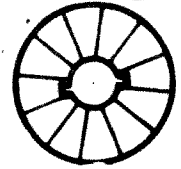

DEAN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION NEWS

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WELCOME TO DEAN VILLAGE

We are pleased to welcome those who are now moving into 30-32 Belford Road, and soon into Hawthorn Buildings. We look forward to meeting them at our forthcoming events.

The renovations have been carried out by the Link Housing Association which is a non-profit-making organisation formed in 1962. The name "Link" was chosen because it was hoped that the houses would help to fill a gap between the public and private sectors. Building and renovation projects extend into Fife, the Borders, Central and Strathclyde Regions.

A very pleasing aspect of their schemes is the quality of the landscaping, which we have already appreciated at West Mill and are now beginning to see both behind Hawthorn Buildings and in the riverside garden. The maintenance of these areas is carried out by a small team employed directly by Link.

Alongside the ground neatly laid out by Link we still have an untidy area of grass and weeds running to the footbridge. Some members of the Dean Village Association would urge the City to sell this land to a private developer; others would prefer no building at all. In the past

there were gardens and a bleaching green here, and it has been suggested that it be left to nature. This may however lead to it becoming an unsightly dumping ground. The Link Housing Association has expressed interest in developing the site, and their Annual Report includes plans for 60 family and single flats, with provision for some landscaping. The difficulty here will be that the Government has placed a moratorium on finance for Housing Associations.

It has been suggested by a member of the Dean Village Association that houses be built only on the lower part of the site, altogether an easier location for development, and the remainder of the area landscaped and maintained by the City. The present financial circumstances make it unlikely that any such proposals will be carried out in the near future.

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SUNBURY (SLOAN'S SITE)

Revised plans have been submitted for both the office block on Belford Road (International Caledonian Assets Ltd) and for the 55 houses and flats between there and the river (Cala Homes Ltd).

The scale of the office block (Architects: Ian Burke Associates) has been reduced, but the Association, in its submission, maintains that it is still too high towards

the existing mews. As for the housing, the materials of the three-storey "town-houses" are more satisfactory, but we feel there is still room for improvement in design and lay-out. The two blocks of flats still sit most unhappily on the site and require much more thought.

A contrasting example, where flats have been designed for a curve of the Water of Leith, can be seen just downstream from Stockbridge. Flats for the elderly are being erected by the Hanover Housing Association (Architects: GRM Kennedy & Partners). This development lies alongside a new stretch of the Water of Leith Walkway. (Both can be reached by way of Haugh Street.)

The revised plans for Sunbury incorporate a riverside walk on the right bank. This is welcome, but it will not give the residents access to the Water of Leith Walkway on the opposite bank (Dean Bank Footpath); the only way in or out of this enclave of new housing would be via Belford Road. The Cockburn Association has suggested that there be a footbridge to link the new development with Dean Bank Footpath. The latter climbs steeply up to its present exit on Dean Path but will eventually be continued along the bank past the Tannery Site to the iron footbridge beside Well Court.

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TANNERY SITE

There is no further news about this.

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TRAFFIC

The amount of through traffic has been a subject of complaint for a long time. Towards the end of 1980 the Committee made a determined effort to find a solution to the problem. Councillor Cramond had promised help in having a scheme adopted, but first we had to devise a scheme and get general support of it.

The scheme described in "The Dean Village 1980" was favoured by the Committee. It proposed one-way traffic down Bell's Brae and up Dean Path. Moreover, it was confidently predicted that the amount of traffic would be much reduced by including Ravelston Terrace in the scheme, making it one-way from west to east; then traffic coming out from town and going through the Village could not turn left into Ravelston Terrace and would be forced back on to Queensferry Road. At present much of it does turn into Ravelston Terrace and so along Ravelston Dykes. Some, it seems, goes on via Craigcrook Road to rejoin the main road at Davidson's Mains. It is reported that even vehicles from Orchard Brae use this route to avoid a mile or two of the A90. (Residential streets used thus are called "rat-runs" by officials involved with environmental traffic control scheme.)

So this ingenious scheme was designed to remove the incentive for through traffic to cut through the Village. It would also reduce the traffic in Ravelston Terrace, although admittedly the remaining vehicles might travel faster. It would stop all the city-bound traffic (including the vehicles which seem to blunder into the

Village by going straight ahead from Orchard Brae). It would surely reduce traffic in the other direction by at least half, especially at the rush-hour.

A questionnaire and a map showing the scheme were delivered to every house in the heart of the Village and in Dean path, Belgrave Mews and Ravelston Terrace. A big majority of the replies were favourable but there were objectors in and near Ravelston Terrace. They were invited to meet Committee members who gave fuller information but failed to win them over.

