

The Beaconsfield Society

NEWSLETTER May 2016

Dates for your Diary

Special General Meeting

Thursday 16th June 2016 7.00 pm
Fitzwilliams Centre, Committee Room A

Beaconsfield Now! 2016

Saturday 18th June 2016 11.00 am – 2.00 pm
Council Green

Heritage Visit to Chenies Manor

Wednesday 20th July 2016 1.45 pm for 2.00 pm

Chairman's letter

Mike Elliott

These are interesting times for our town and I am pleased to say the Beaconsfield Society remains engaged and active, **celebrating the past, promoting the present and influencing the future.** This newsletter reflects this, I commend it to members and invite them to pass it on to neighbours and friends who care about our Town. Encourage them to join us as our voice is made all the more authentic and loud with increasing membership.

For many years, the Society has worked with **Beaconsfield Old Town Residents Association (BOTRA)** on things like Wilton Park Watch and the worst planning excesses. We share a passion and commitment to the town. Our respective committees have been in informal talks over many months about our future direction in the best interests our members and Beaconsfield as a whole. It was our joint conclusion that a merger of the two organisations would be the most positive way forward. BOTRA put this proposal to their AGM on 6 May and it was unanimously passed subject, of course, to the agreement of the Beaconsfield Society. This newsletter gives notice, under the terms of our constitution, of a Special General Meeting when the merger will be put to TBS membership. There is provision for proxy voting should members be unable to attend the SGM in person. Please see details on the last two pages of this newsletter.

Our committee met recently and unanimously agreed to recommend the merger, the transitional arrangements and some amendments to our constitution to facilitate it. Your committee are convinced that we would be “better together” and ask that you vote “FOR” the proposal.

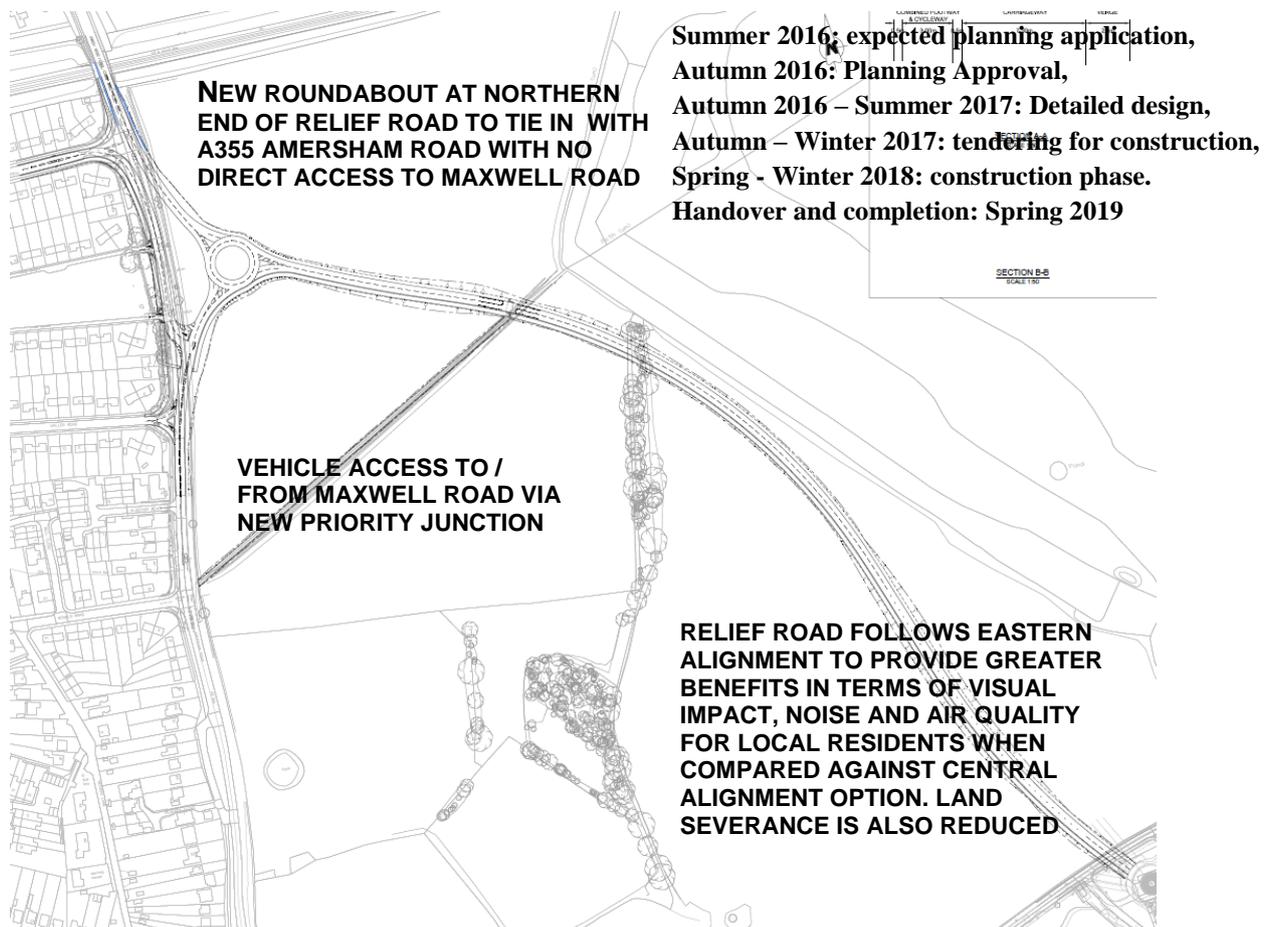
Many of you will know that SBDC has initiated a process to update the **Local Plan** for the district, setting the context for all development until 2036! The society submitted a comprehensive response and will remain active in future stages, a summary is given below. You will have noticed that work has begun on the access road off the Pyebush roundabout to Wilton Park. We attended an event hosted by BCC where they shared their latest plans to build a further section of road to join up with the A355 at Maxwell Road, thus making a relief road for London End. There is a summary report below.

