



The Wheathampstead Award



As you may know St Albans Civic Society, whose aims and objectives for St Albans are similar to our own for Wheathampstead, presents an annual award for what it considers to

be the best development and design initiative of the year. The Civic Society award is however limited to the city of St Albans, and achievements in the nearby villages and countryside are not eligible.

WDPS has decided to present an award for the best development and design initiative in Wheathampstead and the surrounding district. The initiative could relate to buildings or to open space. The project could be of any size. The important point is that the initiative should have contributed to the concepts of conserving what is best about Wheathampstead and of making sure that new projects are sympathetic to what already exists. We plan to present our first award at our AGM on 25 February 2011.

If you would like to nominate a project, or an individual or group of people for the work they have done, please either email the address below or write to Sue Johnston, 9 Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, AL4 8AN. The award will not be of significant monetary value, but we feel sure that the recognition will be much appreciated.

Priority issues

In our June newsletter we asked readers to raise issues which they believe WDPS should tackle in addition to the priorities we listed in that edition. We shall publish details of these in our next newsletter, along with a note on what we are doing about them.



REPRIEVE FOR OLD RECTORY

October 25th was a great day for the village. At long last a planning application was approved which will mean that the Old Rectory, for so long in a sad state of dilapidation, will be repaired.

Thanks to a concerted effort from Wheathampstead Parish Council, WDPS and the local traders' association WEB, District Councillors approved the application submitted by the current owners, Hammersmatch Ltd.

The Old Rectory will be changed back to its original use as a residence. Six flats will replace the empty building which served as a canteen when the site was occupied by *Helmets* as a factory; these will be in a similar style to the King Edward Place development across the road.

And, very importantly, a section of the walled garden behind the Old Rectory will be gifted to the Parish as a public amenity. As a result we shall in the future all be able to enjoy access to this tranquil spot in the heart of Wheathampstead and appreciate the crinkle-crankle wall, the only structure of its kind in Hertfordshire.

WDPS will continue to work with the Parish Council to help the village make the most of what will become an important public space. We are hoping too that the goodwill generated by our active support for the planning application will enable WDPS to pursue its discussions with Hammersmatch about providing access to the river opposite the Bull.

**Annual General Meeting:
Friday, 25th February 2011
8 pm, Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead
All are welcome.
Further details will follow in the New Year**

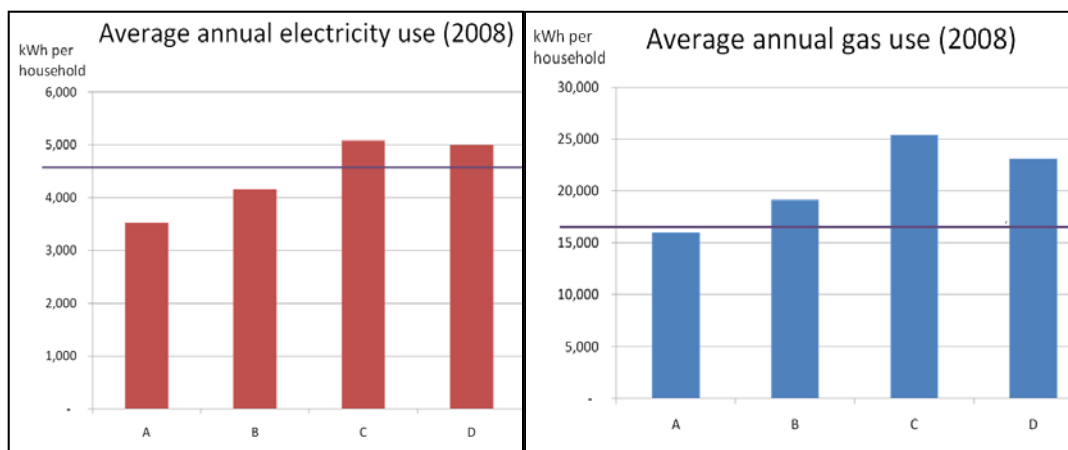
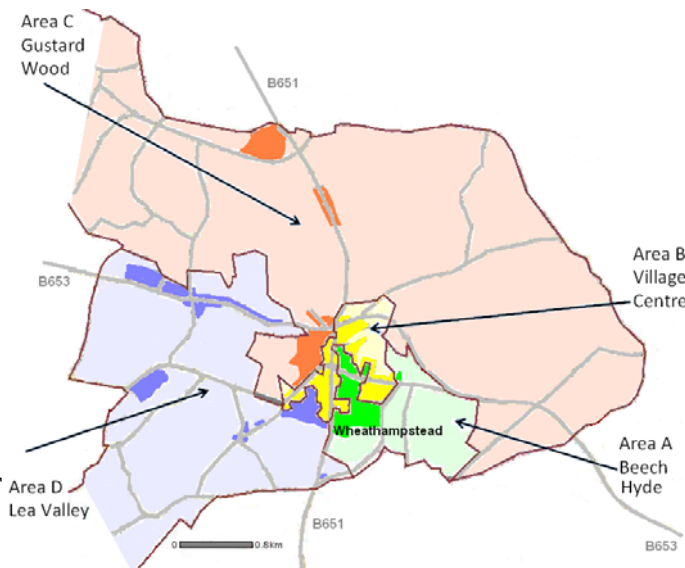
Energy Conservation Update

