

Bishop's Waltham Society



Past • Present • Future

Registered Charity Number 1170683

Contents

Change of Plans...	1
Members' Meetings for 2018	1
What was "Pew rage"?	2
Cricklemede/Hoe Road Roundabout	3
Eastleigh's Housing Plans	3
Royal Yachting Association Award	4
Volunteers for Speed Watch?	4
25 years ago...	4

Change of plans...

We were planning to produce an autumn newsletter but our editor was indisposed during September and October and time pressures to get the new edition of 'The Changing Face of Bishop's Waltham' out before Christmas meant little spare time was available.

We also planned to produce a separate 'Planning Supplement', designed to bring all our members up to date with current plans both in and around Bishop's Waltham. This has proved a bigger task than anticipated. So we have decided to produce a short newsletter now and to produce the intended supplement in the New Year, when Christmas is over!

You may or may not know that the Society objected strongly to the proposed demolition of Abbey Mill by the likely developer of the Abbey Mill site - Beechcroft Development. In fact it appears that the original plans have now changed and we await revised plans that will include the retention of most of the Mill building.

The Executive Committee felt that we should let you see some of our arguments for retaining the Mill and so parts of our objection are included as an insert in this newsletter. We hope you agree with the points we made!

Newsletter

Autumn/Winter

2017

Member's Meetings for 2018

We have now finalised our plans for the year. Unless otherwise specified, meetings are at 7.30 pm at the Church Hall in Free Street on the third Thursday of the month. So here are some dates for your 2018 diary:

Thursday 15th February - The Society's Annual General Meeting. This will be our second Annual General Meeting as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It will be followed by cheese and wine and a 30-minute talk by Alan Inder on 'A Short History of London from the 18th century'.

NB This is also formal Notice of the next AGM

Thursday 15th March - "Pew Rage". An illustrated talk by Penny Copeland on this fascinating source of local conflict in the 18th and 19th centuries, using Titchfield and Bishop's Waltham churches as good examples. There is more background to this talk on page 2.



Thursday 19th April - "Buster Crabb: the real story". Dr John Bevan, diving historian, consultant and expert witness will recount the story of Commander 'Buster' Crabb, who was recruited by MI6 to investigate the Soviet cruiser Ordzhonikidze (above) which had brought Soviet leaders Khrushchev and Bulganin to Britain on a diplomatic visit. Crabb vanished during his mission (which had been expressly forbidden by Prime Minister Anthony Eden) at Portsmouth Dockyard in 1956.

Thursday 17th May - "Harlots, Dung and Glory". Historian and Blue Badge Guide Andrew Negus will give an illustrated talk on Portsmouth's past, from the medieval period to the end of the 18th century.

Gaining its royal charter from Richard the Lionheart in 1194, Portsmouth went on to become a royal dockyard under Henry VII, a position consolidated when Henry VIII, 'Father of the English Navy', commissioned several vessels, including the magnificent but ill-fated Mary Rose. The erecting of towers, moats and walls that eventually encircled Portsmouth and Portsea, the location of Southsea Castle, the narrow harbour entrances, all provided excellent strategic potential - and influence!

Thursday 21st June - Midsummer at the Museum
A 'Discovery Evening' for Society members at Bishop's Waltham Museum on Midsummer's Day! Guided tours of the museum with drinks and nibbles in the Palace grounds. **Please note venue: 7.30 at the Museum.**



Thursday 19th July - "Bone Ships, Theatres and Lewd Objects". Paul Chamberlain, writer and lecturer on the Napoleonic period, will talk about what French prisoners of war did to occupy themselves during their imprisonment in what were often appalling conditions.



Thursday 20th September - "The Road to Mandalay". During the Spring of 2016, David Cope went on a trip down the Irrawaddy from Mandalay to Pagan on board a small 'colonial' style boat, all teak and brass and gin and tonic. As well as visiting many temples, he stopped at remote villages on the river banks and gained some insight into life in Myanmar, past and present, in particular

Buddhism, the impact of Aung San Suu Kyi and the current political situation with regard to the Rohingya Muslims.



Thursday 18th October - "How to write up your Family History". A talk by Barry Jerome. Have you been researching your family history? Do want to write it up, but don't know where to start? Barry's talk shows an approach he used when he wrote his own family history, going back 500 years.

