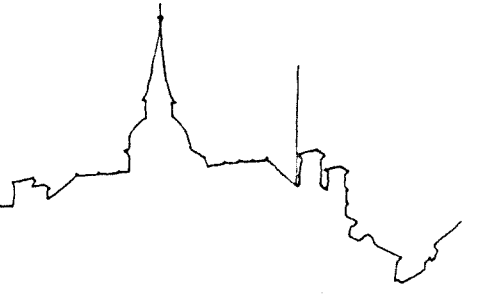


# Towcester Town Crier

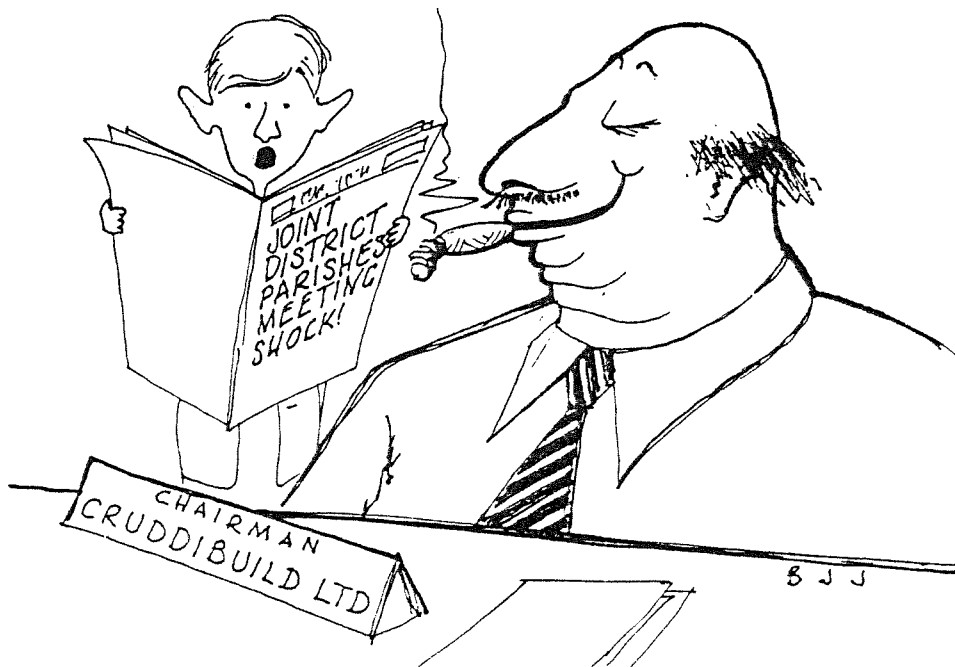


No.14 March 1986 Town Hall, Towcester.

REPORT FROM THE ANNUAL JOINT MEETING OF THE DISTRICT AND PARISH COUNCILS BY TOM MINNS, VICE-CHAIRMAN OF TOWCESTER PARISH COUNCIL: Mrs Orchard and myself represented the Towcester Parish Council. We raised three points:

- 1 When will the South Northants District Council allow a parish council representative to attend site planning meetings?
- 2 What is the South Northants District Council's policy on enforcing their planning decisions?
- 3 When is the South Northants District Council going to provide comprehensive leisure facilities for Towcester and the surrounding district.

This meeting is only consultative. No decisions can be made, but it does allow Parish Councils to criticise the South Northants District Council and get some answers. Councillors Sheppard and Huntrods gave quite good answers to many questions as did the executive officers. However, many Parish Councils asked similar questions, especially on planning matters, which were not answered satisfactorily.



