



# THE WIVENHOE SOCIETY

## **Wivenhoe Society submission to Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

The Wivenhoe Society has around 400 members. Its stated aims are to foster pride in the town of Wivenhoe and its surroundings; to safeguard all that is best in the possessions, appearance and character of the local area; to encourage appropriate development which is keeping with the area and the improvement of civic amenities, with the purpose of making Wivenhoe a pleasant and well-planned place in which to live and work and to visit.

### **Conservation and heritage issues:**

#### Conservation area

In 2007 a report “Wivenhoe Conservation Area, Appraisal and Management Guidelines” was produced for the Borough. This contained various recommendations including an extension of the Conservation Area. <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1800&p=0>

Section 9 reads

It is proposed to include the following properties within the boundary of the Conservation Area:

Nos. 2-12 (evens) and 27-49 (odds) Park Road  
Nos. 21-29 (odds), The Pump House and 58-72 (evens) Queen’s Road  
Nos. 15-21 (odds) and 16-22 (evens) Paget Road  
No.16, Anglesea Cottage, Annandale, Berri-Dene, Bolton Lodge, Gimbals,  
Herons, Highclere, Hillifields, Holt, Mariners, Millcot, Rivendell and Riverview,  
Anglesea Road

These inclusions bring most of the Wivenhoe House Estate development of the 1860s within the Conservation Area, thereby completing the street frontage of Park Road and Queen’s Road, and unifying the two halves of Anglesea Road and Paget Road

This area is important historically to the development of Wivenhoe as the town expanded in the second half of the C19 and many of the smaller terraced properties built in this area housed the shipyard workers. The Pump House played an important role in servicing the town and the larger C19 villas on Park Road and on Anglesea Road are very prominent in views across the area because

of the changes in ground level.

The Society agrees with these proposals and would like to see them implemented.

The Society would also like to suggest that the Conservation Area be extended to all land within the settlement boundary south of the railway land. It is true that this includes a lot of relatively new build (some new build at Cook's shipyard is already included). When designing the new estates care was taken to try to blend with existing buildings, to provide an attractive river front and to preserve interesting vistas of, for example, the Church Tower. Controls over alterations and extensions would prevent inappropriate development.

The Conservation appraisal, mentioned above, comments unfavourably on the visual impact of telegraph poles and overhead wires. The Society has been campaigning since 1967 for their replacement with underground wiring.

The Society also supports the comment in the report that the Business Centre is important to Wivenhoe but that landscaping improvements are needed. The Business Centre is zoned as residential land. The Society would like to see it zoned for business use as it provides useful employment and services.

#### Other heritage issues

The Goods Shed is a listed building but has been allowed to fall into disrepair. Covered in scaffolding and plastic sheeting it is currently an eyesore. The Society urges that either a use is found for the building or it should be demolished.

#### The environment and green spaces

##### Open spaces and countryside

The Society strongly supports the Borough coastal protection belt policy. The river is an integral part of the setting of Wivenhoe. Having green spaces beside the river and on land overlooking the river is one of Wivenhoe's delights and these should be preserved. There are other areas which are important for recreation/ walking which will no doubt feature in the survey results. The green break between the University and the current settlement boundary is very important in preserving the identity of Wivenhoe as a separate entity from Colchester. The Society recognises that a parcel of this land has been allocated for future University expansion but would strongly oppose any more being allocated. If in the long term more land is needed by the University the Society is of the opinion that this should take place on land to the north of the A133

##### Trees

An issue that is repeatedly brought up at our AGM is that of trees. At one time Wivenhoe had a tree warden but the Borough no longer seems to operate a tree warden scheme, unlike Tendring which is very tree pro-active. There is a 2010 Borough policy document "Colchester Tree Policy" <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1164&p=>

Tree wardens are briefly mentioned in this document, to quote:

### Tree Warden Schemes

13.12 These have proven to be very successful in many local authority areas across the country and are administered by the Civic Trust, who provide guidance on how to set up and administer schemes locally. The Tree Council also supports and encourages Tree Wardens, and their help could be sought to assist the scheme.

