

Hitcham and Taplow Society

Newsletter 101: Spring 2014
£2.50 to non-members



www.taplowsociety.org.uk

Hitcham and Taplow Society

Formed in 1959 to protect Hitcham, Taplow and the surrounding countryside from being spoilt by bad development and neglect.

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Vice Presidents: Tony Hickman, Fred Russell, Professor Bernard Trevallion OBE
Chairman: Karl Lawrence
Treasurer: Peter Mole
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Cover picture: The Thames and the Jubilee River both rose 3½ feet in February but did not break their banks. Photo by Nigel Smales.

Editorial

The Village Centre's committee room is named for Ernest Perkins. He was chairman of the Taplow Parish Council which in the 1960s left a number of lasting legacies including smaller homes, whose families rejuvenated the community, and the Village Centre, School and Green which are now its heart.

That Council did not have the benefit of a financial windfall. Today's must be congratulated for securing the Bishop Centre windfall and for its wisdom in inviting suggestions for how this might be invested to best effect to afford permanent legacy value to the entire community. Seeking consensus is never easy but neither should it be shirked. It is right that the Council is taking counsel and that the community is able to observe its deliberation of this difficult decision.

The Society was pleased that South Bucks District Council (SBDC) took counsel to adopt a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requiring a comprehensive development plan for Mill Lane. However there is concern that this is not apparent in the schematic design exhibited by the developer, Berkeley Group, and that Jane Griffin, SBDC Principal Planning

Officer, Policy, has advised "the proposals [in the SPD] are not yet set in stone". Let's hope SBDC does the right thing for our community by not letting the SPD's better bits go by the board.

A defining characteristic of a community is that it shares common values. With contributors ranging in age from 14 to 85, this Newsletter offers various examples of how ours does just that. It hasn't room to report on two others. On Easter Monday, many children enjoyed the Society's fifth annual Easter Egg Hunt; sincere thanks to our hosts Charlie & Toby Greeves and Sheila & Barrie Peroni. And recently the first 2014 working party took another step towards making Old Priory Garden (OPG) a valuable public amenity. New volunteers should contact Roger Andrews on rdaprivate@btinternet.com.

Anthony Harding is a regular OPG volunteer. He has lived all but the first three weeks of his life locally, in Marsh Lane from 1937 and Buffins since 1966. Is there anyone who has lived continuously in our community longer than his 77 years?

Nigel Smales



On the Road to Rescue?

At first glance, the acquisition of the Mill Lane site by Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Ltd seems good news, or at least good in parts. Could the site finally be on the road to rescue?

Berkeley has started well, first in private conversations with stakeholders, then at two public exhibitions of its outline ideas at which chairman Andrew Saunders-Davies and his team genuinely seemed keen to consult. The current schematic design shows Glen Island House, Mill House, Mill Cottage and Stable Cottage being refurbished and Dunloe Lodge being rebuilt to provide a total of 20 homes while the proposed 230 new dwellings include 60 flats for 'seniors' in blocks to the west and north of the Windrush showroom, detached houses on the former Severnside paper storage site, three blocks of flats on the mill site and a terrace of riverfront townhouses west of Mill Lane adjacent to a new Skindle's in the form of a 3-storey restaurant overlooking Maidenhead Bridge. Perhaps the unexciting architecture will improve before the planning application Berkeley plans to make in the summer.

This will be the biggest development ever in Taplow. All by itself, it will increase the number of dwellings in the parish by 32% and its population by perhaps 36%. It will place a massive extra strain on water supply, sewage disposal, schools, primary health care and especially the already overloaded Bath Road.

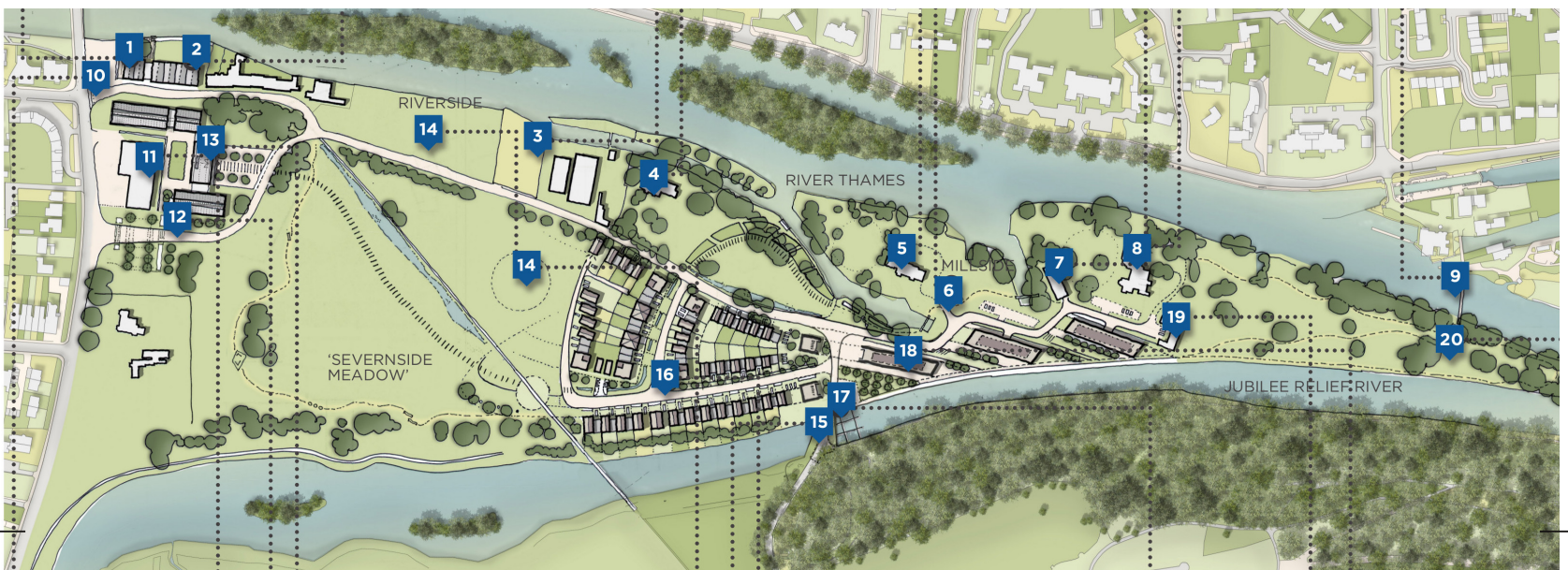
There are possible departures from the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted by South Bucks District Council (SBDC). Reactions were generally positive to the revival of Skindle's as a restaurant, which would preserve the iconic name and location, rather than as a hotel, which is unlikely to be

