

The Cookham Society



October 2018 Newsletter

Photograph by Mick Vogel Photography

Registered Charity No. 257224 | www.cookhamsociety.org.uk | messages@cookhamsociety.org.uk

NEWSLETTER UPDATE

Welcome to this special edition of the Cookham Society newsletter, which is being sent out to all the residents of the three Cookhams.

We normally send out four emailed or posted newsletters a year to our paid-up members only, but we thought it would be good to let everyone in Cookham know what we do.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter – there's a fascinating article about

local wildlife in the autumn and lots of informative pieces about the Cookhams. We hope it inspires you to join the Society.

Our new subscription rate is just £5.00 per household, payable by Standing Order.

For further details contact the membership secretary, Ossie Wardell-Yerburgh on **01628 528041** or by email to **ossie.daphne@btinternet.com**

WHAT WE DO

We are an active society that places value on our lovely village and environment. We have a Planning sub-committee, chaired by Dick Scarff, which meets once a month to review planning applications.

We take an open-minded approach to developments and very few are challenged. More often, we suggest how proposals for development might be improved and can ask that conditions should be imposed on approvals to mitigate some of the less desirable aspects of plans.

CONSERVATION AREA REVIEW MOVES SLOWLY FORWARD

The appraisal of the Cookham High Street Conservation Area, which the Royal Borough initiated more than two years ago, was presented at a public consultation at the beginning of July and no major changes were proposed. The Society felt this was a missed opportunity to expand the area slightly to take account of some of the neighbouring areas, which were highlighted in 2013, when the Village Design Statement was published.



The third area comprises Roman Lea, which the VDS describes as, “[providing] a largely uninterrupted view of a striking and serene row of houses, reflecting a very specific element of Cookham’s historical growth”. The final area includes Black Butts Cottages and the area from Sutton Close to Mill Lane. The VDS particularly drew attention to the 1950s houses in Sutton Close, noting the harmony of their design, which, it said, gives “...a highly individual character to the Close, which should be carefully protected”.



*Clockwise from top: Sutton Close; Black Butts; Pony Field
Pictures by Barry Weare*

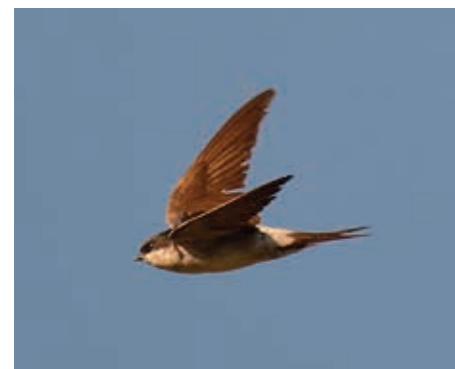
THE CHANGING SEASONS by Brian Clews

Local naturalist, Brian Clews, considers the changing seasons and how wildlife responds to the autumn feast.

Have you noticed that the robin's song becomes quite doleful towards summer's end? It's as if he regrets the end of the sound of cheerful, cheeping youngsters, although it could be sheer relief that he's managed to pass another test of his fecundity. It might also be the diminution of nature's bounty which can be relied on during spring and high summer, or that it's time to replace his feathers in the annual moult - an energy sapping occurrence for any small bird.



I first heard the robin's solemn sound in mid-August and, as a resident species, cock robin and his hen, may well have produced two or three broods by the end of the warmer season. Our summer-visiting species, however, will continue to extract the maximum return out of Cookham's bounty of insects. House martins might be feeding their final brood right up to October and it is thought the first flight of these particular fledglings is their long



journey to Africa. Yet, amazingly, we don't know precisely where 'our' martins spend the winter. A special survey is being undertaken this year to try and resolve the mystery. As far as we know, the only breeding house martins in the Cookhams this year, have been at the Odney Club.

Autumn is also when we notice our changing trees. The unusually hot summer has caused many mature trees to shed their leaves and has increased the stress on specimens such as the Horse Chestnut. This

has compounded the damage caused to the tree by the leaf miner moth, which has troubled them for some years now. It was thought that the conker crop would not be affected, but it's hard not to notice that many trees seem to be hosting fewer and fewer nuts.



But nature moves on, and by now, we should be seeing the delightful ivy bees emerging from our lawns and seeking out ivy pollen to pack into the nest holes where next year's eggs have already been laid. On this

productive plant, we can still see numerous insects such as bees, wasps, butterflies and hoverflies, busy throughout autumn and on into winter. Yes, the length of the day is reduced, but that's no excuse not to get out into Cookham's

wonderful surroundings to see what can be found.

Clockwise from top: Robin in the Snow, picture by Gordon Langsbury; Horse Chestnut leaf miner moth, picture by R Edmunds; House Martin, picture by Martin Hunt

Wild About Cookham

Photo Competition

Get involved in this competition leading to an exhibition at next year's Cookham Festival and the chance to feature in WildCookham's 2020 Calendar.

Photographers of all ages are encouraged to take pictures that will give a real sense of the variety of life and the special wild habitats that still exist in the Cookhams. The photographs all have to be taken in the parish of Cookham.

A panel of judges will select photos for the exhibition and the calendar and the exhibition visitors will vote for the prize-winners in adult, under 17 and smart-phone categories. Copies of the photo competition rules can be downloaded from the Cookham Festival website (www.cookhamfestival.org.uk/). Get snapping now!

BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

From The Chairman

The production of local plans by councils can be a tortuous and protracted process and it can take years for a draft plan to get to the stage where it can be submitted to a public inquiry.

Our files show the Society sent in representations to the Borough's draft plan as far back as February 2014. The Royal Borough's current plan finally made it to an examination in public (EIP) this summer to considerable local disquiet.

Plans have to be 'sound' and in the first part of the EIP, the inspector had to consider whether the Borough's document was sound or not.

At the outset, the inspector raised a series of questions with the council about the Green Belt, the Borough's liaison with other neighbouring planning authorities and important environmental issues.

The inspector appeared to be unsatisfied that the council had properly done all the work necessary to ensure the plan's soundness.



The first stage of the EIP has now taken place and the inspector has asked the Borough to do further work on the plan to ensure that it meets the necessary criteria.

Flooding

Will The Thames Flood Cookham Village Again?

The answer is easy, it will. The harder question is when, and to what degree. To put things in perspective, the severe flooding we had in 2014 was assessed at the time by the Environment Agency as a one in 10-15 year event. Or to put it differently, in any year, there is a 6-10% chance of a similar flood. This next winter could be worse, or there could be no flooding at all, but we do need to be prepared for any eventuality and the Society continues to work on strategies to help reduce the effects of future flooding.

Prior to the flood of 2014, the borough was refusing to open the Causeway to traffic during flooding, which meant that when all three roads into Cookham were inundated, the village was effectively an island.

We fought this policy before the event and during the flood itself we led the campaign to have the Causeway opened for traffic. Pressure from the Society led to the current arrangement for it to be accessible in a controlled and safe manner.

Lightlands Lane Pumping Station

The pumping station at Lightlands Lane transfers all the sewage from the three Cookhams to Maidenhead for treatment and it failed during the 2014 flood. Raw sewage was discharged across the countryside and into private gardens for days.

After researching the original construction in the Town Hall archives, we were instrumental in getting Thames Water to remedy a serious design defect in the pumping station's drainage. This should reduce the chance of the station failing in the future.

We also asked TW to raise all the electrics above flood level, rather than relying solely on the bund wall, but they refused on grounds of expense.

Sand Bags

The Society would like to make householders aware that the Borough will no longer distribute sand bags in the event of a flood. Property owners need to make sure they install and maintain their own defences.

Flood Hub

We welcome and support the efforts of the Parish Council to improve communication with residents, the emergency services and other authorities in the event of a flood. Communications will be based around a "Flood Hub" set up at The Chartered Institute of Marketing.

In August, four members of our committee joined a group of Parish Councillors and other residents at a Flood Response Training Event. All part of being better prepared for next time!

Further Flood Resilience Measures

We continue to push for an increase in the capacity of the weirs and channels around Cookham to reduce all flood levels, although we do accept that Cookham suffered less in 2014 than the communities downstream from the Jubilee River such as Datchet and Old Windsor.

Realistically, it is unlikely that any improvements at Cookham will be considered by the authorities, before the River Thames Scheme from Datchet to Teddington is underway.

At present, this is expected to start in 2020 but may yet be delayed due to lack of funding.



Moor Floods

THE DESIGN AWARD 2018

The Cookham Society awards an annual design prize for a project completed in the previous year.

It is awarded to either whole buildings, extensions or landscaping projects. Winners receive a certificate and a unique blue ceramic plaque.

Entries must be formally proposed and are then visited by an Assessment Panel, consisting of members of the Society's Planning sub-committee and are reviewed by

our honorary consultant, the distinguished architect, Professor Robert Adam, FRIBA.

For further details and entry forms contact the chair of the design committee, Pablo Dubois at: Pablo@dubois.me.uk



CHRISTMAS CARDS

Pick up a bargain! The Society is clearing old stock at just £2 for a pack of 10 cards and envelopes. Available at **Village Hardware, Cookham** from October 1st.



QUIET BEAUTY SPOTS IN COOKHAM

View of Odney Weir. Part of our series which features Cookham's less known beauty spots.

Picture by Barry Weare

MEMBERSHIP AND PAYMENTS UPDATE

If you are already a member you will be aware we are trying to simplify our administrative procedures and that we are moving towards a system of membership payments by Standing Order only.

This means members don't have to fill in a form every year and we don't have to waste time chasing members for the money. If you get a reminder from us, please consider switching to SO.

Our bank details are as follows:

Bank: NatWest

Bank Account: The Cookham Society

Account Number: 64226026

Sort code: 60 13 35

NEW MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Are you someone with energy and an interest in the Cookhams? We are always on the lookout for good committee members. If you feel you could offer something to our current committee why not join us?

The main committee meets once every two months and there are other sub-committees that get together more frequently to look at planning or environment issues. For further information, contact Lysette Penston, on 01628 473862.

Cookham Society: Committee Members

President..... John Bowley
Vice-president..... Vacant
Chairman..... Tom Denniford
Vice-chair..... Lysette Penston
Treasurer..... Mark Chapman
Secretary..... Lysette Penston
Membership sec..... Ossie Wardell-Yerburgh

Committee members:

Fiona Butler
Pablo Dubois
John Kitching
Liz Peters
Dick Scarff
Mike Springate
Barry Weare

