

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Minutes of the 51st Annual General Meeting Held at the Village Centre on Friday 3 December 2010 at 8.00 p.m.

1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

36 members attended. Apologies were received from John and Ann Hanford, Sheila Peroni, George Milne, Jill Harden, Ros Russell, Dick and Gill Nutt, Geoff Holloway, Gina Hoffman-Juviler and Rosemary Reed.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2009 AGM

The minutes of the 50th AGM were approved.

3. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Eva Lipman made the following opening remarks.

"I would like to welcome you all to our 51st AGM. Once again I am delighted to see so many of you here.

Unfortunately during the year we have lost two of our longest standing distinguished members - Bill Ball, who was a past chairman, and Sally Miall, beloved wife of Leonard and a stalwart in the community. I would like everyone to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

[A minute's silence was held.]

It has been satisfying to see a number of the younger members of the village organise events within the village and we would love to see some of them participate in our own activities which we believe have helped to keep Taplow and Hitcham such great places to live.

As you may know Euan will be standing down as Chairman after having given four years of sterling service. We are extremely fortunate in that he has very kindly agreed to stay on the Committee and keep an eye on planning and help us with commenting on the various consultation exercises with our local authorities. The new coalition government has thrown various balls to do with long term planning and structure into the air and as yet no-one knows where they will land. We will be watching this space! Before I ask Euan to give you his chairman's report we would all like to give him our sincere and most appreciative thanks for all his hard work on our behalf. Thank you Euan and over to you."

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Euan Felton gave the following report.

“Good evening and welcome to this Annual General Meeting. I am pleased to see those of you who have been able to attend, regardless of the outside conditions. I am afraid the cold weather has been against us for the last few days and I hope it will improve and is not an indication of what is in store for the rest of the winter.

The year started well and I would particularly like to thank Neil and Gill Blundell for taking the initiative to organise an Easter Egg hunt and lunch at the Taplow House hotel and thank Sam Goss, the general manager of the hotel for hosting us. About 70 grown ups and 30 children took part and the day was a huge success. We will be organising it again this coming Easter Monday and hope to see many of you and your children and grandchildren at the event.

We held the Village Green party in June on, unfortunately, the coldest day of the month. C'est La Vie, a day earlier or later would have been much better, but there were no choices. I am so pleased that the attendance was nearly up to normal standards and that our charity partners, The Thames Valley Adventure Playground, made nearly £700 from the raffle. Thanks to energetic dancing the cold was kept at bay and everyone enjoyed the evening. Next year the date will be Saturday June 25th: please put it in your diaries.

Following last year's AGM and Tony Hickman's suggestions we have tried to nurse some of the Social Groups into life. There has been some interest shown in the The Art, Gardening and Literature Groups, but none have yet got off the ground. We will try during this coming year to improve on that.

Taplow Parish Council have adopted the K6 traditional phone box opposite the bottom of the High Street and intend to carry out the necessary work to re-paint and preserve it. The Society and the Parish Council would be interested to receive any suggestions as to what community uses it might be suitable for.

The Parish Council, as a result of receiving a request from the District Council, has been progressing the possibility of leasing the woodland to the South East of Wellbank for some community recreational use and the Society has expressed a strong interest in participating in the renovation of the gardens which once existed there. The School has also expressed interest in the potential for studies and involvement with the flora and fauna. It is at an early stage and a working party has been formed by the Parish Council, including interested non-Councillors, to look at all the possibilities, including, but not least, the financial implications of taking it on.

We have decided to keep the Society's subscription rates the same again for this year, but feel we must increase them from October next year because so many costs have been increasing, particularly the production costs of the Newsletter, which is paid for entirely from the money raised from subscriptions. We will keep you in touch in the Spring Newsletter as to what we feel we must do and you will have the opportunity to vote on any proposal at a general meeting.

We are still searching for elusive copies of early Newsletters and have not been able to find anywhere numbers 1-28. If by any chance you have any early ones tucked away we would be most grateful if you would let the Committee know. It is the

intention to scan all the pre-electronic Newsletters and put them on the website when we get the opportunity.

