

Woking

AREA NEWS

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HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



This is the way the traffic goes . . .

THIS plan shows the final road pattern for Woking town centre, which has now been in operation for the last few months.

The shaded area covering part of Commercial Road indicates the pedestrian precinct.

As time goes on, further alterations to the system of a minor nature will be introduced which will mainly result in the establishment of further traffic-free shopping areas.

The map also shows pedestrian subways, the site of the new market (near the 'Victoria' bus stop) and main features of the town centre redevelopment programme.

Giant estate — work starts



WHEN Area News was last published in March, two floors of this multi-storey office block had been completed. Now it is really reaching for the sky — when finished it will comprise 15 floors of offices with shops below.

The block is under construction in the commercial redevelopment site of the town centre. For an up-to-date progress report on the town centre — and a photograph of the

Going up — a new-look Woking

interior of the indoor swimming pool which opened on October 1 — see the article in the centre pages.

FOLLOWING protracted negotiations with the proposed developers of the Slococks site, planning permission for the erection of some 4,000 dwellings, together with appropriate shops, schools and other community facilities, was issued in March 1973.

The detailed plans for the early part of the development have now been approved and work has already started in various parts of the site. A plan of the development, showing the location of residential development and other facilities, is given on the centre pages.

The plan shows a main road pattern running north-south from Triggs Arch to Hensell Birch and east-west on the north side of the canal from Harelands to St. John's with a spur to the north to join Littlewick Road.

The plans provide for three schools, a health centre, a fire station, library and 42 acres of recreation ground together with provision for churches and community halls.

The main feature will be a substantial lake which will not only serve for drainage purposes but will also provide recreational amenities covering 17 acres with housing facilities.

The development when completed will produce a town the size of Truro, the county town of Cornwall, or Lewes in Sussex.

Part of the housing development will be undertaken by the council and possibly also by housing associations, but the bulk of it will be carried out by the developers, New Ideal Homes Ltd., over the next ten to 15 years.

Crime prevention and public apathy

EARLY in 1973 at the suggestion of the Chief Constable, the Woking and District Crime Prevention Panel was set up with the object of fostering greater public involvement in the prevention of crime.

The Panel is representative of local community organisations under the Chairmanship of Councillor H. S. Cavsey.

Benefit

Consideration is being given to such problems as security of commercial and private property, vandalism, juvenile delinquency, and how these can be diminished by public education and interest.

The most obvious conclusion to emerge from meetings of the Panel is the apparent apathy and carelessness of the majority of the public so far as crime is concerned.

It is hoped that the public will benefit by a reduction in crimes committed in the Woking area as a result of the work of the Panel.

CHAIRMAN'S APPEAL



AS Chairman of Woking Urban District Council, it is my privilege to sponsor a charitable appeal. I have chosen the WHITE LODGE SPASTIC CENTRE for two reasons. First, it is a local charity for our own neighbours, friends, and local people; second, it closes an unfortunate gap in our statutory services and fills this desperate need for help.

The centre was built in 1961-62 from generous donations and by a hard-working committee collecting funds. It provides treatment and education for many children, but there are many more who could benefit if the funds were available.

Both Surrey County Council and the health authorities contribute generously, but not enough to keep the centre open.

Pleasure

So far, many firms and organisations have sent most generous contributions with encouraging well wishes, and by the time this edition of Area News is published, the Woking Horse Show and Gymkhana will have been held, the proceeds of which have been promised for the appeal. I am most grateful to all who have contributed so far. However, if further generous persons feel able to send me a donation for this most deserving cause, I shall be more than happy to acknowledge it and I do assure you that the benefit and pleasure the money will bring will be very real. Contributions may be sent to me at the Council Offices, Woking.

DAVID ROBINSON

● Above: Mr. Robinson pictured at the White Lodge Centre with some of the children who benefit from its work.

Goldswort pattern for the future

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CANAL FILLS A NEW NEED

DURING the closing decades of the eighteenth century, at the height of the Industrial Revolution, a network of canals was built throughout England. These canals, built for the transport of goods, were strictly utilitarian, and contributed greatly both to the improvement of living standards, and by stimulating industry, to the destruction of the landscape around the towns which they served.

