

from Neil Parry, our Green Belt coordinator

As reported last time the greatest threat to Wirral Green Belt land is the use of the euphemism "Enabling Development". In other words if allowed to do some inappropriate ("illegal") development in the Green Belt (e.g. housing) then the money (if made) might be put to a "good cause".

The Wirral Society will be opposing such "euphemistic" destruction of the Green Belt it should be called "Collateral Damage".

The task is made harder as the biggest culprit seems to be the Council, who of course decides on Green Belt development applications, even if it owns the land.

A point that it is not stressing in its "consultation" on the Hoylake Golf Resort scheme, that after almost 15 years of running has suddenly got a developer interested by talking about "Enabling Development" on its Green Belt land. Surely very inappropriate for the Council to be leading on a developer with the "support" of Green Belt development before its "Independent Planning Committee" has decided!

This link is to the Councils very positive website

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/hoylake-golf-resort>

This site has some discussion on what it may really be about.

<http://www.hoylakejunction.com/golf-resort-public-info-drop-ins>

It is concerning that this "Enabling Development" is now being promoted by the Council when it claims it can no longer meet the Government's planned new housing target for the next 5 years. We find this most strange as very recently it felt confident of even meeting a seven year new housing target.

We are still awaiting the impending Planning Application by the Fire Service to impose their "Community Service" upon Saughall Massie, having been repulsed from imposing their "Community Service" on Greasby. Apparently, in the need to save money it "has" to spend £4+ million (of our money) on a new station. It is deeply worrying since the Fire Service's own figures show Upton to be some 5 times busier than West Kirby, so moving away from greatest need.

In South Wirral, we have had the confirmation of the 2,000 houses to be built by Redrow off Ledsham Road. Perhaps these will "offset" the need for Wirral Council to provide housing, being just over the border?

Any issues on the Green Belt in the Wirral please email:-
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HELP SUPPORT OUR WORK

send your name and address, tel.number and email address to Avril with a cheque to 'The Wirral Society' for £10, (£15 for a society) for annual membership (Jan to Dec)

Wirral Matters are available in all libraries and sent to councillors and MPs in the Wirral peninsula.

Copies go to the Archives of Wirral, The British Library and Scottish Deposits

Hamilton Square

An ill thought out proposal, estimated cost- over one million pounds, to destroy the pedestrian public zone in front of the old Town Hall is being opposed by The Wirral Society and many other groups and individuals. An online petition gained over 1200 signatures in its first week. Although 3000 makes the Council take notice, surely the voices of so many individuals is important. The idea that the roar of through traffic would bring new life to the Square is misguided. Supporting local businesses and reintroducing the two hours free parking that obtained a few years ago would be much better.

Farmers Markets and food fairs in Wirral are proliferating. Good both for the local economy and the farmers, consumers and the environment. Food clocks up fewer 'food miles' than that sold in supermarkets, packaging is reduced. They provide an important outlet for selling organic and less intensely produced food. Great to encourage this movement.

Support your local one in Heswall, Neston, Wallasey, West Kirby and New Ferry

WINTER 2015-2016 www.wirralsociety.net



WIRRAL MATTERS

NEWS and VIEWS from **THE WIRRAL SOCIETY - FOUNDED 1928**
THE WIRRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND (CPRE)

President: Professor John Tarn OBE DL FRIBA FRSA FRHistS FSA



Cutting with the Best by Paul Loughnane

The Wirral Society has funded the buying of new hedge loppers

Wirral Countryside Volunteers held their ninth free hedge laying training day, opposite Barnstondale Camp, attracting 25 participants. They laid 60metres of hedge. Ten participants were novice cutters with one novice coming all the way from Ashbourne in Derbyshire.

Hedge laying is when hedgerows are restored from the base of the hedge resulting in a thicker hedge, compared to over flailed hedges where gaps develop in the base of the hedge. Flailing wounds the hedge and when it is repeatedly cut over a long time at the same height lets in rot and eventually kills the toughest of hedgerow shrubs, hawthorn.

