

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting Held at the Village Centre on Friday 2 December 2011 at 8.00 p.m.

1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

45 members attended. Apologies were received from George Milne, Sheila and Brian Horton, Jill Harden, Alastair Hill, and Dick and Gill Nutt.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2009 AGM

The minutes of the 51st AGM were approved.

3. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Eva Lipman made the following opening remarks.

"Once again it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to our AGM which is our 52nd one. It is with a certain amount of satisfaction I can reflect that your Society has survived this long and is in good heart and still making a valuable contribution to Taplow and Hitcham.

I will leave it to your Chairman to update you on the activities of the Society. Karl, in spite of his indifferent health has been an exceptional hardworking chairman and has brought a lot of expertise to the job and we have a lot for which to thank him. No doubt in his report he will refer to the departure for pastures new of Andy McKenzie and his wife Annick. I would just like to give my special thanks to them on your behalf for all the years they have contributed and say how pleased I was to be able to present them with a small gift from us all at the excellent Easter Egg Hunt Lunch at Taplow House Hotel.

Again I am sure Karl will give thanks to our great Newsletter Editor Fred Russell but I wanted to add my special thanks for once again his devoting so much of his valuable time. I do not think many of you know how much of his time it takes up. You just see the finished product of a job well done.

I will leave the rest of the well deserved thank yous to Karl.

Last but not least I am sure we would all like to wish our erstwhile chairman Euan Felton a very happy birthday. I cannot understand in the least why he is not celebrating here tonight with us all but wherever he is we hope he is having a wonderful time and a great birthday

And now to the formal business of the evening.”

4. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Rosalind Lawrence read out the following report on behalf of Karl Lawrence whose voice had failed.

“Good evening and welcome to this 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Hitcham and Taplow Society.

First on behalf of the Society a 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 relations with other organisations, our responses to planning applications and the production of our Newsletter - thank you Eva.

Again this year we held our signature events - the post-AGM talk, the Easter Egg Hunt and the Village Green Party.

Des O'Sullivan's talk at the AGM was a fascinating account of the biodiversity of Taplow Reaches. It appears to be certain now that this special stretch of the River Thames will be properly protected within any proposal to develop the Taplow Mill site and the surrounding area.

The Easter Egg Hunt was a resounding success with 40 children competing for the eggs and 65 families enjoying a delicious lunch. Thank you to Neil and Gill Blundell, their team of helpers and the host, Taplow House Hotel, for a truly enjoyable day. The date for your next year diary is 9 April.

Pouring rain in the morning and afternoon on the day of the Village Green Party failed to discourage the young and old regulars and a clear but damp evening was enjoyed with unquenchable enthusiasm by the smaller than usual crowd. The event made a small loss yet still the raffle organisers raised £600 for St Nicolas Church funds. Thank you to Miv and his several task forces and most especially to Euan for again, and at my late request, taking over the organisation of all the many aspects needed to secure a successful event. The date for your next year diary is 23 June.

The Taplow Parish Council Autumn Newsletter covers most of the important village matters but a special mention must be made of our exhilarating celebration of the Royal Wedding. The Race to the Church was an unique inspiration. The speed and spills of the Soapbox Races thrilled the crowd of High Street spectators refreshed, between the morning practice and the afternoon competition, by the excellent barbecue buffet. Congratulations to Roger and Jacqueline Andrews and their large team of helpers and most especially to the drivers of the superb home-engineered machines.

For our prime mission, the scrutiny of planning policy and applications, 2011 was a busy year

The South Bucks District Core Strategy was approved by the Government Inspectorate and so pending further changes expected from the Government, it becomes the key document in the Council's planning policy portfolio. The Society made a significant contribution to the consultation on the content of the Core Strategy.

Identification of the Mill Lane area and the Bishop Centre as development opportunity sites are key elements of the Core Strategy.

For Mill Lane the strategy requires that a Development Brief must be agreed by the several landowners and approved by the Council. Any planning application must conform to the terms of that Development Brief.