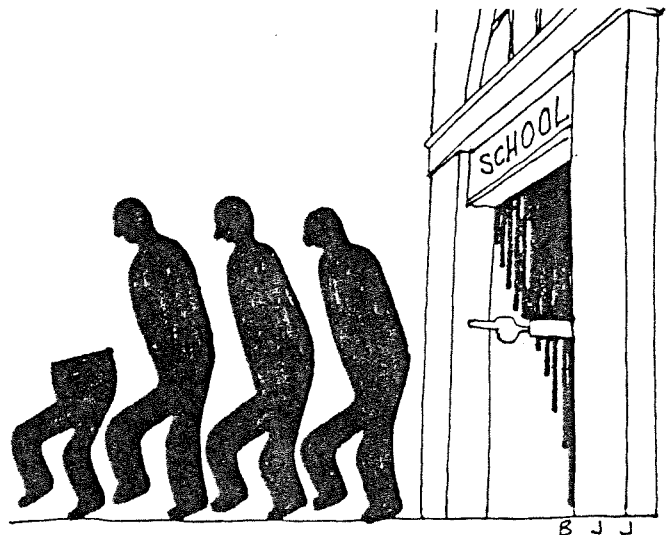
"..... and if SNDC were to try to enforce planning decisions it would cost them too much, because developers would probably appeal against them and, even if they lost, it would ....."

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FROM IAN MILLER: Work has started on the footpaths along the A5 south of Towcester. In November the Department of Transport asked the County to submit bids for work on trunk roads for this financial year. I'm pleased to say that a scheme to improve these footways was accepted. Work started at the A508 roundabout by Old Stratford and is working its way northwards. I hope it gets to Heathencote soon.

Two issues have dominated the County Council this past month, the County Budget and Education. The budget passed by the administration was not the one originally proposed. Up until mid January it looked as if the rules for spending dictated by Central Government would allow services to be maintained, without a significant rate rise. Then the Government told us the bad news. They'd changed the rules so that County Councils would have less to spend before being penalised. I voted against the decision to cut teaching staff.

The County Council's Auditors have just issued a report which says that Rate Support Grant does not take Northamptonshire's exceptionally high proportion of school age population (18%) sufficiently into account. In other words the independent experts who monitor how the County Council spend ratepayers money say they don't think Central Government are being fair to the ratepayers of Northamptonshire.

Locally one effect is to cut 3.5 teachers from Sponne School's staff of 62.5, a little over 5.5%. In practice that is not easy to organise as the size of year groups and subject choices rarely arrange themselves to maximise the efficient use of staff. This cut also coincides with the introduction of a new curriculum for the GCSE exams, this will inevitably involve teachers in a significant amount of additional work preparing new material.



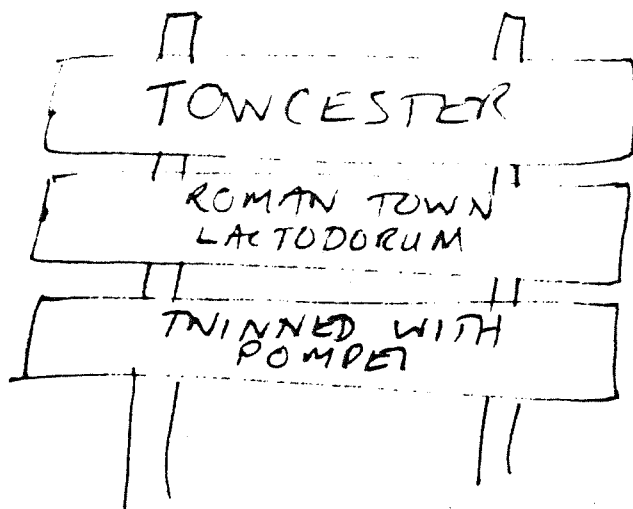
The Government's Education Inspectors have already said that while they approve of the County Council's policy of starting children at school in the September following their fourth birthday, they were worried that reception classes were too large for such young children. At the budget meeting I warned that any worsening of the present pupil/teacher ratio through cuts at primary schools would make this situation worse and endanger the 4+ policy. I have been told there will be staff cuts at primary schools.

The Minister of State for Education, Mr Chris Patten, put forward a lack of public pressure as an explanation of why the Government did not put more resources into education. He said on BBC TV on February 9th:

"Public expenditure priorities reflect public pressures."  
If that really is the way this Government works, anyone who believes education is important should be writing to their MP and the Ministers responsible demanding a higher priority.

Returning to the Budget, the County Rate is up by 12.5%. Had Central Government left the Support Grant as it was, the Rate rise would have been about the same as inflation and there would have been fewer cuts in services.

TOWCESTER - BLAIN.



