



Fleet & Crookham Civic Society Newsletter – Autumn 2007



FLEET & CROOKHAM CIVIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 23 April 2008 at 7.30pm
Crookham War Memorial Hall, Sandy Lane,
Church Crookham

Speaker: Roger Walker, Director of Airport
Operations at TAG Farnborough

**Please support your Society: come along to
our AGM and let us have your views on
any issues of concern**



Photo from www.facc.org.uk

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Welcome to our new members

Since our last newsletter, the following people
have joined the Fleet & Crookham Civic Society:

- Natasha and Adam Clement-Jones
- Kate Goodwin
- Major Harry Meekings
- Mrs Barbara Purnell
- Mr and Mrs P Mitton
- Peter Lattey
- Mr and Mrs Pickett
- Mr and Mrs D J Hissey
- Philip and Ruth Crane
- Maureen Andrews

Welcome to the Society!

From the Editor

Putting together this latest issue of the FCCS
Newsletter has been overshadowed by the untimely
death of our Chairman, David Fearn, at the end of
August. In place of David's usual introduction are
tributes from two of his colleagues, which show what
an inspirational figure he was, not just within our local
community.

Our greatest asset is our members, and we are
always on the look out for more, especially as our
community becomes more transitory. Please do
remember to mention the FCCS to friends and
neighbours – membership is just £5 a year (when
paid by direct debit); with more members we can do
even more to support Fleet and Church Crookham.

Finally, if you are willing to receive future issues
of this newsletter by email, please do let our
Membership Secretary Debbie Moss know (details
on page 16).

Happy reading!

The views and comments expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Fleet & Crookham Civic Society. Neither the authors nor the Civic Society accept responsibility for any use to which the information contained in this Newsletter may be put.

Dr David Fearn 1938–2007

It is with tremendous sadness that we report that our Chairman, Dr David Fearn, died on 29 August. In place of David's introduction to this issue of the newsletter are tributes from two of his colleagues and friends.



I met David Fearn in 1957, one month short of 50 years ago, when he came to Imperial College to read physics. He had attended Bridport Grammar School where he experienced a last minute problem with A-levels when the school discovered that a pass in Chemistry was required in addition to the subjects he had prepared. As there was no teacher to help him, he taught himself in the remaining 6 weeks and obtained the necessary pass as well as winning a prestigious state scholarship.

He enthusiastically participated in undergraduate life and in his final year he organised the Annual Hyde Park Road Relay Race, one of the major events in the athletic calendar which attracted universities from the UK and Europe. He found time to keep up with his course work and after graduating with a First Class Honours was invited to stay on to study for a PhD in plasma physics. During this time an accident in the laboratory caused damage to his left eye. He continued the research as a Senior Research Fellow at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and as a Research Assistant at Royal Holloway College.

In 1967 he joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment where his work on ion propulsion won international acclaim, becoming regarded as the father of spacecraft ion propulsion. In 1999 he officially retired but

despite failing health he continued to work at the same frenetic pace, presenting papers on his theories at conferences all over the world. Altogether he published some 250 papers. He received many prizes and awards including ones from the USA, France and Italy. At the time he died he was preparing three papers to present at the International Electric Propulsion Conference in Florence where he was to receive a meritorious lifetime achievement award. Among other appointments he was Vice-President of the British Interplanetary Society and a Visiting Professor at the University of Surrey.

He worked tirelessly for the local community and was Treasurer of Bracknell Athletic Club for the last 40 years. He coached members of Fleet & Crookham Athletic Club over a similar period of time and was honoured by both clubs electing him to Life Vice President, an honour given to very few people. He won the Berkshire 6 mile track title and continued to run into his late 60s. His tireless work as Chairman of the Fleet & Crookham Civic Society is well known to readers of this newsletter.

His early ambition had been to join the RAF but he was thwarted by having imperfect sight. He was interested in WW1 and WW2 war planes and I was indebted to him for obtaining tickets and taking me to the historic 50th anniversary events at Southampton to mark the first flight of the spitfire. He was a supporter of the society attempting to restore Vulcan XH558 to airworthy condition. On his 60th birthday he was given flying lessons and he continued to enjoy flying, logging over 150 hours.

In 1995 he had a multiple heart bypass operation which was only partially successful and earlier this year he suffered a heart attack but this did little to slow him down. He preferred to wear out rather than rust out. He died while carrying out a pre-flight inspection at Blackbushe.

David was a modest man who was always pleased with the successes of others but rarely spoke of his own. He had great determination as evidenced by the way he tackled A-level chemistry, a 2-year course, in 6 weeks.

He is survived by his wife Elaine, his son Anthony and granddaughters Keira and Sasha.

Graham Tilly

Dr David Fearn, Chairman Fleet & Crookham Civic Society 1991–2007

David Fearn joined the Executive Committee of Fleet & Crookham Civic Society in February 1990. Our previous much respected chairman, Derek Durrant, died in September 1990 and David agreed to be Acting Chairman until his nomination as Chairman could be approved at the Annual General Meeting in April 1991.

David had a very strong dedication to the quality of life of the community in which he lived. He accepted many challenges from unsuitable, unsustainable and disproportionate development and was able to present a strong case through his knowledge and experience of the local planning scene. He represented Fleet & Crookham Civic Society at Planning Advisory Group informal meetings, Planning Committee debates and at Planning Inquiries. Some of these Inquiries have been long and arduous affairs running into several days. An example was the Inquiry into the Hart District Local Plan at which David presented the Society's objections to development on greenfield land, the low provision of affordable housing and the inadequacy of infrastructure and community services to serve the proposed expansion of the two towns.

David had a particular interest in the provision of adequate and quality sporting facilities. He played a leading role in the Fleet & Crookham Athletic Club and was a strong campaigner for better provision of facilities for athletics and other sporting facilities. His

tireless energy often saw him hard at work at his consultancy work during the day, supervising the athletics meeting in the early evening and he had been known to follow that with a meeting with the FCCS Exec Committee still in his tracksuit.

Campaigning for improved athletics facilities was one element of the many community activities for which David sought to gain enhancement when responding to the fast growth in population of the two towns. He has represented the Society at community health meetings, planning workshops, Hampshire Water Partnership workshops and for 3 years represented the Society on the board of the local housing association committee.