We know that the implementation of an Environmental Traffic Scheme takes up a lot of the time of officials and that a small minority of adamant protestors can prevent a scheme, however good, from going through. So the Committee has decided to leave the matter in abeyance.

What next? The questionnaire asked for alternative suggestions and some were made, but they all raised problems which have already been taken into account. Many residents who would have been inconvenienced by the proposed scheme were prepared to accept it, feeling that the reduction in traffic would be worth paying for with some inconvenience. There will never be a perfect scheme.

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“THE QUEEN’S HIGHWAY”

She should be ashamed of it, for it includes Convening Court, West Mill Lane and the road from two points on Belford Road down to the old ford and the foot-bridge. We are trying to get the Highways Department of Lothian Region to fulfil their responsibilities for them by clearing the weeds and improving

the surfaces. The first thing, we found, was to make them realise that these ways are **used**. (A senior official with an office just up there in Rothesay Terrace had even thought that the foot-bridge was blocked and out of use!) There is of course considerable usage by local people, by Edinburgh folk from further afield and by tourists.

A member who lives in West Mill Lane sees many people going along it, in spite of its dreadful condition, to see a picturesque view and take photographs. The surface should be laid in setts, to match the area in front of the Mill. We have succeeded in getting the Cleansing Department to remove the litter. We have asked for a light to illumine the dark area which makes some residents nervous.

D.L.F.

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BELFORD CHURCH

This red sandstone building at the corner of Douglas Gardens and Belford Road was built by Sidney Mitchell, the architect of Well Court. It is now occupied by Hillside School. In respect of the main part of the building, an application has been made for a change of use to a theatre and dance hall.

The Association has lodged an objection to the latter use, since anything like a public dance-hall or discotheque could cause considerable nuisance to residents nearby. A suggestion has also been made for installing the emergency exit without marring the fine interior.

There is a font which seems unwanted and in danger of being damaged. It has been suggested that it could find a worthy place in the garden of Well Court.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The traditional Christmas Party was held on 22 December last year, and was much enjoyed by a large number of villagers. We were fortunate to have Dave Pollock and his accordian to provide music for the occasion, and a lot of fun was had playing team games (requiring much skill and energy!) and dancing, followed by a well-deserved and delicious tea.

BURNS SUPPER

For the first time outside caterers were hired to provide the meal at this year's Burns Supper. This experiment was most successful, easing as it did the pressure on those stalwart members of the Association who undertake the preparations for these events. All those who attended appreciated the meal and the refreshments.

The entertainments were much enjoyed, ranging from a charming speech by George Smith who also took the Chair, through the singing of Margaret Slater, the fiddle music of the two Willies (Smith and Johnson) to recitations by Helen Melville.

Special mention should be made of two newcomers to our celebrations, namely John Lyon, tenor, and Graham Lever, a 15-year-old from Daniel Stewart's and Melville College, who played the pipes.

REVERSING HISTORY

Many years ago it was the habit of seamen arriving at Leith to visit the Dean Village and the Public House which then existed. The DVA Chairman, in partnership with friends, has now opened a bistro in Dock Place, Leith, appropriately named "Skippers". Now we have the opportunity to reverse history, and those of us who have been there would recommend highly the food and atmosphere of "Skippers".

DEAN DIARY

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 25 February 1981

Mr Basil Skinner will give a talk on "The Union Canal", illustrated with slides, in the Village School at 7.30 p.m.

Friday 13 March 1981

Beer, Skittles and Buffet Supper at West Barns. £3.50 including food and bus from Village School at 6.45 p.m. prompt. Bus returns at 11.15 p.m. 24 places available - contact Ian Cowie, 20 Well Court (226 3984) by 28 February.

Wednesday 22 April 1981

The Lord Provost, Mr Tom Morgan (District Councillor for Dean Ward) will address the Association at its **Annual General Meeting** - 7.30 p.m. in the Village School.

Thursday 14 May 1981

A Spring Evening in Drumsheugh Toll. Wine and Cheese, with Music, and a fine view from an interesting house. 7.30 p.m. Tickets £1.50. Contact Dorothy Forrester, 13 Belford Road (226 5843) by 12 May.

Saturday 6 June 1981

Bus Tour - Contact Mrs Hendry, 42 Well Court (226 7430) as soon as possible.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1981-82 become due on the date of the AGM, April 22.

Normal rate £1.00

Senior Citizens 50p

SECRETARY: Miss D.L. Forrester, 13 Belford Road, Edinburgh EH4 3BL (226 5843)

Communications for the Editor can be sent c/o the Secretary.