

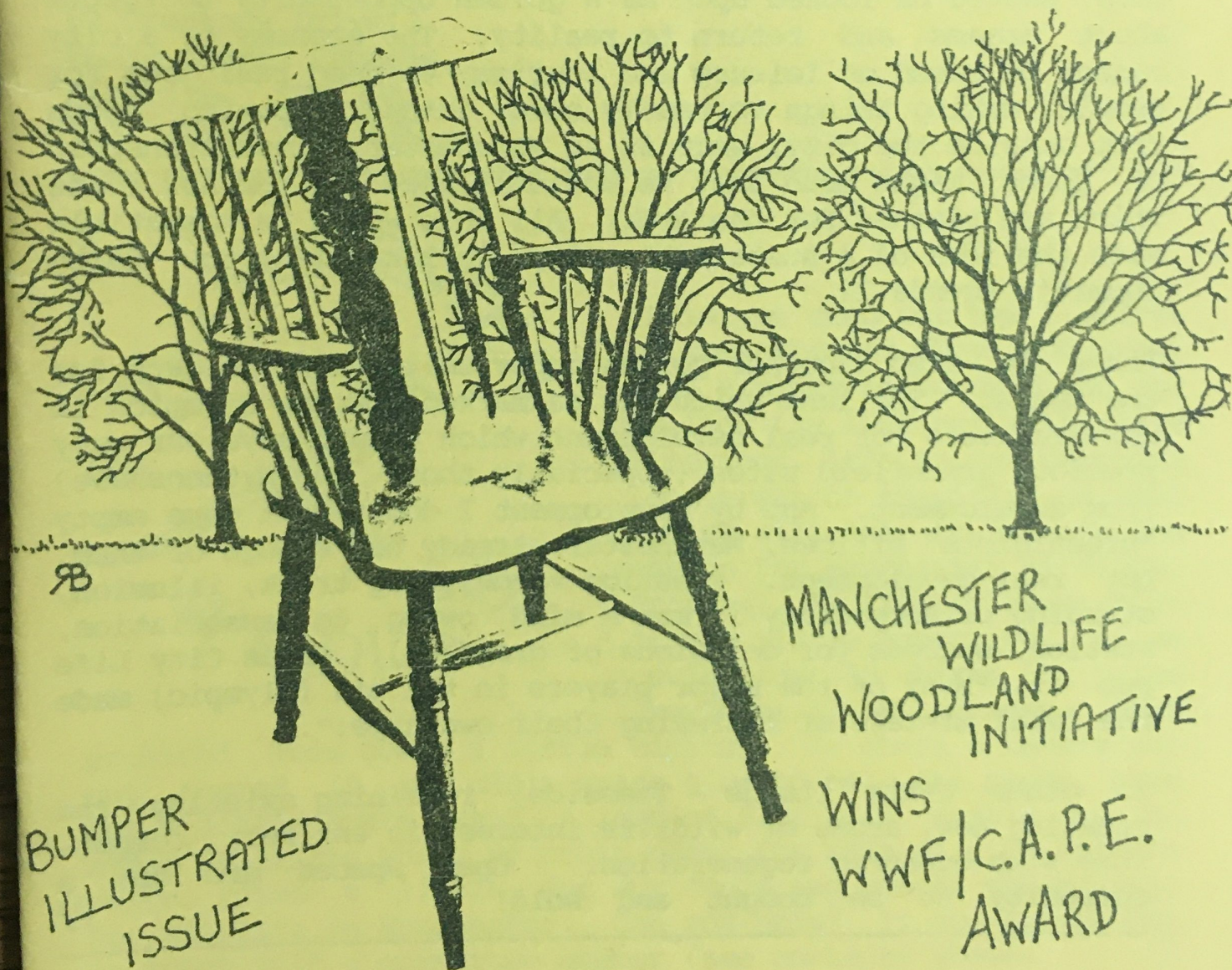


THE MAGPIE

Manchester Wildlife's Official Newsletter

Number 28

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Editorial

Editor's Office - 437 7040

After the Bid is Over

I hope you weren't expecting me to be overly disappointed but one got the impression there were some who were convinced we (Manchester) would surely get the Olympic Games and it would be the cure for all our economic and social ills. No Olympics has done this, so far; even the one at Los Angeles failed to cure their social problems, even if it did make money for a few lucky people.

Perhaps the I.O.C.'s opinion of Manchester as a suitable venue for the Games, which went from 11 votes last time to 11 votes this, should be looked upon as a golden opportunity to forget about dreams and return to reality. The economy of a city cannot be based on leisure and tourism; we need real jobs for people, making things we really need; instead of buying goods from outside the city, make it in Manchester. Less transport of goods might mean that we wouldn't need all the new roads which are planned for the area. All this would be compatible with the idea of a sustainable city, in line with the Earth Summit's Agenda 21.

There is also another golden opportunity which is ours for the taking. The land which was earmarked for the Olympics is now available for real development which should save our very precious greenfield sites (especially those in Wythenshawe) from development. And by development I don't mean more empty "prestigious" offices, Manchester already has enough of them, but real development. Prestige = conjuring trick, illusion, standing or ascendancy in men's mind owing to association, station, success (or delusions of grandeur). Or as City Life put it, "Many of the major players in the bid (Olympic) made the fatal mistake of believing their own hype:".

In other cities (Leeds - Teesside) retaining existing, and creating new, areas of wildlife interest is entirely compatible with economic regeneration. Open spaces are not a commodity to be bought and sold! //

Please note that all cheques, for membership subscriptions etc., should be made payable to - Manchester Wildlife and sent to the Treasurer, Ian Brown. //

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Have you seen our new T-shirts and sweatshirts? They look great with a black background and our new logo (as left but with white lettering). It's an eye catching conversation inspiring garment which will help to promote the message for Manchester Wildlife. Problem! At £10 per sweatshirt it's a little expensive. If we could order 50 shirts the price would be £7.50, or less. Next

problem! This needs a little capital. Is there a benefactor out there? If you can't spare time to help the group, have you a little spare cash? A loan of £250 will enable us to order 50 shirts which we could offer for sale at a reasonable price, raise a little for our funds and spread the message for wildlife in Manchester. Can you help? If so, please get in touch with a committee member (see contacts above). //

The Manchester Plan

by Ian Brown

In July, August and September, the Public Inquiry into the Manchester City Unitary Development Plan was held and anyone who wished could appear to air their objections. This does not sound very exciting but there were interesting moments.