viable. However Berkeley's questionnaire floated the distressing idea of losing Skindle's altogether. Two other departures are equally worrying. The SPD requires a footbridge to Boulter's Island and a comprehensive plan for the whole site, including the two former gasworks owned by National Grid Company (NGC). The footbridge is seen as an attractive amenity yet Berkeley's schematics describe it only as "potential". And by offering neither proposals for the NGC sites nor car parking for the existing boathouse offices, Berkeley reopens the dreaded spectre of fragmented, piecemeal development. Will SBDC bend on these three vital matters?

Other concerns include the absence of any nod towards 1,000 years of mill history (what about a waterwheel generating 'green' electricity?) or any tourism and leisure uses reflecting the riverside heritage (and how about an open-air theatre on the eastern bank of the Jubilee?). the height (18m) and monolithic bulk of the six-storey flats on the mill site, the reinvention of the name Severnside (the unloved mill subsidiary) and two aspects of Mill Lane – its northern closure (if this was west of the Jubilee car park, people could drive down from the village) and especially its new southern junction with the Bath Road (where many fear increased pollution if there are two lanes of standing traffic in each direction instead of one).

However, for the first time in a very long time, perhaps there is cause for hope. Berkeley's next promised consultation in a month or two will be eagerly awaited.

Nigel Smales & Karl Lawrence



The Beaujolais Brothers

Next November Philip and Alan Langton will celebrate the 40th anniversary of their dash in a Reliant Scimitar SE5 – then Princess Anne's sports car of choice – to win the third 'open' Beaujolais Run, a contest in which lovers of both fast cars and fine wine vied to be first from Burgundy to London with a case of freshly-bottled Beaujolais Nouveau. What a way to get their new business 'on the map'.

SGT stood across the road from Taplow Station on a site which for 120 years had a coal yard at one end and a stockyard at the other. A siding ran steeply from the mainline to deliver coal and take livestock to market. Later the big houses stabled horses and carriages in the cattle briars. Taplow was dubbed 'the barbed-wire capital of Britain' during the Second World War when enormous rolls were shunted down and up the siding to and from Hitcham Field (now 'The Pit'). Cade's coal yard continued until 1959 when a gambling debt was settled in The Oak & Saw and Station Garage Amersham & Chalfont had a new branch. It repaired Rolls Royces and Bentleys at Taplow until Philip acquired the business in 1971 and took Alan into partnership the following year.

The brothers hailed from Cookham Dean. Philip was a photographer with cars in his heart. Alan was a manager at Maidenhead Autos (long since superseded by Sytner). Together they became SGT. Life in the fast lane started in a caravan on the forecourt where the boys lived for nine months while the frontage was rebuilt, some of the old coal sheds were converted into workshops and the railway siding spur was removed. In the early days cars could be left unlocked on the forecourt when everyone adjourned for lunch in The Oak & Saw, but only if Alan phoned ahead to order sandwiches, otherwise it would be crisps or nothing. They went on to sell and service an eclectic range of about 20 marques including Alfa Romeo, Lotus, Mitsubishi, Morgan and Subaru cars plus BMW, Silk and Triumph motorcycles.

In its best year, SGT sold 600 motorcycles and 1,200 cars. Customers included Ernie Wise, Terry Wogan, Helen Grellier, Norman Stevens and Max 'Superhod' Quartermain of Burnham, famous in the early-1970s for earning more carrying plaster than did Harold Wilson for being Prime Minister. National newspapers featured photographs of Max handing the Langtons a wad of banknotes to



SGT

Alan and Philip with Ernie Wise

pay for his Rolls Royce; surely the model for Harry Enfield's 'Loadsamoney'?

At its peak, SGT employed 70 local people. Long-serving stalwarts included John McNaught, Jane Godfrey, Brian Clarke, Melvyn Perks, Julian Milne (now a Maidenhead car dealer) and Mike Goldsworthy (now at Taplow Lake). Many still smile to recall the workshop lads going on strike when Alan agreed to sell the fibreglass, three-wheeled Reliant Robin. His children never forgave him for taking one as his company car.

SGT finally closed last year – its site will soon have 66 flats in Lansdowne Place perhaps alongside 14 'railway cottages' – but life goes on. Former employee Chris Wartho has launched SGT Service Centre in Station Yard near where Alan now sells Minis. The Beaujolais Brothers raise their glasses to the new era (but of course, not when at the wheel).

Nigel Smales

Drama Queen

I was asked to write an article about Sally Sharp.

Well, I wasn't exactly sure where to start with the enthusiastic, dramatic and musical woman who also happens to be my Mum. I suppose as long as I can remember she's been part of shows at Maidenhead Musical Comedy Society – the most recent of which, *A Christmas Carol*, my brother Ben and I were also lucky enough to be in – as well as numerous other drama activities, including her own after-school club Play-Act at St Nicolas' School. She works at St Nic's as the business manager and Ben and I both went there as well so it's a special place for us all. But her drama days in the local area started well before we came along. Even before coming to Taplow, Mum had been part of lots of other dramatic societies but somehow MMCS is the group she's stuck with longest.

