

# Points of view

The picture on the front cover of the autumn edition of the Gander seen from a point close to Thornton Abbey set me thinking. It was a brief glimpse of a moment in time after harvest, the straw bales were still in the fields but in a few days they would be gone. The comment beneath the picture drawing our attention to the fact that the village is almost completely hidden from view from most directions made me realise that the time and the place from which you look at the world is most important because it effects what you see.

A very large proportion of the people living in the village have come here from other places. Most of them like me will have had little knowledge of Goxhill before they decided to live here. Their opinions will be formed by things that have happened since they arrived and because the village is spread over a large area where they live will affect their thinking. A simple example of this is the relevance of the use of cars and public transport which will not be the same in Howe Lane as it would be in outlying areas.

Having lived here for many years I have seen lots of changes and because like many older people change is to me rather upsetting I can understand that many people whose families have been here for many generations do not approve of what has happened to the village. In the Parish Council page of the Gander P J Shields asks gardeners to think before they remove trees and shrubs a request with which I heartily concur. It is however important to realise that far more visual impact has been caused by the removal of trees and shrubs for house building, the safety of the electricity cables, health and safety and the like, than by gardeners "weeding".

One very important consideration is the shelter provided by trees, hedges, and shrubs. Although houses in estates protect their neighbours those of us living on the outskirts of the village are well aware of the protection afforded by trees from the cold winds.

My little friend the grey squirrel has been busy throughout the autumn distributing walnuts to my neighbours. It is strange but they do not seem to appreciate the effort. The squirrel buries the nuts and they are not found until they appear above ground as little walnut trees. It is quite alright to pull these trees out and you will not spoil the appearance of the village. This has been a good walnut year and I may have to find the nut crackers because the little grey missed one or two.



Not so with the conkers, the horse chestnut tree did not have many conkers this year and I am a bit concerned that the disease that has spread in the southern counties may have reached us here. If anyone can tell me anything about this I would like to know because to lose the horse chestnuts would alter the appearance of the village very much.

The removal and cutting back of some shrubbery has considerably improved the look of some parts of the village. The work on the Ramper and Nan Brigham has opened up a lovely walk between the high hedges. I do hope that no one will feel the need to lay these hedges because we have so little available woodland here that it is pleasant to see these paths as woodland rides. The improvements that have been made to the cemetery and particularly to the road side boundary are also appreciated. I like the open aspect of the fencing which allows the cemetery, which looks well cared for and is something of which to be proud, to be seen from the road rather than hidden behind a hedge.

Since I came to the village we have had the tragedy of Dutch elm disease. The remnants of the trees by the Barrow road are a sad reminder of what used to be. There are still some Elm trees in the village. Unfortunately very often when they have grown a trunk about six inches in diameter the disease strikes again and they die. Whisper it quietly but looking from my view point in the garden in Willow lane and at this moment in time there is hope.

The Ivy probably cannot be called a tree but it grows so prolifically in many parts of the village and has climbed so high in the trees that it now has a great effect upon what we see as trees. Some people have very strong views about Ivy and would have it removed. There are however other points of view birds love it because it provides food and nesting places. Mature Ivy produces flowers in autumn which are very rich in nectar and the sound of the insects which visit it is amazing, not to mention the butterflies which provide a lovely sight for a sunny afternoon.

This is the winter edition of the Gander and by the time that you read this, the leaves of the trees will have fallen and I hope will have been collected for leaf mould. Thoughts will be turning to a very different kind of tree, real or synthetic the Christmas tree will be making its appearance. The annual question, will there be any berries left on the holly or will the birds have eaten them all will be asked again. As some will see it the appearance of a small branch of mistletoe cut from the parasite of fruit trees will bring seasonal happiness and I don't think cutting it will spoil the village. So whatever your view point have a Happy Christmas.

**Maurice Brawn.**