As Chairman, David guided the Society through a period of decline in the late 1990s and early 2000s to a much more active community group. Under his leadership the Society has grown in stature and experience and has gained the respect of the local authority in all matters affecting the quality of life of the community. The Society can now call upon a wider range of experience to respond to large planning applications and has a good reputation for a considered and constructive appraisal of the planning issues.

Fleet & Crookham Civic Society will sadly miss his undiminished enthusiasm, determination and dedication.

Colin Gray

Fleet & Church Crookham Town Health Check

The Civic Society has been progressing with the Town Health Check project. A company was employed to distribute the questionnaires in

June and July to every household in Fleet and Church Crookham. Although the company has missed some areas, the coverage is spread across the area. If you did not get a copy and wish to fill one in please contact me.

The questionnaire covered a wide range of topics about where we live, the services and facilities we use, and what people want to change or to see stay the same. The results have almost all been entered for analysis and we will be able to see the strength of feeling on many topics.

There are many comments about development, improved cycling routes and



bus services, but it is too early to draw any themes from the results yet. We will need to spend some time analysing the results and hope to have a draft

report published later this year. This report will summarise the views expressed in the survey and will contain an Action Plan. The plan will identify who is responsible for each issue and what action is required and by whom to fulfil the views expressed. The FCCS can then promote the views contained in the results to the organisations responsible.

If anyone would like to help with the analysis and the production of the Action Plan please contact me on 01252 668076 or email macallan@ntlworld.com.

Andrew Macallan

Update on HWT's Grazing for Wildlife Project



Since our visit to your AGM in April, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Grazing for Wildlife Project

has been very busy successfully putting the plans that we talked about into practice.

This Project is a partnership between the Trust and the Ministry of Defence, aiming to maximise the wildlife found on the army training estate in Hampshire. We are doing this by re-introducing suitable grazing livestock, the best and most sustainable way of looking after the heathland habitat.

In April we moved seven Dexter cattle to Velmead Common in Fleet. This followed a number of events to raise awareness of our project and a very successful campaign to recruit volunteer 'lookers' – people who check the welfare of the cattle on a regular basis. The cattle have now settled in and, although more are needed to make a real impact, it is an important first step to local people accepting the idea. Max, the bull, is popular with visitors to the site.

Over the road at Long Valley, 10 cows, with their calves, and a bull have made their home on the area of heath initially cleared of trees for the Farnborough Airport safety zone. These are Aberdeen Angus, another traditional breed ideally suited to these rough conditions. They have made a real impact on the site by munching the grass and increasing the diversity in the vegetation structure, allowing the area to support a wider range of animal and plant species.

On our largest site to date, Caesar's Camp between Aldershot and Fleet, 32 Hereford cross cattle have been roaming since the end of July. This has been our most challenging site as the fences are regularly cut to allow access for illegal motorcycling. This has meant that the cattle have escaped and nearly ended up on adjacent roads. This site is well used by local people so we get plenty of phone calls from concerned members of the public.

Foot and mouth disease has been a major disruption to our work; another outbreak has been confirmed as I write. Our first actions were to restrict the potential spread of the disease so we cancelled all of our volunteer lookers and, after thoroughly disinfecting, checked the cattle ourselves on a daily basis. We were unable to work from our normal office as it is on a sheep farm and we didn't want to spread the disease further.

Hopefully things will be back to normal soon and we will be able to continue to move cattle around in order to benefit further areas for wildlife. We have one more site to find cattle for in the Fleet area, Pondtail, and then we will be looking to expand our work to East Hampshire where the MoD has more training areas around Bordon. We continue to rely on the hard work and dedication of our volunteers and we are always looking for people who can help out with a variety of tasks. The Trust is seeking further funding so that this successful project can continue its work into the future.

If you would like further information or are able to help, please contact me on 01256 381190 and see our blog at <http://grazingproject.blogspot.com>.

Alex Cruickshank
Grazing Project Manager
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Smokefree England

The following points taken from the NHS leaflet 'Smokefree England' may be of general interest.

The new smokefree law, effective from 1 July 2007, covers virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England. These include pubs, clubs, bars, cafes, shops, offices and factories. Staff smoking rooms and indoor smoking areas are no longer allowed, so anyone who wants to smoke has to go outside. Public transport and work vehicles used by more than one person at any time also need to be smoke-free.

The new law has been introduced to protect everyone from the harmful effects of second-hand smoking. It is considered the law will help save

many lives, and create healthier and cleaner places for everyone to socialise and work in.

Anyone who does not comply with the new law will be committing a criminal offence and could face a fine. Fixed penalty notices and maximum fines apply to:

- Smoking in smoke-free premises or vehicles
- Failure to display no smoking signs
- Failing to prevent smoking in a smoke-free place.

The website for more details is:
www.smokefreeengland.co.uk

Stuart Bates

Speed: Know your Limits

At a Hampshire Local Strategic Partnership event organised by the County Council, copies of the booklet 'Speed: Know your limits' was made available. [The publication is issued by the Department of Transport, and is Crown Copyright 2004.] Given the concern about safe driving and the increase in the number of cameras on the roads, the following summary about speed limits for cars and motorcycles may be of interest to those who have not seen the publication. All the information has been extracted unaltered from the 16-page booklet.

Speed limits. For cars and motorcycles are, in mph:

- 30 – Built-up areas (street lit)
- 60 – Single carriageways
- 70 – Dual carriageways
- 70 – Motorways

Dual carriageways. There is sometimes some confusion as to what a dual carriageway is. In short, a dual carriageway is a road that is separated by a central reservation. A central reservation is anything other than a pedestrian refuge that separates vehicles going in the other direction. It should be noted that although it is more usual to have two or more lanes in each direction, the number of lanes is not specified, i.e. it is the presence of a central reservation rather than the number of lanes that determines whether or not a road is a dual carriageway.

20 mph speed limit. This is predominantly used in urban areas. Commonly you will see it in town centres, high streets, residential roads and in the vicinity of schools. The aim of this limit is to reduce vehicle speeds that allows for the presence of vulnerable road users: cyclists, children and the elderly. More often than not a 20 mph speed limit will come in the form of a 'zone'.



