



Fleet & Crookham Civic Society

Chairman : Dr. David Fearn, Fleet 615924
Secretary : Mr. Colin Gray, Fleet 616183 e-mail colin.gray5@virgin.net
Treasurer : Vacant position
Executive Committee :
Miss Alison Chatley, Mrs. Alison Macallan.
Membership Secretary : Mrs. Debbie Moss
Co-opted members 2004/5 Cllr. Jenny Radley FACC Representative Fleet 628751.
Phill Gower Advisor on Planning Fleet 624506
Judith Sutherland PPI/PCT matters

Newsletter Autumn 2004

Diary dates:

Wednesday 27th October 2004, starting at 7.00 pm – Hampshire Constabulary Evening
Wednesday 13th April, 2005, starting at 7.30 p.m. Fleet & Crookham Civic Society AGM

Both events to be held at the
Willis Hall, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham.

Further details on the Hampshire Constabulary Evening on page 3.

Please support your Society, come along and talk to us about your concerns on local issues.
Your views matter and the Society is here to help.

Chairman's Introduction

This traditional Introduction to our Autumn Newsletter is written at a very sad time for the Society and for its Committee. As most of you will know, after a relatively short illness borne with great fortitude, Lt Col Bob Osborne died in the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice on Friday 17th September. An appropriate tribute to Bob appears below, but I would add here that he was the type of person who forms the backbone of organisations such as ours. People of his calibre are rare and we will miss him a very great deal. His expertise and knowledge of environmental matters will be almost impossible to replace, his common-sense approach to seemingly intractable problems, the humour he brought to Committee meetings, and his friendship were all highly valued. His is an example that we will find it difficult to follow. I am sure that we, as a Society, all offer our sympathy to his wife, Mo, and to her family.

Another sad loss occurred some while ago, with the untimely death in May of John Colbourn, who was our representative on the various local organisations associated with healthcare. As with Bob, he was from the relatively small group of people who care deeply about the quality of life of his fellow citizens and was prepared to act in their interests. He is also very much missed, and our sympathy is extended to his family and friends.

Unfortunately, I also have to report that our Membership Secretary over many years, Pat Constantine, is moving away from Church Crookham to near Alton, to be closer to her family, so has had to resign from the Committee. She, too, will be greatly missed, both in her official capacity

and as a staunch supporter of both the Committee and of the Society in general. We wish her well in her new home.

On the positive side, we have been able to recruit two new members to the Committee, who are very welcome indeed. They are Mrs Debbie Moss and Mrs Judith Sutherland, both of whom bring with them great enthusiasm and a willingness to participate fully in our activities. Debbie has volunteered to become Membership Secretary, which fills an important vacancy within our organisation, and will also represent us on the Fleet Town Healthcheck project. She has also agreed to be our Deputy Representative on the Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee (FACC). Judith has kindly offered to fill the role undertaken by John Colbourn, which is likely to become somewhat more demanding as various new health monitoring organisations become fully active.

As members will know, Mrs Jenny Radley and her husband, James, both succeeded in the June elections in becoming members of Hart DC. Although we offer them our congratulations on this success, Jenny's change in status presented the Committee with a problem, since her continued membership of it could have affected her voting rights within the Council. It was necessary to take time to clarify her position with the Monitoring Officer at Hart District Council (legal advisor to the Council) and the Standards Board for England. Their advice was simply that council members are expected to be active in their communities. What the Code of Conduct does make clear is that any member who is also a member of a campaigning group, which relates to the matter under consideration, should declare a personal interest. They can continue to contribute to the meeting and to vote. Although Jenny is not a member of the Planning Committee at Hart D.C., which decides on planning applications that form an important part of the Civic Society's business, she decided to relinquish her right to vote at Civic Society meetings to avoid any criticism of the Society. The Executive Committee has, however, co-opted Jenny to represent us on the FACC with Debbie as her Deputy, and will continue to consult her on matters associated with the Aerodrome and other topics which will clearly not conflict with her Council duties.

Sadly, I must report that, owing partly to work commitments, Mr Phill Gower has also felt it necessary to leave the Committee. However, I am pleased to be able to add that he will continue to devote as much time as possible to planning matters on behalf of the Society, including representing us at the Planning Advisory Group meetings, which are held twice each month. If possible, he will also continue to assist us in the production of the Newsletter and in setting up and maintaining the Website, which we have been planning for many months. I should add here that Phill has done a great deal for the Society in many ways. Although he has been most prominent in the planning arena, where he has been instrumental in obtaining a number of very important appeal victories, he has also had a major impact on membership, through his recruiting efforts, and on the Society's financial state.

With the need to report all these changes, there is little space in which to cover other news. However, I would like to urge you to come, if at all possible, to our meeting with the local Police on 27th. October, and to our next AGM, which will be held on 13th. April 2005. Notices concerning both events appear elsewhere. Please remember that it is opportunities like this, which give the members of the Society a chance to provide feedback to the Committee, which otherwise works in a vacuum. Without such feedback we have no way of judging whether we really do represent your views in the many actions that we take.

David Fearn

New Members

We are pleased to be able to welcome the following new members to the Society:

Mr. and Mrs. Folkes, Mr. and Mrs. Willis and Mr. Grieff.