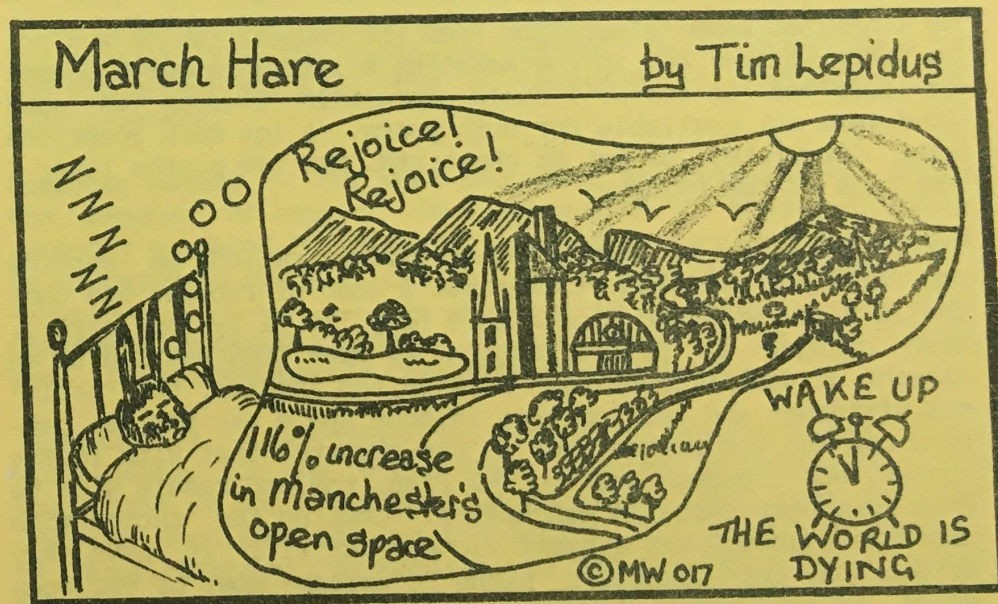
We had made comments on 116 of the Plan's policies; most of these were in support but 42 were objections. In some cases we objected to general policies like Environment, Transport and Leisure mostly because we thought the policies were not strong enough. Sites of Biological Importance are to be protected from development but not from destruction: we suggested that the destruction of an SBI by a landowner or developer should result in the disqualification of the site, for development, in perpetuity. This did not meet with the approval of the planning officer, who thought it inappropriate to plan, in perpetuity. I think that all areas of wildlife importance should be protected from the ravages of development and the hands of the DpT, with their ever increasing road plans.

The bulk of our objections were on site specific development. I will not bore you with the full details but the odd example will not go amiss. The area to the north of Broadhurst Park is designated for unspecified development to be decided later. We argued that we should know the type and extent of development as much of the area had high wildlife value and uncertainty would lead to much argument later. We also objected to the possible loss of the Old Abbey pond in the Science Park, in Hulme. However, our main concern was for the loss of open space, most in Wythenshawe, to business B1 class development (to you, empty offices). To justify these losses the Council had told the inquiry that between 1982 & 1991 there had been an increase in Manchester's open space of 116%. I thought, "pull the other one" and had to set about proving that this claim was not the whole truth. I first established that the most recent losses of open space were only taken into account if building had started by 1991. What was new open space? Clayton Vale was, but as the Council was not sure on some of the areas I asked about, a table was produced (see page 5). I was told that this would explain all. It had first been

Land-use change in Manchester, 1982-1991

	Recreational and Open Land		
	Area in Hectare		% change
	1982	1991	
1. Public Parks and Gardens	183	352	+92%
2. Playgrounds	27	29	+7%
3. Public sports grounds	122	261	+114%
4. Private sports grounds	143	348	+143%
<u>Sub-total</u> (active recreation)	475	990	+108%
5. Agriculture and allotments	49	476	+871%
6. Landscaped areas/amenity space	605	1201	+99%
7. Woodland	10	110	+1000%
<u>Sub-total</u>	664	1789	+169%
8. Area of Water	55	107	+96%
9. Unused/derelict land	332	416	+25%
<u>TOTAL</u>	1526	3302	+116%

Source: City Planning Department, Land - use records



offered in evidence to the Green Party, who were also objecting to loss of open space. I had a look at the table and the first thing I noticed was, 10 hectares of woodland in 1982. I said that I thought this was a low figure but before I got a reply I noticed that this had gone up to 110 ha in 1991. A 1000% increase; surely not possible. I was told that there had been a lot of tree planting by the GMC. Where? Clayton Vale was given as an example. But this was already counted as new open space. Was there some double counting going on? At this point it was decided that questioning on this subject should be postponed to give the Council a chance to produce information to substantiate the table. Later, at home, I had a chance to study the figures closely. The more I looked the less I believed. A 92% increase in Parks; hardly credible. Sports grounds more than doubled; we've lost playing fields recently; Nell Lane, YMCA, Christie, etc. An 871% increase in agricultural land; it's all those City farms. And twice as much water; well it does rain a lot in Manchester. But most importantly the "table" is a good example of how not to compile statistics. If built land was included then both columns would have come to the same figure; as it is it's meaningless and even the compilers can't be sure they've got it right.

So I awaited more information from the Council (which was not to materialise) but in the meantime a little research seemed in order and, as far as I could ascertain, figures on open land were not available for both years. A lot more questions were formulated, to get at the truth, and two months later I was back at the inquiry.

Before I was due on, the planning officer called me outside and admitted that the "table" was a load of rubbish and that the 10 ha of woodland should have been 110 (a typing error). Also changes in classification of open land had led to an element of double counting. Back in the inquiry, the "table" was withdrawn and the increase in open space was put at between one and two percent and it was admitted that with recent losses, and losses due to the Plan, the end result will be even less open space in Manchester. Getting the "table" with drawn as evidence was a small victory but will it have any effect on the Council's plans to destroy most of our open space, in some parts of Manchester? I doubt it! //

Hough End Puff!

by Merton Niven

Old lamp posts knitting a "Willow Pattern"; a bit of nonsense which I believe was for the benefit of the Seed in Time Conference and Partnerships for Change. Another prestigious offering costing a fortune which could have been better spent on some worthwhile conservation work.

