



LECKHAMPTON

GREEN LAND

ACTION GROUP

NEWSLETTER 29

JULY 2007

Memorial to Don Horwood

LEGLAG has been trying for two years to find the best way to commemorate the outstanding work of Don Horwood to save the green fields in and around Leckhampton from over-development. He was a founder member of LEGLAG, and served first as Secretary then as Chairman. He was always the heart and soul of LEGLAG, and in the forefront of our campaigns up to his death two and a half years ago.

Now an opportunity has arisen to erect a traditional oak seat in Burrows' field in his memory. This will be done by Cheltenham Borough Council who own the field, but the work will be paid for jointly by LEGLAG and the Horwood family.

The plaque on the seat will read

"In memory of Don Horwood, ISO, 1920 -2004, Parish Councillor and campaigner for Leckhampton green land."

There will be a dedication ceremony when the seat is installed, details to be announced in the Echo and on the LEGLAG web site.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Cllr Robin MacDonald and Ken Pollock each gave evidence to the Regional Spatial Strategy Examination in Public in Exeter on 22nd and 23rd May 2007. The meeting was attended by senior officers of the County and District Councils of Gloucestershire, and also a bank of developers and their advisors. One session was largely devoted

To Leckhampton reflecting the preponderance of 400 objections – a quarter of the total for the whole Region!

Robin had prepared our case with Kit Braunholtz and made the following points on behalf of Leglag members:

- Our fight against Tewkesbury BC and the subsequent judgement which quashed SD2.
- Three Local Plan Inspectors had turned down development at Leckhampton and Shurdington.
- There is now no basis for the RSS proposal for South Cheltenham.
- North-west Cheltenham is a far more sensible and sustainable option for development.
- The Green Belt review was totally wrong in respect of Leckhampton, having put emphasis on misleading bases.
- Leckhampton is not a sustainable area because of coalescence. Landscape value and accessibility/traffic.

Robin also reported that Ken's "superb evidence and insight reflected his previous role as a planning officer," and gave support to the case that Robin presented. Robin's view is that they were given a fair hearing. We await the final report, due later this year.

Tewkesbury Lose in the High Court

Tewkesbury Borough Council's plan to build 360 houses at site SD2 off Farm Lane Leckhampton received a knock-out blow last April when, following a court case brought by the builders Wimpey, the High Court judge ruled that Tewkesbury had acted unreasonably in including SD2 in its deposit plan, because they should have realised that it would be impossible to complete development of this site by 2011 (the end of the plan period). This was partly because of the conditions imposed by the Government Office of the South West (at our request), and partly because of the many local objectors to the plan! So it looks as if our and your campaigning against the Tewkesbury plan has had an effect after all!

In the long run everything will depend on the outcome of the Regional Spatial Strategy and on what the local Councils do in response to that, but in the short run we are now safe. But, because Tewkesbury's plan is now short of housing sites, it is now vulnerable to attack by potential developers on a number of other sites, including Longford and Bishop's Cleeve. This is the unfortunate - for them - consequence of their foolish persistence in planning to build here despite the strong case against doing so.

Highlights from Wildlife Sightings in the LEGLAG area for the first 5 months of 2007

JANUARY

A flock of approximately 30 **Redwings** was seen in the field next to Robinswood Cottage. (Reassuring news after the single appearance in November). A **Mistle Thrush** appeared at Cherringtons and a pair of **Blackcaps** had been residing in a Vineries garden since November.

FEBRUARY

A good range of finches including **Chaffinch**, **Greenfinch**, **Goldfinch** and **Bullfinch** were sighted as well as **Pied Wagtails** at Leckhampton Farm and **Long-Tailed Tits** at Burrows field.

MARCH

A **Treecreeper** appeared near Hatherley Brook and **Green** and **Greater Spotted Woodpeckers** were seen. **House Sparrows** seem to be holding their own which is good news, the species being in decline nationally.

APRIL

Two female **Sparrowhawks** were seen soaring above the area between Moat Cottage and Cherringtons *plus*, the delightful sight of a pair of **Linnets** drinking in the pond in Lotts/Common Meadow. A **Lesser Whitethroat** was heard singing in the hedge near Leckhampton Farm.

MAY

A record number of species (30) was seen or heard in a single day. Those of outstanding interest being 2 **Whitethroats**, a **Sedge Warbler** and a **Little Owl** flying out of the nest box in the smallholdings. **Chiff-chaffs**, **Swifts**, **Swallows** and **Dunnocks** contributed to this exceptional number.

If more specific information is required on the wildlife seen, please contact me. My thanks to those people who have contributed over this period, especially Tony and Frances Meredith. If anyone has any information on wildlife seen in the LEGLAG and surrounding area, could they please contact me.
(Steve Gladstone)

Membership.

With the enormous number of new members this year, some acknowledgements of receipt of subscriptions have not been sent out. Please be reassured that if you receive this newsletter you are on our books and unless a subscription reminder is enclosed, you are paid up to at least this August. You can check through me if you have any doubts.
(Don Wilson)

Committee

Ken Pollock has retired from our committee, of which he has been a valuable member ever since Leglag was founded. He was instrumental in setting up the group and his incisive analysis of complex situations has contributed much to our success. He remains a member of Leglag and we hope still to be able to draw on his experience from time to time.

IF YOU CAN HELP PLEASE VOLUNTEER

This leaves a vacancy in the committee. We invite anyone who is interested to talk to one of our officers if they can help in any of the areas in the "subject" list on the back page. We would like to co-opt someone soon and hopefully elect them permanently at the next AGM in March 2008.