A Visit from The Local Police

Following an offer made by the local Police to provide speakers for community groups, we are pleased to be able to announce that two representatives of the Hampshire Constabulary, Steve Francis and Colin Pickworth, will address us on Wednesday 27th. October at 7.00 p.m. in the Willis Hall, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham. As there will be plenty of time for discussion, please bring along your questions and observations; to be fully effective, this should be two-way dialogue.

As the Hall is booked until 10.00 pm, and we may well cover all matters of relevance to our Police visitors before that time, please come prepared to participate on a general discussion concerning other topics of general interest. These could well include particular development proposals, education, the Health service, and so on.

Diary of Events

In reading the following section of the Newsletter, please excuse the use of a number of acronyms. These are:-

DLA	Defence Land Agent/Agency	FAC C	Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee
MoD	Ministry of Defence	PPI	Patients Participation Initiative
P C	Planning Committee	PDSG	Peter Driver Sports Ground (in Church Crookham)
P I	Planning Inspectorate	PAG	Fleet & Church Crookham Planning Advisory Group
pSPA	Proposed Special Protection Area (for nature conservation)	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
PCT	Primary Care Trust		

23 March Shotts Nightclub Site at the PDSG. A letter was written to the DLA, asking them to confirm that MoD had placed a restrictive covenant on this land, limiting its use to social and sporting activities. They confirmed in reply that this covenant exists, but that they are negotiating with Hart DC to have this removed (the Council will have to pay a fee for this action).

24 March Planning Application for 16, 16a and 18 Castle Street. The Society objected formally to this undesirable and extensive infilling, which intends to insert 13 houses into a small space with serious road safety implications. The Council later agreed with this objection and the proposal became the subject of an appeal to the PI.

29 March Planning Application for 28/28a Kings Road. The PAG meeting this evening was totally packed with protestors. The proposal is to build 9 town houses and 1 flat on this site, which is excessive. The Society objected to this proposal.

1 April Appeal Concerning Hitches Lane Site. It was announced that an appeal has been made concerning application 03/02012/FUL for 120 houses on this site. This is currently the **third** appeal outstanding on this land to the west of Hitches Lane.

10 April Society's Status within the FACC. Serious problems were experienced by the Society's representative at 20th. November 2003 meeting of the FACC, when our properly formulated questions were disallowed by the Chairman of the meeting, and he was supported in this action by the Hart DC representative. The Society therefore wrote formally to the Chairman of the Council's Scrutiny Committee to ask for its status within the FACC to be confirmed. It should be noted that no formal reply was ever received to this letter and there has never been an apology or any other comment concerning the Hart DC representative's actions at the FACC meeting. The Committee regard this as totally unsatisfactory.

10 April Appeal Concerning Hitches Lane Site. The Society objected formally to the Planning Inspectorate to the addition of the appeal notified to us on 1 April to two others already being considered, the intention being to hear them simultaneously on 20 April 2004. Thus the Society, and all other objectors, were given less than three weeks notice in which to respond to this latest appeal, which is far from adequate.

13 April Planning Application for 50 Gally Hill Road. The Society was notified of an application to build a block of 8 apartments on this site. In view of the rejection of an earlier similar proposal at appeal, the Society again objected to this new application.

17 April Planning Application for Spring House, Branksomewood Road. The Society was notified of a plan to demolish this house and to replace it was a crammed development of 13 two-bedroom apartments, with a major loss of trees amongst other undesirable features. a formal objection was made to this proposal on 22 April. The Council later agreed with this objection and the proposal is now subject to appeal.

20/28 April Appeal Concerning Hitches Lane Site. This appeal was attended by three members of the Committee, who spoke against all three proposals considered (see note above dated 10 April). Significantly, the QC appearing for the appellant chose not to cross-examine the representations made by local groups, since the appeal was mainly concerned with the allocation of building land by Hart DC, and whether this allocation was meeting national guidelines.

21 April Planning Application for 175-179 Fleet Road. This application was placed on the agenda for the PC; it proposed to replace the existing houses with 14 new dwellings. Although not unusual for Fleet in the present climate, this agenda item was notable for the inclusion, possibly for the first time, of a formal objection from English Nature regarding the ever-increasing pressure being placed by the continual stream of new in-filling developments on the SSSIs close to Fleet and the pSPA to the east of the town. Basically, each additional dwelling adds more people, dogs and cats to those already causing grave disturbance to these protected areas. It is significant that such objections from English Nature are now almost routine, but the Council Officers equally routinely disregard them with reasons which do not stand up to proper scrutiny.

7 May Appeal Concerning Retirement Homes to be located at the Junction of Fleet Road and Stockton Avenue. The Society was notified of this appeal. The planning application to be considered is for the construction of a block of 33 retirement homes on the sites of three existing large houses; the Society had objected earlier to this application on numerous grounds, including the excessive bulk of the planned buildings, the loss of trees and inadequate parking provision. The Council later agreed with this objection and the proposal is now subject to appeal.

12 May “Departures” planning applications procedures discussed by PC. Departures planning applications are those which do not comply with the Hart District Local Plan. Up to the present they have been dealt with by the complete Council. However, to conform to a more common practice, the PC decided that, in future, a special Departures Panel would be set up to adjudicate on such applications. The members of this Panel were to have **mandatory** special training in planning procedures and law.

12 May Planning Applications to build new dwellings at 27 and 29/31 Basingbourne Road. These two proposed developments, with refs 03/01660/FUL and 03/01659/FUL, respectively, were refused by the PC, confirming the Council’s wish to preserve these sites from unsuitable development. Later, an appeal for no 27 was announced at the PAG meeting on 6 September and for nos 29/31 on 20 September.