P. S. Manchester Wildlife volunteers have been working hard at Hough End for 7 years for the long term benefit of wildlife. Nobody offered us silly money! //

Red Alert

Help Wanted - So many projects ongoing and so many that could be taken forward. So many calls for help, advice and information from both professionals and public. We could do with some assistance. We ask those of you with spare time, who joined us to do something for wildlife in Greater Manchester, to help us cope with the ever increasing workload. We can offer "reasonable" expenses for travel. We are considering the possibility of having an office. We are determined to put Manchester Wildlife into a position of influence and effectiveness.

Computer Wanted - Our word processor has bust and not worth the expense of repair. Is there anyone out there who has a recently outdated PC which they no longer require and would be prepared to throw it our way (IBM compatible preferred).

Christmas Quackers - When is an open space not an open space? When it is a Manchester City Council statistic!

Incidentally - According to a table on habitat types, which was produced for the recent Phase I Survey of Manchester, the total area of the City is 11704 hectares. Total open space is 4042 ha; woodland, 242 ha; plantation, 217 ha; arable land 81 ha. Total semi-natural habitats is 883 ha (7½% of total area) but amenity space takes up 2114 ha, more than half of all open space. Now isn't that interesting? //

New Park for Hulme ?

We have been involved in consultation over a planned new park in Hulme (Barracks Park), near St. George's. The park is to be between 7 and 13 acre (about the size of Whitworth Park) and the design heavily influenced by the "strait-jacketed" urban design code for Hulme.

We have already submitted our initial suggestions as to how Manchester Wildlife would like to see a "wildlife friendly" lay out, choice of species and long term management as an integral part of the design. Duncan Ecob, landscape architect with Camlin Lonsdale, who are masterminding the project, was particularly interested in MW's potential to help with the planting and care, and future use, of woodland areas. We can only do this if we get adequate resources and can attract volunteers from our membership and the local people. What is only too evident is that creating real wildlife areas is NOT part of the plan for regenerating Hulme. //

Implementing our Development Plan

We are going to hold four meetings a year (open to all) just to discuss strategic planning. This is because our bi-monthly General Meetings have become too crowded (with business, not people). We hope to advertise these meetings in our events list but if you are interested in this aspect of our work, please contact a committee member (see page 3). //

Partnerships for Change the inside story

It was billed as a partnership. The Chair was Dr. Martin Holdgate, Director General of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and there was an International Advisory Group. The Conference was organised by the Department of the Environment on behalf of the British Government, with the Green Alliance acting as programme advisers.

The list of "partners" (i.e. delegates?) made interesting reading - particularly for the UK day. WWF was there, Oxfam, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Tidy Britain Group, and the

Forestry Commission for example, plus no fewer than four delegates from Groundwork Foundation and Groundwork Trust. But where were RSPB, RSNC Wildlife Trusts (The London Wildlife Trust was there but the Environment City Project was presented by Leicester City Council, not the RSNC), BTCV, the NCVS Environment Support Team, not to mention English Nature (perhaps the IUCC represented them), the Countryside Commission? I know space was limited, but a quick flip through Who's Who in the Environment would suggest quite a few UK partners who surely deserved to be there, particularly as the International bodies represented groups as diverse as the Communities Forestry, Social Development of Ghana and the Boy Scouts of Costa Rica.

Somebody remarked to me that while the Conference was saying it must listen to the voice of the people, the real voice of the people was with the banners and protesters outside (and, I believe, inside, in spite of incredible security measures!)

However, to the good things: first and foremost, there are a lot of very positive initiatives going on around the world to bring environmentalists and community together. The business community was represented; in spite of the money it poured * into specific eco-friendly projects, the speaker from Shell was given a pretty rough time, and was left in no doubt as to feelings over the company's global policy! The overall impression was of many individual efforts each struggling to make things better in its own patch, therefore (hopefully) eventually world-wide.

John Gummer announced that the UK has accepted an invitation from the UN's Environment Programme to host the 1994 World Environment Day, which will be held on the 3rd of June. The main focus of the event will be "the presentation of awards to the Global 500 laureates who have made outstanding contributions to the protection of the environment" - so I don't know how relevant it's likely to be to most folks. Of course next year the Global Forum comes to Manchester from the 27th of June to the 3rd of July with the theme of Cities and Sustainable Development. I do hope there are a few more "partners" in evidence - and that includes the people of Manchester and elsewhere. //

* What about the oil they poured into the Mersey! - Editor.

What Larks!

by Daphne Laureola

Remember the monstrous dimpled storage containers which appeared on Albert Square in September? You've read the inside story, now check out the outsider events. First of all the gallant Walk for the Earth trekkers completed the half way stage of their tour of the region's DpT disaster zones. Then John Selwyn Gummer was obliged to get out of his celebrity Metro tram and walk! to the Conference, escorted by the enterprising women and their Government Whitewash banner, who had brought his tram to a well publicised halt. Rumours that a "not inconsiderably important" welcome address video had gone missing, just before the opening ceremony, were apparently true. Earth First! looked enigmatic but smug.



'Wake Up, The World Is Dying'

PHOTO: HULME P.I.G

March Hare and McMouse were there with alarm clocks primed for midday and the Big Noise. The giant clock, its works and assorted noises made a loud if not large, impression on some bemused delegates and a lot of press people in search of a

diversion from the predictable platitudes inside the Containers. Paul made a fine speech. If this had been Berlin there would have been more people in the square than in the boxes. However, all sorts of groups were able to make their point and entertain the many police persons guarding the entrances. There appeared to be more press than delegates. The latter ventured out to gaze in awe at the Olympic rings or were whisked about to admire symbolic lamp posts held together with large (and expensive) swags of willow...at Hough End.