MMCS have rehearsed at St Nicolas' School and Taplow Village Hall for years. That's where Mum first turned up in 1998 to audition. Now she seems to be a regular for 'turning up' at auditions and has played lots of major roles since, even winning a National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) award for her role in *Hello Dolly* as Dolly Levi.

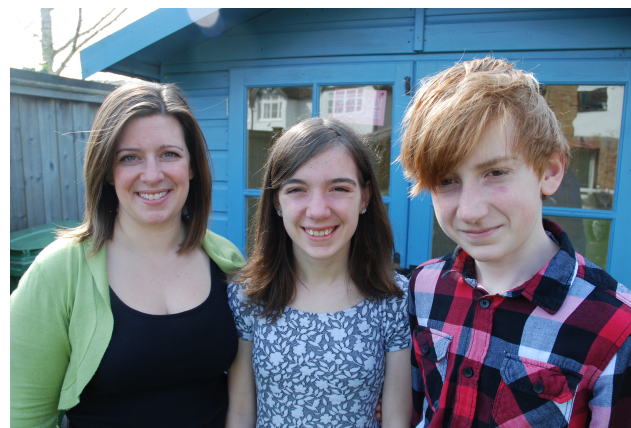


Maidenhead Musical Comedy Society

Sally with her NODA

Hitcham and Taplow Society

I've never really been able to escape the drama – even from a young age I was dragged along to rehearsals in the school hall and plonked in the corner with a colouring book – yet there's something about the music and the acting that has always drawn me, even though I never really thought rehearsals could be enjoyable. That was until we started *A Christmas Carol*. The whole time we never stopped laughing. It was a fantastic way to have fun and feel like we were achieving something. It was also a great opportunity to meet people of different ages and personalities that I never would have got a chance to meet if I hadn't auditioned. With such a huge cast, you feel like you're part of one big family and at the finale it feels amazing. If only that feeling could go on forever! But then you're hit by a wave of tiredness after six adrenalin packed performances, and the disappointment that it's all over.



Nigel Smates

Sally, Lauren and Ben Sharp

All the years I've seen Mum come back from shows and auditions and wondered what's so addictive, but now I see what a thrill you can get. When you stand on that stage to sing on your own, the butterflies in your stomach are doing gymnastics, your heart is galloping but you must keep your voice steady and stay in character. I thought of the buzz as I wrote this and how if Mum hadn't been so in love with drama I would never have been part of this amazing experience. I think of that and smile, maybe having a drama queen for a mother isn't so bad.

Lauren Sharp

Lauren is 14 and now at Cox Green School where she is developing her talent for writing – Ed.

All the World's a Stage

Some players perform in our little corner of it, others on sets imagined or made by talented locals...

Taplow was most recently in the spotlight last winter when the Mill played an unsung role as production office for the second series of *Endeavour*. On 30th March and the three succeeding Sundays, TV buffs will have seen Shaun Evans as young Detective Sergeant Morse. During Episode 3 on 13th April, who recognised The Rectory playing a murder scene? Location manager Nick Marshall tells the tale:

Several foreboding phone calls warning of dangerous times ahead, enmity at every turn and the wrath of school-parents and commuters alike prompted a hasty review of our carefully laid parking plans one innocent Friday in December. For although arrangements had taken place to film entirely within the private grounds of the delightful Reverend Alan & Gillian Dibden, it was evident that our desire to park our essential technical vehicles in close proximity was an entirely different matter.

Sally Sharp of St Nicolas' School confirmed that the less-residential section of Rectory Road was the logical spot for these vehicles, some of which are without doubt excessively large. It was acknowledged that they should cause no greater access problems for traffic – usually reduced to one lane anyway – than any normal day when normal-sized vehicles park along the same stretch. Sally also kindly offered to advise parents to allow an additional five minutes to their journey to quell the expected fervour. As a village-dwelling parent of school-age children living in a commuter belt, I knew better than most that our presence would not be for the feint-hearted at school time.

Further correspondence by e-mail informed me of the hundreds of vehicles I could expect to descend upon the village throughout the day. And that, on occasion, emotions have been known to run so high punches have even been thrown. Had we bitten off more than we could chew?

Just as we were least expecting it an American gentleman offered to stand down leaf-blowers in Cedar Chase in consideration of our sound recordist – a most thoughtful and welcome gesture amidst the growing doom.

On the eve of filming a final reconnaissance explored ways of reducing our footprint further. Ian Burne at The Oak and Saw kindly offered us the use of his car park until the rush hour had receded, prior to his lunchtime business. We also recognised that, having

earlier cornered the Director to clarify his camera angles, we could place most of our smaller vehicles in the Rectory driveway in spite of our exterior scenes. Not all Directors are so approachable and pragmatic. Indeed many might have declared, 'I need 360!' irrespective of their actual requirements!



Nigel Smales

Making *Endeavour* at The Rectory

We met our 'cone man' in the evening – the gallant lone-ranger drafted in to reserve the spaces we coveted for the following day. We briefed him. We warned him. We wished him well and bade him goodnight.

As the night sky began to brighten into morning the dawn chorus greeted us like old friends, the rising sun revealing the fine work of the cone man who, having survived the night without antagonism, was in his battered old Austin wolfing down the sausage-and-egg roll he so richly deserved. In the distance, above the drone of the motorway, the rumble of the camera lorry could be heard approaching as the freshly-rested Security operatives braced themselves for the onslaught....

In the end the day passed by without a hitch. No animosity, no traffic jams and no fisticuffs. The location was ideal, the parking reasonably inconspicuous and the tense experience we were anticipating never materialised. Indeed, it was a pleasure.