13 May Planning Application to surround land between the Bowenhurst Gardens estate and Aldershot Road in Church Crookham with a 2 m high fence. The Society objected to this proposal on the basis that the street scene would be severely damaged by it. The Council later agreed with this objection and the proposal is now subject to appeal.

9 June Vehicle movements per day. An important statistic required in assessing planning applications is the likely number of vehicle movements per day which will result from a new development. In the agenda for the June PC meetings, it was stated, possibly for the first time, that the definitive number is 8 movements per dwelling per day (Lynchford Tyres site, ref 03/01854/OUT).

10 June Council Election. James and Jenny Radley were both elected to Hart DC, representing the Community Campaign (Hart). A new political group appears on Hart DC.

21 June PAG Chairman. In a PAG meeting which lasted for almost 4 hours, Cllr Sharyn Wheale was elected as the new Chairman of PAG. The new Vice-Chairman is Cllr John Pearson.

22 June Appeal Concerning the proposed replacement of Haviland House, Pinewood Hill with 10 two-bedroom flats. The Society previously objected to this proposal, which would result in the loss of a fine old house and the construction of a large block of flats. Committee members spoke at this appeal to reinforce the earlier objection.

28 June Society Committee meeting. It was at this Committee meeting that Jenny Radley was felt obliged to stand down to protect FCCS from challenge to their independence as a non-political group. Her current status as FACC representative does not allow her to vote on any matters not associated with the Farnborough Aerodrome.

1 July Appeal Concerning the proposed replacement of Haviland House Pinewood Hill with 10 two-bedroom flats. In a decision reached with almost unprecedented speed, the Planning Inspectorate rejected this appeal.

1 July Planning Applications to build 11 flats and 2 houses at 35 Church Road. The Society objected to this proposal on the basis that it involves the loss of one of the few distinctive older houses in Fleet and Church Crookham. This house was designed in the early 1930s by the well-known Midlands architect, W H Bidlake. Significantly, amongst this architect’s output are many listed buildings, some of Grade 1 and Grade 2*, suggesting that his work is of national importance.

20 July Appeals Concerning the proposed 33 Retirement Homes to be located at the Junction of Fleet Road and Stockton Avenue. Committee members spoke at these appeals (two were heard at the same time), emphasising the excessive size of the proposed new buildings and the unacceptable loss of trees.

27 July Town Centre Improvements meeting. Colin Gray attended this meeting on behalf of the Society. Although most of the matters discussed were of a fairly minor nature, in aggregate they can potentially improve the environment in the town centre very considerably.

29 July FACC meeting. Debbie Moss represented the Society. Owing to an administrative oversight, the Society's 5 questions were not tabled in advance, but she managed to raise some important points at suitable times in the agenda. Our relationship with the Aerodrome management continues to be good. As an indication of this, the missed questions were submitted later, on 10 August, and a useful response was received almost immediately, on 13 August. Debbie was elected to the FACC website working group. This would ensure that the website will contain details of FACC and its functions for all to see.

2 August Planning Application to build 14 houses and flats at 40-42 Kings Road. The Society was informed of this new application for this site, for which a previous application was lost on appeal (and to which the Society strenuously objected). This scheme is an improvement, so the Society's response was to suggest modifications to effect further enhancements.

2 August Proposal to build 220 dwellings at the Waterfront Business Park. An Environmental Impact Assessment was received by PAG from the developer. Amazingly, no member of PAG felt competent to read and assess this very large document (many hundreds of pages), so it was left to our Hon Secretary, Colin Gray, to undertake this (unpaid) task on behalf of the Council. He reported on the generally unsatisfactory nature of the report at the next PAG meeting on 16 August.

17 August Appeal Concerning Hitches Lane Site. The PI notified the Society that this appeal has been dismissed; so the local community has again been successful in protecting this green-field site. However, on this occasion, the PI recommended that the appeal should be granted on the basis of their assessment of the land supply situation. Conversely, the Secretary of State did not agree with this assessment, so the PI was over-ruled. It is not often that the Secretary of State is seen to be in support of local environmental campaigners!!

19 August Appeals Concerning the proposed 33 Retirement Homes to be located at the Junction of Fleet Road and Stockton Avenue. The Society was notified that both appeals had been rejected by the PI, so the local environment was again the winner.

19 August Aerodrome visit. In response to an invitation from TAG, the operators of the Farnborough Aerodrome, members of the Society were provided with the opportunity to be given a guided tour of the airport, facilities and infrastructure, including the air traffic control tower. This proved to be a very popular visit and the limited number of places were oversubscribed several fold. (The committee are already speaking with TAG in the hope that subsequent visits can be arranged for other members who would wish to attend). The mini-bus tour was hosted by Ann Bartaby, the Director of Operations at TAG aviation. She provided an informative and enthusiastic insight to the work that TAG have/are doing to modernise the facilities at the airport. The tour around the airfield details some of the interesting history of the airfield and includes commentary on buildings both old and new.

The highlight of the tour is undoubtedly the visit to the Air Traffic Control (ATC) and noise monitoring facilities, including an impressive view from the top of the control tower. The modern architecture of the tower itself is awesome, and the building houses an incredible range of modern technology, computers and radar screens.