30 mph speed limit. This is predominantly used in urban areas (and more recently in many villages) and is usually indicated by the presence of streetlights. The presence of streetlights is the way we

recognise this speed limit and is the reason why we do not see, apart from where the limit starts, 30 mph speed limit signs. If there are streetlights and no signs to the contrary, a 30 mph speed limit is in force. There are a number of unlit roads where a 30 mph speed limit applies. In these circumstances the traffic authority must place 30 mph repeater signs.

40 mph and 50 mph speed limits. These two speeds are predominantly used in non-built up areas where a higher speed is both safe and appropriate. In addition to signing the beginning of the speed limit, traffic authorities must also place speed limit repeater signs at regular intervals along the length of road being enforced.



The national speed limit. The national speed limit is indicated by a round sign showing a white background with a diagonal black stripe across it (pictured).

For the majority of vehicles it means 60 mph on single carriageway roads and 70 mph on dual carriageway roads. This speed limit works on the same principle as the 30 mph speed limit in that it is not signed apart from where the speed limit starts. It is predominantly used along the rural road network. Again, recognising it is simple: where there are no streetlights and no signs to the contrary, the national speed limit is in force. The speed limit on a motorway is 70 mph unless otherwise indicated.

Stuart Bates (Member of Hart LSP: Recreation & Wellbeing Theme Group)

Terry Tingey has made the following comments on Stuart's article on speed limits:

In circumstances where the highways authority feels the need for it, a 40 mph limit is imposed on what would otherwise appear to require 30 mph. A built-up area does not always imply a 30 mph limit. It is of considerable concern that insufficient care is taken by the authorities to ensure speed limit and other road signs are kept clear of vegetation or other obstructions. An obscured sign is not an excuse for avoiding a fine it seems.

I am unaware of any proper scientific method of determining a speed limit. The 'alive at 30 mph – dead at 35 mph' mantra is of recent origin, whereas the original 30 mph (up from 20 mph) has been around for over 80 years. In recent times, Western Australia has dropped its urban limit from 60 kph to 50 kph. The EU recommendation is 60 kph.

QEB Public Appeal Inquiry Update

The FCCS has been representing local residents as a 'rule 6' party at the Queen Elizabeth Barracks (QEB) appeal. The appeal adjourned in mid-July due to various scheduling constraints and will resume on 27 November.



Photo from Taylor Wimpey

The QEB planning application to build 1100 new homes on the site of the former Gurkha Barracks in Church Crookham has caused much local controversy. Public concern over the scale of the proposed development, with the impact of the traffic which will be generated by the new estate and the inadequacy of the additional local infrastructure being offered, has meant that this particular application was always going to generate a widespread reaction. However, when Taylor Woodrow (now Taylor Wimpey) also applied to restrict the Bourley Road car park down to just five spaces, this application generated a feeling of anger and injustice in local residents. The car park gives access to the heathland areas on Tweseldown for very many people, who may travel up to 10 km to enjoy the feeling of being out in an open wilderness, despite our otherwise densely populated area. The developer is proposing to reduce the capacity of the car park so that they can claim that they are acting to protect the area (which is important for various species of rare birds) from any damage that the 3000 people who would eventually live on the QEB site could otherwise cause.

A special session of the resumed Public Inquiry is to be held in the Princes Hall,

Aldershot on the evening of **Wednesday 28 November** starting at 7pm. The intention of holding an evening session is so that local people can have a focused event in which to turn out in numbers and demonstrate the

extent of the widespread concern over this application.

It is important that if the Civic Society is to successfully argue that the restriction of the Bourley Road car park will result in a significant loss of amenity to the local community, then as many people as possible must turn out to show the true numbers of people who would be adversely affected by this proposal.

The meeting will also give an opportunity for a small number of the public to make statements about any aspect of the proposed development which might concern them. This is a formal Public Inquiry and is governed by strict rules of engagement. If you would like to speak at the meeting then please contact Ken Blockwell (tel: 01252 622470) who can give you details on how to register as an 'interested party' with the Planning Inspector.

Please, as many FCCS members as possible who can attend – do come and support this key meeting. Help us in the fight to maintain unfettered access to this beautiful part of our local area and to protect our environment and quality of life from the other impacts of this proposed development.

James Radley

Local Health Matters

Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) has been responsible for providing health care for most of the population of Hampshire since its formation last autumn. It made a surplus of £9.9 million in the 2006–07 financial year and expects to break even in the current financial year. The PCT is currently developing a 5-year strategy following an analysis of health needs in the county. It aims to focus more heavily on prevention and on support for people with long-term conditions in primary care and community settings.

After months of uncertainty and speculation about plans for the future of hospital services in Surrey, the Boards of the Frimley Park Hospital Foundation Trust and of the Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals Trust have announced that they are discussing the possibility of a full merger of the two organisations. It is not clear at present what this would mean for patients, so it is difficult to comment until more details emerge. Any changes could well affect residents in our area, many of whom are referred to Frimley Park Hospital. If there were a firm proposal to merge the two organisations, there would have to be a public consultation before it could proceed.

Judith Sutherland

Local clubs and associations – an invitation

There are many activities going on in Hart district involving local organisations, clubs and associations. If you are an active member of one of them, the Civic Society would welcome a brief article or information that would be suitable for our newsletter in a new series called *Local Clubs and Associations*. To begin the series, our Treasurer has written one about the local chess club where he has been Secretary for more years than he cares to mention (14!).

Editor

Local Clubs and Associations: *Fleet and Farnborough Chess Club*



Following a small but vital grant from Hart District Council for equipment, the Chess Club was formed 24 years ago in 1983.

The first venue was a room next to the squash courts at

Hart Leisure Centre. As the grunts and groans from our energetic neighbours were not conducive to cerebral concentration, the club moved to the newly refurbished Harlington Centre. Here there was peace and quiet, but unfortunately the room hire prices kept increasing and the cost became prohibitive. So the club moved to the Royal British Legion in Clarence Road. But fortune was still against us, because the local British Legion had to close down. Once again new premises had to be found, but on this occasion it became a matter of fourth time lucky. The club moved to and became an integral member of the Cody Sports and Social Club at Pyestock (the former RAE club) in 1999, and has been there ever since.