The whole process of planning is about to change under the new Government and will, hopefully give us a greater say in planning our locality, but in any case we must remain vigilant as new regimes develop and be able to participate in and influence the ways in which planning will be handled, including the impacts on the environment.

For the time being the District Council Core Strategy document is going ahead and last month was examined by the Inspector as to its legality and soundness for adoption. We do not know when the Inspector will report, but believe it may be in the New Year. Meantime the Regional South East plan has been cancelled by the new Government, but there have been some successful legal challenges to the cancellation of regional plans and so the whole business is a bit up in the air at present.

As Eva has said I shall be standing down as chairman after this meeting and am very pleased to be handing over to Karl Lawrence who has been persuaded to take on the chairmanship subject, of course, to your endorsement of that change. I have very much enjoyed my four years as Chairman and am happy, with your permission, to remain on the Committee and continue to participate in the work of the Society.

Now I would like to turn to the formal business of the meeting.”

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Peter Mole distributed the unaudited profit and loss account for the year ended 30 September 2010. In answer to a question about insurance, Peter explained that the Society had previously insured through the Civic Society which had now been disbanded and therefore alternative options were being considered for the forthcoming year. The accounts were then approved.

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was unanimously resolved that the minimum annual subscription for the forthcoming year should remain at £5 per household (£4.50 per household for agreed block membership) and £50 per corporation, due on 1 October 2010. It was pointed out to the meeting that the Committee would be considering an increase in subscriptions for next year to meet rising costs, in particular printing costs of the Newsletter.

7. ELECTIONS

President

It was unanimously resolved to re-appoint Eva Lipman as President for the forthcoming year.

Vice Presidents

It was unanimously resolved to re-appoint Tony Hickman, Bernard Trevallion and Fred Russell as Vice Presidents for the forthcoming year.

Chairman

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Karl Lawrence as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

Vice Chairman

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Neil Blundell as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year.

Treasurer

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Peter Mole as Treasurer for the forthcoming year.

Secretary

It was unanimously resolved to re-appoint Neil Blundell as Secretary for the forthcoming year.

Executive Committee

It was unanimously resolved to re-appoint the following as Committee members for the forthcoming year: Jeremy Vanstone, Heather Fenn, Andy McKenzie, Barrie Peroni, Louise Symons, Mathew Travers, Sarah Brodie, Jill Harden.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The following items were raised:

Gill Holloway proposed thanks to Newsletter sub-committee, in particular Fred Russell, for the excellent Autumn Newsletter. Andrew Findlay gave a brief explanation about how he had produced the photograph on the front cover which apparently involved a lot of patience, skill and some clever software.

Fred Russell proposed thanks to Matt Travers for organising the rota for the Village Green Party.

Euan explained that Esther Wilmore had stood down from the Committee due to her husband's illness but that the Committee would be pleased to welcome her back after his recovery.

A brief discussion was held about the telephone box in Rectory Road which had been acquired by the Parish Council. Suggestions were being sought for its use once it has been restored. Andrew Findlay suggested a miniature art gallery. It was suggested that a village notice board distinct from the School and Parish notice boards could be established. It was also suggested that the Helen Lee legacy could be used to fund any chosen project.

In relation to the land behind Wellbank, it was suggested that the best way to preserve such an area from an ecological perspective was to leave it as it is.

In answer to a question, Karl Lawrence confirmed that the Newsletters were available for sale to non-members for £3 each.

Heather Fenn asked whether the Society should convene a meeting to discuss green energy issues for the area with a view to forming views on how the Society should deal with such matters in relation to planning applications. Euan Felton said that the Committee would consider the matter at its next meeting and in so doing would need to have regard to the fact that it is a very broad area and the extent to which it is relevant to the Society.

9. CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

After the meeting Des O’Sullivan gave an illustrated talk entitled “Taplow Reaches”. The talk was exceptionally entertaining and gave a fascinating insight in to the biodiversity of the river in the waters adjacent to Taplow Mill. Des O’Sullivan was warmly thanked for giving such an enjoyable and informative presentation.

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Eva Lipman