*Surely King Louis XIV (Alan Rickman to his friends) felt the same as Nick earlier last year when Cliveden was cast as the Palace of Versailles with its French dining room starring as a bedchamber, all prepared by supervising art director David Hindle as a set for the soon-to-be-released film *A Little Chaos*.*

Art direction is about getting 'the look' right on screen, often a complex challenge which starts with concept, digresses into 'the how' (in the studio, on location, computer



Making *Frankenweenie*
Tim Browning, Tim Burton and Trey Thomas

graphics or a mix thereof?) and in the real world culminates in set construction and decoration or hands-on location management. It sometimes involves striving for period consistency – hence *Endeavour* enjoying The Rectory for its 1960s style – and can entertain eagle-eyed geeks who love to look for errors. Brian Ackland-Snow might be the most famous Taplovian art director; he left his mark on the High Street where he recast The Hollies as Mulberry House after winning an Oscar and a BAFTA for *A Room with a View* (released 1985). Nowadays Tim Browning and David are hot on his heels as two of the many reasons why the British film industry is booming.

Tim evolved from theatre carpentry in Sydney to build sets for *The Matrix* (1999) and paint them for *Moulin Rouge* (2001) and *Star Wars: Episode 2* (2002). Having first sat at the drawing board for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005), he has become a concept artist of growing renown with his creative illustrations of the sets and action we eventually see on screen. He worked on *The Golden Compass* (2007) – but not at Hedsor – and his recent achievements include *Skyfall* (2012) and the nearly-finished *Edge of Tomorrow*. He cannot confirm or deny that he is currently working on the latest *Stars Wars* but will admit to enjoying ventures into art direction with Tim Burton on *Alice in Wonderland* (2010) – in which he appeared painting roses – and especially the stop-action animation *Frankenweenie* (2012).

David's first foray – on the TV series *The Borrowers* (1992) – remains closest to his heart, not least because that's where he 'borrowed' his wife Rebecca, herself later art director on various productions including *Mamma Mia* (2008). He has since divided his time between TV – including *Gormenghast* (2000), *Upstairs Downstairs* (2010) and *Hunted* (2012) – and a few "movies you've never heard of" as well as some you have, such as *Ladies in Lavender* (2004) and *The King's Speech* (2010) in which his magic turned the Bradford

Bulls stadium into Wembley, played a part in extending the storyline and excited those geeks by featuring 1930s microphone covers that were two years before their time (shock, horror). He is now working on *Suffragette*.

The boys both have architectural beginnings. Tim's first degree was in the history of art and architecture and his MA in production design at the National Film School, Beaconsfield. He and his wife Cat are at Hitcham House with their handful of daughters Lyra, Juno and Thomasina. David trained in architecture before switching to take a Master's degree in film. He and Rebecca (now a teacher at St Nicolas' School) share Neighbours in Hill Farm Road with Tallulah and Felix. Three of these five youngsters were named for film characters. Who can guess who?

Nigel Smales



Men at Work – Tim & David

What does Conservation Area mean today?

Caroline and I moved to Taplow 14 years ago. We both lived and worked in London for many years until shortly after getting married we decided to move to a more conducive environment to start a family. We were both brought up in the countryside and wanted the same for our children.

One of the main reasons we chose our house in Ellington Gardens was its semi-rural, village setting in a cluster of attractive Edwardian houses at the heart of Taplow Riverside Conservation Area. What we didn't know beforehand was how close-knit our community is and how passionate everyone is to preserve the amenity value in this secluded area. There is a real family feeling here too. The five houses in Ellington Gardens alone are home to 15

children, including our two, who often play together safely on the private gravel drive in front of our houses with the backdrop of the small woodland surrounded by 16 houses on Ellington Gardens and Ellington Road.

It's a travesty that on 29th January this year the woodland was virtually eradicated, destroying the character of this leafy neighbourhood. One of the reasons planning applications to build new housing have been refused is that the trees "...are protected by virtue of their location on a Conservation Area". And further, since "The proposals... would result in the loss of several mature trees which contribute to the amenities of the Conservation Area and the locality as a whole [they are] therefore contrary to policy EP4 of the South Bucks District Local Plan".



Baylis Media Ltd

So why did South Bucks District Council (SBDC) allow six mature trees to be felled and one huge tree to be severely pollarded? They were even marked as 'Important Trees' in the original documents creating the Conservation Area. Furthermore, why did SBDC initially show little concern that three healthy trees on the site were illegally felled in October last year prior to the application for permission to remove six more? It was only after substantial pressure from local residents that SBDC reacted and wrote to the owner of the site informing him of his duty and setting out the Council's requirements for replacement trees. Three saplings are due to be planted in the 'planting season', which is now!

Community feeling was clearly demonstrated by 44 letters of objection and the protest gathering of about 50 residents photographed by *The Maidenhead Advertiser*, and yet SBDC approved the application. We are all aware of the need for new housing but Taplow has more than played its part. In the relatively small area of Taplow Riverside, developments over the last ten years have included nine new flats at Taplow Quay, six at The Nutshell (next to Brunel's bridge) and two large family houses on the corner of Ellington Road and Ellington Gardens. By the time ongoing and proposed housing developments nearby are completed, Taplow's population will grow by at least 40% from the 1,699 counted in the 2011 census.

The small pocket of land at Ellington Gardens may seem inconsequential but the trees provided significant amenity value for many residents in this area. This is Green Belt, a Flood Plain and a Conservation Area since 1999. If these aren't good enough reasons for protection, what is? The residents really care about this unspoilt, semi-rural location. We want to keep it this way.

