

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Executive Committee Meeting Taplow House Hotel Monday 20th February 2017 8.00pm

MINUTES

Present:

Eva Lipman (chair)
Bob Hanbury
Alastair Hill
Nigel Smales
Louise Symons

Charlie Greeves
Rupert Sellers
Zoe Hatch
Fred Russell
Robert Harrap

Apologies:

Karl Lawrence
Roger Worthington
Tony Hickman
Miv Wayland-Smith

- **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the January meeting were agreed.

- **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Eva asked Robert to track overdue subscriptions and bring up at our meetings on a regular basis. London Green Belt Society has invited HTS to subscribe (£15-20). It is possible to gather information from site with or without subscribing (similar to HTS website access to info). Agreed that we should pay this.

- **NEWSLETTER**

Nigel has a draft of the content. Lots of work required to produce the 16 pages. Adam Smith has written a 3 page draft on Desborough. Nigel has spoken to George Sandy to see if he would like to write an article as he, John Bamberg and John Kennedy are stepping down from the PCC. Having been on the PCC for a long time and ex members of HTS, George has agreed to write a piece. Nigel will provide updates on hot topics including Heathrow's new proposed flight paths. Also updates on OPG – Eva suggested a pic of snowdrops in the area (but not for front cover). All agreed that newsletter won't be put on new website until at least 2 months post publication.

- **PLANNING**

In Roger's absence, Eva covered new applications. Copper Beech, Ellington Rd have applied for a rear extension. St Regis Paper Mill (Berkeley Homes) have applied for opening times extension for the restaurant. New proposal is: 0830-2330 (Mon-Thurs), 0830-midnight (Sat), 0830-2230 (Sun), 0830-0200 (New Year's Eve). We do not yet know if closing times mentioned are for last orders or actually for customers to have left the restaurant. This point needs clarification. The same applicant has requested additional parking (status pending) and tidying up allocations.

In regards to the plans for Thames Riviera, Nigel has spoken to Dominic Grieve and DG has written to RBWM to support us in the widening of the road on the west side of Maidenhead Bridge to ease traffic.

- **TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

Zoe gave a PowerPoint presentation to provides some updates on progress with the new website. There have been 423 sessions on the new site since launch, and 319 new visitors, of which 191 are direct links (ie people we would have emailed). And 74 visits from social media, such as Facebook. It was agreed that we would reciprocate links with 'Next door neighbourhood' to alert HTS presence to a wider audience. Next steps: Zoe would like to generate more news and asked for our help to come up with content. It was agreed that frequency of emails to members would be once a month for

the time being. Nigel added that Hedgerley is very communicative with their villagers via their website. Zoe advised that since the new HTS website has gone live, there have been no negative comments on the site or social media. Zoe will look at Instagram soon to engage with the younger people in our community. We should encourage friends to 'like' the HTS Facebook page to help spread the word. It was agreed that we should move to online payments/membership (more on this in Recruitment section).

- **VILLAGE GREEN PARTY**

Alastair gave an update on payment technology. Paypal is good, but is difficult to track receipts and therefore this option is not viable. Eventbrite is very clear and easy to administer but there is 67p charge for a £5 ticket. So it is expensive. Bob shared the stats from last year's VGP: There were 60 pre-bought tickets at £4 each. And there were 235 tickets at £5 each sold on the night. It was agreed that, in order to absorb the Eventbrite cost, advanced tickets will be at £5 and on the night tickets will be £6. We will review this £1 increase and ticket numbers post event to monitor the success of this new online ticket pricing.

- **EASTER EGG HUNT**

Charlie confirmed that the hunt is all set for 17th April – and the event is online! It was confirmed that we will do the same Eventbrite deal as above.

- **RECRUITMENT**

Nigel and Roger have been working on this – Lots of new Taplovians to recruit. The primary new areas are the Old Court development, Mill Lane (211 homes) and the new flats on Institute Road. Nigel suggests that knocking on people's doors and saying 'hello' is the best way to sign up new members. We should have a value proposition so that potential recruits understand what HTS is and how it benefits members. Nigel is preparing a 4 page extra spread to be included in the next newsletter which outlines the value proposition, and this could continue for the next 2-3 editions as new houses are phased in. At 18p per extra page, it's not much cost and Nigel proposed that these 20 page magazines are distributed free of charge to new recruits as part of the marketing strategy. Roger and Nigel currently share the load of distribution. More people to distribute the magazine as the area grows would be appreciated.

Nigel would like to chase up outstanding cash payments: After 2 knocks, leave a letter to say that it is assumed the person has no more interest in the newsletter. But Eva suggested that an email is sent first, not a visit.

Zoe put the question: Why do we want to swell numbers? The general consensus was: Community spirit, money and we have more of a voice. It was also noted that HTS used to have over 300 members. Zoe suggested that HTS is marketed as a localised version of the National Trust. Zoe has kindly agreed to take on the task of Marketing/Recruitment manager.

- **LITTER INITIATIVE**

Zoe suggested we get people involved, as previously done. The official national clean day is 3rd March but there's insufficient time to tie in with this. Eva proposed "Taplow Clean" day for Sunday 14th May which the committee agreed. An email will be sent to members to promote this clean day in conjunction with the Easter egg hunt mailing.

- **SCREEN ON THE GREEN**

Zoe proposed that we should run this event in the summer next year. She added that the PCC is very pro this idea. Serious consultation with the locals would be needed to keep people on side.

- **HEATHROW CONSULTATION**

Eva announced that there will be consultation events in Windsor on 3rd March, in Maidenhead (11am-8pm at Sportsable, Braywick) on 7th March and Slough on 13th March. What stand should we take? If Heathrow expansion goes ahead, it will employ 50,000 extra workers. Nigel said that it is looking bad for Taplow. With a 3rd runway, flights would pass directly overhead at 60 decibels before branching out north and west.

- **AOB**

Cycle Lane – Eva said that details are now available re Freedom of Information and it looks evident that the survey was self selecting: Respondents were primarily cyclists, not drivers. The plans are certainly not dead, just postponed.

Taplow Court – Robert requested that ‘open’ dates for TC are added to the new website. Also TC would like to put up temporary signage this summer, as well as a ‘brown sign’ (like Cliveden’s) at the bottom of Berry Hill.

Nigel advised that he is giving a talk on Nancy Astor in Hedgerley on 19th April at 8.15pm. Nigel would like to have feedback on the status of Berry Hill traffic. People are now leaving earlier in the morning to avoid the traffic.

Zoe advised that the ‘Stop Slough Expansion’ page on Facebook (Burnham group) shows the big plans to expand to Burnham – south of Burnham Beeches.

Meeting closed at 10pm.

Next HTS Committee Meeting: 20th March. Roger will host, as Eva will be away.