Now, during the closing

decades of the twentieth century, after a land of beauty has been changed into a land of beauty, these canals are again needed, this time as countryside amenities.

The Basingstoke Canal was and is such a waterway. Started in 1788 it took six years to build and although the work included 68 bridges, 29 locks and a 70ft deep 1,000 yard long cutting at Deepcut, progress was considered to be disgracefully slow.

The canal was originally conceived as the first phase of a waterway linking London with Southampton, but the Southampton link was frustrated by the advent of the railway. For this reason, the canal has had a commercially disastrous history.

It has a very considerable future. There is an overwhelming demand for the waterway to be fully restored for recreational boating, angling, towpath walking

● Left: The Basingstoke Canal, overgrown and with a layer of duckweed covering the water surface. View looking towards Arthur's Bridge.

● Right: A working waterway near home — the River Wey Navigation at the Anchor Lock, Witley.



and natural history pursuits, and both Hampshire and Surrey County Councils are seeking to satisfy this by bringing the canal into public ownership.

Once this is done, with the help of hundreds of volunteer labourers, who have been waiting in the wings for many years, and with a comparatively small expenditure of public money, the Basingstoke Canal will come into use for a second time but for a very different purpose.



Last barge to Woking

DID you know that the last commercial barge to use the canal did so on June 27, 1949? She was the Gwendoline, and she collected 20 standards of timber from the SS Salvus at Surrey Docks and took the load via the Thames, Wey Navigation and Basingstoke Canal to Spantons in Woking. The load weighed 50 tons and she drew 3ft. 4in. of water.

The best year for trade on the canal was 1915, when 31,377 tons were carried up to Woking. Coal was charged at 3d. a ton to Woking.

The Woodham Locks lodger gives details of passages worked and shows the use to which the canal was put. On October 2, 1923, for example, one wide boat (70ft. long, 10-12ft. beam); three barges (over 12ft. beam) and two narrow boats (70ft. long, 7ft. wide) used the Woodham flight of locks.

From September to December inclusive in the same year, a total of 322 commercial craft used the same locks — the busiest month being October when there were 104 passages.



Park

the new development at park will be two new highway schemes...
 some envisages the improvement linking Goldsworth Road at roundabout. It will mean Lane and Triggs Lane will need to be improved. Eventually dual carriageways but scheme will provide a single road only.

Bypass
 over the railway will be outside the existing Wych York Road and Mount will become cul-de-sac and (shown by dotted lines on have to be provided. Work is in Stage 1 of the scheme in out is estimated at £20,000.

Final
 scheme is to provide a bypass stage of St. John's. The plan pass which leads from the roundabout off Robin Hood Road near the Winston road.
 sited this should free St. much of the through traffic, g of the scheme involving the of a single carriageway road is for 1978 at a cost of a final stage will be required two years later.



● The heavy machinery moves in and roads begin to take shape. This view of the Goldsworth Park development site was taken from Arthur's Bridge Road.



● Looking into the Goldsworth Park from a house in St. John's.



Guilford



Town centre welcomes the dawn chorus

A PASSER-BY was heard to remark that for the first time for 30 years he had been able to hear the birds singing as he walked to work through the town centre. The reason? The relief road, now opened, has taken all but goods vehicles and a few cars out of the 'middle', and Woking is now on the way to joining most other towns of its size and moving at last into the sevenies with a traffic-free shopping centre.
 On the credit side, as a 'spin-off', the many critics of the one-way system can now sleep peacefully again: not only is High Street back to two-way working but so is the Broadway as well.

Headquarters

For shoppers, a new ground level car park has been laid out south of the Centre Pool and when the demand is there a 1,000 space multi-storey park will be built on the site. At all costs car parking spaces must be provided for all comers — our great advantage over neighbouring towns must be preserved. The Centre Pool? Open. The Civic Hall? Building space. The Shopping Complex? Running to time.
 As a bonus, the Government has now decided that the headquarters of the South Western Metropolitan Regional Health Authority shall come to Woking, and architects are now busy designing both an office block for it and a new railway station, which we so badly need, which is to be a part of the development.