It was great to see so many of you drop by our stall on Village Day. Your encouragement for what we do is very motivating, and 15 new members joined us that day.

It was especially rewarding to see how interested many people were in energy conservation – our thanks go to Energy Saving Trust for supporting us with their informative stand next to ours. And we were particularly delighted to receive some special support from the Department of Energy and Climate Change, who went to the trouble of letting us have energy consumption statistics for Wheathampstead, split into the four local census areas.

These figures (see below) will act as an excellent base line against which we can measure the results of the efforts that so many people are making to reduce energy usage in their homes and businesses.

We are aware of many examples of members who have followed up the energy saving advice they have received, improving their insulation or installing solar panels. It will be interesting to see how each of the local census areas fares in reducing their energy consumption.



Above.: Map of the parish showing the 4 local census areas.

Left: Electricity and Gas use in 2008 per local census area. The horizontal line is the average across the East of England

WDPS or not?!

The WDPS Committee have been considering a change of name following feedback that "Wheathampstead and District Preservation Society" does not accurately reflect the type of projects we become involved in.

In recent months, we have been involved in projects as diverse as:

spearheading a campaign for Wheathampstead to reduce its energy usage in association with the Energy Saving Trust; promoting the use of suitable signage and advertising by village businesses; painting a children's playground; liaising with local councils over planning applications which we felt would detract from the spirit and character of our village and campaigning against the possible re-opening of Blackbridge Tip.

So... what do you think? Should WDPS change its name to reflect the varied nature of our work? Do we need to "move with the times"?! What should we be called? Or do you think that we are "known" as WDPS and should remain so?

Whatever your views, please let us know by emailing info@wheathampsteadpreservation.org.uk or writing to Sue Johnston, 9 Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, AL4 8AN.

Many hands make light work

Could you spare an hour or so one weekend to help maintain our beautiful village?

WDPS need more pairs of hands for some ongoing work around the village. In the coming weeks, we plan to plant bulbs at the entrances to the village to provide a stunning Spring display, clear weeds and debris from the river in the village centre and clean some of the village signs that are starting to look a little "grubby"!

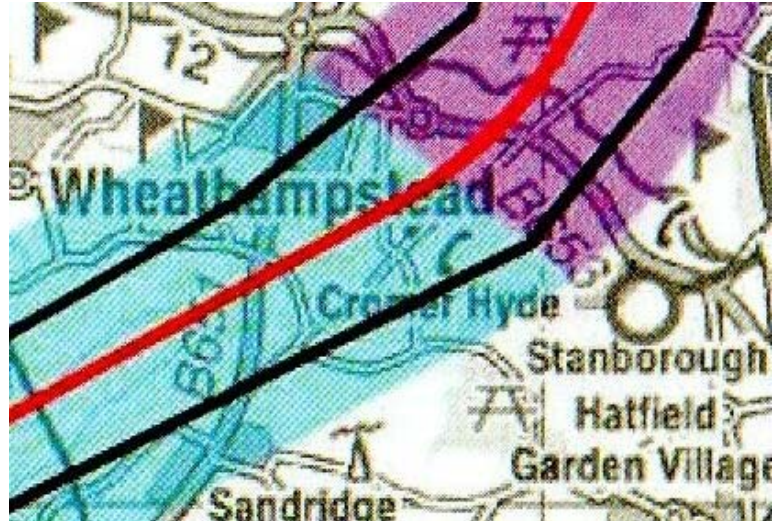


Planting bulbs around the new Wheathampstead signs. We planted snowdrops and acornites earlier in the year.

