

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Minutes of the 55th Annual General Meeting Held at the Village Centre on Friday 28 November 2014 at 8.00 p.m.

1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

President Eva Lipman welcomed some thirty members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Daphne** Susan Leeson, the Shephards, Sally Sandy, Louise Symons and Ros Russell

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2012 AGM

The minutes of the 54th AGM were approved. The secretary apologised for them not being uploaded to the website.

3. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Eva Lipman made the following opening remarks.

It gives me great pleasure to see so many familiar and some new faces at this our 55th AGM. Thank you all for coming on this dark November night. It says something for the dedication of your committee and their officers both past and present that your Society has continued for so long. It is said that bad things happen when good people do nothing. We are trying in our small way to do something. As you all know we try to help to keep Hitcham and Taplow a pleasant happy place in which to live. With this aim we attempt to scrutinise and comment on the various Authority Documents which affect us as well as the Planning Applications, gravel extraction etc. We also have our various social events to help give a sense of cohesion to our community, and we allow a local organisation to fundraise at our Village Green Party. As you will presently hear our finances are in reasonable shape.

I will leave it to Karl in his Chairman's Report to give you an account of the day to day activities of your Society.

I have once again to give Karl our heartfelt thanks for all the good work he has put in on your behalf during the year and being such a conscientious and excellent Chairman. This in spite of his ill health. I will leave the other thanks to Karl in his Chairman's Report.

Eva was thanked from the floor for her work during the year.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On behalf of the Society, I begin by expressing our continuing very special thank you to our indefatigable President for the major contributions she makes to all of the activities of the Society ... our social events ... our responses to planning applications ... our participation in both Local and National Government public consultations ... the production of our newsletter ... and in particular our membership in other organisations ... the Association of North

Thames Amenity Societies (ANTAS), The Chiltern Society, and Civic Voice, the association of Civic Societies

Eva ... thank you.

Our signature events ... the Easter Egg Hunt and the Village Green Party are highlights of the Taplow year ... this year there was an all-time record attendance at each event.

On April the Twenty First ... Barrie and Sheila Peroni ... opened their spacious attractive gardens ... for a horde of excited children to form an eager line up waiting for the flag to drop to start a wild hunt for the 50 hidden Easter Eggs ... watched over by parents and friends enjoying the generous supplies of coffee, cakes and mince pies ... and the odd glass of red.

A very special thank you ... to Toby and Charlie Grieves for their splendid efficiency in carrying out the multiple tasks of before-the-day preparation ... with the help on the day of the family Peroni generations ... to bring a truly enjoyable Easter Holiday morning.

The date for your next year diary is April 6th.

On June the Twenty First ... the sun shone from dawn-til-dusk for a memorable Village Green Party..

Taplow resident Tim Browning and his Drone captured the frolics on video ... it is available to view on the Society website ...a parents and pupils 'sleepover' in the school field brought more children to the dance 'floor' ... for the 29th successive year Mike Sanderson and his band ... with the incomparable caller Tom Brown ... enticed young and old to their dancing feet ... enthusiastic Sea Cadets persuaded the revellers to contribute a handsome amount to the raffle

A very special thank you ... to Alistair Hill ... for the complex arranging before and the hands-on supervising on the day ...and ...Miv Wayland Smith ... for the minute- to-minute assistance on the day ... and the recruiting of the too-numerous-to-name team of fire minders, spit turners, roast carvers, barbecue cooks, setters up on Saturday, takers down on Sunday ... to the ticket sellers ... and to SGI at Taplow Court for supplying the logs and the barbecues.

The date for your next year diary is June 20th.

The Society paid for the restoration of the bench by the river that had been badly damaged by the floods and thanked Heather Fen for her generous donation towards this.

For our prime mission, the scrutiny of planning policy and applications, this was again a difficult year.

The Society submitted a strong and comprehensive objection to the application for an industrial scale poultry egg production, packaging, and distribution enterprise at Marshwood Farm on Marsh Lane ... that application was refused ... but there is no evidence of the enforcement order to end the various activities on the site for which there is no planning permission happening.

There has been no response by the District Council to the Society's request for it to publish its policy regarding the enforcement of abuse of planning rules and conditions ... the gravel workings bordering Boundary Road, the proliferation of Roots Garden Centre roadside signs, the replacement of felled trees in Ellington Gardens, are current examples of enforcement failure.

The Society submits comments on all applications which impact the Green Belt or the Taplow Conservation Areas ... several recent such applications ... for an Equestrian Centre north of Buffins ... for extensions to Silchester House on the Bath Road ... to convert Marta Villa on Ellington Road into two separate dwellings ... to replace garages in Ellington Gardens with a new house ... to replace sheds to the south of Buffins with a new house ... have been refused.