● Cool, clean lines mark Woking's new indoor swimming pool, opened to the public on October 1. This picture shows the main pool, which is 25 metres long. At the far end, behind the young swimmers standing at the poolside, is the teaching pool. Sauna facilities are the highlight of the Centre Pool.



Personality



CLERK to Woking Council for the past 18 years, Mr. Michael Shawcross (above) is the choice of the District Council to head the management structure as Chief Executive.

Clerk is new council's Chief Executive

Mr. Shawcross joined Woking Council from the Middlesex County Council in 1948 as assistant solicitor, and became Deputy Clerk in 1949.

He served throughout the second world war with the 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) and Inns of Court Regiment (The 'Devil's Own'). With the latter he saw service in France and Germany and is now the Hon. Secretary of the Old Comrades Association.

His role as Chief Executive will be to advise the new council on

policy and ensure the efficient operation of all council activities.

He is this year's President of the Society of Clerks of County and District Councils, and a member of the Woking Rotary Club. His principal relaxation is watching motor races — particularly of the vintage and historic variety.

Where to put your rubbish — and turn paper into cash!

WITH the closing of the refuse disposal site at Worplesdon more use is being made of the containers sited at various points throughout the district. These refuse disposal points are as follows:

- Byfleet Village Hall car park.
 - Woodlands Avenue car park, West Byfleet.
 - Council depot, Monument Way East (working hours only).
 - Mount Hermon Road, near council housing office.
 - Brewery Road car park.
 - Westfield Avenue, entrance to council depot.
 - St. John's Eye, opposite recreation ground.
- Disposal facilities are being afforded Woking residents at Guildford as follows:
- Until 4 pm, Syfield estate tip.
 - At weighbridge entrance, Woking Road, on the Woking side of Stoke roundabout, 8 pm-6.30 pm Monday to Friday, 8 am-1 pm Saturday and Sunday.
- These facilities are not available to traders who should make their own arrangements with Guildford Borough Council (Guildford T1111) to receive their refuse.
- Residents are requested when using the above facilities to ensure that the material for disposal is placed in the containers provided or stored neatly at the side or rear of full containers.
- If the material you have is too large to transport and is not brick rubble or garden refuse, then telephone Woking 3624 to arrange a free collection.

THE recovery of waste paper is now almost as important to the national economy as it was during the years 1939-46. The demand is such that all local authorities have been asked by the Board Mills to increase activities in this field.

The average amount of paper thrown away by each household each week is 10 lbs, or 38 per cent of the total refuse, and at least 5 lbs. of this is good recoverable paper.

Are you aware that you can help yourself, your local school or local organisation by saving this? A scheme is operated by the council whereby a sum of 25 is paid for every tonne received at the depot.

Pool
 So why not get organised and raise funds for your own special requirements? One school has already raised £220 for a swimming pool.

No need to wait until you have accumulated a tonne — 50p for every 100 kg (for the non-metric almost 2 cwt.).
 For information contact Woking 3624.

Royal request for borough charter

ON June 7, 1973, Woking District Council was elected to take over from the present urban council on April 1, 1974.

This is part of a much larger reorganisation in the country as a whole, and Woking is lucky to come off comparatively unscathed. Our area is unchanged and the number of members of the council is slightly reduced from 36 to 32.

Petition

The primary functions of the new council will be local planning, housing and recreation. It will no longer have any educational functions. Personal health will be a matter for the new Health Authorities; sewage

disposal for the new Water Authorities.

Although responsibility for highways (including traffic management, street lighting and road safety) becomes a matter for the new Surrey County Council, the public will see no change as arrangements are being made for local administration to continue. Apart from the services already mentioned it is almost 'as you were' so far as Woking is concerned.

The new district council have petitioned the Queen for the grant of a Charter conferring the status of a Borough on the district. If granted, Woking's first citizen will then be the Mayor and not the chairman as at present.

