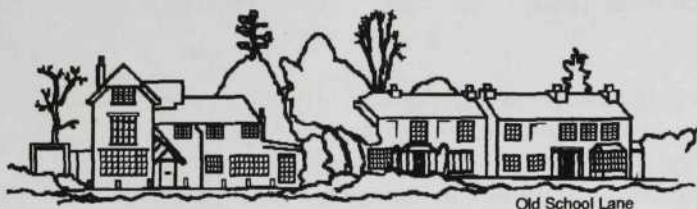


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# STOP PRESS

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The  
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## NEW LECTURE PROGRAMME

September begins new academic years for schools and colleges. While the warm air carries the scents of autumn hedgerow riches and spiders spin swathes of silk over gilded leaves, new hopes and dreams swarm like the gnats on the common. Over the past nine months the executive members of The Yateley Society have been exposed more and more to the new thinking and revolutionary legislation which has followed in the wake of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. One major item from that summit was the Rio Declaration, a statement which agrees the need to balance the protection of our environment with the need for sustainable development. The UK's "Biodiversity Action Plan", adopted in 1994, is the UK's formal commitment to halt the loss of animal and plant species and genetic resources. Its complement is the UK's "Sustainable Development Strategy" adopted the same year. Two other plans, covering Climate Change and Sustainable Forestry, complete a set of documents which will reshape our social and economic priorities. Already the Biodiversity Plan is affecting the thinking of our local and county councils. It is all tremendously exciting. We need to know more about what is going on. Our lecture programme will begin to explore some of these fields and pastures new, the common theme being the nature of the lowland heath which lies on our doorstep. This heathland is one of 38 key habitats whose protection is so urgent that it is already one of the 14 key habitats which have costed action plans.

Our talks will range over the birds and bees, plants and animals peculiar to the heathland and over some of the land use and land management topics. The lectures will have wide appeal since many of our speakers will be enthusiastic specialists, with on-going research projects or management roles.

The first of these themed talks will be given by Mike Edwards, the entomologist who has been dashing from Midhurst up to the common whenever the sun has really shone and the temperature risen to bring out yet more species of his speciality: wasps, bees and ants. His survey findings have been used immediately in the Fox Farm III housing appeal to augment the evidence against development given by English Nature. In fact the survey was commissioned by The Society for precisely that immediate purpose, since we know by now that food chains are the hidden links in local ecological webs and the heather and gorse support vital insects as well as our more visible important bird species. Mike supplied the insect exhibits for our May Fayre display this year. He is a most knowledgeable and entertaining speaker, vividly describing the habits of his amazing insects and their precarious environment.

The second talk will be given by Hugh Howes, Principal Strategic Planning officer for the Thames Basin region in the new Environment Agency. This new regulatory body combines the functions of the National Rivers Authority, the Inspectorate of Pollution, and the Waste Regulation authorities. It too is a consequence of the Rio declarations. Its role is to regulate the uses of land, air and water and provide high quality environmental protection and improvement. Its ultimate aim is to contribute to Sustainable Development which is defined as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." There are eight regions in the Agency and the Thames Basin, which is Mr Howes' responsibility, has an area of 5,000 square miles, a resident population of 12 million and an overall budget of £92 million. Of course the Blackwater Valley has its water pollution problems and the common suffers other pollutants. This talk will be a unique opportunity to understand the structure and powers of the new Agency and appreciate the ways in which it contributes to habit protection and to sustainable development.

To open our autumn programme, however, we will begin with a new talk by Richard Johnston on the architectural history of Barclay House. The now Italianate styled but originally Georgian house is an obvious feature of Vicarage Road and is one of Yateley's eighteen listed buildings. Richard made his historical architectural survey at the end of 1995, shortly before David Healey and his family left Yateley. The house, with its vast cellars and rambling and partly semi-derelect outbuildings - dating from the 17th century and unaltered for at least a century - provides fascinating insights into social conditions in Yateley over the last three centuries. Hear about and see the primitive conditions suffered by the house servants; contrast them with those of the house owner. See a wonderful turn of the century example of the bucket closet, complete with rudimentary flushing system. Listen as Richard unravels the historical development of the house and discover whether he has solved the mystery surrounding its ownership prior to the nineteenth century. As usual, Richard will illustrate his talk with documents and a wide variety of visual media.