The club is just one of many sporting and social activities available at Cody and is known as 'The Chess Section', which meets on Tuesday nights. For the purposes of the English Chess Federation, however, the club is known nationally as 'Fleet and Farnborough Chess Club'. (The name of Farnborough was added to that of Fleet after the move to Pyestock because the venue was equidistant from the two towns.)

Ever since the club was first founded it has played competitive chess in the Surrey Border Chess League. For the 2007–08 season the League will have almost 50 teams playing in seven divisions, with clubs from



Addlestone, Ashted, Basingstoke, Bracknell, Camberley, Crowthorne, Farnham, Godalming, Guildford, Reading, and several others. The range of players is enormous, from England's latest and youngest Grandmaster to keen young juniors who have just learnt to play. The result of each match game is sent to the English Chess Federation which calculates and publishes a national grade for each player. Games are subject to time controls using special clocks, and each chess move has to be recorded on score sheets by both players. Some games can become extremely tense as time pressure mounts and the slightest false move can cause disaster!

The fortunes of the club have waxed and waned over the years, going from just about surviving to needing a second grant from Hart DC for more equipment. The club has won several League divisions in the past, and is currently on a high when there will be four teams in the League for the first time. Some members of the club also play county matches for Hampshire.

Both the Fleet and Farnborough Chess Club and the Border League have websites (fleetchessclub.org.uk and borderleague.org.uk). New members are always most welcome to join the Chess Club.

Stuart Bates
Secretary & Treasurer
Fleet & Farnborough Chess Club

Facing Fleet's Challenges Head On



Fleet stands on the cusp of an opportunity to develop itself into a new style town that will retain its unique charm while meeting the needs of modern consumers and businesses. As the major town in a primarily rural district, Fleet has always had something of the market town about it.

Yet it is not a traditional market town. Fleet's only concessionary nod to its rural hinterland is the Saturday market that runs in Gurkha Square. And some would argue that this has seen better days.

In many ways it is easy to argue that the traditional farmers' market is passé. Regulations and modern shopping practices mean that consumers are increasingly divorced from their food's origins. Indeed farmers themselves, arguably, have a less positive profile than they should because they interface with the large food retailers rather than directly with consumers. Nor is this helped by adverse publicity following the recent outbreaks of foot and mouth and bluetongue disease.

But Hampshire farmers produce some of the best food and produce in the world and Fleet should celebrate its district connections in ways that meet modern consumer demands. This means improved presentation of the food and having events that reconnect consumers with the joy and distinctive flavours of real home-produced food.

This can be achieved by running two Food Festivals next year – on 26 May and 13 December – featuring a mobile kitchen at which local chefs can create different dishes using local produce. These events can be complemented both by occasional continental markets and by improving the Saturday farmers' market.

In this way Fleet can become a shining example where Hampshire farmers channel their wares with modern professionalism and in

the full awareness of today's consumers' concerns. The old style market with food of dubious origin, unknown use-by dates and variable appearance has lost its appeal. What is needed is a fresh, modern approach that accepts and works with valid consumer concerns while reconnecting consumers with the natural foods of Hampshire.

Yet we also need far more businesses in the town centre and not located on business parks scattered on the periphery. This means providing modern managed office suites with a wide range of capacities suitable for business men and women without introducing extremely high overheads. It means creating buildings of distinctive design suited to Fleet's emerging image yet equipped to meet modern communication, data handling and security requirements.

We need more brand name shops so that Fleet can offer visitors a high proportion of the goods available in other shopping centres. But we should not seek to go head-to-head with Camberley and Farnborough; we must develop our own unique and marketable image. This poses a challenge to Fleet's traditional small retailers that can be met by raising their standards, adapting their techniques and improving their own marketing.

Fleet can, and should be, both professional and welcoming. Other towns compete on price; we should compete on service and our welcoming and relaxing atmosphere. This means developing a strategic plan to achieve these objectives and it will require an improved partnership between all of the stakeholders based on mutual respect and consensus.

It requires a prolonged financial and political commitment from the district council matched by that of businesses in the region. And it demands that we actively promote Fleet with a comprehensive and achievable marketing plan.

Paul Doughty
Fleet Town Centre Manager



Following the piece in our last issue by our late Chairman on housing, and flats in particular, the MP for North East Hampshire, James Arbuthnot, sent us the following article. This serves as a valuable reminder that we are very happy to consider contributions from our readers on this or other topics. Views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the author, and not of the FCCS – *Editor*

Garden Grabbing in North East Hampshire

The great house building debate. How many new houses should we build? Where should we build them and of what type? Do we need more flats, or is it family homes that are required? The one thing that everyone is in agreement about: we need more affordable and eco-friendly housing. Much, much more. But in recent years we've seen a different approach to housing development – it's called garden grabbing.

Up and down the country, from Durham to Hampshire, people are concerned that inappropriate and intrusive back garden development is destroying the character of their neighbourhoods. We're building the wrong type of houses in the wrong places – developments of flats in back gardens! This is putting an intolerable strain on local infrastructure and disempowering local communities, because the Government's planning rules override the wishes of local people.

And this all follows from John Prescott's misguided policy of classifying back gardens as brownfield land, exactly the same as a disused gasworks, while at the same time introducing a target for 60% of all new development to be built on brownfield land. The result has been an assault on back gardens. The latest figures show that in Hart District Council's area the percentage of new dwellings on previously residential land (that's garden grabbing to you and me) now stands at 25%.

So what's wrong with slotting in another house in a big back garden, or a development of flats where a bungalow once stood? Well, first of all, it doesn't help address the need for more affordable housing. Houses with gardens large enough to be developed are mostly in locations where house prices are high: one recent survey put parts of North East Hampshire among the highest in the country. The result is that the new home is beyond the pocket of first-time and key worker buyers.

But there is also a perverse incentive in operation. The threshold to provide affordable housing had been set too high. Previously, a figure of more than 25 units per development was needed before a developer was required



to include any affordable housing. So instead of targeting derelict industrial estates – just what we all thought brownfield land to be – the Government's policy has been driving developers to seek the smaller, easier and more profitable option of garden grabbing.

And furthermore, garden development is incremental, with a few houses here and a development of flats there, however inappropriate to the area such a development may be. So it adds an almost stealthy strain on the local infrastructure. Infrastructure that was never designed to accommodate the level of housing density now required by the Government's targets.

