



Charity No 2324205

Henley Society Newsletter

August 2013

Editor: Sandra Moon

www.thehenleysociety.ctc-aspire.co.uk

Dates for your diary:

Thursday 26th September – Bletchley Park (application form enclosed)

Saturday 7th December – Christmas Lunch at Badgemore Golf Club

Volunteers wanted

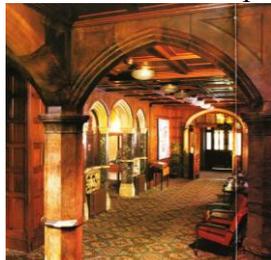
The Society is looking to boost the membership of its planning committee which is somewhat depleted due to recent retirements. The committee meets on Monday evenings at intervals of 2 - 3 weeks to examine applications for building developments within Henley, and sends its comments to SODC, the planning authority. Members of the Society interested in such a role are invited to contact David Whitehead, the current chairman of the planning committee, (01491 573635) for further information.

Also is anyone available to deliver the Newsletters in Henley. This is only about three times a year and to cover when people are away. Can you let me know – Sandra Moon on 01491 573887.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - This outing is open to non-members.

BLETCHLEY PARK

Our next outing will be on 26th September when we are planning a visit to Bletchley Park which was once Britain's Best Kept Secret. Today Bletchley Park is a heritage site and a vibrant tourist attraction.



Visitors can explore and experience the top secret world of the iconic WW2 Codebreaking Huts set within the atmospheric Victorian estate nestled in Buckinghamshire countryside.

A day at Bletchley Park includes the opportunity to see the world's only fully-operational Bombe rebuild – the mechanical device used to mechanise the process of breaking Enigma and the largest and most comprehensive public display of Enigma machines in the world.

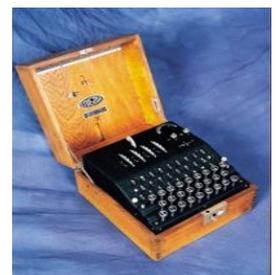
The visit will include a tour of the huts with a Tour Guide who will tell us the amazing story of the World War Two Code Breakers and their breath taking achievements.

Visitors may also visit the Alan Turing gallery along with many other exhibits.

On our arrival at Bletchley Park we will be offered tea, coffee and biscuits and following our tour a hot lunch will be provided in a dedicated group catering area. Members will then be free to explore the unique atmosphere of Bletchley Park at their leisure prior to our departure.

A visit to Bletchley Park is highly recommended and even to those who have previously visited there is always something new to discover.

We have arranged a booking for 25 Members so please book early to secure a place.



Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 10th April 2013

This year the AGM took place at the River & Rowing Museum, which was attended by 41 members. Lord Camoys took the chair after members had the opportunity of seeing the exhibits at the museum.

Errol Facy welcomed members and gave a short account of the events of the year, which included our trip to the Houses of Parliament, with lunch and an opportunity to hear a debate in the House of Lords. We then went to Highclere, followed by a repeat trip to Highgrove and our final event the Christmas lunch at Badgemore.

He was kept busy as for the first time in 30 years, as Treasurer I was unable to attend and he had to present the accounts. David Whitehead presented his report as Chairman of the Planning Committee, which I give below.

After the closing of the Meeting, a talk was given by Kate Ashbrook – General Secretary of the Open Spaces Society.

Report by the Chairman of the Planning Committee to the AGM, April 2013

The past year has been a relatively quiet one, both in terms of actual building and in terms of major planning applications, with the one exception of plans for the Townlands re-development. However the more minor applications have continued to come in at the usual rate; and the planning committee has looked at a total of 262 planning applications during the year. This is a similar number to the previous year, and within the range of 250 – 300 that has applied for at least the past 9 years.

Regarding Townlands, a comprehensive application for the whole site was submitted last summer and, despite some objections to the scale and design of the scheme, it was approved with very little change by SODC. And as you have probably seen in the Henley Standard, the financing of the hospital project has now been guaranteed by the government.