The principle is easy... but the practice is more complicated than it first seems. Skill is required to create a well-constructed and flowing hedge, cutting the stems thin enough so the hedge regrows from the base but not so thinly cut that the stem dies.

To enable the volunteers to host these larger events and other numerous other conservation projects The Wirral Society sponsored the purchase of three new pairs of loppers. In the last few years these training events have given participants the confidence to compete in local Cheshire hedge cutting matches.

Rod Tann Chair of The Wirral Society said "We were delighted to help Wirral Countryside Volunteers who are a hands on group who have restored more than two miles of Wirral's hedgerows in the last two decades. The Wirral Society is delighted to see the volunteers expanding their activities to promote the care of our hedgerows, which although not removed to any large extent in Wirral, are imperceptibly being degraded through lack of appropriate management".

The Wirral Society is the local branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England. Paul Loughnane, Wirral Countryside Volunteers' secretary commented on how appropriate it was for the Wirral Society to support the volunteers in hedgerow restoration as The Wirral Society recruitment leaflet contains a photograph of recently laid hedge along Landican Lane.

Paul Loughnane and Colin Spencer - Photo credit Philippa Loughnane

Seen Around



Canada Geese family , Birkenhead Park.....



Road Mending, Neston

Paths Where There Were None?

How entirely new off-road routes might be established in Wirral
by Gareth Lovett Jones – writer, photographer, filmmaker

– use Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 226 and Wirral A to Z

Since publication of the article on this area in the Summer 2015 edition of Wirral Matters, I have been shown a section of Andrew Bryant's 1831 map of Cheshire. This confirms the then existence of a 'Foot Road' running for much the point on Storeton Lane which I identified, in a roughly south-easterly direction, emerging on today's Heswall-to-Brimstige road a little eastwards of the junction with White House Lane. Bridleways or bridle roads are marked elsewhere on Bryant's map in so many words. Thus 'Foot Road' may indicate nothing more substantial than a field path – which, of course is all that is needed.



It is open to question whether anything so ancient could now be retrieved for the county's Definitive Maps. But the very fact of this path's historic existence might form the basis for negotiation of a new permissive route here. Ideally this would be given a trajectory which turned eastwards to link it up directly with Brimstige Village

and the paths beyond it, rather than leading walkers onto a half a mile or more of road-walking from White House Lane.

The (re) introduction of any path link across this stretch of Wirral, coupled with formalization of access alongside Prenton Brook (see Wirral matters Spring 2015), would also, as it happens, provide the key missing link in another long distance path otherwise made up of existing rights of way. If you have an Explorer map handy, you can sketch it out for yourself: the only clues needed are:-

- that whilst the route can certainly begin at Willaston, it might also start in Chester (with some improvements to the existing North Cheshire Way),
- that it uses one or more of the new permissive links between Raby and Thornton Hough
- and to keep continuity in open country, would have to make dog-leg turns westwards, both in Landican and at Irby Mill Hill in order to reach the northern shore at Meols.

For any newcomer walking such a route, the impression would be of a Wirral still largely made up of farmed countryside: contrast the daily experience of most motorists.

Gareth has sent a similar copy of this article to Wirral's Footpath Officer, Robin Tutchings
Thanks to Susan Nicholson for contacting us with the old map information



The Wirral Society is sponsoring a new notice-board for the cliff top at Thurstaston. Judith Railton designed it whilst discussing content with the Rangers, It shows 'What you could see from this point', season, tide and weather permitting.

Neston and Parkgate Snippets from Doreen Grey



Brightening up the market square in Neston are weatherproof panels - designs chosen from a competition in local schools. **See photo left** Parkgate Society are working on an old Hilbre class boat to place on the Middle Slip – a reminder of similar fishing vessels that used this access before the 1940s World War. New information boards are proposed for Boathouse Slip and Middle Slip to tell of ferry, fishing and ship building here. Community volunteers have been working enthusiastically to clear overgrown shrubbery, weed and mud debris from high tide. Traders and householders have been improving the Parade with paint and flower displays.