John Gummer betrayed the petulance for which he was renowned at Cambridge (fellow undergraduates would track down the CICCUC lunches at which our would-be politician honed his evangelical oratory and jump in unison in the room above), when interviewed by Radio 4's Alex Kirby on the Day's events. I bet he wished J. Major had kept his great ideas to himself. If it weren't for the O word...where would we be: not throwing good money after bad at the Global Forum I'll be bound? //

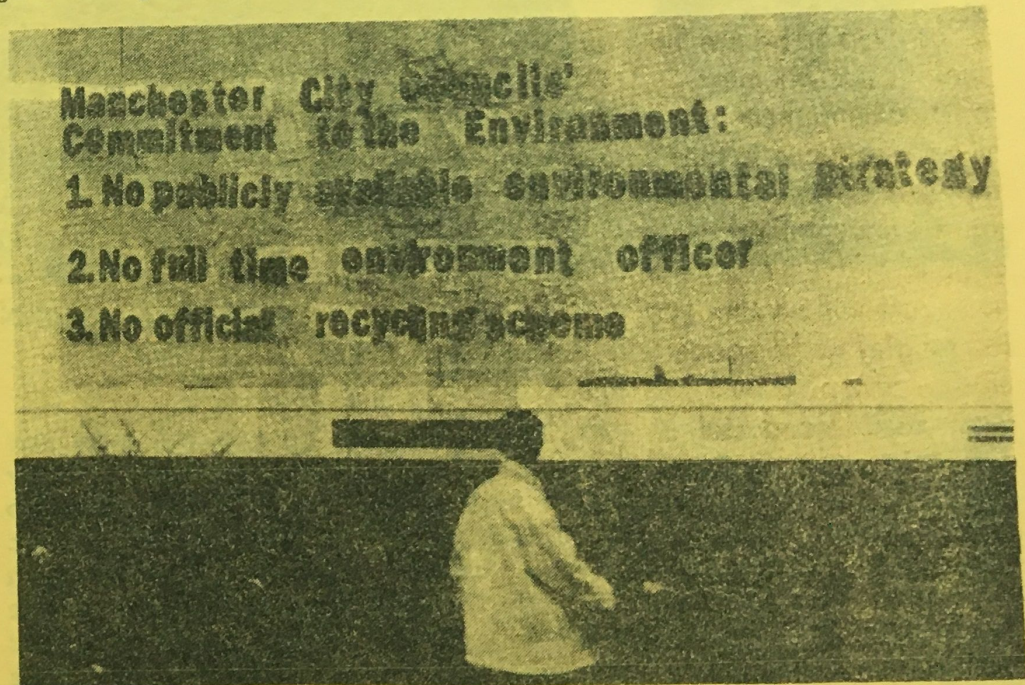


PHOTO: HULME P.I.G

Abbey Pond on Red Alert



PHOTO: IAN BROWN

WARNING

You read it first in PIG, now the clock is ticking away for the only pond in Hulme, Moss Side or anywhere in inner city Manchester; rich in wildlife and open to anyone who cares to take a wander down to the Old Abbey pub on Pencroft Way, next door to the Greenheys Business Centre. It may not look much at this time of year but two Sundays ago, the pond and the landscaped area (0.3 hectare), were a hive of action as volunteers gathered to give the pond an autumn clean-up. (See M.E.N. October 8th) The grown-ups were getting unwanted bits and pieces out of the deeper water and clearing away some of the surplus weed, the kids and their parents were enjoying

the last of the summer sun and making up a temporary zoo in plastic beakers of all the different kinds of pondlife we found in the weed. There were still newts and tadpoles on the go, beetles, waterboatmen and wiggly creatures galore, but best of all, the children found the fearsome looking "nymph" of the pond's star turn - the Broad Bodied Chaser dragonfly, a new record for Manchester when spotted by Manchester Wildlife member and local resident, Unity Kelly, in June this year. Here was definite proof that this relatively scarce and nationally declining species (almost all our dragonflies are suffering from habitat loss or damage), was breeding in the Abbey Pond and according to a couple of ace observers from Webster and St. Wilfrid's Junior Schools has been around for a year or two. Not even the Museum and the University Departments, who keep biological records for the area and were much involved in the creation of this site seven years ago (1985), and are five minutes away across Lloyd Street, knew that the pond now supports more species of aquatic invertebrates (26) than any of the 342 ponds in Greater Manchester recently surveyed by Dave Bentley, Amphibian Consultant from Bury, who carried out his survey on 18th August 93. With seven species of breeding dragonfly/damselfly, a regionally notable beetle (the screech beetle) as well as the many birds who bathe and feed here, you might well assume that this small site would be cherished and protected, especially in a Science Park, in the city, in Hulme with its high profile commitment to community consultation and a shiny new "green image". //

Trouble at t' Pond

by Unity Kelly

Ten days after our sunny and successful pond-clean at Abbey Villa Pond, a phone call alerted us to the arrival of the planning application by Manchester Science Park Ltd. at the Town Hall. Inspection of the plans revealed what we had suspected for some months, that the proposed office, laboratories and generous carparking would turn the pond and its semi-natural grassland into history. Those of you familiar with Mrs. Gaskell's first novel, "Mary Barton", can discover her description of the rustic delights of some fields near Manchester, well known to the inhabitants as "Green Heys Fields". Here may be seen the country business of haymaking,

ploughing etc. "If you could see the charm of one particular stile. Close by it is a deep clear pond...." She goes on to describe the hedges of hawthorn and blackthorn, the foot-paths, the black and white farmhouses and their flower filled gardens....and the pleasure this countryside gave to the artisans from the mills and forges. All that was soon to vanish, but history has a funny way of repeating itself. When the wholesale clearances of the 1960s gave Greenheys back a small pocket of naturally regenerated urban common, the happy accident of fractured watermain also created a sizeable pond. In the early stages, it was the botanical arrivals, especially in the marshy areas, which aroused the interest of the University ecologists and others. It also made a fascinating place for children to explore and welcome relief from the newly fashioned concrete jungle in Hulme. Even while public money was being spent on various "improvements" and better access in 1985, plans were on paper to enable the site to be retrieved for development at will. There was no consultation when part of the area was taken for the site of the Greenheys Business Centre but all the residents we have spoken to, were aware that all was not well. Trees had gone and the marsh where the mallard roosted in 1986/7 was ruined by infilling. But the pond itself continued to thrive and give delight and knowledge to the local children. The water quality remains excellent and now we know just how good it is for aquatic invertebrates, including species which are quite choosy where they live. Another species of dragonfly has been added to the list; the Black Darter. It is our smallest dragonfly (as opposed to the damselflies), and is a "very Interesting" record (Andrew Bielinski).

