

Spring Newsletter 2011

THE
HASLEMERE
SOCIETY



FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2011

Spring Meeting	Friday 15 th April	Haslemere Hall
1 st Outing by coach (fully booked)	Friday 13 th May	Billingsgate
Summer Party	Friday 24 th June	Haslemere Museum
2 nd Outing by coach (places available)	Friday 30 th September	Billingsgate
AGM	Friday 18 th November	Haslemere Hall

From the Chairman

Haslemere is a special place for us all. It is defined by the woodland, fields and heathland which surround its attractive townscape. Although the development of the town was catalysed by the coming of the railway, it is far from a soulless commuter town. On the contrary, Haslemere has succeeded in growing in size and vitality in a time of changing attitudes and fortunes.

Our Society has taken a leading role in shaping this unique environment and we seek to continue to in this role. For some time communities have felt that their voices have not been heard by the decision makers, but this seems set to change. In Haslemere, the Town Council, together with the Society and other community leaders, has embarked upon the production of the Haslemere Design Statement - a vision for Beacon Hill, Critchmere, Haslemere, Hindhead, Shottermill and Weyhill. This document will be presented to and adopted by Waverley Borough Council and will become a strong influence on the designs proposed by developers and public bodies.

Government has also responded to the mood of local communities and recognised the economic benefits of mobilising their skills and enthusiasm. The Localisation Bill is the outcome. The Bill passes political and financial power back to district councils like Waverley and through them to neighbourhoods, represented by town councils, civic societies, social enterprises and individuals. The Bill proposes **six actions**, two of which impact directly on our concerns.

The **first** addresses regional strategies and in particular it abolishes regional housing targets in favour of local decision making. It gives the Society greater opportunity to be proactive in establishing local policy rather than being reactive to central government dictates. The **second** action is to empower local communities to do things in their own way. It encourages town and parish councils, together with community leaders, to produce Neighbourhood Plans which will shape the development of the town. The other **four** actions are supportive of the first two. They strengthen accountability to local people via local referenda and petitions. They increase local control of public finance, diversify the supply of public services and open government to public scrutiny.

The immediate challenge for us is to use the Bill to influence the policies and actions of Waverley Borough Council and Haslemere Town Council. The Society may promote actions affecting the town, such as resolving car parking for commuters, influencing the zoning of development, considering the after-use of the police station and of course promoting The Haslemere Design Statement.

Nigel Quick

Significant Planning Matters commented on by the Society since the Annual Report

An application for an illuminated sign at **Boots, High Street**, the full width of the property, was objected to and refused by Waverley. The Society also objected to a new application for one half the width of the property as unsuitable for our town centre conservation area and we hope Waverley will also refuse this.

Barclays Bank applied for a larger sign and additional projecting signs which we considered to be out of keeping with the town centre conservation area but regrettably Waverley decided to consent.

We feel that national retailers wishing to place larger prominent signs on their properties within our conservation area need to be strictly regulated.

Following Waverley’s refusal of the scheme to redevelop the **motor cycle shop** and **Clements** factory in Wey Hill, demolition of the buildings has been carried out. A second planning application for a scheme only slightly reduced in size has again been refused. The Society’s expressed concerns about inadequate parking and provision for service vehicle parking to prevent increased congestion have now also been recognised by Waverley planners.

Proposals to ‘garden grab’ and build a house in the front garden of a house in **Weydown Road**, designated as a low density housing area, were refused by Waverley. An appeal against this decision has been made.

Following an earlier withdrawal of an application for a large house in a garden with restricted access on **Courts Mount Road**, a revised scheme has been submitted and awaits Waverley’s decision.

A developer’s blatant disregard for the planning process by carrying out major landscaping works at a house in **Petworth Road** resulted in Waverley serving an enforcement notice. A planning application for a new drive entrance on to the main road has now been made which has yet to be determined by Waverley. This appears to be a precursor to the developer’s further intentions for the site which the Society has highlighted in its objections to the application.

A planning application for development of the **King Edward VII** site near Midhurst has been made and consultations have been held prior to the submission of a planning application to develop the **Syngenta** site at Fernhurst. Although both of these major sites are in West Sussex, they will have a profound effect upon the parking and congestion problems in Haslemere and the Society has expressed concerns to Chichester District Council about this. We expect Waverley and Haslemere town councils to make appropriate vigorous representations including securing Section 106 Agreements for financial contributions to infrastructure improvements in Haslemere.

Waverley Borough Council has issued a further consultation on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options and Draft Policies for public comments. This will replace the current Borough Local Plan and everyone is urged to read this and submit their comments.

John Greer

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THE OUTING TO BILLINGSGATE on 13th MAY is fully booked, in spite of the somewhat challenging early hour of departure from Haslemere. David McG Smith has kindly offered to repeat this special event on **FRIDAY 30th SEPTEMBER** if enough people are interested. So far several people have booked provisionally for this second outing, which has a maximum of 24, as before. I expect some cancellations nearer both dates. Please see back page for details.