More specifically on **Wilton Park**, we expect an outline planning application for the Wilton Park site any day now. This has to be within the context of the Supplementary Development brief where members of the Society, through Wilton Park Watch, were both enthusiastic and influential.

I will leave it to my colleagues to tell you about **Pride in our Town**, working parties and upcoming events, but I should highlight the “Clean for the Queen” coordination as example of how community groups can work together to great effect: WI, Scouts, Beavers and others making a difference in our town.

I am sorry to report that **John Page**, our Vice President, passed away on 3 May. John made such a significant contribution to our Town, a County Councillor for many years. TBS hugely valued his vast knowledge of Local Government matters, his sage like comment and insight. John was a winner of our Citizen of the Year award and more recently was invited to serve as Vice President. On behalf of John's committee colleagues and many friends in TBS, I extend our condolences to Gerda and his family.

A Public A355 Consultation on behalf of Bucks CC was held on April 22nd 2016 in the Town Hall.



The Beaconsfield Society appreciated the opportunities provided by Jacobs Engineering Group Consultants and Bucks County Councillors to allow Beaconsfield residents to review, discuss and comment on the relief road plans at this Public A355 consultation. Information boards were displayed around the Chamber room. There was a lot of discussion and some heated debates. Feedback was welcomed via feedback forms.

The new Maxwell Road junction roundabout opposite Hyde Green is shown on the diagram above. The proposals would stop direct access to Maxwell Road therefore allowing for smoother movement of traffic on the Relief Road. Access along Maxwell Road was proposed via a junction onto and off Park Lane near the Relief Road roundabout. No signals or priority was suggested. Public Vehicles such as buses have been assessed and would allegedly be able to negotiate tight corners in both directions around this junction.

The Society has concern as to the impact that the relief road will have on traffic flow on many local roads throughout the town. The possible impact had been calculated theoretically using traffic flow models. The results were displayed, with details of traffic flow increases and decreases as well as speed variations during peak periods throughout Beaconsfield. These are speculative but suggest the volume of traffic will probably increase and speeds will be reduced. On Ledborough Lane traffic is predicted to increase at peak times in both directions. Greater volumes are also expected along Candlemas Lane and London End, although congestion at the London End roundabout should be reduced due to the Relief Road.

As always before, it was again emphasised that the relief road will **not** extend across the railway. The area of most discussion seemed to be about the impact of the relief road on the Ledborough Lane junction. This junction was **not** included in these Relief Road proposals and any alterations would be via a separate future planning application; there is no definitive proposal. Double roundabouts or traffic lights? There is a planned joint cycle/pedestrian way along the south side of the 40mph Relief Road. The safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists across the Relief Road will be provided within Wilton Park land.

Emerging Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan 2014-2036

As we have reported previously, Chiltern District and SBDC are preparing a new joint Local Plan for the period 2014-2036. The Local Plan is a highly important document because it sets out planning policy for the local area. The Local Plan is not just about issues such as designation of Green Belt but includes policies which govern whether planning applications can be granted or denied. For example, the current Local Plan includes policies on such matters as:

**Development within Conservation Areas
Use, Design and Layout of development
Residential layout and design
Intensity and density of development**

**Alterations to Listed Buildings
Landscaping
Residential Areas of Exceptional Character
Green Belt boundaries**

It is therefore highly important that the new Local Plan includes similar protective policies for the town in order to safeguard the town from insensitive overdevelopment. It is the policies of the Local Plan which must be quoted when objecting to an unsuitable planning application.