13.13 The Colchester Civic Society has already expressed an interest in assisting with the re-establishment of a scheme in Colchester. If popular it may be possible to provide training to these wardens in order that they can undertake small scale maintenance operations and develop their own community activities locally. Many Parish Councils have 'Tree Wardens' and their voluntary work can be of great benefit to their local communities. The availability of grants in this area (such as the Community Trees Fund run by The Tree Council) also provide tremendous opportunities for community involvement, particularly with young people, and should be actively encouraged.

### Policy 13.03

The Council will liaise with local interest groups to establish a Tree Warden Scheme across the Borough

Efforts to liaise with the Borough Council to establish a tree warden for Wivenhoe both on the part of the Wivenhoe Society and the Town Council have met with no success even though two volunteers had been identified. The Colchester Civic Society does not operate a scheme and has not received co-operation from the Borough.

Very few trees in Wivenhoe are covered by tree preservation orders and where these have been in place they have provided little protection when developers have wanted to cut them down.

Given that the Borough has a policy in place it is not clear that a neighbourhood plan policy, that there should be a tree warden/tree wardens for Wivenhoe would be effective, but the Wivenhoe Society is of the opinion that having a tree warden for the area should be included in the Plan in the hope that the Borough would respond and that a more pro-active policy with respect to obtaining tree preservation orders and assessing possible planting sites should be adopted.

### Wild life habitats

On the whole the Society considers that the management of the Wivenhoe Woods and the Nature reserve is good from the wild life point of view. There are some areas designated as local wildlife sites. There is a patchwork of sites shown for the University Campus. It is not clear how much protection this gives as one site shown forms part of the land allocated for the Knowledge Gateway development. The wooded area between Boundary Road and the railway is also shown although this has been designated on the Site Allocations map as available for University expansion. The Wivenhoe Society requested that tree preservation orders be placed on the mature trees in this area but were told that being a local wildlife site gave adequate protection. This bit of woodland is an important feature in the

Wivenhoe river landscape. There are three local wildlife sites shown for the land in Wivenhoe Cross ward to the north of the A133, the two woods and a strip either side of Salary Brook. There is a further site of 6.27 hectares, Wivenhoe Cross Pit (The nearest road is Henrietta Close). Wivenhoe Woods are also designated as a local wildlife site. Those sites which are of particular importance should be identified and highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Garden grabbing

Gardens are an important resource for wildlife. In some parts of Wivenhoe there are quite large gardens, though in other parts housing density is high. The Borough's Supplementary Planning Document "Backland and Infill development" adopted 2009, revised 2010 is relevant

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3767&p=0>

It is recommended that plot sizes should reflect those in the immediate neighbourhood. On garden amenity it states

### Garden Amenity

6.15 The Essex Design Guide and the Core Strategy set out minimum sizes for gardens. The emerging Development Policies DPD is also likely to contain a policy covering minimum garden sizes. When considering backland and infill proposals, garden sizes may need to be substantially larger than these minimum standards in order that garden sizes reflect the size and shape of gardens in the area. Gardens must provide useable private space. Gardens provide other functions that the Council considers important, they allow the infiltration of water into the ground reducing the amount of surface waste run off a site produces. Trees, shrubs and hedges can add to the biodiversity of an area. Where a garden is rich in biodiversity an assessment will be required to assess its value. If there are protected species on or adjacent to the site an ecological survey will be required.

This seems quite a robust statement but perhaps the Neighbourhood Plan should endorse it.

### **Traffic Issues**

Congestion in the Avenue, The High St and Station Road is a problem. The Society would like to see some restrictions on parking to allow "passing bays". This has been discussed in the past but nothing seemed to come from these discussions. The Society has made representations on two occasions about Tendring's suggestions of large scale development to the north of the A133 some of which falls within Wivenhoe Cross ward. The implications for traffic at the Clingoe Hill roundabout would be horrendous. As mentioned above this land would be better left undeveloped so that at some future date it could be used for University expansion. While this would also strain the road infrastructure the impact would be less than that of a large scale housing development.

### **Community Facilities**

The William Loveless Hall is the only publicly owned facility which was built at a time when the population of Wivenhoe was about a third of what it now is. The Phillip Road Centre is currently not available. The Society strongly supports the use of part of the Phillip Road building to provide community space. There is currently nowhere suitable for the Youth Club to meet. The Youth Club provided a much needed service.

*President Tom Roberts, Chairman Robert Needham*