Ann Bartaby, (centre left), speaking with FCCS members at the Eastern end of the runway.



TAG's impressive ATC Tower.

21 August Planning Application to build 8 flats at 11 Gally Hill Road. Following the earlier rejection of an appeal to build a larger number of flats on this site (next door to Christ Church), the developer submitted plans to replace the existing house with 8 flats. This is again unacceptable and the Society objects to this new application.

6 September Council/Developer meeting concerning the Queen Elizabeth Barracks site. This meeting, convened as a “Community Forum”, was thought to be open to community groups such as our Society, but our representative was rejected on the basis that the Council provided an adequate representation of the local residents!!

6 September Proposal to build 220 dwellings at the Waterfront Business Park. An addendum to the earlier transport assessment was presented to the PAG meeting.

Planning Application to build 8 flats at 11 Gally Hill Road and a block of 7 flats at 50 Gally Hill Road, Church Crookham. These also came up at PAG on this evening. Both are unacceptable developments in terms of design and density for this part of the settlement.

Redfields Garden Centre – realignment of the garden centre and 70 houses on rear of the site

This needs careful study. The access for the garden centre would be off the Zebon Copse roundabout. Access for the houses would be from Ewshott Lane – a rather narrow lane – and access very close to the access to Humphrey’s Park. No infrastructure upgrade was proposed as the site hoped to benefit from redevelopment of QEB. This site has pSPA implications as does QEB.

20 September Planning Applications to build a medical centre on the site of the Shotts Nightclub at the PDSG. Although a new medical centre in this part of Church Crookham is to be supported, there are issues concerning possible danger from over-flying aircraft, which are at very low altitude as they leave or approach the Farnborough Aerodrome; the site is only a few metres from the edge of the Public Safety Zone, in which no development is permitted. Guidance on building within a PSZ said: “Generally there will not be any new or replacement development or changes of use of existing buildings within a PSZ”. More seriously, if this proposal results in the total relocation of the Richmond Surgery, there is a serious danger that the Pharmacy in Linkway will close, followed by the small shops located there. On the basis of such a relocation, the Society objects to this proposal.

20 September PAG meeting – many more flats proposed. This PAG meeting demonstrated very clearly the move towards filling Fleet with blocks of flats, so that developers and landowners can take advantage of the high property prices in the town. Applications at this meeting included the following: 104-112 Reading Road South – 12 flats; 11-13 Florence road – 4 flats and 3 terraced houses; 30-32 Fleet Road – 36 flats. Although a decision had not been made at the time of writing, it seems likely that the Society will object to all these proposals.

22 September Licensing Laws and policy. With the possible relaxation of the Licensing Laws, which will permit some establishments to remain open continuously, Hart DC initiated a consultation exercise, before deciding on a revised policy. The Society will comment on this matter in due course.

Residents' Association

For many years we have maintained a close relationship with the Residents' Association, and have occasionally reported upon this in the Newsletter. This relationship, which has included joint Committee meetings from time-to-time, is based upon a common interest in the general well-being of Fleet and Church Crookham. Any differences in approach which have emerged over the years have been slight, but those that have appeared have perhaps been due to the Association's emphasis on obtaining value for money for Council Tax payers, whereas the Society is primarily concerned with the quality of life and the general environment.

We held another joint meeting on 3 September to discuss how this relationship might develop in the future. Although no decisions were reached, it is clear that both organisations would benefit from closer liaison, if nothing more, so expect further news from the current discussions in the near future. Of course, any proposals for a more fundamental change in our relationship will be put to an AGM of the Society.

David Fearn

Trees

Anyone observing the decisions of the Society concerning planning matters and, to some extent, those of the Council, will note that there is often a considerable concern about the loss of trees and other foliage. This is because the generally pleasant atmosphere of the town is largely due to the rural appearance provided by the trees, hedges and shrubs with which Fleet and Church Crookham are blessed. However, every new in-filling development causes some of this vital foliage to be lost, as do proposals to replace hedges with fences, to cut down trees because they reduce the amount of sunlight reaching windows, and so on. We have even noted that some residents have opposed tree preservation orders because the leaves fall on their gardens in the autumn and they are obliged to clear them away!! While some of these losses can be justified, many should be strongly resisted, otherwise Fleet and Church Crookham will eventually become devoid of vegetation.

While any proposals involving the above actions are usually notified to nearby residents via the normal Council planning procedures, a very worrying unofficial practice is becoming fairly common, and we would ask all members to watch out for it and to take action to prevent it if they can. This is for house owners, or developers buying their properties, to cut down all trees and other foliage on the land in question before applying for planning permission; in this way, their planning application can state, absolutely truthfully, that the implementation of their proposals will result in "no loss of trees, hedges," etc. Of course, this is truthful because they have already cut everything down! If you suspect that a property near you is likely to be treated in this way, please contact the Council and ask for an emergency tree preservation order to be imposed immediately. Incidentally, do not wait until Monday morning – such actions very often occur during a weekend when no-one is on duty in the Council Offices.

David Fearn

The Gurkhas

Many members will remember with great affection the Gurkha units who were stationed in the Queen Elizabeth Barracks for many years. They were without doubt a credit to the British Army, to their Country and to our town, and most of us deeply regretted (and opposed) the decision by MoD to send them elsewhere. So it was with a thrill that many of us had the opportunity to meet some of them once again on Saturday, 18th. September, when a street collection was held on behalf of the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This was organised once again by Peter Shoesmith, who is to be congratulated on his determination to support the Gurkhas.