The initial consultation period for the proposed Local Plan ran from 1st January to 14th March this year and is now closed. It has been reported that 5,000 responses have been received. SBDC have stated that these responses will be made available for view on their website but they are not available yet. The Beaconsfield Society and Local Plan Watch both submitted full and comprehensive responses on the initial proposals. Our responses are now being considered, together with all other comments made as SBDC now work on a Preferred Options document which is expected to be published in October-November this year. Following this, a second consultation period will take place. Keep an eye on The Beaconsfield Society website and also the SBDC website for details - you can register with SBDC to be notified at key stages of the process of the Plan preparation consultations.

The SBDC evidence base which forms the basis of their proposals has identified a need for 28,664 new homes in South Bucks, Chiltern and Wycombe over the period 2013 to 2033. These new homes will have to go somewhere and although we have questioned the extent of this housing need, the first stage plans have included proposals for the release of large areas of Green Belt land around Beaconsfield. These areas are not limited to the Wilton Park site but include large areas along the A40 and A355 and the area between the Pyebush Roundabout and M40 - which includes part of Beaconsfield Rugby Club and also of the Cricket Club. However the new Plan is not just about the Green Belt- it needs to include protective policies to protect our town from gross overdevelopment and intrusive intensity of development which could spoil our attractive environment and place additional stress on infrastructure and facilities. Watch this space for updates as the Local Plan process continues and be ready to have your say once the second consultation process commences later in the year.

Clean for The Queen 1*Nanu Hodson*

The Beaconsfield Society is proud to have organised the 'Clean for the Queen' litter pick in March of this year. We managed to involve members of another eight organisations in the town and many local businesses. In all we had over 100 adults and children taking part, collecting around 80 bags of rubbish from much of the town, including the station approaches, grass verges, pavements and footpaths, as well as Malthouse Square and Holtspur Parks.

We also carried out a second litter pick around the Old Town with Committee members of both The Beaconsfield Society and BOTRA smartening up more of our streets. In all, the whole town looked cleaner, tidier and was a more pleasant place to be.

We are hoping to maintain this momentum when we join the 4th Beaconsfield Scout Group for their annual Litter Pick, now in its fourth year, on **Saturday 11th June**. Please come and join us on the Town Council Green from 10am with whatever time you can spare to help keep Beaconsfield looking beautiful.

The Beaconsfield Society's event, **Beaconsfield Now 2016**, showcases not-for-profit organisations and is taking place on the **Town Council Green on Saturday June 18th between 11am and 2pm.**

and this year will be **under cover** !!

There will be entertainment from local musicians and choirs, a bouncy castle for adults and kids as well as arts and crafts to enjoy. Please join us and the Scouts for a delicious barbeque lunch, followed by cakes and refreshments prepared by the Guides.

Long standing or new residents to Beaconsfield are welcome. Come and find out what is going on in and around our town. New this year will be the Blue Cross animal rehoming centre, The Royal Artillery Association and the Macmillan Cancer Support team. We are delighted to welcome again the University of the Third Age, Model Railway Club, Friends of Holtspur Bank, Beaconsfield Twinning Association, Alfriston pool representatives, Churches Together, The Library, WI, Carers Trust, Abbeyfield (Bradbury House) and many more. Come and see if you can spot those from the Young Theatre?

It will always be dry inside!! Our 22nd year of information sharing will differ in that it will be dry. This year, a **marquee** centrally placed on the Town Council Green, will shelter the majority of stands. Everyone can be informed and inspired in the dry, come rain or shine!

We look forward to welcoming residents of all ages to find out about all that is on offer in Beaconsfield. Join us at Beaconsfield Now! 2016 - June 18th 11am until 2pm on the Council Green.

Heritage Visit to Chenies Manor (20th July)*John Burton*

This year our Heritage Visit will be to Chenies Manor House and Gardens on Wednesday 20th July from 2pm. Please park by 1.45 pm and then meet in the House reception.

Chenies Manor is a Grade 1 listed building located a few miles from Little Chalfont. It is a semi-fortified manor house built by Sir John Cheyne in the mid-15th century. Tudor monarchs visited the house on a number of occasions. In the 16th century the original building was extended by John Russell, 1st Earl of Bedford, Chenies Manor remained as part of the Russell estate until 1950.

Restoration work has continued until the present day and lately the 16th century pavilion has been restored. An unusual feature in the house is the spiral staircase where the handrail is carved into the brickwork and it is this area that footsteps are still sometimes heard crossing the gallery.

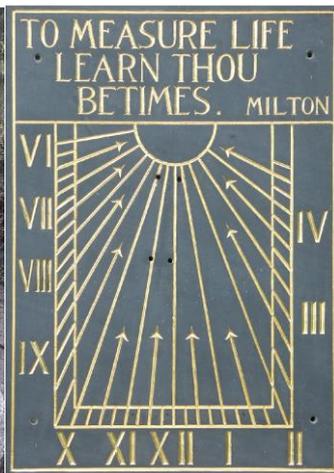
Our visit includes the gardens and the Summer Garden will have a large display of dahlias among numerous other perennials. Facilities for teas and light refreshments are available.