Thursday 15th November - "Cruises". A talk by Oliver Hammerer, a cruise consultant, on the history of cruises including the development of world-wide itineraries, cruise lines and types of ship. He will include advice on how to make the right choices before booking.

Thursday 20th December - The Society's Christmas Party. Our own Christmas Party - members and guests only. This year the entertainment is provided by the Shantyheads - a shanty-singing folk band based in the Meon Valley who played at Wickham Music Festival in 2016 and 2017.

What was 'Pew Rage'?

Penny Copeland's talk to the Society on Thursday 15th March 2018 is based on a paper that she and her colleague at Southampton University will be presenting at a conference in the New Year.

The paper is actually entitled "The Social Life of Pews: Clement Walcot's distress, William Horner's ambition." During the 18th century, box pews and the increasing use of gallery space became very common in nearly all churches.

Pews were assigned to particular houses and were rented by the families, providing income for the church and some physical comfort for families who could afford them. Therefore, when they were allocated pew positions they often reflected the status of the family. However, population movement, housing improvements and social aspiration frequently lead to rancorous local disputes, often resulting in "pew rage". This could be dealt with by pews being completely reallocated or new galleries being commissioned.

**Winchester City Council planning application reference
number: 17/02075/FUL**

Demolition of the Mill Building and construction of a 66 bed Care Home, 39 Assisted Living Units, 19 family houses and 12 affordable homes and associated works.

On 26th June 2017 Beechcroft Development's advisers, Hunter Page Planning, held a Public Exhibition at the Jubilee Hall to unveil their plans for the Abbey Mill site on Station Road. This was attended by members of the Bishops Waltham Society's Executive Committee and its Planning Sub-Committee who had a variety of discussions with representatives of Beechcroft, Hunter Page and RM Architects who were attending the exhibition.

Concern at the ambiguity about their plans for the Abbey Mill building was justified when, at the beginning of August, Beechcroft Development applied for planning permission, including the **demolition of the Mill**. As a result, the Society wrote to Winchester City Council to object to this plan. The following is an extract from that letter dated 20th September.

"We object strongly to the applicant's proposal to demolish the Mill building for the reasons set out below:

1. The nature of the Mill as a heritage asset

a) Cotswold Archaeology's Assessment

The applicant's Heritage Statement prepared by Cotswold Archaeology is clear about the nature of the Mill. "The extant mill building is thought to represent an 1862 reconstruction of a late 18th-century structure (with later alterations). It is a non-designated locally-important heritage asset, with its significance derived mostly from its evidential and historical (illustrative) values."

So, the applicant's own archaeological consultants regard the Mill as "**a non-designated locally important heritage asset**". We agree.

b) How important locally?

In July 2017, as part of their Community Involvement activity the applicant provided a Consultation Questionnaire for visitors to their public consultation. One question enquired about local attitudes toward the Mill: "The intention is to reuse the mill for assisted living units, subject to a structural survey to determine if it is still structurally sound. If it isn't would you support a new building replicating what is in situ?" This is a complex question since saying 'yes' appears to condone demolition.

This is evident in Beechcroft's summary of answers to this question. The applicant says "A total of 22 respondents answered this question with 19 making positive comments and no negative comment made. Of those who were positive, the following comments were made:

- Nice to smarten up a derelict site;
- Historic landmark and part of the town;
- Mill is dilapidated and not even attractive."

This is disingenuous because it entirely depends on what one regards as 'positive' or 'negative' comments. Clearly the applicant sees negative views of the mill as 'positive'. Luckily many respondents saw through this - as exemplified by these nine answers:

- Historical landmark.
- It is an historic building with attractive features which should be replicated.
- But all effort should be made to maintain the original mill.
- It is a lovely building and an important part of local history.
- It's not possible to answer yes or no to this question without further information.
- I am very keen that Abbey Mill be retained but would have to accept that it may not be viable to do so.
- The building is popular and many people would wish to see it preserved and used in some way.
- Prefer not to but the building may need re-creation
- Would prefer it to remain. If replicated how much would it be identical to the present building?

c) A proper poll of residents' opinions.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is fortunate that Bishop's Waltham Parish Council, at the urging of local residents, carried out an opinion poll on attitudes toward the Mill in 2015. All Bishop's Waltham residents were invited to participate.

