

## **HITCHAM AND TAPLOW SOCIETY**

### **Minutes of the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting Held at the Village Centre Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016 at 8pm**

#### **1. Welcome by Eva Lipman**

Welcome to you all to this our 57th AGM. I find it quite remarkable that we have been going this long but although the things we are doing have been evolving over the years we are still making a contribution to village life and hopefully Taplow and Hitcham are better for our efforts.

Just to remind you that over the years we have contributed to renovation, restoration or rescue projects including Bapsey Pond, Taplow Court's cruciform dairy, Boundary Road trees, Burnham Abbey where we helped to restore an ancient wall, Cliveden's Hanging Woods, St John's Ambulance Brigade, St Mary's Church, St Nicolas' Church, the Scouts, the Sea Cadets, the Celtic cross, Sheila's mural, Taplow Station flowerbeds which I can remember weeding, the Thames path bench, Thames Salmon Trust, TVAP, Thames Valley Hospice, the Playgroup, Village phone box and the WI floor.

It is with great sadness that I have to report that we have lost a number of longstanding Taplovians this year amongst whom are:-

Tony Meats who was a committee member in 1976 and 1979

Tony Read a distinguished writer

Sir Terry Wogan whose credentials are too well known for me to enumerate. But many of you may not know that Lady Helen Wogan was a committee member from 1996-2004, and Malcolm Tait, a naturalist who did wonderful work in the Old Priory Garden

Very recently we lost our good friend Ken Johnston who was always ready with a helping hand and

Barrie Peroni. Barrie was a very long standing member of our Committee serving for well over 30 years. He served as a Governor at St. Nicolas School, was a big supporter of the church, helped the Thames Valley Adventure Playground and was President of the Taplow & Dorney Conservative Branch.

They will in their different ways leave a large hole in Taplow Society and be very much missed by us all.

We would like to send our condolences to their relatives.

We will now have a short pause for us to remember them....

#### **2. Attendance and apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from:

Tony Hickman, George Sandy, Jessie Cooper, Susan Leeson, Pamela Viollet, Tina Sell, Fleur North and Zoe Hatch.

### **3. 2015 AGM Minutes**

The 2015 AGM minutes were unanimously approved.

### **4. President's address and report**

This year I am combining my address with the Chairman's Report. The reason for this is that Karl, our very efficient, caring Chairman since 2009 feels he is not well enough to continue. I would like to thank him for all his work on behalf of the Society. He will be a very hard act to follow. It does leave us with a vacancy for Chairman.

What a year we have had. A Royal year in fact and it was celebrated in style. Members of your Society helped out in a big way with the splendid evocative torchlight procession to the burial mound where a beacon was lit and we all enjoyed a terrific firework display. Pity about the Easter Egg Hunt having to be called off due to the weather especially as Charlotte and Toby had done all the preparation for it. Hopefully next year the weather will be kinder.

We owe grateful thanks to Al Hill for organising our 31st Village Green Party. He had many helpers to make this event happen and go so well and so smoothly and our thanks go to them all. £536 was raised for the Thames Valley Adventure Playground and £217 in memory of Iris Midlane went to cancer research by the bakers of the village. This year the weather was kind and we all had a great time. It is entirely possible that this event is unique. I remember when your Society first put it on. It has become very popular and manages to bring all the generations together from great grandparents to babes in arms all enjoying the great tradition it has become. It is possible that many may not realise that the price of the food ticket also has to cover our overheads which are considerable, and include the cost of the band, third party insurance cover, St. John's ambulance, etc. This means that if tickets are not purchased or a donation given, those who do buy are subsidising those who do not and the society might even be saddled with a loss. We do not aim to make a profit from this event but we do wish to break even.

We have publicised some local authority matters by circulating our membership and letting them know what is going on allowing them to make their own representations and informing us of their opinions so that we could base our submission on your input. A thank you to all of you who responded. One of these concerns is the closure of Mill Lane.

I will not go into the history of this now because Nigel has covered it very well in our current newsletter and you should all have seen our emails about the issue. It is due to one of our members that the petition was drawn up and that showed the overwhelming opposition to its closure and we were inundated by members unhappy about the closure. Only three said that they wanted it to be closed. Unfortunately our protests have been unsuccessful but at least BCC are aware of a great deal of local opposition and we should make sure that traffic surveys are done to measure the results of the closure so that the situation can be reviewed in the future. You might have noticed that Mill Lane is now closed. Certainly at the moment the traffic is backing up along

Berry Hill to a completely unacceptable level. We are told that Transport for Bucks is monitoring the effects. If it has not settled down to more acceptable levels shortly you might like to write to Transport for Bucks with your views.

Another issue about which we have tried to keep everyone informed is the proposed cycleway. Again we had overwhelming support for scrapping this ill thought out scheme with the ramifications of the closure of Berry Hill to right hand traffic and the narrowing of the overcrowded A4. Many of you wrote in and we made our submission to BCC based on your opposition with the support of our MP Dominic Grieve.

If anyone is not on our email circulation list and wishes to be, could you please let Roger know. On the other hand if you do not wish to be informed of what we think are important issues could you please let Roger know so that he can leave you off our circulation list. We do try not to overwhelm you with too much information but keep it to matters which we think relatively important.