Rupert Sellers

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives local authorities the power to make Tree Preservation Orders if they consider it would be "expedient in the interests of amenity". SBDC's Arboricultural Officer Frank Spooner concluded that the Ellington trees are in poor condition and of insufficient amenity value to protect. Condition is an objective judgement with which other experts may or may not agree. Amenity is surely subjective. Shouldn't locals judge the amenity value of their trees? Perhaps others might beg the question – Ed.

Hitcham and Taplow Society

A Rare Opportunity

The unique shopping village is no more. An enormous supermarket is rising at the Bishop Centre. During negotiations to secure planning approval for this scheme, huge sums of money were offered by developer Land Securities to fund various projects to benefit Burnham. Taplow Parish Council Chairman George Sandy reminded the developer that the site is actually in Taplow. The result was a 'windfall' of £100,000 to the Council "to be used towards environmental improvements" in the Parish.

The Council invited suggestions for how this windfall might be invested, set the deadline for responses at 30th April and established criteria on which each will be considered – that the proposed project must offer permanent 'legacy' value, must benefit the entire Parish community, must be affordable within the amount of the windfall and must not result in any long-term maintenance costs which cannot be met within the Council's normal annual budget.

Proposals are now being considered. Each will be assessed at the Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Centre on 20th May when proposers will have an opportunity to present their ideas and everybody will have the chance to hear Councillors' views. The Council's final decision will be made at a public meeting on a date not yet announced at the time of going to press.

Members of the Hitcham & Taplow Society have been asked to send a copy of any proposal they submit in order that it can be published on the Society website at www.taplowsociety.org.uk.

Karl Lawrence

Village Green Party

Saturday 21st June

See insert for details and
booking form

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Taplow Pop Up Shop

The ghost of last Christmas Past will always be with me for the special way Taplow turned up trumps. Our small community came together on 15th & 16th November to have such fun procuring, creating, displaying, selling and buying a magnificent array of goodies at the Christmas Pop Up Shop to raise over £4,000 for our very deserving Thames Valley Adventure Playground (TVAP). What a generous, talented, inventive, patient, dedicated, inspired bunch you are. My desire to give each of you the credit you deserve meant that my first draft of this article was three times too long and read like an over-excited Oscar acceptance speech. Please excuse me for having to contain my gratitude in the space available.

First among equals has to be Iris Midlane who bravely opened her beautiful home to be transformed into a Winter Wonderland by Tamsin Hornett, Chris Ashford, Yannick LeTouze and pals. A stunning tree (thanks, Homebase) was beautified by Marie Tenglund and friends (*tack så mycket* to Ikea for the decorations). We enjoyed the musical delights of Sally Sharp and her Dickensian singers on Friday and the tingling strings of Rachel Horton-Kitchlew our resident harpist on Saturday. We were privileged to be joined by Father Christmas and his elf visitor (also known as Barrie Peroni and Jairo de Rojas), and especially by TVAP's Sylvia Livsey (one of its founders) and Nicky Hutchinson, unsung hero and truly a woman of significance.

Simon Edlin and Toby Greeves must be mentioned in dispatches for freezing off their proverbial tutus while safely shepherding guests across the cricket field throughout Friday evening to find the doorstep prickling with holly wreaths crafted by Cath Knight and friends. And once in the warm, there was the retail therapy of gifts galore made with such skill by the likes of Liz Forsyth, Jennifer Mead and her Mum, Anne Thorne and her daughter-in-law Esme, Charlie Greeves and Tamsin's Aunt Sally with her lovely olive oil-based skin products. Such a treat! Tasty delights ranged from the cakes of Sarah Meats to the choc-fix of Lisa Meats with delicious stops at fondant snowmen and penguins (thanks to Taplow Kids!), chutneys, jams, cakes and mince pies by Janette Mackay, Pipe Dreams, Roger Worthington, Clemency Horton-Kitchlew, Sainsburys, Sweetmeats, Daphne Walker and so many others including Rosie Peters who made tea all morning.



Nigel Smales

Of all the original ideas, Team Tap L'eau took the biscuit, just. Not only a big fundraiser but such an iconic addition to the Taplow tapestry; no self-respecting dinner host can expect to serve supper without a bottle gracing their table. Congratulations to Jane & Jamie Barnard, Tim Browning and Pete Webb for their fantastic creativity *à la Français*. And Pete – signage, pricing, wrapping paper, Christmas labels, bottle labels – such an amazing human being. What would we do without you?

Most money was raised on the silent art auction. Very special thanks to our amazing artists Sheila & Brian Horton, Juliet Lecchini, Muriel King, Tony Meats and Lucy de Rojas for their enormous generosity in donating their artwork. Now time to roll the credits for the cast of thousands not yet mentioned – Tom Allen, Roger Andrews, Sally Ashford, Gill Blundell, Marianne Boden, Chris Cherry, Clementine Fox, Maud & Ken Johnson, Martin Knight, Karl Lawrence, Jo Leftley, McAfee, Chris & George Ormond, Caroline Sellers, Caroline & Nigel Smales, Sam Viollet, Victoria Wayland-Smith and the crew from TVAP. The list is endless and demonstrates what a fantastic place we live in and why we all love it. Taplow terrific!

Jacqueline Andrews

Taplow terrific indeed, and Jacqueline terrific too for she was the inspiration for the Pop Up Shop and the heartbeat of its delivery and success – Ed.

Batteries Not Included

The prospect of two 7-metre high sheds with multiple chimneys housing 40,000 battery chickens and dominating the Bath Road at the junction with Marsh Lane has been averted together with the inevitable prospect of constant noise, unpleasant odours and the proliferation of flies and vermin.

More than 50 letters and e-mails sent by the Taplow Parish Council, members of the Hitcham & Taplow Society and the residents of Marsh Lane, Ye Meads and elsewhere persuaded South Bucks District Council (SBDC) to accept the recommendation of its planning officers to refuse Planning Application 13/02108/FUL submitted by the owner of the land adjacent to Marshmead in Marsh Lane.

