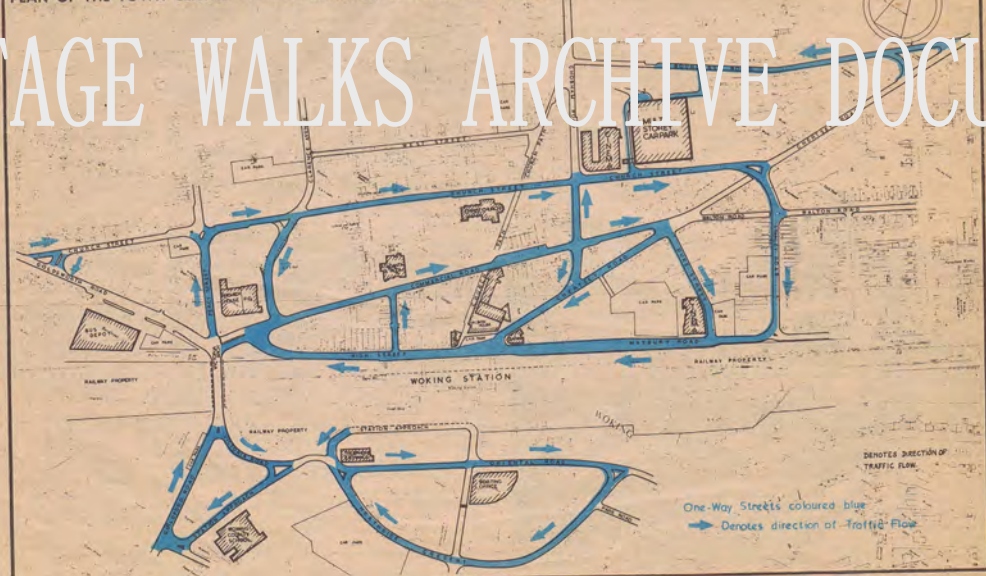
After books the gramophone record service is next in popularity. Records of classical music have been provided and they may be obtained in either stereo or mono form, the former becoming increasingly common. A subscription of £1 a year

(or 50p for six months) is payable on joining, with a borrowing fee of 5p for each record. Another activity which now operates at all four local libraries is the picture lending scheme. Reproductions of paintings by well-known artists form the bulk of this and are lent at 50p

a quarter. Also available are original paintings by local artists (most are also for sale) and these are lent for 75p a quarter.

The Byfleet Library is the newest and most modern library in the district and includes a meeting room for the use of local societies.

PLAN OF THE TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS AND CAR PARKS



HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Out and About

HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Old People's bungalows. Hermitage, St. John's.

Photo. P. T. Baker

9,000 HOUSES TO RENT

By 1981 the Council consider that Woking will need a total stock of 9,000 houses to rent by the 30% of families who cannot or prefer not to buy.

To meet this expected demand the Council plan to build 1,000 houses in the 10 year period. Housing Association will have priority help will have a 50% share in the balance needed. 500 of the Council houses will be occupied by Christmas 1974 including—
 Arlbeggars, Horsell ... 270
 Arthur's Bridge, Horsell 33
 Pares Close, Horsell ... 22

South Road, Horsell ... 10
 Hermitage, St. John's ... 25
 Rectory Lane, Byfleet ... 62
 Chertsey Road, Byfleet 35

In the past, most of the 3,500 houses built by the Council have been for families with children but now the need is for old people's bungalows. The last estate with a large number of family dwellings, in future the Council intend to build on small sites with, perhaps, 20 to 40 flats especially designed with older people in mind.

At present, tenants pay about 75% of the cost of the houses; the rest coming mainly from the Government. This is to be changed; rents will be raised up to 'fair rent' levels but there will be big rebates for those who cannot pay. Some will pay less but many will pay more.

Council house tenancy will become less attractive to the well paid who will, perhaps, make room for the 160 families on the waiting list some of whom are having to wait 2½ years before they come to the top of the list.

One of the interesting amenities in Woking Park is the wild fowl enclosure which is now well established.

The above picture shows its

attractive natural setting in the corner of the Park near the children's playground.

At present the enclosure has 51 inhabitants including —

mallards; mandarin; pintails; tufted pochards; bar-headed geese, barnacle geese and many others. Each year additional types and varieties are added.

Photo. P. T. Baker

Do you know? Good News for Sportsmen

1. That at the May, 1970 U.D.C. Elections seven out of nine wards were contested. 15,754 people voted out of a possible 40,233 and the cost of the election was 24p per vote cast.