In my report to the AGM last year I gave a comprehensive account of the position of the Society regarding Mill Lane ... the significant contribution of the Society to the content of the SPD ... the Supplement Planning Document ... it being legally binding ... its several welcome features ... and the disquiet of the Society regarding its features which may impact on this especially important area of the Green Belt.

Since then the Mill Lane site was bought by Berkeley Homes for Twenty Three and a Half million pounds ... in September it submitted four separate Planning Applications setting out its intentions for the regeneration of the site ... the voluminous documentation supporting the applications numbers several thousand pages.

The Society submitted its objections on November 19th

The number of households is the chief concern ... 257 is proposed ... more than double the number set in the economic report commissioned by the District Council ... estimated to house a minimum of 580 people ... a one third increase in the population of Taplow at the last census ... added to the people who will occupy the new households on the Station Garage and other already approved developments it may double the number.

The significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt through the number and heights of the buildings is an equal concern.

The volume of traffic entering on to and out from the Bath Road at its junction with Mill Lane ... will bring added stress to a principal highway already acknowledged to be over its capacity.

A further update to the report on the Parish “Windfall” in the Newsletter ... the Society is making firm progress towards obtaining a quotation for the digital imaging of the Sheila Horton Mural around to ensure its protection in perpetuity..

Under the management of THRGA Chairman, Alistair Forsythe the Old Priory Garden restoration project is progressing at speed with Roger Andrews and Miv Wayland-Smith leading a growing team of volunteers. The Society continues to support the fundraising efforts.

Our website www.taplowsociety.org.uk continues to attract significant numbers of visits and enquiries. Delivering comprehensive information to members via our website is easier and faster than other methods and we urge all members who have access to the internet to make regular visits.

Email is much the most reliable and certainly the quickest method of communicating to all of our members at the same time. If you have an email address and you have not yet given it to the Society, please give it this evening to the Treasurer to be added to our HTS Members email group. .

Your address is fully protected from public gaze, it is known only to the Treasurer and only the Chairman is allowed to sanction the sending of an email to the group.

The AGM date for your next year diary is November 27th.

In conclusion, thank you to all who have contributed to the activities of the Society this year ... Vice-Presidents ... Secretary ... with special thanks to retiring Treasurer Peter Mole ... Executive Committee ... a special thank you to Euan Felton for his indispensable analysis of planning applications ... the Membership Secretary ... to the Editor of the Newsletter ... to SGI at Taplow Court for providing and serving refreshments this evening... to Taplow House Hotel for providing a meeting room for our monthly Committee meetings ... and to you all for continuing your support by renewing your annual membership.

Karl was particularly thanked from the floor for his tireless efforts on the Mill Lane matter.

5. **TREASURER’S REPORT**

Peter Mole distributed the unaudited profit and loss account for the year to 24 November 2014. A completed version would be uploaded to the web site shortly.

6. **ELECTIONS**

The current President and Vice Presidents and the executive committee were re-elected en bloc, as were the posts of chairman and secretary. Myra Drinkwater was elected in place of Peter Mole as treasurer and the resignation

7. **MOTION TO AMEND ARTICLE 4.1 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

This motion was carried unanimously.

8. **MILL LANE**

Heather Fenn queried the S106 proviso in the applications and its handling by SBDC. George Sandy advised that this was all fairly well agreed with the developer.

George Sandy advised on the process that the application would now follow. Submissions to be included in the officers report had now closed but letters sent to SBDC would still be seen by the Planning Committee. The committee would also be influenced by physical presence at the meeting if people felt strongly about the decision. The meeting is on January 14th but the time should be checked. Concerns over the closure of Mill Lane should go to Buckinghamshire County Council – TfB and copied to SBDC.

9. **AOB**

Brenda Hickman queried if the Society was aware of the application for a garage conversion in the High Street and was advised that the society had registered an objection. Raising another earlier decision to allow, on appeal from SBDC, a new house in the Green Belt, George Sandy advised that this had been in very exceptional circumstances and was not to be seen as a precedent.

Nigel Smales requested articles for the next issue of the magazine, to be available by end March.

10. **CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING**

The formal meeting concluded at 9 pm..

Following tea and cake, David Long gave a talk on the history of the Amerden area since the Norman Conquest. He was thanked on behalf of all for a most detailed and fascinating account.

Meeting closed at 10:45

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Karl Lawrence
Chairman