The Society is represented on the Working Party which is advising the Steering Group comprising the landowners, Barratts Homes, representing the administrators BDO, and Council Officers which is writing the Brief. There have been many differences of opinion since the process began in November last year and it is expected that the Brief will not be agreed for presentation to the Council until February next year.

The strategy recognises the need to upgrade the Bishop Centre and stipulates that any proposal maintains a scale and role which does not impact adversely on other centres in particular Burnham. Land Securities have submitted a planning application and the Council have received more than a 100 objections to it.

The traffic impact on the A4 and local roads and the inadequate on-site parking provisions are the main thrust of the objection submitted by your Society. In addition the Society sent a questionnaire by email and hand delivery to more than 200 members and residents. 50 replies were received. To the first question "Is there a need for another supermarket in our locality" 85% of the respondents said 'NO' A complete analysis with a verbatim compilation of the answers has been submitted to the Council.

The application and the objections are now being considered by the Council for a decision to be made by 29 December.

The Society submitted objections to two other planning applications. The application to build a house in the grounds of Hitcham Grange was refused. The application to build an Indoor Riding School at Hill Farm was approved with conditions.

The Society added its objections to the hundreds received by the Government to its proposed new planning framework, expressing its concerns about the potential for significant impact on the Green Belt, most especially on villages lying wholly within the Green Belt such as Taplow, Conservation Areas, designated Areas of Natural Beauty and existing open spaces.

More and more internet browsers are visiting our website www.taplowsociety.org.uk. Delivering comprehensive information to

members via our website is easier and faster than other methods and we urge all who have access to the internet to make regular and frequent visits to check out what is new and to browse through the many and various sections.

Another eight early Newsletters have been discovered and now we are missing only numbers 1 to 18 and number 27. Please keep searching. The Newsletter section of the website includes complete copies of numbers 80 to 96 and number 29 is the first of the project underway to include all of the earlier numbers.

Our membership Secretary, Gill Holloway, is now able to communicate with members by writing a message just once and then sending it at the same time to all who have given her an email address. These addresses are fully protected and are known only to Gill.

The acquisition by the Parish Council of the Old Priory Garden will soon be complete. The Taplow and Hitcham Recreation Ground Association will administer the garden and restoration will begin early next year. The Society contributed to the discussions before the Council decision to proceed with the offer from the District Council. The cost of the restoration and the on-going maintenance of the Garden will be considerable. The Society has promised to donate £500 to the initial fund raising effort, and it will be assisting in the call for volunteers to help.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the activities of the Society this year - Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee, Membership Secretary, and a special thank you to Newsletter Editor, Fred Russell and to Andrew Findlay who is the creator of the website and who is responsible for the design and printing of the Newsletter.”

5. TREASURER’S REPORT

Peter Mole distributed the unaudited profit and loss account for the year ended 30 September 2011. It was noted that the opening balance for the previous year had been misstated. Subject to that correction, the accounts were then approved.

6. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The following resolutions were unanimously approved:

- (a) Subscriptions for membership shall become due on 1 January for each forthcoming year. The corresponding dates in Rule 4.1 and Rule 9.1 of the Society’s Rules shall be amended accordingly. The membership year which ended on 30 September 2010 shall be retrospectively extended to 31 December 2011 and the new year will begin on 1 January 2012.
- (b) The minimum annual membership subscription shall be increased to £7 per household (£6.50 per household for agreed block membership) and £50 per corporation, effective from the subscription year beginning 1 January 2013.

John Hanford observed that whilst he did not object to the increase, the real problem seemed to be the declining membership. Karl Lawrence acknowledged this as an issue and said that the Committee had begun a membership drive. 20 new members had been signed up in the last ten days. It was planned to seek block memberships from Cliveden Gages, Orkney Court and Hitcham Grange. Karl believed that this would help to reverse the decline. However, the Committee wanted to ensure that the income from current members would be sufficient to cover any losses from the Village Green Party and enable the Society to maintain the quality of the Newsletter, so it felt that the increase was fully justified on that basis.