INVEST IN WOKING UDC BONDS

Details from The Treasurer
Council Offices, Woking

It and About

THE Council's team of building inspectors (there are six of them, nowadays called Building Control Officers) rarely come into the public eye, and when they do it is usually to be blamed rather than praised.

Only, for example, when you build a garage or an extension to your house will you meet them, and then you will probably be annoyed at being told that you have broken the rules, or that the work is unsound and must be condemned.

However, the existence of these officers, backed as they are by the Government's Building Regulations, which have the force of law, means that your new house at least complies with acceptable standards of building and that you are afforded a good measure of protection against building failure when you go shopping, to the theatre, or to have your car filled up with petrol.

Fire risk

Until 1936 there was very little control over building quality, and it was in the 1920s and early thirties that the phrase "Jerry Building" came to be used. But in 1936 an Act of Parliament was passed under which local authorities could require all new building to conform to byelaws, and could appoint expert staff to see that this was done.

Since then the control of building has been strengthened. Standard Building Regulations laid down by Parliament have taken the place of local byelaws, and before plans of houses or other buildings are approved by the Council they are carefully checked to see that they comply

with these regulations, particularly with regard to structural stability and fire risk, and that suitable materials will be used. During the actual building operations, at least ten site visits will be made to a house, and many more to other larger buildings.

But be warned! The regulations do not cover workmanship. So as a house purchaser, although you can be fairly sure that basically your house is reasonably built, there is still a very large area in which you must use your own judgment, or better still, that of your surveyor.

No, he's not having a conversation with someone "down below" — just taking a close look at the foundations of a new building in Madeira Road, West Byfleet. The inspector seen at work here is Mr. A. J. C. Frewin, building inspector for the Byfleet area.

"Why upon my word he's bought a house I vow, and declare it's not fit for a mouse. The tiles are off and the rafters rotten. The foundations too have all been forgotten. A pox on the builder, the misbegotten Bricklaying son of a louse!"

(William Wycherley, 1640-1716)



New lease of life for cottages

ORIGINALLY bought for demolition to make way for the Town Centre Relief Road, these cottages in Vale Farm Road have been preserved and modernised by the Council.

At a cost of £29,580 the original seven dilapidated terraced houses have been converted into 14 one-person flats. The reclaiming of one property has therefore proved a useful addition to the Council's pool of accommodation.

Lit up

MOTORISTS will be pleased to hear that high pressure sodium lighting similar to that provided on the town centre relief road has been installed at the new Mayford roundabout.

Holiday play

ONCE again the play leadership scheme has proved very popular with children during the school holidays. A total of 184 children enjoyed a wide variety of games and pastimes at venues throughout the district and the efforts of the play leaders was much appreciated.

Going in

THE council has accepted a tender for the sum of £145,000 for the construction of a new access road from Elm Bridge Lane to the Recreation Centre site. The next step will be to accept a tender for the construction of the centre itself, with a view to works starting early in the New Year.

Round we go

PLANS are proceeding for the construction of a mini roundabout at Sandford Corner, Old Woking, off A13.



● The cottages in Vale Farm Road, Woking, saved from demolition and now modernised to provide 14 one-person flats.

A new job — with leisure on his mind



● Mr. Bernard Warden, formerly manager of the Bracknell Sports Centre, is now settling in as the new Chief Amenities and Recreation Officer for Woking.

Mr. Warden, who faces a challenging task, will initially concentrate on promoting the new Centre Halls which are due for completion during early summer next year. He will also be closely connected with the construction of the new recreation centre in Woking Park, programmed for completion in 1975.

Eventually, Mr. Warden will take over responsibility for the parks, recreation grounds and both swimming pools in the town. Sports, the arts and all other leisure activities are also his concern. With all these activities to look after, one wonders when he will be able to obtain any leisure moments himself!

You're never too old to learn — say 5,500 people!

WORKING Institute of Further Education is the main provider of adult education classes in the Woking area. The Institute was formed about nine years ago by the amalgamation of what were four separate evening institutes, and the number of students attending classes has increased from 2,500 to about 5,500.

When adult education first started about 150 years ago in the Mechanics Institute in Scotland, the demand for classes soon spread through the industrial areas of Northern England.