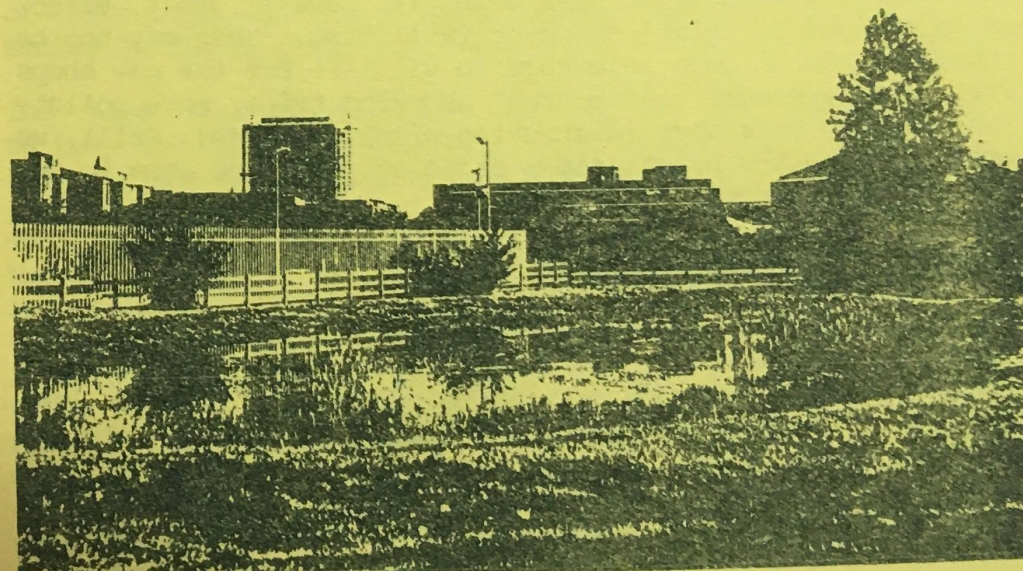
The argument put forward by David Kaiserman (Planner and statistician!), at the UDP Inquiry, was that the pond was a temporary measure and artificially created and hence not entitled to protection on account of its value to wildlife - or the community. Well, all ponds are artificial but not all ponds develop the way this one has done. This line of reasoning could be bad news for ponds everywhere. Evidently the site has been reserved for further development "for a number of years". Why bother with the UDP and the so called consultation? In the meantime the Phase 1 Habitat Survey (1990), had identified the site as one of only three areas in

Hulme with any notable wildlife value. "Even unto them that hath very little, so even that shall be taken away".

Manchester Wildlife is working closely with the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and many other conservation bodies to oppose this development. The local Action Group is based at No. 1, Otterburn Close, Hulme (Tel. 226 1987 or 226 6774-hotline). Please send your objection immediately to the Planning Dept, Town Hall, f.a.o. Chris McGough.

The Abbey Pond Action Group is making waves - donations gratefully accepted. //

PHOTO: IAN BROWN



Is this the only Pond in Hulme? The nearest Pond to the City Centre? The Best pond in Manchester? Yes Yes Yes

Ploughed Up

The area of open countryside, between Woodhouse Park and the airport, has been ploughed-up again. This was first done in May 1991, an action which led to the destruction of the Grade A Site of Biological Importance in the area. We assume that the ploughing was undertaken by Ringway International Developments Ltd., who own the land and won our "Des Poiler" Award for the work (see "Awards"). After the first ploughing, the site was very good for butterflies and most of the wild plant species had survived; let's hope this still applies!

Dumped On

The shopping city at Dumplington is to go ahead. Although at first sight this area of old farm land may not seem to be a great prospect for wildlife, it is quite significant for bird life with many species, including Short-eared Owl. The shops which are to be built will have an area equivalent to those in Altrincham, plus a lot of car parking space. This development, and those of Sainsbury/John Lewis at Bruntwood and Tesco/Marks & Spencer at Handforth will have a great effect on local (and district) shopping facilities. This may not be thought to be of much relevance to wildlife but the new shops will encourage more "car bourne" shopping trips; more pollution and more motorways (destroying wildlife areas). Still, we must look on the bright side; at least you'll be able to get a nice cup of coffee.

and Rubbished

U.M.I.S.T. put in an appearance at the U.D.P. inquiry. They spent a day, with Dr. Ray Gemmell (ex. Countryside Unit) as their ecological witness, trying to rubbish the Site of Biological Importance at Lower Hardy Farm. The Council, who are hoping to protect the area, had ecologist Dr. Ralph Tomlinson (also ex. CU), as their witness to defend. What happens when two experts disagree? I would like to agree with our amateur botanist, David Bishop, when he says that Lower Hardy Farm is the best wildflower area in the central Mersey Valley. It is worth noting that U.M.I.S.T. would like to build houses on their sports ground at Lytham Road.

Merton Niven

Manchester Wildlife Awards

by Tim Lepidus

These are still being awarded so keep sending in nominations, for the good and bad things happening to the environment, in Greater Manchester. We are having difficulty presenting some of the awards; mainly it's lack of time and the appropriate opportunity. The 1991 "Golden Magpie" was presented to June Greaves, for her work at Reddish Mini-wood; the "Malcolm Practice" Award went to Stockport Leisure Services, for dumping waste, from Highfield Cemetery, into Royley Wood. The 1991 awards which have not yet been presented are: the "March Hare" Mad Award which was won by U.M.I.S.T. for their plan to infill Lower Hardy Farm SBI with 23ft of inert waste and turn it into playing fields (they still want to do this and are claiming that they have an extant planning permission, from 1965, for the dumping of domestic waste) and the "Des Poiler" Award was won by Ringway International Developments Ltd (RID) for the ploughing of the Grade A SBI at Woodhouse Park. As a matter of interest, we are wondering if, as RID have offices at Manchester Airport, there is a connection with MIA and so, of course, to the City Council. These two awards will be presented in the fullness of time.

The good news is that, for 1992, we have reduced the awards to two; the good and the bad. This should make things easier but, for the same reasons, we have not yet been able to make presentations (we've not even had the certificates printed). The winner of the "Golden Magpie" Award is the Crossacres Woodland Project. This wood, at the junction of Brownley Road and Crossacres Road, in Wythenshawe (also known as Park Wood) has undergone a transformation with rubbish clearing, bridge, footpath and boardwalk building, woodland management and many other improvements; an excellent community project. The "Des Poiler" Award has been won by the Stockport Council Planning Officers for omitting words from a G.M. Structure Plan Policy in their report to Councillors on the Cheadle Hospital office development. We feel this may have led the Councillors into thinking they should approve the development.

We hope that our awards will remind people of the events affecting the environment so keep the nominations rolling in. //

Woodland Management and Crafts

by Ian Brown

The chair depicted on the front cover is made of Alder from Big Wood in Wythenshawe, where we undertook coppice thinning earlier this year. The area has breeding Orange-tip butterflies and the thinning should keep the sunny glade open, and ensure that correct breeding conditions are maintained.