If you could help, for even an hour or so, please contact one of the Committee and we'd be delighted to welcome you to our Working Party for whatever activity you would like to become involved in. All materials are provided and we're a fun bunch of people!! So why don't you get involved and do something positive one weekend to help preserve Wheathampstead?

Flight Path changes on hold

NATS (National Air Traffic Services) announced on 13 October that it has postponed its plans to change the air traffic routes that pass over the area to the north of London. These are plans which, as reported in previous editions of the newsletter, would have resulted in increased aircraft noise over Wheathampstead.



The easterly flight path (red) for destinations to the south west that NATS proposed would have passed just to the south of Wheathampstead.

NATS' change of heart results from the reduction that has occurred since 2008 in air traffic levels over the UK. Its forecast is currently that the volume of UK air traffic will not return to the levels of 2007 until 2013 - 14 at the earliest.

This is not the end of the story, however, as NATS plans to incorporate its review of the airspace north of London into a wider review that will cover much of southern England. WDPS will continue to monitor closely what any changes that NATS proposes will mean for Wheathampstead.

Recommend a friend!

Do you have friends or neighbours who care as passionately about our beautiful village as you do? Why don't you ask them to join us? The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the local community.

Members benefit from regular newsletters and events, the opportunity to give "hands-on" help to preserve our village, and the knowledge that they are part of a lively organisation which is proactively protecting our unique village environment. Joining is simple and only costs £5 per year, per household. The standing order forms are available from our website, or can be obtained from Madeleine Salter (01582 831658).

Pass on the message!

Grade II wall in peril



The Grade II listed Elizabethan wall and archway on the Station Road boundary of Place Farm are falling into disrepair.

The base of the wall is in a particularly poor state, as water is regularly splashed up by cars. The combination of water and frost is also eroding the brickwork and the fine stone in the archway and damaging the oak door. The archway is of Reigate Stone and is now irreplaceable.

At the top of the wall there is another danger: here it is likely that ivy is causing significant damage.

Our thanks go to Robert Strachan for raising this issue. We are currently working with GHM to see how the wall can best be restored and protected.

Round the Roundabout

We were very surprised to see solar panels sprouting like giant beanstalks at the Station Road roundabout. We have received several letters from members and other residents objecting to the added clutter that the panels cause.

We were particularly disappointed as, before this happened, we had been in active discussions with Herts Highways about reducing the volume of street clutter at the roundabout. In fact, we had a conversation with them in the week before the work was carried out, and Herts Highways made no mention of their plans to erect the panels.



We are working with Wheathampstead Parish Council to arrange for Herts Highways to visit the roundabout again and to see if we can persuade them to replace the four panels with a single solar panel. This would need to be larger but it could be sited lower down and would therefore be less obtrusive.

WDPS strongly supports the principle of deriving energy from solar panels as our current energy saving campaign demonstrates, but we believe that wherever possible this should be done in an aesthetically pleasing way. In this case a far less unsightly solution is possible.

David Watson moves to Wales

We are sorry to tell you that, after sterling service as our Treasurer, David Watson will shortly be leaving the WDPS Committee. Although this is sad news for us, it is good news for David who is braving the rain and moving to Llantwit Major in South Wales to be near his son and grandson. We heartily thank David for the excellent job that he has done, and we wish him and Anne all the very best in their new home. The allotments of South Wales will not know what has hit them!

A New Treasurer

We are very lucky that another committee mem-

ber, Lisa Hobden, has agreed to step into the breach. She will do a fine job, and has been given a flying start as David has left our accounts in first class order.

Would you like to join the committee?

This has, of course, left us short of at least one committee member. We are sure that there are lots of talented WDPS members with skills and enthusiasm which would be invaluable to the committee. If you would like to join us please send an email to the address on the WDPS website, or write to our Secretary, Sue Johnston, at 9 Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead AL4 8AN.