

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Executive Committee Meeting Taplow House Hotel Monday 19th February 2018 8.00pm

MINUTES

Present:

Eva Lipman (chair)
Louise Symons
Rupert Sellers
Roger Worthington

Charlie Greeves
Nigel Smales

Apologies:

Robert Hanbury
Zoe Hatch
Robert Harrap

Eva advised the meeting that Zoe had written to her tendering her resignation from the committee, due to illness and pressure of other commitments. She would continue to provide support to the IT functions of the Society. Eva had written to her thanking her for her efforts in developing the new web site and on-line ticketing.

- **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the November meeting were agreed and signed

- **TREASURER'S REPORT**

In the absence of Robert, Roger advised that **current balances were £3552.29 and £1576.04**

- **NEWSLETTER.**

Nigel checked with Eva on the status of an article on the Lee memorial bench. Nick Lee has been very impressed with the bench. Nigel is looking for a **photo of Eva at the bench.**

Some articles promised are perhaps unlikely to materialise but total content not a problem.

An article on **the first VGP** is planned. A **regular planning status article** will appear and there are many planning objections that will have their own associated articles. **Deadline of 31st March** for copy to Nigel.

A possible article on a "**Taplovian of the Year**" will be reviewed at the next meeting. Need to deal with possible alignment / clash if the Parish Council goes ahead with a chairman's award.

Following a report from Nigel on recruitment matters (attached) it was agreed that the next Newsletter would carry a **four page insert** promoting Society membership and that **300 copies** would be printed, leaving spares for recruiting new members. Expected to cost **£420**. Only dependent on producing an acceptable content for the next meeting. Roger to lead this.

- **PLANNING.**

The committee had been circulated with the **letter to SBDC planning** from TPC, HTS and George Sandy (SBDC) concerning the hotch-potch of applications affecting Mill Lane.

The application from **egg Homes** has been made. The objection drafted from TPC was discussed and TS would object on similar lines.

NetworkRail have advised that the **old bridge will not be reinstated**. View was that this means that the siting of the new bridge should be reviewed and that the current **application to remove TPO protected trees** for access should be refused.

An application at **Lindens on Hill Farm Road** was reviewed. Thought likely that the extension proposed would exceed the 50% level and should be refused.

Nigel reported on a visit to the **Heathrow Airport exhibition** (attached). Conclusion is that we should comment on **our preference for distributed flight paths** and raise concerns for over-use of

the A4 but not make representations on the overall third runway itself. **Nigel would draft** an HTS response. This would be circulated to members to encourage many submissions.

- **TECHNOLOGY UPDATE**

Roger had agreed an ongoing support process with Zoe following her resignation from committee. She would continue to provide the web, poster and Eventbrite support this year to both the Easter Egg Hunt and the VGP. A version upgrade of Wordpress will be made shortly. Roger will pick up some more technical details from Zoe on areas he is unfamiliar with. The committee should look for an alternative IT support person.

- **EASTER EGG HUNT**

Charlie confirmed that this will go ahead, having been re-assured that ticket support etc. will be available as last year. Roger will liaise with Zoe on this.

- **VGP**

Roger will liaise with Zoe on technical support. As St Johns Ambulance have proved very difficult to deal with in recent years an initial approach would be made to Taplow FC, who provided cover last year when they did the raffle. It was decided that the raffle would be offered to the Playgroup this year. Emphasis should be put on achieving fewer but higher quality prizes.

- **AOB**

Roger confirmed that he and Eva would attend the ANTAS AGM. The date for the MMPA AGM would be checked to ensure that we are represented there.

Meeting closed at 9:45pm.

Next HTS Committee Meeting: March 19th

SIGNED:.....

RECRUITMENT REPORT

First thing to clarify is **Membership Payment Processes**.

Currently, we have three means of taking payment - cash, cheque or standing order.

Cash or cheque payments are inconvenient for collectors but the preference of 28% of members who might not continue otherwise.

Standing orders (SOs) are convenient except for two things - they can only be varied by members, not by HTS, and there is a history of set-up glitches.

Can we resolve these SO glitches and offer (and when) either or both direct debit arrangements (which HTS could vary) and e-payments (which would still require chase-up)?

Recommendation = Add direct debit and online e-payment facilities and encourage members to switch to these means of payment but NOT terminate other options.