There were 476 respondents (350 online and 126 in a paper survey). The results were absolutely clear. To the question "Would you want the Abbey Mill to be demolished or restored?" the votes were as shown in the table below. **82% wanted it to be restored!**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly in favour of restoration	51.05%	242
Prefer to see it restored	31.01%	147
Don't mind. Others can decide	4.85%	23
Prefer to see it demolished to make way for other development	9.70%	46
Strongly in favour of demolition	3.38%	16
Total		474

d) The Mill's emblematic status

Built in 1862 by Sir Arthur Helps, Queen Victoria's Private Secretary, the Mill's size and form quickly became an emblematic structure associated with Bishop's Waltham for the next 70-100 years.

- i. The railway from Botley to Bishop's Waltham opened a year later, in 1863, and passed close to the Mill - as is clear from the train in the background on this postcard published in around 1905. Any passenger using the railway during the 70 years between 1863 and 1933 would have seen the imposing rear of the Mill as their first, and significant, sight of Bishop's Waltham.



- ii. The main Winchester to Portsmouth road (then the A333) passed directly in front of Abbey Mill on Station Road until the Great Pond was 'bridged' in 1967. So for 100 years anyone travelling between Winchester and Portsmouth would have seen the Mill's frontage as a symbolic feature of the town. This is clearly captured in the postcard below, dated 1905.



- iii. The view from the Botley road toward Bishop's Waltham (see below) presents an early sight of the town from the south. This detail from a circa 1917 photograph shows the impact that the Mill building would also have had from this approach to the town.



The fact that visitors to the town, quite apart from its residents, would have seen the mill as a central feature of the town confirms the importance of its distinct built form and its setting on the dam wall. This underlines its significance as a **locally important heritage asset** (as correctly described by Cotswold Archaeology).

2. The Mill's place and role within the Conservation Area

Winchester City Council's guidance, contained in Local Plan Part 2, says that "the special architectural or historic interest of conservation areas need to be understood and articulated." The following are the assessments made by Cotswold Archaeology in the Heritage Statement attached to this application (the emphasis is ours):

- "The heritage significance of the Bishop's Waltham fishponds character area of the Bishop's Waltham Conservation Area derives from a number of factors. The principal contributor is the evidential and historical illustrative values of the surviving fishponds and embedded in the physical fabric of the non-designated Abbey Mill."
- "The southern pond, with its earthwork dam, and Abbey Mill retain evidential values in the physical remains/fabric."
- "At present the Site comprises derelict land, contrasting with the other areas within the Conservation Area. Abbey Mill, a historic structure with potential to illustrate the continuation of the use of the Bishop's estate pond into the 19th century is currently disused"
- "Apart from ponds, this area incorporates Abbey Mill, a 19th century mill historically powered by a leat off the northern pond (infilled). The mill comprises a brick structure, built into the dam. It is, however, currently neglected and fenced off, with the appreciation of the building's architectural character affected by the fencing and derelict character of the Site."

It is clear from these comments that the applicant's own advisor believes that the physical fabric of the existing Mill building has evidential and historical illustrative value especially as a historic structure with potential to illustrate the continued use of the Bishop's ponds into the 19th century. We wholeheartedly agree.

3. WCC Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy

Policies within the Joint Core Strategy relating to the historic environment include:

- **Policy CP20 - Heritage and Landscape Character.**

This states that WCC "will support new development which recognises, protects and enhances the District's distinctive landscape and heritage assets and their settings. These may be designated or undesigned, and include natural and man-made assets associated with existing landscape and townscape character and conservation areas...

Particular emphasis should be given to conserving:

- recognised built form and designed or natural landscapes that include features and elements of natural beauty, cultural or historic importance;
- local distinctiveness, especially in terms of characteristic materials, trees, built form and layout, tranquillity, sense of place and setting."

As our emphasis above indicates, we firmly believe that Abbey Mill - an "undesigned" "man-made asset" of locally "historic importance" - as agreed by Cotswold Archaeology - should be conserved because of its:

- "local distinctiveness"
- "built form and layout" and
- its "sense of place and setting" on the dam of the great pond.

This latter point is well captured in this photograph taken in 2010.