Most of the other planning applications for Henley were for house extensions, and these ranged in size from a front porch to almost doubling the floor area of the house concerned. Two types of extension that appear to be increasing in numbers are those that involve a loft conversion and those that incorporate an existing garage into the residential part of the house. Side extensions are also becoming more common. Depending on their position and design, all of these extensions can have an adverse effect on the appearance of the town, and we submit comments to SODC when we think there is a significant and undesirable impact. Recently, our comments have been placed on the Society's website and so, if you wish to see what was said about a particular planning application, you can easily do so. It is of course SODC who make the decisions, and they now state that they take a positive but proactive approach to all applications. The positive approach means that it is unusual for an application to be completely rejected, though a few are, and some do undergo modification before they are accepted.

Last year, I mentioned two undesirable major developments that were still outstanding. One was the Market Place Mews/ Kings Road car-park development, and this still has planning approval to be started at any time until October this year. The other development, which will be decided by the County Council, is the extension to the gravel quarry at Sonning Eye with its inevitable heavy traffic coming on to the Henley-Caversham road, and a decision on that has still not been announced. (Still no decision made 16th August)

Last year I also spoke about the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the prospect of a Henley Neighbourhood Plan. The Core Strategy has finally been adopted and can be read on the SODC website. It states that space will have to be allocated for 400 new houses in Henley, to be built before the year 2027, with the option for 450 if space can be found. The Core Strategy also contains a number of rather

remarkable statements. Here is one example: “The study also indicates that Henley would benefit from an improved range of bars, restaurants and cafes.....”. Another is: “The retail assessment indicates a need for 2.1 thousand sq. metres of additional floorspace in the town centre to 2016...”.

In response to the Core Strategy, Henley Town Council decided during the year to pursue the option of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, and some of the pros and cons of such a plan were discussed at our AGM last year. One problem is that SODC has provisionally allocated a substantial proportion of Henley's 400 houses to sites in Harpsden parish rather than Henley, and Harpsden Parish Council, not surprisingly, has resisted this allocation. However Harpsden has finally and reluctantly agreed to join Henley in producing a Neighbourhood Plan that would cover both parishes. So, as I predicted last year, progress towards the production of a Neighbourhood Plan has been both slow and contentious. However, the wheels are turning slowly, and you may have seen the report in the Henley Standard of 8 March, in which the Town Clerk invited volunteers from the community - that's all of us - to contribute to the production of the plan. But how the process will develop from now on is still not clear. The arrangements are in the hands of the Town Council.

Finally I would like to thank the other members of the planning committee for taking part in our discussions and I would also like to thank the Town Council for making available their copies of the planning applications.

David Whitehead

Lacock Abbey

A successful trip to Lacock took place with 19 members enjoying this lovely property.



Fawley Steam Train and Railway

About 30 of us spent a lovely time at Sir William McAlpine's Private Railway and Museum in Fawley on Father's Day. The weather could have been better, it started in sunshine, but unfortunately it became changeable with the showers of rain sending the animals and birds to take shelter.



But if you were fed up with going on the train, the carousel was back after refurbishment and gave rides all afternoon.



Tim Ferguson was the lucky winner of the draw to go on the footplates.

New members

I would like to welcome the following as members of the Society: Emma Abbott, Jean Baptist Crazier, Paul Henderson and Brenda Wright.

Newsletters

With the cost of printing rising, and although we deliver a lot, postage as well, we would prefer to send these by email in future. Obviously, those who do not have computer we will continue to deliver by hand or post. Please see enclosed form.

This can be found on our website, together with details of our comments to SODC on planning applications. Has anyone got any old pictures of Henley that we could add?

Committee

Errol Facy – Chairman

Ian Giuliani Vice Chairman

Nora Scanlon – Hon Secretary 01491 579619

Sandra Moon - Hon Treasurer & Membership Secretary 01491 573887

David Whitehead – Chairman of Planning Committee

Jenifer Copeland

Pauline Fleming – Events Organizer 01491 573261

Mr James Lambert

Mrs Valerie Alasia