Last year, we had severe shortages of water; this year we had floods. There is an increasing pressure on the commuter trains to North East Hampshire; they are heavily overcrowded. The new carriages that are being introduced are considered so uncomfortable that people cannot sit down, so they stand all the way to Waterloo! Our roads are absolutely packed. Schools are completely full. Health services are at breaking point. We cannot accommodate more and more infill development without investment in local infrastructure first.



But the Government is encouraging building now and worrying about infrastructure later. It has only just begun to consult on how we increase and improve our water supplies. There are discussions about lengthening platforms for the rail infrastructure, but that is 15 years away at least. There is simply no mechanism to review local infrastructure requirements, as the push towards brownfield development, densification and more house building has intensified.

So over the last 2 years, I've been sponsoring a Parliamentary Bill that would reverse the damaging policies introduced by the former Deputy Prime Minister which lead to garden grabbing. It's a pretty simple

concept: remove back gardens from the classification of brownfield land and return a little control over planning matters back to where it should belong – with local people.

But it's taken 2 years for the Bill just to get to a second reading debate which will resume on 19 October. The Government has employed every delaying tactic in the book in an attempt to kill off the Bill and avoid addressing some pretty serious issues. I'm not suggesting the solution to how we provide more affordable housing is easy, but knocking down family homes to squeeze in blocks of flats certainly isn't the answer.

James Arbuthnot MP

FACC and the Quiet Flying Programme

Quiet Flying Programme

In January 2007, Brandon O'Reilly took over as the new Chief Executive at TAG Farnborough Airport. This seems to have heralded a new approach to the way the airport operator relates to the local community. Serious efforts are now, finally, being made to try to address the high level of concern expressed by many local residents. They have particularly been reporting disturbing noise events caused by aircraft using Farnborough Airport. After many years of increasing concerns, at last, the operators have officially recognised Farnborough to be a 'noise-sensitive airport'.

Due to the efforts of the FCCS to inform and involve local people, we have now been invited to join the Steering Group for the Quiet Flying Programme. This is an initiative taken by TAG, in response to the high level of local concern. The Steering Group comprises National Air Traffic Service officers, airport management led by TAG directors and TAG Aviation's Chief Pilot. They have invited representatives from three local interest groups (including the FCCS) to assist them. This group is now investigating the suitability and testing of a range of measures to try to reduce the noise impact on local residents (see box opposite).

These measures are generally to be welcomed. In fact many of the ground noise measures have proved to be very effective. However, the most important measures with regard to noise impact for residents in Fleet, Church Crookham and Ewshot are the instructions for best rate of climb and the control over departure and arrival routes. Any flights that turn early and fly over residential areas of Fleet, Church Crookham and Ewshot

Trial measures currently employed to try to reduce the noise impact on local residents:

- Encouraging the use of ground power units, free of charge, to reduce the need for aircraft to run their noisy auxiliary power units when parked on the ground.
- Offering clearance for rolling take-off, when safe to do so, which also reduces ground noise.
- Requesting pilots to employ best rate of climb on take-off to ensure aircraft gain as much height as possible.
- Greater control over arrival and departure routes to avoid noise-sensitive areas; this includes having departing aircraft flying straight ahead to a pre-determined point before allowing turns onto intended course, and for arrivals to join the final straight approach path at a distance of 3 nautical miles (nm) or greater.
- Developing instructional material in co-operation with Flight Safety, based at Farnborough, to be used to educate pilots and operators.
- Minimising use of reverse thrust on landing, unless necessary.
- Promoting Farnborough Airport's new noise message and tag-line: 'Farnborough is a noise sensitive airport. Please fly quietly and respect our neighbours'.

should only do so when required by Air Traffic Control to avoid 'conflicting' traffic. The fact that this still happens on a regular basis indicates just how busy the airspace around Farnborough is.

The measure to control flight departures does have the effect of increasing the number of aircraft that fly straight along the flight centre line and this has raised great concern from people who live under the route. It also appears that the efforts to raise the height of the aircraft as they depart over Church Crookham has in fact increased the number of people who see and hear the aircraft, and this has had an unexpected detrimental effect. It is clear that further work is very necessary before any decision can be made to permanently adopt these measures.

Photo from www.facc.org.uk



FACC (Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee)

The FACC is a committee consisting of representatives from three groups: the airport operators and users, local authority members, and local interest groups. The committee meets three times a year, in March, July and November. Its aim is to provide an effective forum for the discussion of all matters concerning the development or operations at the airport, along with any changes that will have an impact on the users of the airport and on people living and working in the surrounding area.

The FCCS has had a representative member on the FACC, as one of the local interest groups, since July 2003. This allows local people the opportunity to express their comments and questions to the FACC through the nominated representative. The FCCS representative is an important contact link for those who live under the busy south-west flight path.

The regular venue for meetings of the FACC is the British Aerospace Park Centre building at Farnborough Airport. This is reached from the Queen's Roundabout entrance in Farnborough on the A235. The car parking area for the building is usually signed from there.

The next FACC meeting is at 2pm on Thursday 1 November 2007.

These meetings are open to the public, although it is generally agreed that members of the public are only entitled to ask questions for a 15-minute session during the meeting. The Chairman may, at his discretion, allow members of the public to speak during other topical agenda items.

The committee regularly engages in detailed discussions about safety, noise, aircraft tracking and general operations as well as reports relating to the airshow. TAG also provides an information report at each meeting on aircraft movements, noise monitoring, air quality monitoring, new development, new initiatives and complaints. The committee provides an informative website with details about all the meetings, including agendas, minutes, information reports and supplementary papers. In fact there is a wide range of other useful information about Farnborough Airport and more about the Quiet Flying Programme on the website: www.facc.org.uk.

Residents who have any concern about a flight using Farnborough Airport are also able to contact TAG Aviation, Farnborough, directly. They should leave a message on the answerphone and provide clear contact details for themselves along with details of the direction, date and time of the flight and the specific reason for the call. The TAG Complaint telephone number is 01252 526001.