Since our last AGM we have had two excellent newsletters and our grateful thanks go to Nigel Smales our enthusiastic and capable editor and to Andrew Findlay for ably laying it out ready for printing and for maintaining our website.

Our current web site has given good service for many years and our thanks go to Andrew Findlay for creating and maintaining it. We wish to use newer technologies to improve member communications and Zoe Hatch is leading this project. We have sent you a questionnaire to find what your priorities are, so do please respond to this.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XCD2HR6>

Little did I think when Max and I arrived in Taplow that I would be involved in the restoration of various crosses. For those of you who may not have been here or remember when I was first Chair in 1995 I made it our mission to get the beautiful old celtic cross in the Old Churchyard standing next to the burial mound restored because its base was in a perilous state. I am so pleased that it now stands proudly and securely with the original inscription carved on its base, which had to be researched because it had become illegible. Hopefully will not need further attention for a very long time.

Fred Russell and I were made aware by Civic Voice, that there are grants available for the restoration of World War 1 memorials and I forwarded the information to our Parish Council. I understand that our Parish Clerk has been working towards getting something done for our Taplow War Memorial.

Roger, Bob Hanbury and myself have done a survey of the Hitcham War Memorial details which are now posted on the national website. Some of the carving has become difficult to read. If we are lucky we can get a grant to restore it.

We still have the money which Helen and Lincoln Lee's family have given for a memorial for their parents and which I am ashamed to say still has not been utilised. We have thought of a number of projects over the years - none of which have come to fruition. Does anyone out there have a good idea for something worthwhile and for which it could be used? The current thinking is a hopefully vandal proof, durable,

low maintenance inscribed bench for Old Priory Gardens.

The face of Taplow will inevitably change over the next few years with the influx of so many new residents both near the station and Mill Lane but we must make them welcome and hope that they will join our community so that Taplow can continue to be the happy place it has always been.

Your committee is very hard working and committed and I am sure we would all like to thank them. I have a few special thanks to make.

I have mentioned Nigel Smales before in connection with being the editor of our newsletter but he does much more than that for us. He has been instrumental in doing traffic surveys, dealing with planning matters and generally being a great communicator and researcher. Thank you Nigel.

I cannot finish my report before thanking your excellent, hardworking secretary and planning guru Roger Worthington without whom the Committee would not function nearly as well and efficiently. We are so lucky to have him and I personally am very grateful for all the advice and help which he has given.

Before we come to the election of officers two people are stepping down and I would like to thank them. Firstly Peter Mole who has served on the committee from 2008-2014 as Treasurer. We will be sorry to lose him but hopefully can still call on his help especially in matters to do with south of the Bath Road. Also Myra Drinkwater who was our Treasurer for nearly 3 years and we would like to thank her for all the work she has put in on our behalf. We are delighted that Bob Hanbury has stepped into the breach and is doing an excellent job.

Your Chairman, Karl Lawrence has been very unwell during this past year and is stepping down as Chair. In spite of his ill health he has taken a keen interest in all society matters and we are very grateful for all he has done. Thankfully we will not be losing the benefit of his sage advice as he has agreed to become a Vice President. Unless there are any objections I propose to take the elections en-bloc. You have all seen the agenda with the names of the officers and committee. Rupert Sellers has also been nominated to join the committee so I would like to add his name to the list.

## 5. Elections

The following list of officers and committee members was proposed by Max Lipman and unanimously accepted:

President:	Eva Lipman
Vice Presidents:	Tony Hickman, Fred Russell, Sir Bernard Trevallion Karl Lawrence
Chairman:	vacant
Secretary:	Roger Worthington
Treasurer:	Robert Hanbury
Executive Committee:	Heather Fenn, Charlotte Greeves, Robert Harrap, Zoe Hatch Alastair Hill, Rupert Sellers, Nigel Smales, Louise Symons Miv Wayland-Smith

## 6. **Treasurer's report**

Robert Hanbury submitted the profit and loss statement to the meeting. The figures have been audited by our internal auditor, Claire Price, who was thanked for this. The statement is attached.

## 7. **Any Other Business**

**Carols on the Green. Thursday the 22nd of December at 6pm.** There will be mulled wine, cakes, snacks and of course a festive sing-a-long. The event is being organised by Sasha Boden and Scarlett Wayland-Smith and helpers. Please take note and come along with your friends if you can. It has become a lovely Taplow event. The Christmas tree financed by the legacy of Jo Brooking was the inspiration of Liz Forsythe. We are lucky to live in a village where so many are prepared to give of their time and effort for the public good.

**Thank you** to Robert Harrap and Taplow Court for the provision of the refreshments and to Pauline Worthington for the decoration and serving with Louise Symons.

**Keith Parry from the Maidenhead Heritage Centre** gave a talk on Millionaires and their Thameside Mansions, looking principally at Temple, Taplow Court, Taplow House and Cliveden and the families that have shaped them. He was thanked for an informative talk by Nigel Smales on behalf of the audience.

**Meeting closed at 9:45**