With collectors stationed on Fleet Road, in the Verne and Linkway, and in Elvetham Heath, the impressive sum of £2,763 was raised for this most worthy cause, exceeding the 2003 total by £514. This was an excellent result and suggests that the local people still remember the Gurkhas with affection. Incidentally, other events are also held at intervals in support of the Welfare Fund. For example, a buffet lunch and visit to the Gurkha Museum was held on 24 September, at which the Society was represented.

David Fearn

The Friends of the Gurkha (N. E Hants) is the local group that works tirelessly to raise money for the Trust. Funds raised go to help those retired soldiers who, because they have served less than 15 years, receive no pension. There is at present a campaign to try to persuade the government to allow Gurkha soldiers the right to hold a British Passport. This is denied them because Nepal is not a member of the Commonwealth. When one considers how many Gurkhas have fought and died for this country, this is a very poor excuse.

Colin Gray

Hitches Lane Update

As mentioned in the Diary Section above, the latest appeal concerning the Hitches Lane site was heard on 20 and 28 April before an Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate (PI). It should perhaps be noted that there have been several previous appeals, all of which have been rejected. On this occasion, the arguments concerned primarily the housing land allocation within Hart District for the next few years. The developer maintained that Hart did not have sufficient land available to meet national guidelines, so that this site should be “released”, whereas the Council firmly rejected this argument. The Society, in its submissions, endorsed Hart’s reasoning, but also made several important points about the lack of an adequate infrastructure to support such an extensive new development, which could easily be the start of an unstoppable movement to build on all the land between Fleet/Church Crookham and Dogmersfield and Winchfield.

In reality, the appeal hinged totally on whether the allocation of building land by Hart DC was meeting these national guidelines, which are somewhat confused and perhaps contradictory. We were therefore very relieved when, on 17 August, the Planning Inspectorate notified the Society that this appeal had been dismissed. However, somewhat amazingly, the PI had recommended that the appeal should be granted on the basis of their assessment of the land supply situation. Conversely, the Secretary of State did not agree with this assessment, so the PI was over-ruled, and the site is safe for a few more years.

Despite this success, one further factor emerged in the judgement made by the Inspector, which was very worrying for the future, and one which will need to be challenged in due course. In his report he sympathised with the many objections made concerning infrastructure (roads, education and medical facilities, and so on), but stated that they were not material considerations because they had all been adequately considered during the Public Inquiry into the Hart District Local Plan. What he did not recognise, was that this Inquiry took place several years ago, and that the situation

has changed considerably since then. In particular, the population has expanded dramatically, yet we still have the same infrastructure as at that time.

The conclusion that we have reached is that the only way in which such sites can be protected in a more positive way is to have them removed from the Local Plan, where they are currently listed as reserve sites. Since the Local Plan is now being revisited, any opportunity should be taken to persuade the Council to take this step. After all, the massive in-filling which is now occurring, despite successes in opposing some of the worst applications, means that the implied demand for the use of green field sites must be eliminated from the Plan.*David Fearn*

Housing in Hart

A Housing Strategy Day was held in July by Hart District Council. Delegates attended from Hart, Fleet and Crookham Civic Society, Government Office for South East (GOSE), Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Hart Volunteer Bureau, Rural Housing Trust, Sentinel Housing Group, UB40, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Axis Journal of Planning.

The aim of the meeting was to assist in the formation of a new Housing Strategy for Hart.

The Hart Housing Needs Survey completed in 2003 gave a 36% return of questionnaires which has enabled data to be collated. This shows for example that the vast majority of residents live in adequate housing; 14% of households are Special Needs and that 464 “concealed” households are forming each year (“concealed” refers to people needing to move out of the family unit to a home of their own, but can’t afford it).

Since the last Housing Strategy (2003) much has changed including changes to funding of affordable housing; new requirements regarding homeless people, particularly relating to bed and breakfast accommodation; the Barker report, recommending increasing the housing supply and the South East Regional Housing Strategy.

Hart Planning office are already negotiating 40% of affordable housing on suitable sites;

Hart reached its target to reduce families in B&B accommodation last year and has a target to provide 150 new affordable homes this year.

Debbie Moss

Bob Osborne

Christ Church, Church Crookham was packed with friends and colleagues on 24th September for the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of a much loved and respected friend. Joe Rayment read the address and he has very kindly given permission for an extract to be printed in our Newsletter. This is not the full text, but I hope it will be as much a tribute from the Fleet & Crookham Civic Society as Bob deserves for his work for us. Bob was a soldier who never grew old and who will live on in the memories of very many friends.



Tribute to Lt Col R. G. L. Osborne RTR by his friend Brig J. C. J. Rayment **OBE** **dated 24th September 2004**

Bob was my best friend of nearly 50 years. He had many qualities. He was generous, had loads of courage, was brave and determined, energetic, optimistic and had a constant sense of humour and fun. Of these, for me, his generosity stands out.

When I joined 1st Royal Tank Regt as its Engineer in 1957, as a new boy, he and Mo took Enid and I under their wing, and in Hong Kong arranged to locate us in their married quarters patch with other officers of the Regiment. The apartments were imaginatively named - Lot 181, but they did overlook the warm China Sea. They invited us to join in, they welcomed us, they helped us.