Vortices

The vortex effect is caused by the difference in air pressure above and below an aircraft wing which results in a flow of air that is dissipated at the end tip of the wing creating what is commonly known as wing tip vortex. It happens with every aircraft, causing turbulence behind the aircraft, and is one of the reasons why aircraft have minimum spacing distances. Most of the time these vortices are unnoticeable as they are dissipated by the wind, but occasionally the turbulence can be seen or heard after the aircraft has passed. On rare occasions these effects have been known to lift roof tiles.

TAG agreed at the last meeting, in July, to add a page to the FACC website to provide clear information on vortices and how to report damage, as requested by residents in Church Crookham.

TAG Masterplan

TAG Aviation, the main operator at Farnborough Airport, currently has permission

to operate up to 28,000 flight movements per year. When they started in the year 2000, they were running just over 14,000 flight movements per year and this has steadily increased to a predicted 26,000 for this current year, 2007. They are restricted to 2500 flight movements at weekends and bank holidays. In fact, they have reached this particular limit for each of the past 3 years and you may be aware that TAG made an application to increase this number to 5000 flights per year in Autumn 2005. Although that application was refused by the host planning authority, Rushmoor Borough Council, TAG appealed the decision and the appeal was heard by a Planning Inspector earlier this year. This application was considered to be of such importance that it was decided that the Secretary of State should make the final decision after reading the Inspector's report. It was expected that her decision would be published at the end of October; however, notice has just been sent out from the relevant

government department to suggest that this decision might be delayed.

Meanwhile, the TAG Chief Executive, Brandon O'Reilly, has also made it clear that they are preparing and intend to publish their long-term future plans, their Masterplan for Farnborough Airport, in Spring 2008. It is expected that the Masterplan will be seeking a significant increase in the 28,000 movement limit.

TAG has kindly offered to make a presentation about their Masterplan and the Quiet Flying Programme at the FCCS Annual General Meeting in April next year (see page 1 for details). We hope this will be well attended.

If you have any issues or questions that you would like to discuss on this matter or to be raised at the next FACC meeting, please contact me on 01252 628751 or e-mail jenny@jradley.com.

Jenny Radley
FCCS Representative on the FACC

Civic Society Activities March – September 2007

Note: Attendances at routine meetings are not reported below, e.g. the meetings of the Planning Advisory Group and the Planning Committee of Hart DC.

- 15 February **Land rear of 159 Aldershot Road, Church Crookham.** Second application (the first having been refused by HDC and dismissed at appeal) to erect a dwelling in this small rear garden was refused by HDC as it would appear unduly cramped within the site and would be the loss of an amenity, particularly to 161 Aldershot Road. Applicants appealed on 30 August.
- 13 March **Town Health Check.** Group meeting to discuss the draft questionnaire.
- 19 March **Hampshire Action Team questionnaire.** Society responded to this questionnaire concerning opinions of the county's services and suggestions as to how they might be improved.
- 22 March **Pyestock development.** The Pyestock action group (SPLAT) gave an update presentation at which the Society was represented.
- 29 March **Hart Local Strategic Partnership (HLSP) Affordable and Safe Housing Theme Group meeting.** Society represented by two Committee members. Very useful information was obtained – as an example, 1364 people/families are now listed on the Hart Housing Register, an increase of 50% in 5 years.
- 29 March **Hampshire Water Partnership Conference.** Society represented at this important meeting, held in Winchester.
- 2 April **TAG Appeal at Rushmoor Borough Council offices.** Appeal reconvened and lasted until 5 April. Despite being tedious in the extreme, the Society was represented throughout, and appropriate cross-examination of the witnesses was undertaken.
- 4 April **Queen Elizabeth Barracks (QEB) Inquiry.** The scope of these appeals was modified at the second pre-inquiry meeting held on 26 February, and subsequently agreed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Society wrote to the Inspectorate to complain about the way in which this action has disadvantaged local groups opposed to these planning applications.
- 11 April **HLSP Recreation & Wellbeing Theme Group meeting.** Society represented at this meeting, but as the Group was without a chairman (and still is) not much was achieved.
- 16 April **Tweseldown Racecourse.** Society completed and sent to the Planning Inspectorate its formal 'Proof of Evidence' (14 pages) required for the Public Inquiry into the racecourse's breach of planning regulations.

- 19 April **HLSP Full Partnership Meeting.** Society represented, during which the HLSP Terms of Reference were issued, and the Hampshire Action Team of HCC gave an interesting presentation on a 'Profile of Hart'.
- 22 April **QEB Inquiry.** Society completed the initial draft of its formal 'Proof of Evidence' (22 pages) required for the Public Inquiry into these major development proposals.
- 23 April **Retrospective application for fencing at 61 Rounton Road.** Society objected on grounds of road safety with regard to essential sight lines at junctions with Compton Road and Aldershot Road and on street scene impact.
- 23 April **Planning application for 53 Rounton Road.** Society objected to the inconsiderate application to erect a two-storey side extension on the basis of loss of light to no. 55 and poor design. Application withdrawn on 8 May before HDC made a decision.
- 24 April **Tweseldown Racecourse.** Society represented at the opening of the Public Inquiry into the Racecourse's breach of planning regulations. This was a fiasco – the racecourse leaseholder, to whom all paperwork had been addressed and who had himself filled in all the forms, admitted that he was in fact only a sub-leaseholder. British Eventing is the main leaseholder, but is not mentioned on any of the documentation, which is now all invalid. So the appeal had to be stopped, the Inspector was very angry, and the whole process will have to start again.
- 25 April **FCCS AGM.** Our AGM at the Willis Hall was well attended.
- 28 April **Redevelopment of 94A Reading Road South.** Society wrote to the Planning Inspectorate in support of HDC and objecting to the planning application to replace this one bungalow with five or six houses packed into a very small space (two concurrent appeals).
- 30 April **QEB Inquiry.** Following revision, the Society sent its formal 'Proof of Evidence' to the Planning Inspectorate, conforming to the numerous rules concerning layout, binding, etc.
- 3 May **Town Health Check.** Group meeting to finalise questionnaire.
- 15 May **QEB Inquiry.** Opening day of these very important appeals, attended by members of the Society's Committee. Owing to the withdrawal of the Redfields Garden Centre appeal and to the late substitution of another planning application for Wakefords Copse by the appellants, it was decided by the Inspector that the whole process would be delayed until 19 June.
- 16 May **Farnborough Airport area action plan meeting.** Rushmoor Borough Council plans for the future of the airport. FCCS attended this initial scoping meeting as one of the members of the FACC and will be invited to future meetings.
- 17 May **Planning application for 61 Rounton Road.** Society wrote again to HDC objecting to the construction of an unsightly and hazardous 2 m fence, despite the submission of slightly modified plans. HDC refused the application on 25 May, but not for the highways issues. This decision omitted to consider the 1970s Court decision (when Compton Road was adopted) that sight lines must be maintained.
- 17 May **Retrospective planning application for 1 Folly Close.** Society wrote to HDC objecting to the construction of a large 'garage' at this property – clearly intended as a second residence.
- 17 May **North Fleet Conservation Area (NFCA).** Society wrote to the Council's Conservation Officer to emphasise the importance of the NFCA and of the need to protect its characteristics. No reply has been received. Society also wrote to the Council's Landscape Officer, stressing the importance of the tree and vegetation cover in the NFCA. Again, no reply has been received.
- 21 May **Hart Service Review: Street Cleaning.** The start of the series of reviews into the services provided by HDC encouraging local people to comment and suggest improvements. Review findings published on 25th May.
- 22 May **Redevelopment of 27 Elms Road.** Society wrote to HDC objecting to the construction of a pair of large semi-detached houses on the site of a single small bungalow.
- 22 May **Nursing Home on Redfields Industrial Estate.** Although the Society did not object in principle to this development, the design, in the opinion of the Committee, is more suited to a barracks block. It also has other serious deficiencies. We therefore wrote to the Council objecting about these factors.
- 22 May **Wakefords Copse.** It is this new planning application which has caused the long delay in reconvening the QEB Public Inquiry. Although the Society does not object to this development, the application includes the new roundabout on Beacon Hill Road and the large car park to be constructed in the SINC adjacent to Greendane Copse, to which we do object. We therefore wrote to the Council concerning these important matters.