All objected to the infringement of this particularly precious area of Green Belt. It is one of the few glimpses of green remaining on the A4 along 45 miles between Maidenhead Thicket and Piccadilly Circus.

Most contested the applicant's claim that what was being proposed was an agricultural enterprise. Egg production in artificial light in an enclosure of cages is not agriculture. Moreover throughout the years the field adjacent to Marshmead has been an equestrian paddock. It has never been a farm. Renaming it Marshwood Farm is a spurious invention of convenience.

Many made constructive objections to different aspects of the documents submitted in

support of the application. The storage and removal of the several tons of manure produced each day was a special concern. The volume of HGV and other vehicles was calculated to bring an unacceptable level of traffic movements to a road network already under stress.

Several drew attention to the decade-long history of many planning applications for commercial uses of Marshmead and the adjacent land being refused. Throughout that decade commercial activity has persisted without planning permission. Many considered it unacceptable (perhaps outrageous) for the applicant to suggest that ceasing this unlawful operation will be conditional on the application being approved.

From these letters and the various other relevant documents SBDC concluded it to be an inappropriate location for an enterprise of the proposed industrial scale due to the significant impact it would have on neighbouring residents. Furthermore it is a highly visible location which performs a vital Green Belt function in maintaining openness between surrounding settlements.

The time is long overdue for SBDC to use its powers of enforcement in respect of the flouting of planning law to close all unlawful businesses being pursued on its patch.

Karl Lawrence



Nigel Smales

Building the Newsletter

Andrew Findlay joined then Editor Fred Russell to produce the Society's Newsletter 80 (Autumn 2003). Together they transformed our Newsletter to be the exceptional, outstanding, illustrated, full colour magazine it is now. Here Andrew describes the complex skilled process of converting the text and photographs comprising the articles selected by the Editor to create each edition of our Newsletter. This process demands a high degree of awareness of how the Newsletter will appear when it is delivered through your letterbox and how each page needs to be a coherent and interesting story commending your attention. Andrew has brought an alert and imaginative eye to this process and the resounding success of his effort has been a major contribution to the keen expectation of our readers for the next edition to appear. – Ed

Design

It all begins with the words. Local news, opinions, reports, history, interviews, anything relevant to people and places in Hitcham and Taplow. The Editor usually has some 'hot topics' that must be covered and some less time-critical subjects to provide a balance. He finds and encourages authors, corrects spelling and grammar, and adjusts the text to match our 'house style' where necessary.

A magazine is more than just text and pictures. It has a 'feel' – a visual style – that is consistent from one issue to the next. Our current style is based on a two-column layout with relatively wide margins to give a feeling of space. We use a larger font size than most Sunday supplements and our typography is very conventional: a light serif font, URW Palladio, is used for the text of the articles and a sans-serif font, Nimbus Sans Bold, for the headlines. Italics are used for the titles of other publications, some larger quotations, foreign words in English usage, authors' names and editorial comments.

Palladio
Nimbus

 Serifs

Typesetting

Typesetting a magazine is not like word-processing. I did use a word-processor for the first issue I was involved with and it was hard work!

Word-processors are for creating text: you should be thinking about the structure and content of what you are writing, and leave the layout to the computer. Page layout works the other way around: you start with a fixed number of blank pages and concentrate on fitting the text and pictures into them in a pleasing way. I use a package called *Scribus* for this job; it is an open-source (i.e. free) page-layout program that anyone can download from the Internet.

The first step is to create a document with a lot of blank pages. I then paste in the text of the articles, starting each one on a new page. This stage is known as the 'galley proof'. In the days of hot-metal typesetting this was the most important stage for correcting errors as they are easier to fix before the text is broken up into pages.

Where there are pictures to go with an article I usually add very small copies to the galley page. Sometimes authors supply pictures, sometimes the Editor or I find them in our collections or take new ones for the Newsletter. A printed magazine exposes all the faults in an image, so I always check that pictures look good when reduced to the size of a postage stamp and also when enlarged to 3 times the size that they will be printed.

A PDF file of the galleys goes to the Editor to show how much text we have. Often an article is too long for the available space and we have to decide whether to edit the text, reduce the number of pictures, or if it is only a little bit over we can squeeze the text by adjusting the 'tracking' (this affects how close together the individual letters will be placed).

The job now becomes a jigsaw where the object is to find articles that will fit together to make up complete pages. Photos are moved around and re-sized to fill the space, and pages are placed in a suitable order. After this the footers can be updated to show the date and the page numbers. Some footers interfere with images and get removed at this stage.

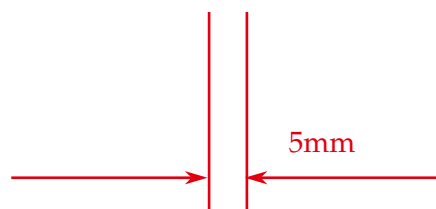


Jane Curry

Photo credit lines up

Equal gaps around image

Text 11pt on 13.2pt



The Newsletter now looks complete, but there is more to be done. Apparently tiny details can have a big effect on the quality of the final product. You would not bother with these for an office memo, but a glossy magazine is more like a work of art so I spend some time looking at the appearance of the text on the page.

The human eye is very sensitive to alignment. You can detect whether two lines on a page 'line up' even if they are some distance apart: scientists call this 'vernier acuity'. To satisfy the eye, article text is aligned on a 'baseline grid' which is in exactly the same place on every page. Similarly, I try to make both columns on the page finish on the same line.

The next check is for 'widows and orphans'; these are cases where the first or last line of a paragraph is split off to another column. I also try to avoid a paragraph ending with one word alone on a line. The usual way to fix these problems is to adjust the tracking of a few words or sometimes a whole paragraph. There are limits to this: too much expansion makes the words fall apart visually, and too much compression makes them look cramped and hard to read.

