

Events—2006

The highlight of the year 2005 was the **Christmas Fayre** which attracted so much enthusiasm that we will be expected to hold it again in 2006. The performance of Christmas card sales, boosted by a large corporate order contributed a profit of almost £2,000 and the Christmas Fayre, mainly due to the Tombola raised £740.

Sally Lloyd Parry has agreed to run the event as last year and we have checked the availability of Moor Hall who will allow us to have the use of the whole premises on 25 November.

Thanks were conveyed to Bill Spicer for the Christmas cards and to Cordelia Ashwanden for the success of the Tombola.



Timmy Mallett with Friends

Dates for your diary:

June 17 Scouts Fair Cookham Moor

Sept 16 Cookham Dean Village Fair
Cookham Dean Cricket Common

Your news and views to The Editor

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IMPORTANT –

If any part of your name and address as shown on your address label requires correction please let Bill Spicer know:-
01628-525258 or by E-mail on bill@thespicers.co.uk.



The COOKHAM SOCIETY Newsletter February 2006

Cookham is under threat



Since the beginning of November developers have applied to build another 32 dwellings in the village – mostly without adequate parking. Can the infrastructure support such a number? Is there room for the additional vehicles on our roads? Is there room in the schools for the children? How will the Medical Centre be able to cope? Are our drains and water supplies adequate? This number only includes new building it does not take into account extensions to existing houses which might also add to the pressures on the infrastructure.

This situation will continue as long as the present Local Plan is not modified. The Royal Borough is caught in a cleft stick because even if the Planning Panel refuse an application, the Government inspectors will allow most applications on appeal because the Local Plan does not specify what is acceptable for development in the Cookhams.

The solution is to prepare a Village Plan which can be incorporated in the Local Development Framework which the Royal Borough is currently drafting to replace the old Local Plan. This plan should help the local authority to refuse unacceptable planning applications on the grounds that they are contrary to the Local Plan and such refusals will be much more difficult to appeal. *(continued over)*

AGM
16th March
see
Agenda inside

Come to the AGM and
hear about the Village Plan
listen to
Richard Simmonds
discuss village planning

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"Cookham is under threat" - (continued)

What does preparation of a Village Plan entail? The starting point for this Plan will be an inventory of what already exists in the village and the views of everyone who lives here of what they would like to see happen in the future. This will involve the collection of data about the infrastructure, the needs of service providers (medical, retail, education, fire, police etc.) and an analysis of possible future trends. We would need to consider the requirement for affordable housing for essential workers, the conservation of those parts of the villages which merit it and the areas where development might be desirable and of what type. As the above indicates there is a substantial amount of work involved.

How do we go about developing a Village Plan? The first step is for the village to set up a Steering Group to oversee the project. This Group should be responsible for defining the scope of the investigation, applying for funding, appointing a Project Manager recruiting helpers and driving the project to a conclusion.

Members can help this project by undertaking some of the data gathering and consultation work, responding to questionnaires and offering their support in what ever way is needed. The Cookham Society was set up to protect the Cookhams from just the sort of threat that we now face and this project is probably the only way to do it effectively. So please come to the Annual General Meeting where we plan to invite participation in this task and seek agreement to the Society contributing to the funding required.

We have invited Richard Simmonds, former local councillor (he was involved with the 1974 Cookham Village Plan), MEP and Chairman of the Countryside Commission, to speak about creating local plans.

Outstanding Planning matters

The Royal Borough has stated that since the Government imposed target of new dwellings to be built up to 2010 has now been reached (or permissions have been granted), there will be a moratorium on new approvals unless they contribute to the affordable housing stock. This moratorium has not yet been tested by appeals but could give us the breathing space we need to prepare our Village Plan.

The urgency of this work is underlined by the latest consultation document issued by the Royal Borough in connection with the new Local Development Framework. It contains a list of sites which may be considered for development in Cookham. The sites specifically mentioned are: Poundfield, Old Sewerage works (at the bottom of the Golf Course), land between Whyteladyes Lane and Lower Mount Farm, Cookham Gas Holder site, Formosa Place farm site, Moor Hall, 124 and 116-126 Whyteladyes Lane and the site of the garages beside 20 Windmill Road (by the Gas Holder site).

The last site on the list has already been approved for development: Sandpipers and Laburnam Cottage in Worster Road.

A further application for detailed permission has just been submitted following an unsuccessful application in November (the original outline permission was only granted on appeal last summer).

The latest effort still contains many unacceptable features and we are opposing it vigorously.



'Glenore' Berries Road



Berries Road was first included in the conservation area in 1991, especially to protect the unique Edwardian houses there. We have to ask ourselves what protection has the conservation status given to Berries Road?

In March 2000 an application was received to demolish the existing Edwardian house to be replaced by a massive apartment building. Objections to the proposal came from all sides and was in fact a cause célèbre at the time.

Fears were expressed that it was vandalism to demolish and would create a precedent, that the proposed development was very bulky and owed more to the appearance of Cookham Fire Station, than a replacement dwelling which might enhance the character of Berries Road.

Flooding

At an appeal for permission to build a pair of new cottages at Black Butts held in November, the Inspector was presented with the latest version of the Flood Plain map. On the strength of it and the implication of the risk of a one in a hundred chance of flooding, he ruled that any increase in the number of people put at risk by flooding would be unacceptable. The Environment Agency stated that the risk of being unable to evacuate people safely would be such that further increases in the population because of development should not be permitted.

While this ruling seems to offer some protection to the village, the other effects of the new map seem to reach further along the Maidenhead Road and even touch the end of Westwood Green. The Strande Lane situation still has not been satisfactorily resolved despite the EA's acknowledgement that the onus is on them to find a solution.

Railways

The franchise for our local lines has been awarded to First Great Western for a further period. Following a national timetable conference held on 6 and 7 February a new draft timetable to be effective from 6 December 2006 has been published for public consultation. It seems that some of the proposed changes may not be particularly advantageous to Cookham commuters (ie the 7.34am through train will stop additionally at Ealing Broadway – further increasing journey time). We have not had time to examine the new timetable in detail and suggest that any members likely to be affected by changes look at the web site at <http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/franchise/en/Timetable.php>. Any objections or comments have to be made to FGW by 8 March