It's all part of Manchester Wildlife's Woodland Management and Crafts Initiative for which we have now won two awards. These awards are national competitions (as opposed to grants) and the second is the WWF/C.A.P.E. Award, for £1000, which is now sponsored by BT. This will be very useful, together with the £400 from the Red Rose Forest, in helping us to set up a woodland craft centre in the Community Forest. We have already spent money on training and hardware for pole-lathes, and are ordering basic tools for wood turning and management work. To come; a day building a lathe and shaving horse at Parrs Wood CRE. At this event you will be able to learn the skill required for such work; there may be a small charge to help cover our expenses.

As part of our awareness raising programme we have been busy staging bodging demonstrations, 17 days this year (with more to come), mostly in Greater Manchester but with a few away events. One I particularly enjoyed was a week-end at Eastham Country Park, in Wirral. This was devoted to woodland and other traditional crafts. There was peg, rake, hurdle, basket and charcoal making, with a smithy in operation (I was able to have an adze blade bent for chair making), a well as three bodgers using different styles. I turned a full set of parts for a Windsor chair out of some beautiful Sweet Chestnut. The public took a great interest, as always seems to be the case, and such events offer the chance to explain the sustainable management and use of our woodlands.

Most of you will have come across the phrase "Sustainable Development" and some may have wondered what it means. You are not on your own; there has been debate, in planning and other circles, as to its meaning. There is actually not a mystery - "Sustainable Development means living within the

natural carrying capacity of the earth - not taking out more than we put back" (WWF News). I prefer the term "Sustainable Society" as the word development seems to infer ever increasing production. Prime examples of what are not "Sustainable Development", are; expansion of airports and building of more motorways; both activities encouraging unnecessary transport of both goods and people. To be sustainable, we should cater for our needs, by local manufacture and only import what is vital to our lives. There is a problem in that the current economic ethos seems to be to make as much as possible using as few people as possible. The principle outcome of this is, unemployment; a terrible waste of a renewable energy source; human effort. To be sustainable we should be making as little as necessary using as many people as possible; I think such an alternative economic ethos would be an anathema to government (both national and local), and most industrialists, but it's the way we must go if there is to be any future for the earth's environment.

What has all this raving to do with Manchester Wildlife? Our woodland management and crafts are a sustainable way of using a local resource. I have been involved with much woodland management work and been concerned that most of the timber has been wasted on bonfires and habitat piles. Using the products of coppicing to make furniture, and other useful items, is far more productive. If coppiced, trees will produce more timber, and live longer, than if left to grow to maturity. To win this timber, without the use of machinery, and then fashion it into chair legs or rakes, using simple hand tools, is low on input and high on output. To coppice woodland by rotation means that every 6-20 years you can return to find that there is as much timber as the last time. An infinite supply which is far more sustainable than clear felling. If you put in you will always be able to take back. In woodland crafts, such as bodging, the wood is used "green" and can be worked in situ; you only take away the finished product which will season more quickly than bulk timber, thus saving the time, and expense, of transport and storage.

One problem we have, at present, is that to put on bodging demonstrations it is necessary to use a vehicle to move the equipment around. If craft centres can be established in many

parts of Manchester then we will be able to get our message across without carting stuff about, which is not sustainable. We will be able to teach people "new" skills and maybe even help to create employment. So, what if these "new" skills are 3000 years old, dating back to Ancient Greece and the Iron Age; they worked then and I think they are still relevant to today. There is presently sufficient woodland, in Greater Manchester, which is desperately in need of management, to be able to sustain a certain amount of traditional crafts. Many trees have been planted in recent years, and the Red Rose Forest should provide more, to supply timber for future needs but we require proper planting schemes, not pseudo designer landscaping to pretty-up office developments.

A Craft Centre could be set up at Parrs Wood CRE, at least on a temporary basis but what we need is a vacant workshop, near woodland. We hear of the possibility of a new visitor centre at Chorlton Water Park; this sounds like an ideal location.

The last two years have been an interesting, learning experience; acquiring the skills of wood turning and chair making and finding out more about our traditional crafts and their relevance to the modern day. I have attended three conferences, recently; the first, "A Seed in Time", about Community Forestry, was rather a waste of time (though I only attended for one day, because of the high cost). The Bodger's Annual Conference was an excellent and enjoyable event; meeting many like-minded folk and learning about their different ways and skills, and all in the ideal setting of the Greenwood Trust, at Coalbrook Dale. More recently, at Sheffield, a one day seminar entitled "Woodlands Old and New" was most interesting and educational. Sheffield has 6,000 acres of woodland (the most wooded city in Britain) and at least 35 Ancient Woods; they also have a craft centre with 3 pole-lathes. The learning will go on and we hope to acquire new crafts and skills to make our project all the more worthwhile (Unity fancies a go at basket making). What would you like to try; get in touch, we might be able to find you a job.

Quote of the Year? - "The Social and Psychological values of nature in the city cannot be over-estimated" - BT Environment City Review of Sustainability.

Odds and Ends

GOOD NEWS ON ROADS - Two motorway schemes have been stopped by the DpT, both because of public pressure. The M6-M56 link, which would have cut a swathe through Trafford countryside, has been cancelled. The M1-M62 link, in Yorkshire, is also a goner. Keep it up, DpT, don't stop now - cancel the rest and save millions. There is still much protest over other road schemes; keep it up, public opinion can make a difference.

More on Ponds - Dave Bentley has found a Nationally Notable species at Trafford Ecology Park. A diving beetle, Rhantus suturalis which is thought to occur in only between 31 and 100 10km squares, in Britain. We would like to thank Dave for all his hard work at the Old Abbey Pond, in Hulme. After an in depth study he has now found 43 species of pond animals; and counting.

MANCHESTER FOR SALE? - We hear that Manchester City Council is holding an auction sale of their land and properties; from our precious open spaces to shops. Apparently nothing is safe, except Parks! If this is true it's a disgrace, and to sell any of our Parks would provoke public outrage, but will they be the only open space we have left except for the River Valleys? So much for the Manchester countryside! We believe that the sale is to take place this month.

City Wagtails - We have reported sightings of Grey Wagtails, in Manchester, in previous Magpies; they are normally a bird of rural areas but seem to be developing a liking for cities. There are large roosts in Hulme's derelict deck access flats; they feed at the Old Abbey Pond. Are these birds changing their habits?