Once the paragraphs start and end in good places on the page I look inside them. Sometimes there will be a big gap between words, or a visual 'crack' of white space running down the middle. Tweaking the tracking on a few words usually sorts this out, but if there are a lot of long words close together I may have to put in a hyphen. I try to avoid hyphens though, and all other forms of over-punctuation. My grandfather used to run a printing works, and his advice on punctuation characters was always "if in doubt leave it out".

called for more encouragement from school for pupils to join a cadet force to enable them to develop personal qualities such as self-motivation, self-discipline, resourcefulness and tenacity. And if TS Iron Duke's cadets are anything to go by,

A paragraph that needs some work

called for more encouragement from school for pupils to join a cadet force to enable them to develop personal qualities such as self-motivation, self-discipline, resourcefulness and tenacity. And if TS Iron Duke's cadets are anything to go by, these well-rounded

Improved by changing the tracking

We use a lot more pictures now than we used to. Digital technology makes this affordable and the pictures contribute a lot to the appearance of the Newsletter. Each image has to be checked for quality, and also for technical things like the colour profile used in the file. Some images run right up to the edge of the paper: this is called 'full bleed' and to make it work I have to make sure that the image continues for a few millimetres outside the finished page area. Most commercial printing uses over-sized paper and the edges are trimmed off after the magazine has been stapled together, so we don't actually have ink bleeding off into the works of the machine!

Proof

My part of the job is almost done, so I make another PDF file and send it to the Editor for checking. Errors found at this stage have to be corrected very carefully to avoid creating new problems. Eventually I make a high-resolution PDF file with all the fonts and images embedded in it, and e-mail it to our printers – Michael Burbridge Ltd in Maidenhead.

Our print-run is usually quite small (250 copies) so the Newsletter is normally printed on an HP Indigo machine, which is an ink-jet printer the size of a small car. For the 100th edition we needed many more copies so the job was put on a Heidelberg offset-litho machine. This has a greater setup cost as four plates must be made for each page, but the quality is higher and the per-copy cost is lower than the ink-jet machine.

Experts at the printing works convert the PDF file for printing: images are changed from RGB to the CMYK colour model and adjusted to the colour profile of the machine and inks to be used. Pages are laid up for printing on A3+ paper: look at how the magazine is put together and you will see that pages 4 and 13 are on one sheet of paper, with 14 and 3 on the other side. We get a printed proof copy for a final check, and if everyone is happy with that the job is scheduled for production.

Deliver!

We try to allow two weeks in the schedule for proof and printing, and then it is time to mobilise our network of volunteers to deliver your copy – hot off the press!

Andrew Findlay

Marching Orders for the Iron Duke?

This is an anxious time for Maidenhead Sea Cadets. The redevelopment of Mill Lane could mean an end to the 72-year history of their training ship, TS Iron Duke.

The ship leases its riverside site from National Grid on a rolling five-year term recently and unexpectedly reduced to three-years. Chairman Andrew Anderson, an ex-Merchant Navy officer, says: "That's somewhat worrying since we don't know what this means in terms of their future intentions. If they'll let us stay, the housing development could be good for us because there would be more families right on our doorstep and that could mean new members. However, although our site isn't actually part of the Mill Lane development area, it is in a prime position on the Thames!"



Caroline Gillies

Chairman Andrew Anderson and Lt Bob Westover

Commanding officer Lieutenant Bob Westover has been with the Cadets man and boy. He is supported by a small team of volunteers, mainly keen parents. As its name implies, his ship is run on Royal Navy lines. Cadets are addressed by their rank and surname, all very professional and seamanlike; everyone thrives on the benevolent discipline. Youngsters can join as Juniors at 10-years-old, become full Cadets at 12 and work their way up through the ranks to Able Cadet, Leading Cadet and Cadet Petty Officer. Each promotion involves passing exams in leadership and other skills. The more senior cadets are expected to lead by example and take responsibility for younger ones.

Once upon a time, when Britain ruled the waves, the Cadet Corps was a way of showing young men what life in the Navy

would be like. Today over 400 ships around the country are more about giving youngsters the chance for excitement and adventure on the water in a safe and well-managed environment. Until the 1980s it was boys only but now girls form half the Iron Duke's membership of around 40 which comes mainly from Maidenhead, Holyport, Burnham and Taplow. Most join because they have been influenced by schoolmates who are already members. "I just hung out at the weekend. What did you do?" a friend might ask. "Well, I went on a Navy warship and had a brilliant time," replies the cadet.



Caroline Gillies

Cadet Ryan Myles hard at work with the boot polish while Lt Bob Westover shows Jane Honke and Tempy Burchett how it should be done

After a three-month induction course, each cadet is given a No 4 working uniform plus a set of No 1s, the full dress uniform for parades and official functions. Membership is only £10 a month for two nights a week of activities and summer weekends when they're out on the boats – kayaks, canoes and motor boats. When the nights draw in, there is classroom instruction in anything from first aid to rope work and navigation to

boat maintenance. There are also inter-unit competitions and official parades to attend and for these boots have to be buffed to a mirror-like shine and No 1s have to be clean, brushed and crisply ironed with badges perfectly sewn on. Cadets are surprisingly keen on the concept of military smartness and love being part of the cadet family. Typical of this attitude is courteous and enthusiastic George Garbett (14) whose mother Kim is the unit's secretary. "We're a pretty close-knit team and all get on well together," he says proudly.

