

Wivenhoe,  
Essex.

THE ELECTIONS TO THE WIVENHOE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL - 1970

Dear Candidate,

At the recent Annual General Meeting of the Wivenhoe Society a resolution was passed that this year's candidates for the council elections should be sent a questionnaire. Here, then, are a round dozen questions for your attention on matters pertinent to the aims and objects of the society.

1. Are you in favour of more council meetings to which the public are admitted?
2. Are you in favour of fuller press coverage of council meetings?
3. Are you satisfied with the present facilities for football in Wivenhoe?
4. Are you satisfied with the present facilities for tennis in Wivenhoe?
5. Do you want the Wivenhoe Wood to remain as an amenity to the town or to be developed for housing?
6. Are you in favour of repairing the footpath from Wivenhoe to the Hythe? (Footpath no.8)
7. Do you want the Rowhedge Ferry Road to remain open?
8. Do you want Park Road to be made up?
9. Are you in favour of a pedestrian crossing at the junction of the Colchester Road and Heath Road?
10. Do you think that Wivenhoe needs its own swimming-pool?
11. Are you prepared to speak and answer questions at a public meeting before the election?
12. What ideas have you for Wivenhoe?

If you would like to answer some or all of these questions please send your list of replies to me at the above address and I will then publish the same both to our members and to the press. As you see, all the questions save the last can be answered either in one word or more fully. I hope that you will not find this questionnaire - the first, to my knowledge that has yet been sent out - at all formidable. I think that you will agree that in the past there has been too much apathy in local elections and that it is in your interest to change all that, if we can.

There is current a rather dreadful expression which is used particularly with respect to politics, both local and national: "I don't want to know ...". But there exists at least one group of people who does want to know - the Wivenhoe Society.

Yours faithfully,

N.A.M. BUTLER  
(HON. SECRETARY)

And here are Councillor Cracknell's answers. We would like to say that we are grateful that a Councillor of his long-standing has taken an interest in the questionnaire:

1. At present Standing Orders of Council prohibit the public and press attending committee meetings.
2. The minutes of all committee meetings are available and these are discussed at the monthly meeting which is open to the public. The attendance at these meetings averages 2 or 3 persons.
3. 4. & 10. If money becomes available there are many improvements for sport we would like to make. The Council hope to improve the football pitch but it would not be possible to provide a pitch comparable to the University pitch.
5. The Council agreed with the Essex County Council when outline planning was refused by them.
6. The footpath was the responsibility of the River Board. It would be too costly for Wivenhoe Ratepayers to bear this expense without other aid.
7. The Council did not object to Rowhedge Ferry Road being closed.
8. The making up of Park Road is being proceeded with, and the Council's Architect is preparing the costs for each frontage owner.
9. This is a County Road and the Council have for many years tried to get an improvement in this area. I would be in favour of a crossing and other improvements that have been promised by the County.
12. As a native of Wivenhoe I have always tried to preserve that which is good and to support anything that will continue to make Wivenhoe a happy Town.

On page 2 of the Newsletter, referring to the failure of the other candidates to reply to the Questionnaire, I said: "The rest is silence, but perhaps the thoughtful voter may find it an indicative one".

But with the arrival of replies from Councillor Cracknell and Mr. Langford-Allen the position has changed. Now only three out of eight candidates have not answered. I gave the Questionnaires for Mr. Carlin and Mrs. Baker to Mr. Morsley but just in case he has not yet had time to deliver them I have sent out two more through the post and if I receive replies will quote them in full in the next Newsletter for future reference.

Meanwhile, here are Mr. Langford-Allen's answers. He says that he is very glad of the opportunity of giving his views, and has pleasure in listing his answers:

1. I would support any move to extend the number of meetings open to the public and Press; council decisions are of vital concern to the village, and it is only reasonable that they should be taken in the light of the people.
2. Not everyone would be able to come to a council meeting, even if they were allowed. It is therefore obvious that greater Press coverage would be a very good thing.
3. The liaison with the University provides excellent pitches; in the long term I would like to see an improved Wivenhoe pitch available.
4. I am not satisfied with the present facilities - who is? - and would try to improve the situation.
5. Without qualification I would be against any attempt to destroy the wood, as I would have fought previous threats to our natural amenities.
6. I am fully in favour of repairing and maintaining not only this footpath but all others in the village and around it.
7. Emphatically in favour of it remaining open. I am strongly against the attempts to close the road.
8. Cost is an important factor here; as soon as it can be justified financially I would support the making-up of Park Rd.
9. I am in favour; I would also support an enquiry into the siting of other crossings and reviewing the parking restrictions (especially at the Cross).
10. I am not convinced that the large capital cost would be justified at present; possibly something could be arranged in association with the new Junior School.
11. An opportunity of speak and answer questions would be welcome.
12. I have many, of varying practicality: improvement of the local amenities, re-making the many poor condition roads, provision of more and better facilities for entertainment; perhaps as important is the fact that I would be prepared to receive the ideas of other people. No single person can hope to produce a complete plan for a town - with help and advice from others it becomes possible. If elected, I should hope to be able to listen to anyone with an idea for Wivenhoe. I can't say more than that!