- 24 May **Town Health Check.** Group meeting to discuss details for distribution of questionnaire to all households.
- 25 May **Pyestock development.** Society was represented and spoke at HDC's special Planning Advisory Group meeting which discussed this controversial development proposal.
- 28 May **Pyestock development.** Society formally objected to this proposal, giving numerous reasons.
- 30 May **Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Molly Ebdon.** Society represented at the service at All Saints' Church to pay tribute to a lady whose long and dedicated voluntary work for Fleet Carnival, WRVS and Fleet Town Centre Group deserves special mention.
- June **Town Health Check.** Delivery of the questionnaire, together with a leaflet about the Society, to every household in Fleet and Church Crookham commenced – 16,000 copies in total.
- 1 June **Waterfront Business Park.** Society met developer's representative from Green Issues to discuss this proposal to build 207 dwellings on the Business Park. The current proposals are an improvement on those discussed previously and include SPA mitigation land adjacent to the A287 near Crondall.
- 4 June **Proposed Campbell Close development.** Although the Society does not object in principle to this proposal to replace the 25 small bungalows in Campbell Close with several blocks of affordable retirement apartments (63 in total), the Committee considers the architecture to be of a very poor standard, and not in any way compatible with the adjacent North Fleet Conservation Area. The Society therefore wrote to the Council to object on these grounds.
- 7 June **Planning application for 53 Rounton Road.** Society objected to the second application to erect a two-storey side extension, on the basis of lack of consideration for the neighbours at no. 55 by the erection of a huge blank wall very close to their window as well as poor design, seeing little difference from the first application. The applicants withdrew the application before HDC made a decision.
- 11 June **Redevelopment of 163–165 Reading Road.** HDC refused an application to erect two semi-detached houses following demolition of two existing properties. Society had objected on the grounds of poor design, overbearing and loss of light to neighbours.
- 12 June **Redevelopment of 94A Reading Road South.** Society appeared and spoke at the two concurrent planning appeals concerning the proposals to replace this one bungalow with five or six houses.
- 16 June **TAG Quiet Flying Programme.** A member of the Committee joined passengers on a flight from Farnborough to demonstrate the new approach and departure routes.
- 18 June **Meetings of Hart Association of Town & Parish Councils.** The Society received an invitation to send representatives to these regular meetings.
- 19 June **QEB Inquiry.** The Inquiry opened, and the Inspector outlined the procedures and provisional timescale. Several members of the Society's Committee attended.
- 19 June **Fleet Business Partnership meeting.** Society attended as observer.
- 19 June **Fleet Town Centre Manager presentation.** Society present to hear and discuss newly appointed Town Centre Manager Paul Doughty's ambitions for the town (*see also page 8*).
- 20 June **QEB Inquiry.** Society cross-examined the appellants' planning witness.
- 20 June **Police liaison meeting (Church Crookham Community Forum).** Society attended this meeting, chaired by the local Church Crookham Beat Officer, PC Caroline Webster.
- 26 June **QEB Inquiry.** The second week commenced, with the Society represented each day.
- 2–7 July **Town Health Check.** FCCS display stand in Hart Shopping Centre to display details of the Health Check project and encourage local people to participate.
- 7 July **Fleet Carnival.** FCCS committee members assisted with marshalling.
- 10 July **Housing Forum.** Consultation with HDC on housing policy and delivery. Society represented.
- 10 July **Fleet Business Partnership meeting.** This was an Extraordinary meeting to discuss the future policy and strategy. FCCS attended as an observer.
- 12 July **Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee (FACC) meeting.** Society represented by Jenny Radley.
- 18 July **Planning application for 31a Sandy Lane.** Society objected to application to erect new dwelling in rear garden and alteration to existing dwelling. Another case of overdevelopment and 'garden grabbing'.