Diana Serman

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Blue Plaque Scheme - by Chris Harrison

Following the blue plaque unveiling in September at Broad Dene as mentioned in the annual report, we unveiled a plaque at the Poachers Pocket restaurant in Petworth Road. Rather than celebrating the life of an individual, this plaque commemorates the shenanigans of the 1754 Parliamentary election in Haslemere for which Haslemere achieved national notoriety. James More Molyneux, heir to the Loseley estate, and Philip Carteret Webb, standing for Haslemere's two seats in parliament, unseated the incumbents, including General George Oglethorpe, the founder of the colony of Georgia, by means of a series of dodgy manoeuvres including subdividing the freehold of the Red Cow Inn (now the Poachers Pocket) to increase the number of votes available. The poem, The Cow of Haslemere or the Conjuror's Scrutiny at Oxford was widely circulated at the time and our plaque includes a quotation from it: At one strange birth this cow cast forth eight calves in human shape, referring to this subdivision of the freehold interest into eight smaller parts. Copies of a pamphlet written by Anthony Doolittle which includes the poem can be obtained from the Haslemere Bookshop. Some of you may have happened to hear Chris's informative interview arranged at short notice on BBC Radio Surrey in February.

A publication with details and stories behind all our plaques, and a map, should you care to follow a blue plaque trail, can be downloaded from <http://www.haslemere.com/haslemeresociety/achieve.html>.

We have a number of additional ideas for future plaques, including one for Arnold & Carl Dolmetsch, but are always open to new ideas. Please contact Chris Harrison at chrisaharrison@gmail.com with any recommendations. Eligibility criteria can be found on the Haslemere website, one of which is that the plaque needs to be reasonably visible to the general public.

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Notes from the President, Robert Serman

* The almost completed **A3 tunnel** featured in the last AGM when we were fortunate to have a supremely well informed speaker, Paul Hoyland, the Chief Tunnelling Engineer for Balfour Beatty. His insights and pictures were captivating. Our chairman is himself a civil engineer and it was professional contact that brought about Paul's attending our meeting. Few could fail to be impressed by the great skill and meticulous attention to detail that the engineers have shown. A **public walk-through the new tunnel** will take place on Saturday 14th May. To register your interest, contact Caroline White of Hindhead Together: Tel 07772-855 090 or email: caroline@hindheadtogether.org.uk. Current details are available in the Haslemere Town Diary, What's On, at www.haslemere.com and of course on the Hindhead Together website: www.hindheadtogether.org.uk.

* **This year's Spring Meeting on Friday 15th April** will feature a talk by **Jeanne Dolmetsch**, soon after the unveiling of the Dolmetsch Blue Plaque (see article above). More information about Jeanne's talk can be found on the back page of this newsletter, and an invitation is also enclosed.

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The Heritage Weekend last September was a great success, thanks in large part to Nigel, the chairman, for his input, drive and enthusiasm. Many private and public properties could be seen, with guided tours and leaflets to enhance the privilege of visiting private houses, and to learn more about those buildings generally already open to the public. The Haslemere Society has not definitely decided when to take part in the next Heritage weekend, but alternate years will be most likely in the future.

Diana Serman

OUR SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2011

SPRING MEETING Friday 15th April 7.30 pm Haslemere Hall, Bridge Road

We are delighted to welcome Jeanne Dolmetsch as our speaker at the spring meeting. She will enthral us with a tribute to her adventurous and gifted grandfather, Arnold, with letters, pictures and anecdotes - an account of a remarkable musician, scholar, designer, craftsman and teacher, from his early life in Le Mans and Brussels to London, and finally to Haslemere.

As usual the talk will be followed by a glass or two of wine and a few canapés. Please telephone 01428-654 681 for a member's badge.

SUMMER DRINKS & CANAPES Friday 24th June 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

To be held as always in the lovely garden of the Haslemere Educational Museum, weather permitting, indoors if wet. This relaxed evening is a good opportunity to meet other members of the Society in delightful surroundings. Guests are welcome.



Tickets are £10.00 per person. Please fill in the enclosed form and send it with a cheque and SAE to:

The Treasurer, John Stark (01428-656 000) by Wednesday 8th June.

OUTING BY midi-COACH: Friday 30th September 2011

*2nd Early Morning visit to Billingsgate Fish Market
by special arrangement*



5.00 am Leave St Christopher's Green, Weyhill for Billingsgate and briefing from Market Superintendent and David McG Smith. Tea/coffee. Guided tour of market hall, opportunity to buy fish, brief look at outside storage facilities & Crossrail construction in the dock, short visit to Seafood School. **NB** Billingsgate is a working fish market and there will be melting ice on the floor, so wear rubber-soled shoes/boots. Light breakfast (!) such as toast and smoked salmon, bacon sandwiches, pastries, tea/coffee/fruit juice. **9.00 am** Leave Billingsgate. Relax for about 1½ hours at RHS Wisley (Free entry to garden for members. Shops, café etc available to all). **Around NOON or so** Arrive at St Christopher's Green.

* Tickets (at cost) are £28.00, to include breakfast, coach and tip for driver.

Please contact Diana Serman to check for spaces before sending a cheque and S.A.E. with your name(s) and telephone number.

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