F.O.M.V - We have recently held talks with the Friends of the Mersey Valley to discuss the possibility of a joint future. The Friends were formed to counter a threat from Trafford Council to withdraw from the management of the Mersey Valley. Since this early success they have been busy countering other threats and promoting the Valley as a place for wildlife and public enjoyment. It can be very difficult to maintain the momentum, as we know, and our aims being similar, it would

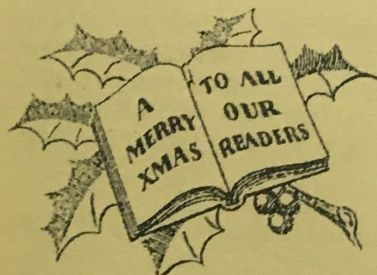
make sense to join together; indeed, FOMV and MW have members in common and if we can share the work load we should be more effective. Too many cooks make light work!

Losing Open Space? - This seems to be a problem in Manchester but probably no more so than in the other Greater Manchester District. How is the open space situation in your Borough? Is it diminishing or increasing? Why not get in touch? Let us know and we will print your views in **Magpie**. //

Copy date for the next **Magpie** is the 11th of January

A Sustainable Christmas to all Our Readers

And for an Environmentally Friendly Christmas Present



the
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The **Ethical Consumer** is available as a bi-monthly magazine and as a Shopping Guide featuring 30 food, drink & household products.

Please send off for a FREE catalogue to ECRA Publishing Ltd (MW), FREEPOST (MR9429), Manchester M1 8DP

NOTE DpT should read DTP = Department of Transport.

Useful Contacts

Insects Peter Hardy - 969 4771 (evenings & weekends)

Birds RSPB Stockport - Tony O'Neill - 962 2449
RSPB Manchester - Simeon Rydz - 434 2720

Bird of Prey Rescue - Brian Wilcocks - 945 3831

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Sale & Altrincham - Shelagh Aston - 275 3146 (day) 928 2223
Salford & Trafford - Brian Taylor - 872 7640 (day)
Stockport - Kim Porter - 0625 874729 (weekends & evenings)

Cheshire Wildlife Trust

North Group (Trafford) - Liz Blackman (Chair) - 962 6748
Stockport & Tameside - Rhian Law (Secretary) - 0663 743070
Wilmslow Group - Tony Browne - 436 1761

Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Bolton Wildlife Project - Annie Surtees - 0204 361847

Manchester Friends of the Earth - 13 Paton Street - 236 4155
Friends of the Mersey Valley - Ann Buckingham - 881 1814

Mersey Valley Wardens - Sale 905 1100 - Chorlton 881 5639

Manchester City Conservation Officers - 273 5843

Elaine Norsworthy - Countryside Officer
Graeme McVitie - Woodland Officer

Manchester Wildlife is a networking organisation - You are included on our contact list; are we included on yours? Other groups might like to come to a similar arrangement!

Copyright Manchester Wildlife: 82 Crantock Dr., Heald Green, Stockport. SK8 3HA Tel. 437 7040

The "**Magpie**" is the newsletter of Manchester Wildlife - the opinions expressed within its pages are not necessarily those of M.W. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in **Magpie** is correct, we cannot be held responsible for any mistakes in the text. Likewise, anyone who undertakes any project based on the information in these pages does so at their own risk.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)

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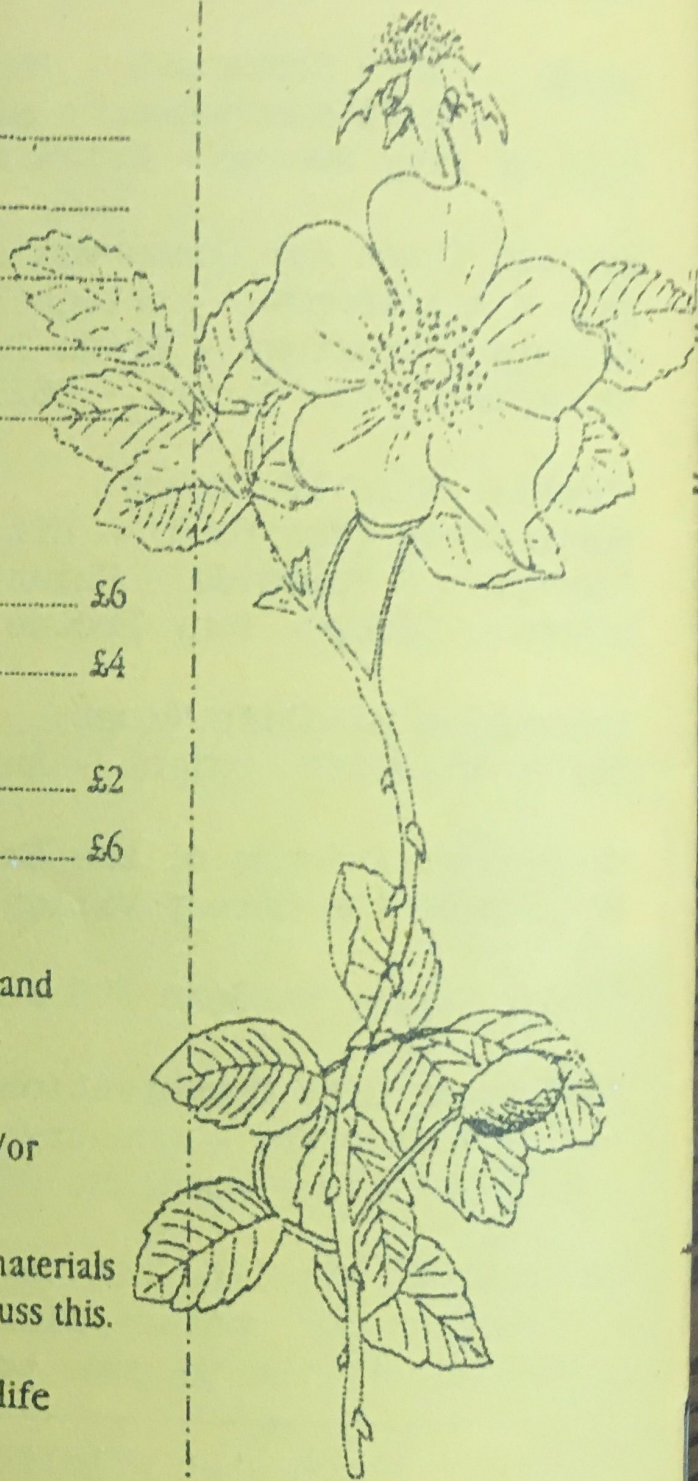
- ☐ Family membership £6
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- ☐ I am interested in sponsoring a Newsletter and/or
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in exchange for publicity and would like to discuss this.