- 22 July **Planning application for 53 Rounton Road.** Society objected to the third application to erect a two-storey side extension. No material difference from the previous two applications could be seen.
- 23 July **Hart Service Review: environmental health.** Society represented. Review findings published on 27 July.
- 25 July **Hart Scrutiny Committee with Thames Water.** Society represented by the Hon. Sec. in conjunction with his role as Chairman of Fleet Pond Society. Update on problems of sewage disposal and review of the flooding from the 20 July storm.
- 31 July **Hart Service Review: building control.** Society represented. Review findings published on 3 August.
- 1 August **Cody Business Park consultation.** Meeting with the developer and agents seeking to redevelop the empty DSTL site between the old and new Ively Roads. Plans include a bakery for Warburtons, 23 small industrial units and a data centre.
- 7 August **Hart Service Review: licensing.** Consultation on licensing of licensed premises and taxi services. Society represented. Review findings published on 10 August.
- 8 August **Planning application for 53 Rounton Road.** Application discussed at HDC full Planning Committee meeting. Decision postponed pending site visit.
- 15 August **Proposed Campbell Close development.** The Secretary spoke at an HDC Planning Committee meeting against the application for Campbell Close on grounds of design, size, layout and bulk with resulting impacts on local residents and the North Fleet Conservation Area. The principle of elderly people's accommodation was not part of the objection.
- 22 August **QEB Inquiry.** Site visit to view the area subject to the development organised by the developer for HDC, the Inquiry Inspector and selected objectors.
- 29 August **Dr David Fearn.** Sudden devastating loss of Society's dedicated Chairman Dr David Fearn, who worked tirelessly for the community of Fleet and Church Crookham by whom he was hugely respected.
- 4 September **Hart Voluntary Action AGM.** Review of the year, presentations by Save the Children Fund and Clarity, an organisation set up to encourage voluntary effort by commercial organisations as team building and community relationship exercises.
- 7/8 September **Cody Business Park.** Exhibition at Ancells Farm Community Centre. Private view attended by the Society in the afternoon prior to open evening on Friday and open day on Saturday.
- 10 September **Hart Service Review: refuse collection.** Society represented. Review findings published on 14 September.
- 11 September **Planning application for 31a Sandy Lane.** Society objected to second application to build a new dwelling in rear garden on the grounds of overdevelopment and inadequate sight lines.
- 12 September **Planning application for 53 Rounton Road.** The application to erect a two-storey side extension was finally turned down by the full HDC Planning Committee. The main reason for refusal was 'overbearing'.
- 13 September **Dr David Fearn.** Service of thanksgiving for the life of FCCS Chairman Dr David Fearn at Christ Church, Crookham. The church was so full that people stood along the walls and filled the choir stalls; a mark of the wide respect and love he engendered throughout his working and voluntary life.
- 18 September **Hart Service Review: leisure.** Society represented. Review findings published on 21 September.

In a world of acronyms – here is an explanation of those used in our newsletter

BC	Borough Council	PAG	Planning Advisory Group [of Fleet & Church Crookham Councillors]
CC	County Council	PCT	Primary Care Trust
FACC	Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee	QEB	Queen Elizabeth Barracks
(H)DC	(Hart) District Council	SPD	Supplementary Planning Document(s) – set out aims, objectives and supporting policies for the LDF
HWT	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust	SPA	Special Protection Area
LDF	Local Development Framework, which is currently being drawn up to replace the Hart District Local Plan	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
(H)LSP	(Hart) Local Strategic Partnership	TAG	Farnborough Airport operating company
MoD	Ministry of Defence		

Diary of Forthcoming Events

Sat 13 October	Autumn bird walk at Fleet Pond led by Jonathan Mist, starting from the Fleet Pond nature reserve car park at 10am
Sun 14 October	Fleet 10K run
Sat 20 October	Farmers' market at Farnborough
Sat 27 October	Fleet Pond Society Autumn Social. SS Philip's & James' Church Hall, 7pm. Cost £8, to include a buffet supper and talk by Alistair Mackay on the London Wetland Centre. Tickets limited so book early by phoning Barbara Martin on 01252 684828.
Thu 1 November	Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee meeting, British Aerospace Park Centre, Farnborough, 2pm (see page 10)
Sat 3 November	Fleet Lions' Firework Fiesta, The Views, 5.30–8.30pm
15–17 November	Cron dall Entertainers perform <i>Comfort & Joy</i> by Mike Harding, Cron dall Village Hall. For more details see www.cron dall.com
Sat 17 November	Farmers' market at Hartley Wintney
Wed 21 November	Fleet Christmas Festivities, from 4.30pm
Tue 27 November	QEB Appeal reconvenes for expected further 2 weeks at 10am in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices in Fleet. Members of the public welcome.
Wed 28 November	Evening meeting of the QEB Appeal, Princes Hall, Aldershot, 7pm (see page 6)
Wed 5 December	Fleet Lions' Carol Concert, Harlington Centre, 7pm
Sat 15 December	Farmers' market at Farnborough
Sun 16 March	Fleet half marathon
Wed 23 April	Fleet & Crookham Civic Society AGM 7.30pm, Crookham War Memorial Hall, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham

FCCS Seeks New Committee Members

Following the tragic loss of our Chairman, the Society's Exec Committee seeks new members to join us in the running of the FCCS. We are a small friendly group and welcome anyone who would be prepared to give us little or as much time as they can to support the work of the Society. For more details, please contact Colin Gray on Fleet 616183, email: colin.gray@fccs.org.uk.

FCCS Committee Contact Details

<i>Chairman:</i>	<i>Position vacant</i>
<i>Secretary:</i>	Colin Gray, Fleet 616183, email: colin.gray@fccs.org.uk
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Stuart Bates
<i>Executive Committee:</i>	Alison Macallan, Judith Sutherland, Andrew Dodd, Pamela Slorach
<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	Debbie Moss, email: membership@fccs.org.uk
<i>Co-opted Members:</i>	Jenny Radley (FACC Representative), Fleet 628751, email: jenny@jradley.com Phill Gower (Planning Matters), Fleet 624506, email: phill.gower@fccs.org.uk Andrew Macallan (Town Health Check), Elizabeth Smith
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	Gillian Wain, email: newsletter@fccs.org.uk

We welcome suggestions of topics for inclusion in this twice-yearly Newsletter, and events for listing in the diary. Please send contributions to newsletter@fccs.org.uk or phone Gillian Wain on Fleet 677536. We encourage members to receive the Newsletter by email instead of printed copy. Please let Membership Secretary Debbie Moss know if you would like to receive the Newsletter by email only.

The views and comments expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Fleet & Crookham Civic Society. Neither the authors nor the Civic Society accept responsibility for any use to which the information contained in this Newsletter may be put.