"Quite apart from what we can teach them here, there are hundreds of national courses offered every year by the Sea Cadet Corps" says Bob. "A cadet can go away for a week and learn anything from power-boating to rock-climbing. The Ministry of Education class it as education so there's no hefty fine for parents taking their children out of school in term time!" Indeed Education Secretary Michael Gove recently called for more encouragement from schools for pupils to join a cadet force to enable them to develop personal qualities such as self-motivation, self-discipline, resourcefulness and tenacity. And if TS Iron Duke's cadets are anything to go by, these well-rounded, respectful and motivated young people will be a great asset to both their community and future employers. But if they are forced out of Mill Lane, finding a site with similar facilities along this part of the Thames may just be an impossible challenge. What a tragedy that would be!

Caroline Gillies



Maidenhead Sea Cadets

TS Iron Duke band at Maidenhead's Remembrance Day Parade in 1964

The Name's Bond

South Bucks District Council must decide by 27th May whether to approve an outline application for permission to demolish the white-and-pale-blue Silchester Manor and build a new day nursery to the rear with four new houses on the Bath Road frontage.



What a shame it would be to lose this iconic Victorian building which stands with an elegant pride that reflects the nature and social stature of the man for whom it was built.

Jonathan Bond was 19 in 1838 when helping his father Jonathan to ferry railway passengers across the river. It wasn't long before he came up with the clever ruse of renting skiffs to people who wanted to row themselves across. This was the beginning of pleasure boating hereabouts. His main yard was on a sliver of east bank land leased from Maidenhead Corporation in 1857. Here he not only hired out boats but also built new ones. It might be said that he and William Skindle together made Maidenhead (but really Taplow) an iconic riverside leisure destination.

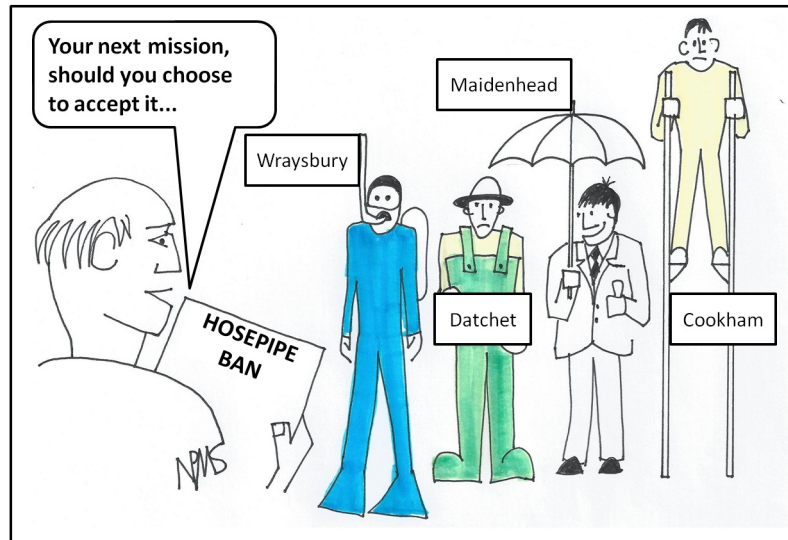
By the mid-1860s Bond had built himself Cedar Lodge on the Bath Road, all very nice but ultimately not grand enough. Soon he was at Brook Side with his son Jonathan nestling respectfully nearby in Rhone Villa. The business passed in 1904 to this third Jonathan and in 1914 to his son George who in the 1930s added Kanellan for his sisters Katherine, Nellie and Anne. By then Beatrice Roberts was at Brook Side running Silchester House Girls' School which has evolved in recent years to become a day nursery.

Cedar Lodge is still there (as Norfolk House Hotel). So is Kanellan. The current proposal is to demolish the Bond centrepiece that was originally Brook Side. It would be so much better if this fabulous undesigned heritage asset could be retained for posterity by converting it into flats with the sensitivity shown at Lansdowne Court.

Nigel Smales

Lincoln's End

Remembering Lincoln Lee



Anyone for an Ark?

In January when the rising Thames cut Cookham off from civilisation (or vice versa) the Environment Agency was reported as saying that the Jubilee River had "saved thousands from flooding [without making] things worse for anyone else". Wraysbury and Datchet didn't agree. Down there the cry was "we are being sacrificed to protect all those expensive properties upstream". Chips weighed heavily on the shoulders of some who complained the "gin-and-Jag set" in Maidenhead were dry while they were sodden, or that all those depressed freshwater mussels must be happy (or at least less depressed) not to be disturbed by dredging. Perhaps these unfortunate folk had read Newsletter 100 which last November recalled Lincoln Lee musing in 2001 that the flood relief channel might be called LODHIC, an acronym for 'Look Out Downstream Here it Comes'.

Did the Jubilee really make matters worse downstream? Some say it ran faster than the Thames, thus delivering a more forceful flood to Datchet and beyond. And had Maidenhead been swamped, there would have been less water heading downstream. But banks were breached everywhere from Oxford to Shepperton except in our reaches. Surely it would have happened here (or at least there,

where Maidenhead built on its floodplain) had it not been for the Jubilee.

An article in a national newspaper caught the eye for its headline "Man the pumps Parky, the Celeb's Riviera's up the creek!" and for its apparent *schadenfraude* in anticipation of the flood engulfing the riverside homes of "assorted luminaries" including Paul Daniels (at Wargrave), Mike Read (at Henley) and Terry Wogan "a couple of miles beyond" Michael Parkinson (at Bray). Daniels and Read did indeed get damp but not

Parky and – blankety-blank – how relieved Helen & Terry must be if the Jubilee can be congratulated for preventing a Biblical-scale flood rising some 115 feet from its usual level to their threshold. Clearly topographical research was beyond this journalist's remit. If the Wogans had been awash then all of Taplow south of St Nicolas' School would have been underwater along with most of London and south-east England.

Question Corner

Miv Wayland-Smith wants to know why Berry Hill's Stable Cottage has two peculiar bulges on its eastern wall. Perhaps Morag & Michael Scarlett would care to enlighten us.

Nigel Smales



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