Since those days I have seen Bob help so many people. After retirement he worked for years giving the most valuable assets we have, - his time and energy. For SSAFA as treasurer, the CPRE as local

chairman, Local Planning Groups and more. He contributed at all levels. He didn't have to be an official, he was a practical man, he dug river banks with enthusiasm in clearing projects, for fishermen on the Rivers Loddon and Lyde and recruited his chums to help. When he tried to recruit me he said "Come on an Engineer would be useful in case a spade or something breaks". In point of fact if anything broke he would definitely be the first to mend it. He was a great recruiter, he even recruited the Curate of this Church, Nick Evans, to join the Army as a Padre.

He loved the countryside and all things rural. He was keen on walking, gardening, birdwatching, fishing, in fact as member of the Gresham Angling Society he received a prize for fishing immediately after his operation - he had caught the biggest fish on the River Lyde in 2003. Other hobbies included family history, the theatre, movie making on his computer, collecting antiques and memorabilia. His jade collection was such that Mo was able to take it on TV in "The Antique Roadshow".

He was a member of U3A discussion groups. - It was at one of these groups that he displayed his sense of humour when after his major operation he turned up for a meeting. "Good to see you they said". He replied "Well most of me is here anyway". He was very brave in his fight against cancer, he continued to be positive, optimistic, determined and in control.

Mo wanted me to say how keen he was to travel and in earlier times to show their daughters, Penelope and Sara, how important it was. The idea must have worked - Sara now lives in the USA. They travelled widely in Europe from Norway to Italy. After retiring the bug really caught on with visits to see wildlife at close quarters. Polar Bears in the Arctic, Sloths in Costa Rica, Big Game Safaris in Africa and more, especially Tigers in India where he had spent his childhood. His father served in Lucknow and Ranikhet in the 10th Royal Hussars so Bob was there from the age of a few months until he was seven, so still remembered India well.

He was in the true sense of the word, a soldier. Loved his Regiment and all those who served with him. He would turn up for every veterans' occasion he could, locally or in London or France and give his support. He would be there in London marching, in the rain if necessary, and at Cambrai. Bob was commissioned in the Royal Tank Regiment at Sandhurst on 9 Feb 1951 just before his 20th birthday. He served in Egypt, Germany, UK. He and Mo were married in April 1956 and together served in Hong Kong and Germany before going to The Royal Military College of Science for Technical Staff training. On promotion to Major he returned once more to Hong Kong, this time to command the independent Tank Sqn with responsibilities for providing armour support for the forces in the Colony. In 1967 he took his first staff appointment in the Ministry of Defence from which he was promoted to Lieut Colonel. He then served as Military Assistant to the Director of the Military Vehicles and Engineering Establishment at Chobham, followed by the appointment of Lt Col Directing Staff of the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham. He then saw the opportunity to become a Principal in the Civil Service. Took the entrance exam and passed. He joined the Crown Estates Department and later was promoted to Deputy Commissioner of Rural Affairs, an appointment that suited his interest of countryside.

After his retirement the other activities that filled his time became so important and resulted in so many friends being made from all around Fleet and many of you are here today. He developed his interest in the countryside after his evacuation to Brockenhurst in the war. He has recorded his happy memories of swimming in the Beaulieu river, of being with the gamekeeper to catch crayfish, pheasants, collecting chestnuts, running in meadows and jumping off haystacks.

Most of all he loved his family. He doted on them all. He would talk of his great admiration for Mo, for daughters Penelope and Sara and granddaughters Sophie and Josie. He became equally proud of grandson Walker and the youngest granddaughter, Alice and his thoughtful son-in-law John.

One thing we can be certain of. Bob would not like us to be sad. Many of your letters refer to his ability to stay cheerful and positive, especially when the going got tough. This is a Celebration for his life, and for all he contributed to the lives of others. I am thankful to have been his friend and now to make this tribute to him.

Stan Knight.

Another much loved and respected man was remembered at a Service on Saturday 25th. September. Stan was a man of many parts. Founder of the Crookham Village Association to stimulate the protection of the village against absorption into the expanding settlements around Fleet; Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Crookham Village P.C. for several years; founder member of the Fleet and Crookham Local History Group and font of all knowledge on the history of Fleet and the neighbouring villages; campaigner and active worker for the restoration of the Basingstoke Canal; after restoration, skipper and crewman of the John Pinkerton and the sequence of boats specially designed for the transport of people with mobility difficulties; central figure in the twinning of Crookham Village with Levignen, Northern France. At the Service, Thierry De Couttere remembered numerous happy times with the French children who loved to question Stan about the history of the area and his many memories. Stan revived the Crookham Mummers who still entertain people with their plays today.

Stan was active in so many fields locally and his presence will be missed by everyone who seeks to preserve the character, beauty and heritage in this part of Hart District. It is up to us to carry on the work his enthusiasm and vitality has supported for so many years.

Material Resource Strategy (MRS)

I was able to take the opportunity to attend the third of a series of MRS workshops which was held at the Princess Theatre in Aldershot for a full day in March. I had hoped to begin to understand more about the way the authorities in Hampshire were tackling the problem of dealing with the problem of waste materials.

It turned out to be a fascinating day and made me realise just how much more there was to the problem of waste management, not just locally and across the country but particularly across the whole of the so-called 'civilised world'. It became clear that we must all take this problem seriously and that something has to be done to start to reverse the incredible rate of waste production that we are generating. We have become a very destructive and throw-away society and this cannot be perpetuated.