© Colin Waterworth 2010

4. Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Site Allocations

Among the relevant guidance is paragraph 6.4.91 (emphasis is ours):

“Within Conservation Areas, the presumption will be in favour of retaining buildings or structures which make a positive contribution to the architectural or historic interest of the area, even if change of use and some alteration is necessary. Consent for demolition of such buildings will be granted only in exceptional circumstances where a building is beyond repair and incapable of beneficial use or the cost of bringing it into use is greater than the benefit of retaining it. Demolition may exceptionally be allowed where the benefits to the conservation area of the proposed redevelopment would be greater than the harm caused by the demolition. In such cases, the significance of the building itself and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole would need to be considered. Important factors would be effects on the character of the conservation area and its special qualities.”

We believe that it is clear from the evidence above that the Mill makes a very positive contribution “to the architectural or historic interest of the area” and that therefore the presumption must be in favour of retaining the existing building even if change of use is necessary.

This guidance culminates in Policy DM27 (emphasis is ours):

“Policy DM27 - Demolition in Conservation Area:

Within a Conservation Area, planning permission will only be granted for proposals involving the demolition, in whole or in part, of unlisted buildings or structures where the existing building or structure:

- (i) Makes no positive contribution to the character, appearance or historic interest of the area, either individually or as part of a group, or in more general views within or from outside the conservation area; or
- (ii) Is demonstrated to be incapable of repair or adaptation so as to extend its useful life; or
- (iii) Where the proposed redevelopment would enhance or better reveal the significance of the Conservation Area.”

We argue that the Abbey Mill makes a very powerful contribution “to the character, appearance and historic interest” of the Conservation Area.”

Our letter then further discussed the importance of protecting Heritage Assets, some aspects of the Mill building itself, the risk from the Flood Zone, the height of the floors in the Mill and the unusual circumstance that Sainsbury’s, who still own the site, had not given Beechcroft Development or their advisers access to the Mill building. This seemed to us extraordinary since it is the only building on the site.

This surprising situation had precluded the applicant from being able to make an informed judgement about the actual state of the building and meant that no structural survey was available as part of the application documentation. Moreover an ‘additional Heritage Statement’, concerning the Mill and proposed by Cotswold Archaeology, was also not forthcoming for the same reason.

However, in early October the applicant’s advisers finally got access to the Mill building and, as a result of their inspections, came to the conclusion that they would, after all, now revise their plans and retain and convert the original 1862 Mill.

As of 31st December 2017 no such revised plans have been posted on WCC’s Planning website.

In a separate letter to WCC Planning Officers dated 9th October 2017 the Society also objected to the application on more general grounds. In it we stated that the Society had originally hoped to be able to support this development, but that we were disappointed that the proposed design failed to meet so many policies within the recently adopted Bishop’s Waltham Design Statement 2016.

In particular we felt strongly that the inclusion (and dominance) of three and four storey buildings on the site was unacceptable and would set a dangerous precedent that could end up irreversibly damaging the unique character of Bishop’s Waltham.

We hope that members of the Society will have found the detail in this insert interesting. All the information about the application and related correspondence (including objections from English Heritage and members of the public) can be found by visiting <https://planningapps.winchester.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple> and using the reference number 17/02075/FUL in the search box provided.

We await the revised proposals...

St Peter's in Bishop's Waltham had two galleries erected in the 18th century and their original occupants are known. The family heads are often recorded as local tradesmen but if their lives are traced, some, like William Horner, later become "gentlemen". So is there a connection between having a desirable pew and a desirable house? Can a house be desirable if it doesn't have a good seat in church?

In her talk Penny will be looking at the people and the problems found in both Bishop's Waltham and Titchfield, together with some of the more sensational cases of the box pew era!

The Cricklemede/Hoe Road roundabout

In the last newsletter we said how pleased we had been to sponsor the wildflowers planted by Bishop's Waltham in Bloom (BWIB) on this roundabout.



The signs attributing this sponsorship of the roundabout wild flower bed - which are intentionally not dominant on the Hoe Road - were put up late in the summer. So although the response from the public has been great, many assumed it was the Parish Council's doing rather than BWiB. And few knew the Society was the sponsor. Nevertheless what is important is the welcome the project received. Here is a small selection of the comments made:

"Just wanted to thank all involved in the planting of the wild flowers on the Cricklemede roundabout. It looks amazing and makes me smile every morning on my way to work."

"As a resident of Swanmore I would just like to say how impressed we are with the wild flower roundabout on Hoe Road! At first I thought what on earth? But now see what you did and it is lovely!"