Well, not quite! But what is Twinning? The Joint Twinning Committee has this to say (1984):

A Twinning between two communities is the making of a public statement of intent between the two of them, a way of giving open and general acceptance to a bond of friendship and of continuing good-will between the two. As time goes by it means making opportunities for groups large and small, individuals and families, to get together on each other's home ground, to

entertain each other, to make and share enjoyment together; hospitality freely given and freely received.

The twinning event itself may not conform to any set plan, but when all is said and done these things usually fall into a recognisable pattern. For instance the major highlight is likely to be a dinner, at which everyone can get together in a convivial atmosphere; a speech or two saying what we have in mind; a charter which sums it all up in simple terms signed by representatives from both communities; a toast to cement the bond; and, music maestro please - to dance into the night to show what we mean by it all. Then, in addition, there are activities which could be done at other times during the weekend such as; planting a fine young sapling say, as a symbol of a promising future; or the naming of a public garden or street after some feature of our new twin-town; plus get-togethers and trips.

This then is the likely pattern of events of a twinning, together with the principle behind them.

Twinning can involve nurses, philatelists, footballers, hockey players, cyclists, motor-cyclists, athletes, morris dancers, fencers, girl guides, musicians, fire officers, police officers, members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, technical college students and boys' clubs, senior citizens and school children, to name but a few.

Why do it at all? Well surely that speaks for itself. It leads us to extend our horizons in exciting and enjoyable ways, we make new friendships with new neighbours abroad, join in their way of life, sample the delights of their country, culture, climate, cuisine and wine, and in our turn take equal delight in entertaining them here in our own homes and enjoy showing much of what this country has for them. There are many levels on which such contacts bring rewards and understandings once the initial steps have been taken.

As far as Towcester is concerned, we have been invited by the French town of Blain to consider a twinning. Blain is situated in the Loire-Atlantique region of France, near Nantes. It has several similarities with Towcester; a shoe industry, a Roman past, etc.. So it might be a good idea to set up this twinning. Leaders of many groups and organisations in the town have been asked to comment on the idea. (If your group has been missed out - sorry!) If it is supported we will do what we can to fix it. If you are interested and would like more information, ring Alex Taylor (Towcester 50510).

**LETTER FROM RICHARD J K NICHOLAS** On 13th March 1986 permission was given by the SNDC Planning Committee for five mature and healthy lime trees in Watling Street, Towcester to be felled. The trees, about 100 years old and with a life expectancy of a further 100 years are the subject of a Group Tree Preservation Order because they are considered to be a visual amenity in the street scene of this small historic town. They are five of only six mature trees on the town's main street frontage.

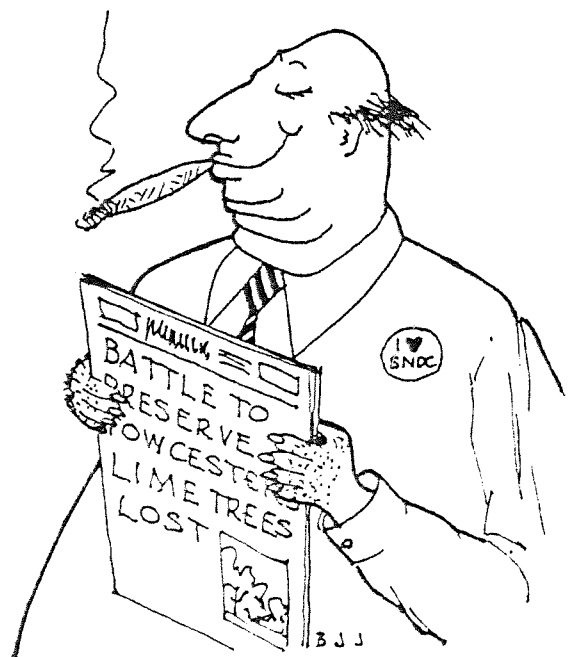
The Parish Council objected to their destruction as did the Towcester Local History Society and the Towcester Conservation Group. Other residents of the town concerned by the application expressed their objection individually to the District Council. It is also worth recalling that four years ago 1500 people signed a petition to keep these trees when they were under threat from another developer. However, the present applicant states that he does not consider the trees to be an amenity and that he requires access to his land at this point, irrespective of the fact that a long used and safer access already exists north of the Silverstone Brook.

