



The
COOKHAM SOCI-
Newsletter **February 2010**

Events Committee

Another generally successful year, during which we attended all the local events, viz Scout Fair, Regatta, Cookham Dean Fete, and the Christmas Fayre at Moor Hall. We sold just over 6,000 of our Christmas Cards. The two original paintings from which the cards were produced were sold, and Cordelia Ashwanden and her team ran a very successful Tombola at the Fayre. Overall, 'Events' produced a profit of approximately £2,000. Our thanks are particularly due to Bill, Evert and Cordelia, and those others who assisted at the various events.



Evert Groeneweg
Bill Spicer Jean Stretton Richard Gold

The Christmas Fayre, which is run and organised by Sally Lloyd Parry, was a major success with over 40 stallholders, both Charities and Retail covering a wide range of goods. Sally organised the presence of 'Help for Heroes' and soldiers from the Household Cavalry. The event was able to give a sizeable donation to 'Help for Heroes'.

Our thanks go to Sally and the other organisations who help in the running of the event, particularly the Institute of Marketing who provide the venue, Moor Hall, free of charge.

Dr Ian Meanock

We are greatly saddened with the news that both Dr Ian and Mrs Pat Meanock passed away during the past year. Pat in January and Ian in December.

Ian, was our Treasurer in the late 1970's, a senior physician at Reading. He took time to give valuable service to the Society taking responsibility for keeping up to date with matters concerning Mineral Extraction in Berkshire. He attended conferences with other amenity groups and gravel companies. before moving away to Billingshurst in West Sussex, Pat and Ian lived in Danes Gardens off the Maidenhead Road.

Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme

At the present time, there is an outstanding planning application concerning the above. At the end of October 2009 the Society made its representations, to Wycombe District Council to oppose this scheme and we continue to be concerned about the status of this planning application.

In our view, for the residents of Cookham, any planning application, which erodes the Flood Plain, is considered unacceptable. Specifically, it is essential that any development should not increase the risk of flooding. The floods of 2003 hit Cookham, and the efficacy of both the Cookham flood alleviation scheme and the Jubilee River have made us particularly sensitive to such matters.



The Society highlighted certain specific concerns, which lead us to believe that the case had not been made to fully safeguard river areas further downstream from the proposed scheme. Specifically, we believe that the scheme could actually increase river flow volumes, which appeared to us to be in direct contravention of Government Policy Statement PPS25 (*), to which, the proposals claim compliance. It appeared to us that the Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme and accompanying assessment failed to pay attention to the effects of the scheme beyond its immediate vicinity and it is our belief that this piecemeal approach to considering river flows is not appropriate.

We have additional concerns regarding the proposed compensatory storage areas not being able to fully mitigate the loss of flood plain because no other similar schemes have yet been implemented in the Thames Valley. We can see no meteorological justification for the Environment Agency's assertions concerning the peak river flow and peak groundwater levels not coinciding.

Our conclusion is that the case for believing there is no increased flood risk for Cookham, is not proven and we requested this application be refused until this is adequately established. At the time of going to press this outcome of this application has yet to be determined. We believe it may be heard at Wycombe's February Panel Meeting.

AGM Announcement and Agenda

The AGM is scheduled to be held in the Chartered Institute of Marketing at Moor Hall on
Thursday, 11th March 2010 at 7.30pm

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(P)=Planning Sub-Committee (EEG)=Entertainments Sub Committee
(EEG)=Environmental Enhancement Group Sub Committee

Bourne End Viaduct

It feels as if we report on this every newsletter with little progress being made! Network Rail was convinced by the Marlow to Maidenhead Passengers Association (with our support) to re-inspect the viaduct. The engineer's report confirms it to be sound although unsightly. We understand that there is no money allocated in the current three year budget period for its refurbishment. However, there may be some flexibility, within in this period, as funds may become available but there is no guarantee they will be spent on this. Our Cookham representative to the MMPA will meet with Network Rail in London on 11th February to press this case.



Stakeholders' Meetings

The Society is actively participating in Borough wide initiatives, committees and consultations as appropriate to the work of the Society. One such group is the Stakeholder Group. This comprises members of local Parish Councils, architects, developers, landowners and amenity groups such as ours. The most recent meeting in January 2010 was aimed primarily at Parish Councils and provided opportunities to discuss, amongst other items, Section 106 Agreements (These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are increasingly used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing in the Borough); permitted development rights and development in areas liable to flooding. Participating in this group gives us a voice and representation at Borough level.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Following the reminder letters sent out in January, would all Members who have not already paid, please ensure that subscriptions are sent to Bill Spicer without further delay.

Chairman's Appeal

Our current chairman will step down at the forthcoming (March) AGM. As we go to print, we have not been able to identify anyone who is willing to take over the position. This will leave us with a serious gap in our Committee and we are interested in hearing from anyone who feels that they may be able to step into that role to support the work of the Cookham Society. Anyone who feels they may have the necessary capabilities and interest but above all the time is welcome to call the current chairman for an informal and confidential discussion.



Marlow to Maidenhead Passengers Association Annual General Meeting

We urge our members to support this organisation and attend its AGM. The meeting is open to members of the public. Representatives from First Great Western, Chiltern Railways and Passenger Focus will be there to answer questions. The AGM is at the Bourne End Community Centre on 26th March 2010 commencing at 20.00. <http://www.mmpa.org.uk/>

Village Design Statement - The Drafting of the Document is Now Underway

With regard to the Village Design Statement (VDS) an enormous amount of effort has gone into, initially clarifying exactly what is to be achieved (this being the first such VDS under the auspices of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), and then collecting the necessary input information.

Two public workshops were run broadly in parallel with a 'call for photos' and questionnaires at various Cookham events. Following that initial round of information collection, a professional survey has been undertaken of every street in Cookham (that is, the village, the Rise and the Dean). After the survey, a series of 'individual consultations' was launched with more than twenty individual consultees, each of whom has a very particular perspective concerning matters relating to Cookham. Those selected included representatives from land ownership, commons management, river and environment, archaeological societies, heritage groups, property development, education, youth groups, church support for the aged, business and the arts.

What a fascinating insight that provided to the views of people considering Cookham's built environment from completely opposite perspectives! The results are fully recorded and will be available in the public domain as part of the information file backing up the Village Design Statement itself. Striking common themes were the huge importance of green spaces in creating the character of Cookham and its sense of community - and the diversity within a 'unified whole' of Cookham's built environment.

All of the incoming information has been analyzed and the drafting of the VDS is now in process. First drafts will be provided to the Royal Borough, the Parish Council and the Cookham Society. Wider consultation with Cookham residents will follow.

Town Centre Redevelopment Consultation

Two members of our planning sub-committee have engaged in the PRoM workshop process to help the Borough define the way forward for Maidenhead town centre. There is currently a Borough wide consultation - The Town Centre Action Plan which sets out preferred options. Our participation in these workshops underpins our belief that it is vital that we support the revitalisation of Maidenhead to develop appropriately, as it is our nearest commercial centre.



Environmental Enhancement Sub Committee

This sub-committee is currently working on issues which have been highlighted by individual society members as well as the main committee itself. It is consulting and liaising with the Parish Council in its work. It is covering areas such as how the Society might make a positive contribution to the appearance of Cookham Rise shopping parade (this was one area highlighted in the questionnaires for the Village Design Statement which was felt to be in need of visual enhancement). It has concerned itself with issues as diverse as better visitor information and potential owner education with regard to dog fouling.



More from this sub-committee in our next Newsletter.