Please list your particular interests in Wildlife
and Conservation -

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Please send completed forms with cheques made
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to:

Ian Brown
82 Crantock Drive
Heald Green
Cheadle
Cheshire SK8 3HA

*Space here for Sponsor's
Name + Logo + Phone No.
Inquiries to Editor - 061 437 7040*



Events: Past, Present and Future

Past Events

The **Green Fun Day** at Wythenhawe Park was a fun day; first time we have had the chance to turn Birch. A good crowd of folk about and we made contact with a basket maker and the Styal Country Park Rangers, who booked our bodging demonstration for their craft event. The **Family Fun Day and Rural Show** at Parrs Wood CRE was extremely well attended with a never ending stream of visitors to see our bodging and exhibition. We could have done with some help as both Anthony and Ian hardly had the chance of a break, but thanks to John Carroll, regular volunteer with the BTCV, the bodger managed a few minutes relief. There was a farrier, basket maker, Tools for Self Reliance, Rare Breeds, Falconry and many other attractions; this must be the best show in Manchester. The **Hay Cutting** at Hough End Clough went well; this time we had a brush cutter which made easy work of the nettles and we made two large hay stacks. Another good days work. **Bodgin with Oldham & Rochdale Groundwork** in the Ashworth Valley was unusual in that it was on the top of a hill. Not enormous crowds, but those who came showed intelligent interest. Many crafts on show and Unity got her picture in the Rochdale Observer, showing off her skill on the shaving horse. The **Reddish Mini-wood** hay cutting day was cancelled but the **Abbey Villa Pond Clean-up** was a stupendous event; this is fully reported in the newsletter. The **Painswick Park Meadow Mowing** turned into a scrub bashing day. This wildflower meadow is in danger of being overrun by willows so we are undertaking a programme to keep them under control. Only three volunteers and, as the Bodger was at Eastham Country Park, tools were limited as no car was available.

Future Events

There are a few possible events which we have not, as yet, been able to finalise. There is a chance that we will be managing an area of woodland in the **Mersey Valley** and a task at Parrs Wood is a distinct possibility. Look out for our **Woodland Craft** events. In the meantime there should be plenty to keep you occupied on our **Events List**. We may be doing bodging demonstrations for the Red Rose Forest. These will take place in Trafford, Bury, Salford, Wigan, Bolton and Manchester. Would you like to assist at any of these events? If so contact the Bodger on 437 7040.

Last time we promised you a report on the **Metro Across the Mersey**; there is something to tell but we are not yet in possession of all the details and we ran out of space in the newsletter. Unity's report on the **Angels from Paradise** walk got the chop for the same reason, and the Editor has not yet found the script. At least we've something for the next **Magpie**, though finding articles is not usually a problem. Even so, if you have an article or story which you would like us to publish, sent it along, we hardly ever refuse.

Jim Hepidus
Daphne Laureola
March Hare
Merton Niven
Mc Mowse
Des Poiler
The Bodger
Malcolm Practice
WISH YOU
A
MERRY
CHRISTMAS



EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Please try to take part in as many events as possible. It is best to phone the contact to make sure there are no alterations.

November 1993

- Tuesday 9th **Pub Meeting** - Parrs Wood Hotel, Junction of School Lane/Parrs Wood Road, East Didsbury. Time 7.30 p.m. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.
- Thursday 18th **Strategic Planning Meeting** - Time 7.30pm. At the home of Unity Kelly 13 Ruskin Avenue, Rusholme. Contact 226 4583.
- Friday 19th **Wildflowers of the Balkans** - Cheshire Wildlife Trust event. Talk and slide show by David Bishop. Venue Altrincham Library. Time 7.45pm Entrance fee 80p for non CWT members,
- Thursday 25th **General Meeting** - Time 7.30 pm. At the home of Julia Gravestock, 9 Fairhaven Avenue (off Sandy Lane), Chorlton. Contact 860 7602.
- Sunday 28th **Tree Fair** - Trafford Ecology Park. Woodcrafts, Tree Art, Stalls, Exhibitions, BBQ. We will be bodging. Time 12 noon to 4pm Contact Kate Breitholtz 746 9585.
- Tuesday 30th **The Birds of Russia** - CWT event. Talk by Dr. Algirdas Kynstautus. Stockport Town Hall at 7.30pm. A must for keen ornithologists. £3.

December 1993

- Saturday 4th **Parrs Wood Christmas Fair** - At Parrs Wood Centre for Rural Education East Didsbury. Come and buy your eco-friendly Christmas presents. Open from 12 noon to 4pm. Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583.
- Sunday 5th **Tree Event** - Croal/Irwell Valley Wardens. Tree dressing and Crafts. We'll be bodging (again!). At Rock Hall, Moses Gate Country Park, Farnsworth. Contact Iain Brown 0204 71561
- Sunday 12th **English Martyrs School** - Tree management and grass cutting. Time 11-3 at Manley Road (Alexandra Road South), Whalley Range. Wear old clothes and bring refreshments. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.
- Tuesday 14th **Pub Meeting** - Parrs Wood Hotel, Junction of School Lane/Parrs Wood Road, East Didsbury. Time 7.30 p.m. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.

January 1994

- Tuesday 11th **Pub Meeting** - Parrs Wood Hotel, Junction of School Lane/Parrs Wood Road, East Didsbury. Time 7.30 p.m. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.
- Tuesday 18th **Strategic Planning Meeting** - Time 7.30pm. At the home of Unity Kelly 13 Ruskin Avenue, Rusholme. Contact 226 4583.
- Sunday 23rd **Woodland Management** - Big Wood Simonway/Shadowmoss Road, Wythenshawe Continuing coppicing work started last year. Wear old clothes and wellies. Time 11 -3. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.
- Thursday 25th **General Meeting** - Time 7.30 pm. At the home of Unity Kelly, 13 Ruskin Avenue, Rusholme. Contact 226 4583

February 1994

- Tuesday 8th **Pub Meeting** - Parrs Wood Hotel, Junction of School Lane/Parrs Wood Road, East Didsbury. Time 7.30 p.m. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040.

STOP PRESS

A REPORT ON OUR EVENTS IS TO BE FOUND OVERLEAF

February 1994

Sunday 13th "Bramble Clearing" - at Parrs Wood CRE, East Didsbury Time 11-4 Contact Ian Brown. 437 7040.