"I am a regular visitor to Bishop's Waltham. I live in Swanmore so pass the Ridgemede Roundabout whenever I go to the shops. The wildflower

meadow looks absolutely lovely: well done to those who have created this for us all to enjoy."

"My own daughter saw the roundabout the other day and called out, 'Wow! Look at the beautiful flowers!' - You can't get a better compliment than that from an 8 year old!"

"Wonderful success of wild flower roundabout on Cricklemede. Well done everyone involved. Presumably that's how all the fields and footpaths looked in Jane Austen's time. How romantic!"

The Society will continue to work with BWiB (and the Parish Council, where appropriate) to improve our local environment.

Eastleigh's Housing Plans

On pages 5-6 of our last (Summer) newsletter we talked about the need to be aware of what planning developments were taking place around us. Our reference to the Douglas Adam's "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" and Vagon Constructor Fleets may have been a bit esoteric for some, but we were making the point that it is important to pay attention to local plans outside the parish.

In the same article we made reference to the proposals being considered by Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) to build thousands of new houses on land between Bishopstoke and Upham - right on our doorstep to the northwest. When we gathered that EBC would be making a decision on this at a meeting on 11th December, we invited John Lauwerys of Action against Destructive Development (ADD) - who oppose the plans - to come to Bishop's Waltham on 1st December and give a presentation so local residents could find out more.

It was very short notice but with posters, 600 hand-delivered leaflets and a number of 'chain emails' we were pleased that over 120 residents took time on a winter's evening to attend the meeting at the Jubilee Hall (see below).



John Lauwerys and David Ashe (chairman of Upham Parish Council) gave a presentation and answered a fair number of questions. Many local residents (both members and non-members) have subsequently thanked the Society for creating the opportunity to hear more about these plans.

At its meeting on 11th December EBC gave conditional approval for the proposed development as part of Eastleigh's Local Plan. It also gave delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to complete the plan before its formal submission. It will then be subjected to review by a government inspector. We will try to keep you informed.

The Council meeting was attended by around 800 people and more than 30 members of the public or representatives of organisations (like the Woodland Trust) spoke against the plans.

Royal Yachting Association Award

Many congratulations to Society member Chris Williams who has been awarded the RYA's Francis Elkin Award. This is presented each year to an individual who has made a significant contribution in time, effort and endeavour to enable people with disabilities to become involved in sailing. Chris is the founder and Chairman of the Gwennili Sailing Trust, a voluntary organisation which has been providing offshore crewing opportunities for people of all ages with disabilities since 1995.

The Gwennili Trust has contributed to training disabled sailors for several high-profile sailing events in recent years, including transatlantic races, the Fastnet Race and Cowes Week. It participates in the Round the Island Race annually, and a catamaran chartered by Gwennili with a disabled crew, including one sailor in a wheelchair, won its class in 2016. Over the years the Trust has provided offshore yachting for 5,320 disabled people, of whom 807 were wheelchair users.



Chris Williams received his award from HRH Princess Royal, President of the RYA

Any volunteers for a new Speed Watch?

An increasing number of vehicle drivers coming through Bishops Waltham appear to be completely ignoring the 30 and 40 mph speed limits; this is a danger, both to pedestrians and to other drivers and is a nuisance for residents.

Speeding should not be tolerated on our roads and a constructive way to do this is to resurrect Speed Watch, with local volunteers operating the system for short periods of time; other villages locally have successfully reduced speeds in this way. Vehicles exceeding the speed limit are referred to the Police and, if evidence of repeated or excessive offence is collated, enforcement and prosecution follow.

The Winchester Road roundabout is the junction of the B2177 and the B3035, both of which are, in the main, well-engineered roads and already carry significant levels of traffic through, as distinct to or from the town. When the current and projected housing developments within the town and surrounding areas are realised, it is likely that significant further traffic increases will occur.

If you agree, have concerns and care enough take part in a renewed Speed Watch initiative in the town, please contact Lesley Hallett on 07908114126 or at lesley_hallett@hotmail.com.

25 years ago...

The Society was welcoming the creation of Claylands as a Local Nature Reserve in the form of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

The warm slopes of the old clay works are now an important habitat for insects. Butterflies such as the Marbled White (below), Green Hairstreak and Common Blue frequent the slopes. After dark on summer evenings, the flightless female glow worm (which is in fact a beetle) glows to attract the winged males. The network of ponds provides a habitat for all three native species of newt. A real success story!