Heather Fenn asked how block memberships were defined. Karl explained that they were available to defined residential communities. Heather asked if a block membership could be applied to Pages Wharf. Karl promised that the Committee would consider it and asked for any other suggestions to be submitted to Peter Mole.

7. ELECTIONS

(a) President

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

(b) Vice Presidents

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

(c) Chairman

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

(d) Vice Chairman

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

(e) Treasurer

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

(f) Secretary

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

(g) Executive Committee

It was unanimously resolved to re-appoint the following as Committee members for the forthcoming year: Euan Felton, Heather Fenn, Barrie Peroni, Louise Symons, Jeremy Vanstone, Miv Wayland-Smith, Mike Yeadon. any other business

It was resolved to appoint the following new Committee members: Jamie Barnard and Alastair Hill.

Karl Lawrence explained that Nigel Smales had agreed to put himself forward for membership of the Committee but that his nomination had been received after the AGM notice had been sent out and that accordingly it was proposed to co-opt Nigel to the Committee.

Karl mentioned the following items:

- (i) The Committee's desire to have e-mail addresses for all members. Progress had been made but many were still missing. Karl emphasised that e-mail addresses would be kept by the membership secretary and used only for Society business.
- (ii) There had been discussion about whether there could be fireworks on the Mound and a torchlight procession to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee.
- (iii) Saturday 3 June (the Jubilee weekend) was "Big Lunch Day" though no details were yet available.
- (iv) The Dropmore Project had been abandoned following its change of ownership. The new buildings were to be demolished and the house to become a single residential dwelling again. Tree surgery was proposed on 5,000 trees in the grounds.
- (v) Nigel Smales congratulated Fred Russell on the excellent Autumn Newsletter and his continued work in relation to that publication generally. Nigel also mentioned explained that he is writing a history of Taplow on a not-for-profit basis with any surplus proceeds to go to a local charity. He asked for any photos and information that may be of interest.

8. CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

The meeting concluded at 8.40 pm.

After the meeting there was a talk by Dr Robert Treharne Jones of Leander Club about rowing, its historical connections with the area and the GB squad preparations for the 2012 Olympics at Eton College Rowing Centre, Dorney. It was an excellent and informative talk and very entertaining. All present much enjoyed it and showed their appreciation.

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Karl Lawrence
Chairman

Hitcham Taplow Society

Profit & Loss 1.10.2010 to 31.09.2011

Income

			Prior Year
Subscriptions & Donations for 20010/11		£870.50	£1,130.00
Village Green Party:			
	Receipts	£915.50	£1,383.70
	Expenses	£1,164.16	£1,449.31
	Surplus	<u>-£248.66</u>	<u>-£65.61</u>
Easter Egg Hunt			
	Receipts	£1,020.50	£1,300.00
	Expenses	£1,004.96	£1,448.56
	Surplus	<u>£15.54</u>	<u>-£148.56</u>
Bank Interest		£0.80	£1.26
Total income		<u>£638.18</u>	<u>£917.09</u>

Expenses

Subscriptions	£25.00	£15.00
Administration Expenses	£284.99	£222.00
Newsletter	£1,080.00	£1,221.00
Total expenses	<u>£1,389.99</u>	<u>£1,458.00</u>
Excess of income over expenses	<u>-£751.81</u>	<u>-£540.91</u>

Banking Reconciliation

Barclays Bank A/c's	Opening balances as of 1/10/10	£3,291.16	£3,47.58
	Excess of income over costs	-£751.81	-£540.91
	Cheque not paid	-£10.00	£67.50
	Less prior year expenses paid after y.e.	-£74.88	-£15.00
			£303.99
	Closing balances as of 31/09/11	<u>£2,454.47</u>	<u>£3,291.16</u>
	Bank Statements	<u>£2,454.47</u>	

P Mole
Hon. Treasurer