At the SNDC Planning Committee meeting our two Councillors Mrs Joyce Herbert and Mr Geoff Smith both pleaded the case for retention of the trees but their arguments were ignored. The trees therefore now stand condemned.

In other historic towns up and down this country conservation is understood and practised to the benefit of all.

Development can take place without loss of irreplaceable assets. Where planners and developers are willing to work with the broad Community in mind instead of the narrow confines of self-interest.

In the light of the impending loss of these trees together with the disfiguring of listed buildings within the Conservation Area we must ask ourselves "what price conservation in Towcester?". This of course begs a further question - "what is the price and who the beneficiary?". It is most certainly and demonstrably not Towcester.



**TOWCESTRIANS CRICKET CLUB:** Now that Towcestrians have entered their second Saturday XI into the Northamptonshire Alliance Cricket League, both sides will be playing league cricket in 1986.

The senior side has played two fairly successful seasons in the Northants County League which has prompted the Club to join the Alliance League. "We hope to foster even more interest in the Club locally", said Chairman Gerald Chidwick. "We have splendid facilities at Greens Norton Road and with the existence of the two league sides, a Sunday XI, plus two junior sides and occasional afternoon and evening fixtures, we believe we can cater for all tastes!"

Anyone interested in joining the Towcestrians should contact the Secretary, David Bowyer, on 0908-563218 or Team Secretary, Alan Wiffill, on 0327-860464.

**PROPOSED LEISURE CENTRE:** As a result of a meeting between the SNDC and Towcester Parish Council to discuss Sports and Leisure facilities in the district, the SNDC proposed that Towcester Parish take responsibility for the new proposed Leisure Centre.

At the meeting, the SNDC indicated that they would look seriously at a more moderate scheme.

In view of that, these proposals will be thoroughly debated at full council, after the Towcester and District Recreation and Leisure Association have submitted their revised plan. Then a public meeting will be called by the parish to discuss with and consider the views of the public.

**ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE, TOWCESTER COMBINED DIVISION.** The members of the division have recently seen developments in the building of their new Headquarters in Islington Road. Already the footings and concrete base have been laid and the temporary garage will be erected soon. We are also trying hard to raise funds for the new building itself as well as for more equipment. In view of this we will be holding several fund-raising events this year starting with a Jumble Sale on Saturday 31st May at 2.00 pm. This will be held in the Community Centre, Islington Road. Later on in the summer we will be having a Sponsored Walk around the Racecourse.

We are also interested in seeing new faces at our weekly meetings. We meet at 8 pm every Tuesday (except after Bank Holidays) at the Community Centre so if you would like to join us please come any Tuesday. We run First Aid courses which are open to the public - in fact we're just completing one now - and at our regular meetings we learn resuscitation, what to do about burns, how to prevent accidents in the home, how to care for sick children, what to do at road accidents, in fact all sorts of things.

Our cadets have a lot going on too - perhaps if you are 11 - 16 you might like to come and join them at 7 pm every Tuesday - we'd love to see you!

**YEALM HOUSE, 9 Brackley Road, Towcester.** The present owners of this property are compiling a history of their house and would

appreciate any information, however trivial, concerning previous residents, occupational usage, old photos, anecdotes, etc. Please write or telephone Towcester 50242.

**POMFRET ROAD PETITION:** I am spokesman for a newly formed six person committee concerned with making Pomfret Road one-way. A meeting took place at my house between the six committee members - Mr & Mrs M J Starmer, Mrs M Downs, Mr A Thompson, Mr S Hirst and Mr J Derby - Mr Ian Miller (Northants County Councillor), Mrs Yvonne Orchard and Miss Yvonne Cook (Advertiser). It was decided to get up a petition. The planning and resources committee have recommended that the parish council discuss it at their next meeting. The main reason that we want it to be made one-way is the danger to pedestrians when cars mount the pavement to pass other vehicles. Ian Miller gives us his full support and is helping us fight our case.

If you would like to sign the petition, they should call on one of the committee members at any of the following addresses - 18, 20, 22, 25 or 35 Pomfret Road. Martin Starmer (Tel: 53587).