In fact, I was very impressed that Hampshire had taken this matter so seriously and was leading other large authorities with this initiative. They have made a remarkable effort to come up with a process to establish a comprehensive strategy to deal with this problem and to strive to raise awareness and to involve a wide range of people in this process. They are also now receiving acknowledgement at high levels for this achievement.

What is the MRS?

The MRS is a partnership between Hampshire County Council, Southampton and Portsmouth Councils and Project Integra, the household waste management group in Hampshire. It also involves the local councils and key stakeholders from a wide range of organisations and from the wider community, as partners in developing the MRS concepts to help to shape this emerging strategy. The MRS was launched in September 2003 with involvement through a series of workshops to discuss and develop the various aspects of the strategy. The initial focus is on developing a draft core strategy by the end of 2004. This will then be consulted upon more widely

before being subject to an examination in public overseen by an independent inspector and hopefully properly implemented.

The problem

Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton produced over 4 million tonnes of waste material last year. This includes municipal, industrial, commercial, construction and agricultural wastes.

As the economy grows the demand for materials increases and so does the amount of waste produced. This causes three main problems:

1. it increases the demand to exploit natural resources both in Hampshire and elsewhere
2. the environmental and economic costs associated with wasting materials which could be reused, reprocessed or recycled are perpetuated
3. it increases demands for facilities and land to dispose of waste.

The sustainability of this approach has been increasingly questioned both at local and global levels. Locally, there is concern about the impact on the environment and amenities. Globally, the concern is about the high level of consumption in the developed world and the ability of the planet to absorb the environmental impacts of ever increasing use of material resources, most of which quickly end up as waste requiring disposal.

Hampshire is believed to be the first geographic area to tackle material resources in this way. Some other county councils are expressing interest in the approach and the MRS have offered to collaborate and share their experience with them.

Material Resources Strategy, Workshop 3 was held on 31st March 2004 in Aldershot. 173 people attended the event, which was an excellent turnout for people from across the county and beyond.

A number of discussion sessions were held on changing minds and practices and exploring individual resource streams.

What can we do to improve resource efficiency and reduce wastage?

How can we maximise reuse, recycling and recovery?

Waste should have a value (as a resource) - not an expense.

To help inform the discussions at Workshop 3, over 30 experts from a wide range of interests associated with the workshop themes attended the workshop to share their knowledge and help the stakeholders develop ideas for action on:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| * Agricultural waste | * Biowaste – food |
| * Biowaste – green | * Biowaste – wastewater |
| * Chemical & hazardous waste | * Paper & card |
| * Plastics | * Glass |
| * Metals | * Construction & demolition waste |
| * Wood | * Textiles (this will appear here shortly) |
| * End of Life Vehicles (ELV) | * Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) |

The proposals for the remaining workshops are to agree the draft core strategy by the end of this year. The consensus view about the future programme was that it was challenging but necessary in view of the important need to finalise the overall MRS process by the end of 2006.

In summary, the MRS aims to address what can be done to use material resources more efficiently and cut out wastage, before going on to the traditional areas of how we can meet the need for virgin minerals and disposal of unavoidable waste. It is planned to be an effective strategy for the next 20 year period. I wish them the best of luck for all our sakes.

If interested the **MRS website** : www.mrs-hampshire.org.uk.

or contact: Damian Reynolds- *Project co-ordinator* Tel: 01962 845290 or email:

damian.reynolds@hants.gov.uk

Jenny Radley

Defending Planning Applications - The importance of ‘Right First Time’.

The Society is pleased to report many planning successes in recent months whereby we felt that there was either considerable overdevelopment and/or adverse impact on amenity. These successes have been both at the application stage and at Planning Inspectorate appeals. It is interesting to observe how easily an application can be won or lost depending on how well residents organise their campaign and the interaction with the planning officers.

To demonstrate this, it is interesting to study the application for the assisted living apartments for the frail elderly starting to be built in Church Road. The developer won this appeal in early summer. In our opinion there were several inconsistencies in the handling of this application that rendered this appeal almost impossible to defend. The Society felt that whilst the architecture was good, there was considerable impact to the houses at the rear of the site, and this formed our main reasons for objection. The officers however refused the first application, choosing to criticise the appearance from Church Road. We were therefore astonished to see that the officers had then recommended acceptance for a second application which looked very similar in appearance to the first one that they had refused!

In contrast, the Society were very pleased to learn that the appeal for the redevelopment of Haviland House (Pondtail) had been so comprehensively dismissed. This was arguably a more difficult application to defend than the Church Road application. From a very early stage, a large number of nearby residents had organised a campaign against this application. The Society was represented at most of the residents’ meetings against this application. Additionally, the Society worked closely with ward councillors and planning officers to plan the defence of the appeal hearing. The Society were involved in meetings with both councillors and planning officers, and the result was allied operation against the developer on the appeal day. On the day, no less than four of the Society’s committee were present, three councillors and many nearby residents. All parties provided a constructive but substantial argument against this application which left the developer completely overwhelmed by the level of feeling against this application. This was potentially a difficult appeal, but resulted in a resounding victory largely by virtue that all parties were united and organised against the application.

This demonstrates the importance of early planning by residents and close communication with ward councillors and the planning department.

