

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 7th December 2015 at 7.30 p.m. at The Friends Meeting House
MINUTES

1. **Present:** Chris Marsden (CM), Ron Taylor (RT), John Davis (JD), Helen Clothier (HC), Pauline Waddilove (PW), Donald Robertson (DR), Alan Jackson (AJ), Mike Waddilove (MW), Harry Downie (HD), John Harris (JH), Susan Vinther (SV), Alan Bunting (AB), John Lowe (JL) and Bob Fletcher (RF).
2. Apologies for absence were received from Victoria Evans (VE), Eric Midwinter (EM), Penny Ayres (PA) and Tim Riley (TR) .
3. Minutes of the meeting on 21st September 2015, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.
4. Matters arising not on the Agenda:
 - (a) None.
5. **Treasurer's Report**
 - (a) HD reported that the Society should break even this year.
6. **Secretary's Items**
 - (a) RF reported that the topic of the 28th January public meeting would be Volunteer For Harpenden.
 - (b) It was agreed that the topic for the 25th February public meeting would be the Red House.
 - (c) It was agreed that the Society would hold a public meeting during the consultation period for the next stage of the Strategic Local Plan which runs from the 8 January to the 19 February. **Action RF to book Rothamsted Conference Centre (post meeting note this meeting has now been arranged for the 4th February 2016)**
7. **Chairman's Items**
 - (a) The Chairman welcomed John Lowe as an observer. John has volunteered to help with the Built Environment working group
 - (b) The Chairman reported that at the recent information exchange meeting with Councillors and Officers it had been stated that the target for opening the new secondary school is still Sept 2017 although it was acknowledged that this was very tight.
 - (c) It was also reported that due to financial constraints the concourse outside the library will now be repaired, not replaced.
 - (d) It was also reported that the children's playground in the park will not now be moved. There is scope to work with others to produce a park development plan which could be used to obtain grants and possibly for a public appeal.
 - (e) The Christmas mulled wine and mince pies, public meeting is taking place in three days time (10th December), at which we intend to invite participants, sitting in an informal circle, to raise issues of concern and then discuss them. Committee members were urged to attend.
 - (f) The Chairman reiterated his intention to step down within a reasonable time period. He had hoped a successor might have been identified by April 2016, when he will have served 5 years. As this now looking unlikely he gave notice that he was prepared to serve for one more year (until April 2017) but would then definitely step down. The committee should actively seek a successor in time for a reasonable period of handover.
8. **Membership Secretary's Items**
 - (a) The Membership Secretary's report had been circulated before the meeting.
 - (b) The Chairman announced that SV was resigning from the Membership Secretary's position at the next AGM and he thanked her sterling work during her time in post.
9. **Newsletter Editor's Items**
 - (a) The Newsletter Editor's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

10. **Publicity Officer's Items**

- (a) The Publicity Officer's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

11. **Red House**

- (a) CM reported that a plan to renovate and improve the Stewarts Building on the Red House site had been put forward.
- (b) However, it is still uncertain what the plans are for the remaining part of the site. There was concern that the NHS may want to sell off the remaining part of the site for housing to fund development elsewhere in the area.
- (c) It was agreed to make the Red House the topic of the 25th February public meeting

12. **Working Group Reports**

- (a) **Community Safety:** The Public Order working group's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (b) **Environment:** The Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. AB raised the issue of litter reporting that some of the problem was caused by school children. Consideration to be given to making litter a topic in an upcoming issue of the Newsletter. **Action AB**
- (c) **Transport:** The Transport report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. DR reported that his survey work showed that parents at the new primary free school in were behaving sensibly and that there were no significant traffic problems caused by the school in the surrounding area during the school run times. DR also reported that his survey work had found that during the morning peak time of 8.15 to 8.45 am the average time to travel by car from North Harpenden (by the car showroom) to the Harpenden Arms was approx. 3 minutes which was not considered excessive.
- (d) **Education & Leisure.** The E&L report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (e) **Health & Social Welfare.** The Health & Social Welfare report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (f) **Built Environment.** The Built Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. PW reported that the Charles Wilson site is being converted into offices and a showroom. JL commented that although the new plans for the Harpenden House Hotel were a significant improvement over the previous version he was still concerned about the quality of the material that was being proposed and the general appearance of the site from the Common,
- (g) **Economic Activity.** RT reported that the St Albans Chamber of Commerce were interested in extending their activities to include Harpenden.

13. **Awards**

- (a) A request for members to nominate buildings for awards was included in the last newsletter and is also on the website.

14. **AOB**

- (a) None

15. **Dates of the next meetings:**

Committee Meeting dates: 25 Jan 16, 21 Mar 16

Speakers meetings: 28 Jan 16, 4 Feb 16 (Rothamsted, SLP Meeting), 25 Feb 16, 21 April 16 (AGM)

- 16. The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.