Second thing to consider is our **Recruitment Plan**.

Four things to decide: What, How, Who and Where. The What is the proposition. The How is means of delivering the What. The Who is them what does the doorstepping. The Where should be anywhere non-members live but the primary target areas must be the Mill Lane and Institute Road developments. Anywhere else? Need to check what Heather Lindsey has achieved along Mill Lane.

Given that it is likely that recruitment efforts will only be successful if someone speaks directly to the target recruits, we need to agree Who will 'doorstep' where armed with a written proposition exhibiting the Society's aims and successes, extolling the benefits of membership and offering the means of joining.

No reason why the means of joining shouldn't be as is - the hard-copy application form we use now (perhaps tweaked) - but the HTS website should also exhibit the proposition and offer an online means of joining.

The proposition might be a one, two or four page document which could be a stand-alone leaflet (essentially, a giveaway) or inserted into or integral within a Newsletter (which by providing evidence of scope of Society activity and quality would be a supplementary 'selling point'). However, can we afford to give away Newsletters with hard-copy propositions?

Advantage of proposition integral within Newsletters is that it would remind current members what HTS does. However, a four-page proposition would increase the relevant Newsletter from 16 pages (cost £305 for 250 copies) to 20 pages (cost £350 for 250 copies, £420 for 300 copies or £490 for 350 copies). Another option might be to stick with 16 pages but dedicate space to the proposition and increase print run to 300 (cost £350).

Recommendation = We must establish how much a stand-alone one, two or four-page proposition would cost to print 50 or 100 copies to compare with these costs.

HEATHROW REPORT

On 3 Feb, Roger and I represented Taplow PC and HTS at the Heathrow Expansion exhibition in Burnham Park Hall.

The displays and documents were complex but Heathrow did a much better job of explaining the what and why of its expansion than did the DfT in the past. However, since it regards expansion as a certainty, Heathrow made little effort at economic justification and instead concentrated on managing expectations and offering locals the chance to minimise negative impacts.

Headlines are:

- A third runway to the north of the current two. Three length options, each extending over the M25 between Sipson (to the east) and Colnbrook (to the west).
- A 6.5 hour ban on night flights between 11pm and 7am plus predictable periods of respite from aircraft noise during the day.
- The generation of up to 40,000 new jobs locally.
- Numerous options for improving air quality, airspace design (flight paths and reduction of noise disturbance), consolidation of and access to terminals, realignment and junction redesign of the M25, the A4 and the A3044 (runs roughly north-south through Colnbrook), expansion to accommodate support facilities and related development, water management (including flood storage and diversions of River Colne) and increase in use of public transport (including rail links from south and west, with Elizabeth Line spur east of Slough enabling direct travel to / from Taplow).

Increases in local population and traffic volumes will be inevitable. While greater powers may continue to try to prevent Heathrow's expansion, Roger and I don't think HTS has the gravitas to exert significant and effective pressure to avert it. Consequently, we will have to address each physical incursion into our domain on its own merits as each arises. However, we have the chance to minimise a specific threat to the tranquil rural character of Taplow and Hitcham - the frequency of overflights and the intensity of noise disturbance.

No final decision has been taken about flight paths, including those west of Heathrow including the two Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) along which departing planes currently overfly Taplow and Hitcham. It is encouraging that the consultation not only acknowledges "urban areas have higher general noise levels than rural areas and therefore... aircraft noise might be less noticeable [in urban areas] than in rural areas" but also offers locals an opportunity to influence flight path design principles.

Essentially, there are three options:

- A - To minimise the total number of people being overflown, essentially by concentrating flights over rural areas.
- B - To minimise the total number of people being newly overflown, essentially by concentrating flights within current NPRs.
- C - To share routes over a much wider area, meaning that each specific location on the ground would be overflown less frequently than A or B.

Roger and I believe that Principles A and B would lead inevitably to Taplow and Hitcham being overflown by a gradually increasing number of flights through the convenient 'Taplow Corridor' between Slough and Maidenhead.

Consequently, we recommend that HTS should press for Principle C, which would dissipate noise over a wider corridor. We should also seek a ban on construction traffic using our stretch of the A4 and encourage HTS members (and others) to lobby accordingly on these two issues.