**COFFEE MORNING WITH CAKES.** Nearly new childrens clothes and toys. At 6 Beech Close, Towcester on Thursday 15th May, 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. Money received to improve treatment facilities and support a swimming group for local children. Donations are welcome. Clothes and toys will be sold: 75% to the donor, 25% to the charity. Further details from Lea Howard (Towcester 50468).

**NATIONAL POSTCARD WEEK** - May 4th to 10th 1986. An Exhibition of old postcards in TOWCESTER LIBRARY from May 7th to 17th will mark this event. Examples of many different types of card will be on show, together with literature on collecting postcards and information on Postcard Clubs, valuations, etc..

**THE WATLING SINGERS URGENTLY REQUIRE TENDERS** to join this small choral group who sing part songs, madrigals, motets and anthems for pleasure and performance. The group meets on alternate Tuesdays at Lodge Cottage, Cornhill, Pattishall. Contact: Mr C Ashmore (tel: Pattishall 830357) or Mr I Smith (tel: Northampton 712272).

**TOWCESTRIANS TENNIS CLUB** - Greens Norton Road, Towcester. The Towcestrians Tennis Club will be emerging from hibernation about now and activity will commence weekends and evenings during early April. The initial play will be both social and practice for the Northampton and Milton Keynes Ladies and Mens league games that start in May.

The club offers two hard courts and two grass courts, a clubhouse containing changing facilities for both men and women and a licensed bar for members. Kitchen facilities are also available during most of the playing periods or by arrangement.

Membership - The Towcestrians is open to all and the club currently has capacity for additional members and welcomes inquiries. Application forms can be obtained from: Jane Sawbridge, hon. sec. (Paulerspury 213), C H Rush (Watling St., Towcester), Freeb's (Watling St., Towcester), Joan Freeborough (Towcester 50297), Tony Benham (Towcester 51948).

Membership fees are: Social £15, Competitive £25, Juniors £5

The courts are available most weekends in the summer and all weekends from September to April.

There is a strong junior membership and competitive games are now being played at under 16 years level. It is hoped to strengthen all age levels of junior tennis this year so new members will be most welcome.

Coaching for both adults and juniors is available on Sunday mornings throughout the early spring and summer for a nominal fee.

The Tennis section warmly welcomes inquiries and new members.

The Towcestrians club also has sporting sections for Rugby, Cricket and Ladies Hockey.

Stop press - players meeting at the clubhouse Tuesday April 8 - 7.30 all members and potential members welcome to help formulate future policies and elect team captains.  
Steak Bar B Que at Burcote Wood Farm, Woodburcote, Towcester on Friday July 25th. Music by the well known 'Unit 6'.

Peter Stewart.

**BRACKLEY ROAD MOTHER AND TODDLERS CLUB:** starting on 10th April. Will meet Thursday mornings 10 - 12 weekly during school terms. Inquiries: Mrs E Hannam (Towcester 52624), Mrs G Leadbetter (Towcester 53001).

**THE TOWCESTER AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CAR SCHEME** takes people who are without their own transport to and from medically related appointments in areas where the bus service is inadequate. The scheme relies upon volunteer drivers who give their time freely and are paid for their petrol costs at the rate of 18 p/mile. Due to a great increase in the requests for transport, the car scheme desperately needs to recruit more volunteer drivers.

If you would be willing to help on an/occasional or regular basis or if you would like some more information, please contact Kate Saul (Towcester 51716).

**WATLING STREET PLAYGROUP** are holding a May Spectacular on Saturday 10th May at the Community Centre - Jumble sale, refreshments, cake stall, tombola and many other stalls. Fun for all the family - Come and enjoy yourselves from 2.00 to 3.30 pm.

**WHAT GOES ON IN TOWCESTER:** Open day/exhibition to launch Towcester Directory of Local Organisations and Societies, Saturday 12th April 10.30 am to 1.00 pm, Towcester Town Hall. Information on all societies listed in the directory available - over 30 organisations will have their own stand - play corner for under fives - results of the Age Concern survey of people over 65 - at 11.15 am majorettes and dancing display.

**NORTHAMPTON AND COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND** is to hold their Annual General Meeting on Monday 28th April, 7.30 to 9.00 pm at Meadow Court, Bickerstaffes Road, Towcester. Everyone welcome just for the evening to find out what we do, or to decide to help us with our work during the year.