The Society now produces ‘Planning Guidance Notes’ for any member seeking advice if they are unfortunate enough to be affected by a planning application that impacts adversely upon them. These notes are freely available to members. Please ask any committee member or contact Phill Gower (phill-maddy@ntlworld.com)

Phill Gower

Annual General Meeting 14th. April 2004.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting are eight pages long and would increase the cost of producing this Newsletter and postage. Copies of the full Minutes can be obtained from the Secretary by sending a self-addressed envelope to the address above. Copies will of course be available at the A.G.M. 13th. April 2005. The following are the Exec. Committee as elected at the A.G.M. and some notes on topics discussed.

Election of Officers: Chairman Dr. David Fearn, Secretary Mr. Colin Gray, the Treasurer post remained unfilled and David Fearn will continue to cover this duty. Mrs. Pat Constantine agreed to continue as Membership Secretary. Other members of the Executive Committee elected were Miss Alison Chatley, Mr. Phill Gower, Mrs. Alison Macallan, Lt. Col. Bob Osborne, Mrs. Jenny Radley. Phill Gower would take on the role of Planning & Development Officer and Mrs. Radley would represent the Society on Farnborough Airfield Consultative Committee (FACC). (As you will have seen from elsewhere in this Newsletter, the situation has changed since the A.G.M. but this was the election result at that time.)

The Committee had also co-opted Mr. John Colbourn to represent us on local health matters. (His sudden death was a great shock to us all and David Fearn refers to this in this Newsletter. We have been fortunate in recruiting Mrs. Judith Sutherland to fill this role.)

Jenny Radley gave a presentation on the Farnborough Airfield Public Safety Zone (PSZ) and the Instrument Landing System (ILS). The current PSZ was confirmed by National Air Transport Services based on the current limit of 28,000 aircraft movements per annum up to 2015. At the western (Hart) end of the runway, the PSZ had shrunk to stop short of the proposed redevelopment of QEB. The setting of the PSZ would not affect exiting properties, but no increases in density would be permitted within the 1 in 10,000 risk zone. Airfield operator TAG said that today's business aviation automatically implied hi-tech aircraft all of which were compatible with ILS technology. Mrs. Radley urged everyone to continue to monitor operations and complain or comment to TAG in the event of aircraft overflying residential areas on landing or turning too soon after take-off. TAG had reported that their operations had reached 16,000 per annum to date.

Mrs. Alison Macallan gave a presentation on the issue of pSPA (proposed Special Protection Area) as it would affect the redevelopment of QEB (the Gurkha Barracks). All the land at Tweseldown, south and east of Beacon Hill Road, adjacent to Velmead Road and along the A323 to Aldershot was pSPA and/or SSSI. Development was not permitted under EU Directive that would have an adverse impact on the species protected by these designations. Of particular concern was public use with implications for fire, trampling, disturbance by people and dogs, predation by cats and damage by all-terrain vehicles, motorbikes or mountain bikes

Members raised the issue of infrastructure (roads, public services (water, electricity, gas, sewage disposal), health facilities, education, etc. which lagged well behind the intense development that continued to be a pressure in the area. David Fearn agreed that this was a major issue of concern that was not being sufficiently addressed by local authorities. Invariably infrastructure to support new housing lagged well behind and often did not materialise at all. The local authorities seemed powerless to insist on promises made and not fulfilled.

The following is a copy of the Accounts as presented at the A.G.M. by Dr. Fearn.

FLEET AND CROOKHAM CIVIC SOCIETY
ACCOUNTS AND BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST. DECEMBER 2003.
Income and Expenditure Account

<u>Income</u>	2002 (£)	2003 (£)
Subscriptions	£240.00	£300.00
Donations	£534.30	£ 59.88
Raffle	-	£109.00
Total	£774.30	£468.88
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Printing	£164.28	-
Affiliation to The Civic Trust	£ 33.00	£ 50.00
Hire of hall for A.G.M.	£ 14.70	£ 15.00
Postage, stationery, misc. office expenses	£ 30.70	£ 68.58
Advertising in Fleet Carnival Magazine	-	£ 14.10
Literature	-	£ 5.00
Total	£242.68	£152.68
Net Balance	£531.62	£316.20
<u>Balance Sheet</u>		
Brought forward from previous year	£ 81.07	£ 714.69
Society surplus for the year	£ 31.62	£ 316.20
Total carried forward	£ 714.69	£1,030.89
<u>Accumulated Funds</u>		
Balance at Bank	£ 689.69	£1,030.89
Cash in hand	£ 25.00	-
Total	£ 714.69	£1,030.89

Notes:

1. The Raffle in autumn 2003 raised £109.00. Many thanks to those who bought tickets and to Phill Gower for organising the event.
2. There have been no charges for Newsletter printing because this has been carried out by a member of the Committee and represents a substantial donation to the Society.
3. Affiliation to the CPRE was discontinued in 2002. However collaboration has continued because three Committee Members are individual members of CPRE.

The Accounts and Balance Sheet were certified complete and correct. Audited by Mr. Keith Young and signed by him and Chairman, Dr. David Fearn. Copies of the signed document are available on request from the Hon. Secretary.

PLEASE JOIN US.

Fleet & Crookham Civic Society always welcomes new members. Membership of our Society gives local people a voice on local issues including housing, amenity provision, roads, leisure and community services.

Numbers count

When talking or negotiating with council members or officers, a strong membership counts for a lot in trying to influence their planning and decision making. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join us.