2. That the oldest building in Woking is the St. Nicholas Church, Pyrford, originally built in 1150.

3. That the railway line from Nine Elms London to Woking was opened on 18th May, 1838 and that the single fare at that time was 2/6 per person.

4. That the product of a rate of 1p in the £ for the Urban District is £42,200.

The construction of the new Horsell County Secondary School in Morton Road is now well on its way. Included in the School complex are first class games' facilities which will be available for use by the general public at weekends and during school holidays.

A gymnasium, changing room and two netball pitches have already been constructed and should be ready for general use early in the new year.

Four grass football pitches, a cricket square and four hard tennis courts will be

come available for use later in 1972.

It is also intended to provide a sports hall in due course.

This is the first scheme of its kind to be introduced in Surrey and it is hoped that it will enable the various sporting associations in the district to extend their activities and provide improved training facilities.

Discussions are taking place with the Surrey County Council to provide similar arrangements at other schools in the district in the near future.

OVER 60's CORNER

What's on in Woking for the not so young

Westgate Centre

The Westgate Centre (opposite Woking Victoria Hospital in Chobham Road) was opened in February 1969 to provide social and welfare facilities for the Elderly and Handicapped in the Woking area.

The Council's Health Department organises a Day Centre there on Tuesday and Thursday of each week. Housebound elderly and handicapped persons are transported to the Centre by ambulance or by private car. Occupational therapy, physiotherapy, chiropody, bathing, hairdressing, welfare foods and library facilities are provided for those attending. A doctor attends monthly to carry out medical screening and an optician for vision testing.

The W.R.V.S. are responsible for the day to day running of the Centre and they deal with all applications for the use of the Building. In addition their staff assist with the transport of patients, organise coffee mornings, a weekly Club for the handicapped, an industrial workshop for the handicapped and elderly, and provide meals for the persons attending the Day Centre.

The Woking Council of Social Service organise weekly visits to the Centre for the elderly from the Homes for the Aged in the area and sponsor discussion groups.

The Council is indebted to the British Red Cross Society for providing transport for patients who are unable to use ordinary cars and to the many who contributed to the Sunshine Couch provided as a result of the Appeal by Clr. Mrs. M. J. Marshall and which is operated by the Woking Council of Social Service.

Many local voluntary organisations have associated themselves with the coffee room activities at the Westgate Centre. These organisations include St. Mary of Bethany Church, Congregational Church, St. Andrew's Church, Methodist Church, Inner Wheel, St. John's Afternoon Women's Institute and the local Girl Guides Companies.

All elderly persons are welcome to enjoy the coffee and luncheon facilities available at the Centre Monday-Friday, 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. and Saturdays coffee only 10.00 a.m.-noon.

The Westgate Centre has

become a focal point for services for the Elderly and Handicapped in Woking and as such affords companionship and a sense of caring and comfort which many of them need so badly.

Anyone wishing to share in the work for the elderly and can spare an hour or two each week is asked to contact the W.R.V.S. at 14 York Road, Woking. Tel: Woking 2596.

Meals on Wheels Service

This service is financed by the Council and organised by the Women's Royal Voluntary Service. Meals are obtained from the canteen of a local firm, from Brookwood Hospital and some are prepared by the W.R.V.S. themselves. Meals are delivered 3 times per week to housebound, elderly and handicapped persons in all parts of the district. The service operates throughout the year and the charge for each meal is nominal only. A total of approximately 20,000 meals are supplied annually in the Woking area.

Enquiries for this service should be made to Mrs. Christian of 3 Claremont Drive, Woking (Telephone: Woking 3492).



Photo. P. T. Baker

PLAY LEADERSHIP SCHEME

Once again the children of the district have enjoyed the Play Leadership Scheme run by the Council in Woking Park, St. John's, Sheerwater, West Byfleet and Byfleet.

This year the scope of the scheme has been extended

and three groups each under the control of a Play Leader, with Helpers, have operated for five weeks at the various venues. Apart from the usual games such as cricket, football and rounders, the children also played shinty, volleyball, badminton and tennis, and took part in Arts and

Crafts competitions. An average of 70 children a day took part in the activities at each of the areas. Not only did the efforts of the Play Leaders please the children, but they also gave Mum and Dad some respite from the pressures of school holidays.

YOUR MONEY CAN HELP BUILD YOUR NEW TOWN

Invest in Woking U.D.C. BONDS

6½% £500-£4,999 } 2, 3, 4, or
 7% £5,000 and over } 5 years

Details:- Treasurer, Council Offices, Woking. Tel. W. 5931

PROBLEMS? WORRIED? LONELY?

Then contact the

WOKING COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE

6A Guildford Road, Woking

Tel. Woking 63220