We cater for the local blind people in Towcester and area, including Adstone, Maidford, Woodend, Blakesley, Litchborough, Wappenham, Slapton, Braden, Abthorpe, Cold Higham, Silverstone, Towcester, Greens Norton, Pattishall, Astcote, Duncote, Eastcote, Whittlebury, Caldecote, Gayton, Tiffield, Pury End, Paulerspury, Blisworth, Shutlanger, Stoke Bruerne, Potterspury, Wicken, Roade, Ashton, Grafton Regis, Yardley Gobion, Old Stratford, Cosgrove, Hartwell, Fosters Booth and Deanshanger. We cover a wide area and could do with some more drivers for our Monday afternoon meetings once a month between 2.00 and 4.00 pm - commencing in April.

We also need committee members to organise events and raise funds. Contact Mrs Phyllis Brockhurst (Towcester 51318 evenings/weekends).

**1ST TOWCESTER SCOUT GROUP.** Activity - scouting for boys aged 8+. Venue - the Scout Hall, Baden Powell Crescent, Towcester. Meetings - weekly. Scouts aged 11 - 16 on Mondays, 7.00 - 9.00 pm. Cub Scouts aged 8 - 11 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6.30 - 8.00 pm.

**Wanted: Scout Leaders and Cub Scout Leaders.** Do you moan about the youth of today. Have you ever considered that perhaps you could do something about it in the future. You can! Come and help us to bring the high standards of scouting to the youth of your town. All our leaders are unpaid volunteers. No qualifications are required only a genuine interest, and a sense of humour. We have a long waiting list of boys who would like to join us, but we never have enough leaders to cope with the ever increasing number of boys who would like to become Scouts and Cub Scouts. Interested? Then telephone one of us today. Group Scout Leader (Towcester 50518), Chairman (Towcester 51128), Secretary (Towcester 51028).

**TOWCESTER ROTARACT'S CARNIVAL PROCESSION:** Friday, 5th September. Remember last year's Carnival Procession? Well, why not help us make it even bigger and better this year by entering your own float. The classes are as follows: Trade, Clubs and Societies, Charities. For further details contact S Gamble (Towcester 50124).



**TOWN CRIER DELIVERERS NEEDED FOR:** Southgate Drive and Islington Road. Please contact Yvonne Orchard (Pattishall 830528).

A **TOWN CRIER INDEX** has been prepared for issues 1 to 12. These are available on request to the Town Hall.

**FOR YOUR DIARY:** The next Towcester Parish Council meetings will be held on 14th April and Annual Meeting on 12th May. Public question time for the ordinary council meeting is from 7.30 to 7.45 pm.

Forthcoming events at Towcester Town Hall:

12 April	Open day/exhibition - What goes on in Towcester Council for Voluntary Services: 9.00 am - 2.00 pm
19 April	Mind: 10.00 am - 3.00 pm



3 May Opportunity Playgroup jumble sale:  
10.00 am - 2.00 pm

17 May Shoe sale: 9.00 am - 4.00 pm

Other venues:

12 April Towcester Rotaract jumble sale:  
A5 Rangers Hall from 2.00 pm

10 May Watling Street Playgroup's jumble sale:  
Community Centre

The final date for contributions to the next issue  
of the Town Crier is 27th May.

The Editorial committee for the Crier welcome any  
contributions and/or comments. The members are:

Mr Peter Allen, 76 Watling Street, tel: 51477

Mrs Ann Hill, 18 Willow Close, tel: 51010

Mr Brian Jolly, 31 Brackley Road, tel: 51661

Mrs Yvonne Orchard, Brambles, School Road, Astcote, Towcester,  
tel: Pattishall 830528

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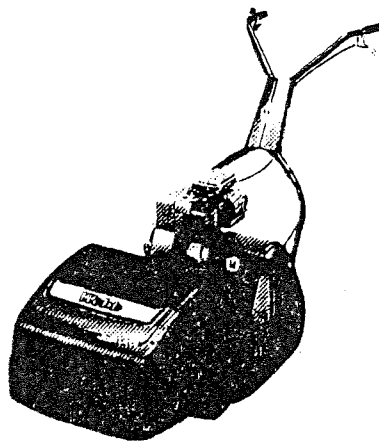
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