In those early days the demand was for classes in vocational subjects in order to help those people who had not gained sufficiently high qualifications at school.

Some ten to twelve years ago, the Department of Education and Science decreed that most of the vocational courses should be provided by Technical Colleges or Colleges of Further Education. Some educationalists thought that adult education as we know it today would probably wither and die, whereas on the contrary it has flourished and gone from strength to strength.

Demand

Each year the number of students increases and it is forecast that the number of students will double from two million to four million in the next decade.

In September last year, the Woking Institute opened its new adult centre at Danesfield, Grange Road, and over 1,500 students enrolled for day and evening classes in that centre.

This year the number is even greater, and it is clear that the centre is not large enough to meet the demand of the local populace. The students come from all walks of life and age groups — from the teenager to the senior citizen.

As was to be expected, most of the daytime students are ladies, but there are a number of men who have come to early retire-

ment and who still feel the need for mental stimulation. The learning processes tend to slow down a little as we grow older, our class members seem to enjoy continuing their education in the company of others who share a common interest, and everyone agrees that the informal and congenial atmosphere at Danesfield makes it all worthwhile.

Commonsense could save a life!

NEXT time you head for the dustbin carrying the shattered fragments of a cup, vase or mirror, spare a thought for the refuse collector. Sharp objects — such as a wedge of broken glass — could give him a nasty cut as he picks up the plastic sack containing your refuse.

Wrap the remains in newspaper before putting them in the plastic sack to lessen the risk of a cut. Watch tin lids too — they should be pushed well inside the bag.

Woking Council runs a free scheme for the collection of unwanted bulky articles (see centre pages for details), but commonsense precautions taken before an article is disposed of could save injury — or a life. Old refrigerators, for example, should always have the doors removed otherwise a child could get trapped inside and die.



● A pottery class — one of the activities undertaken at Danesfield House.

Woking Walkabout 5

by DNW

OF ALL the countries in the world, Britain has probably the most varied landscape and even in the small compass of Woking the scenery shows surprising variations.

This walk (a short one, only 3½ miles) is over the 'Battle Country' in the north west tip of the district, an area which stretches away to beyond Aldershot, and which because of its bareness, unferile nature and convenient position, has been the home ground of the British Army since the days of the Crimean War 120 years ago.

The start, not far from the Garbald crossroads at Knaphill, is a few yards south of the junction of Limecroft Road and the Bagshot Road. Walk down the road leading to Lord Roberts Workshops, leaving your car on the wide verge (you are just outside Woking's boundary). Immediately you will have before you a typical 'Battle Country' view over the Bisleys Ranges.

Remote

Half a mile on, you cross over a stream by a bridge with a wrought-iron parapet bearing the legend 'Stafford Lake 1902' but do not waste time looking for

the lake — the word retains its old English meaning of a stream. You now pass the Princess Christian Homes for Ex-Servicemen, and Lord Roberts Workshops.

Here the road now dwindles to a narrow footpath and you can let your dog off his lead: no sheep round here but plenty of rabbits. Soon this footpath divides and you take the left fork which goes downhill and crosses a stream by a footbridge at a place which is quite overgrown and has a pleasantly remote air.

Stupidity

When you reach a house on your left, turn right on to the wide track running across the common. You are now on Sheets Heath (the word means parkland) and will soon come to a hard road just north of Pibright Bridge.

Go out of your way for a few yards by turning left, and stand on the bridge and look at the state of the canal and wonder at man's stupidity in letting it get that way.

Then turn round and walk up the hard road, turning right at the fork (see Bisleys NRA) and glancing down the left fork to see some very modern architecture in the Guards Depot.

Cross the stream (quite a variety of trees here) and pass the gates of Bisleys Camp. Soon the road divides again, and you take the right hand fork, where a sign tells you that the surface is dangerous.

Accidents

A few hundred yards along there is a group of small but in-

teresting houses and the road becomes a track again. This track takes you back to the Princess Christian Homes, and if in the course of your walk you have torn your trousers or broken your watch, both accidents can be dealt with in Lord Roberts Workshops where they specialise in clock repairs and invisible mending.