A booking slip can be found on the last page of this newsletter. The Committee would like to use car sharing for this visit. Please indicate on the slip whether you can offer transport to other members. Any member requiring it should contact John Burton (Tel; 01494.538206, E-mail jgb_burton@hotmail.com)

Clean for The Queen 2*Graeme Richards*

As part of the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign to clean up Britain for the Queen's 90th birthday, The Beaconsfield Society took on a project to clean all of the 29 post boxes in Beaconsfield. Through the efforts of individual members of the Society, this target has now largely been met.

In carrying out this project, it became evident that many of the post boxes being cleaned were in dire need of painting. After an initially unsuccessful approach, contact was then made with Heritage England and eventually with the Property department of the Royal Mail Group. The Royal Mail has acknowledged the Society's efforts and has since confirmed that it will be painting all 29 post boxes by the end of 2016! So watch for improvements to your local post box later this year!



Top:
Beaconsfield Now! 2015

Middle:
Dr Helen Fry, Speaker at our packed AGM 2015

Left:
Graeme Richards and a post box before and after, and the Enid Blyton Sundial

Enid Blyton Sundial at Bekonscot

Kari Dorne

Great News! An invitation has been extended to all our members to come to the unveiling ceremony of the Enid Blyton sundial at Bekonscot Model Village. We have not got a date yet as the restoration and preparation work is still ongoing but there is every hope that it will be ready in a few months' time.

A large sundial was originally positioned high up on Enid Blyton's house Green Hedges at 42 Penn Road. The house was demolished in 1973 and nothing was heard of it until I had a phone call in 2013 from a retired builder who had rescued it when the house was being pulled down. I was fortunate to be able to acquire it after checking its provenance and then in turn offered it to Bekonscot who were delighted to accept; it was a dream to have Bekonscot as a home for our town's famous children's author Enid Blyton.

The management of Bekonscot then contacted Dr Frank King, the Chairman of the British Sundial Society, asking for advice on sundial restoration and how and where to place it accurately in the Model Village. Happily he deemed it a very fine sundial in its own right even without the Beaconsfield Enid Blyton connection and set about organizing and supervising the extensive restoration work. When the unveiling date is known, come along and hear the full story of the sundial's rescue and restoration!

Notice is hereby given that a Special General Meeting will be held in The Fitzwilliams Centre, Windsor End to consider and vote upon a proposal that the Beaconsfield Old Town Residents Association be merged with The Beaconsfield Society.

Background:

At its AGM on 6 May, the Beaconsfield Old Town Residents Association (BOTRA) resolved that it should merge with The Beaconsfield Society should our Society agree to this. The Committee is in favour of doing so and proposes that the two Societies merge into a single organisation.

Planned Interim arrangements:

1. Memberships, assets and objectives of BOTRA will be merged with those of The Beaconsfield Society with effect from 17th June 2016.
2. The financial assets of BOTRA will be ring-fenced for use in the Old Town until BOTRA is finally wound up. This will take place within 12 months of the merger, with any unused funds then transferred to the general funds of The Beaconsfield Society.
3. As the name of The Beaconsfield Society is well known throughout the area and reflects the work of the combined organisations, it is proposed that the merged organisation should be called The Beaconsfield Society.
4. The Beaconsfield Society committee recommends changes to the Society's Constitution to reflect the merger and to introduce changes that update current modes of operation. These will be published on the Society's website and made available at the Special General Meeting.
5. Specific details of the merger will be agreed by a sub-committee of the officers of both organisations.
6. All members of BOTRA will automatically become members of The Beaconsfield Society until The Beaconsfield Society AGM in November when they will be required to pay The Beaconsfield Society subscription should they wish to remain members.
7. Those committee members of BOTRA who wish to do so will be co-opted onto the TBS Committee until the 2015/6 AGM in the Autumn of 2016.
8. At the AGM, new Officers and Committee members of the merged societies will be elected.

Voting:

All paid-up members of The Beaconsfield Society are eligible to vote (one vote per membership whether single or family). This may be in person at the meeting or by Proxy vote lodged with the Secretary in advance, such Proxy to be either the Chairman of the meeting or another Member actually present at the meeting.

The Proposal:

The Proposal that "The immediate merger between The Beaconsfield Society and The Beaconsfield Old Town Residents Association through changes to The Society's Constitution be approved by the members of the Beaconsfield Society and that the Committee be authorised to take all necessary steps to accomplish this not later than the 2015/6 AGM" will be put to the vote – either In Favour or Against. Of those voting, a two-thirds majority In Favour is required for the proposal to be carried.

A Proxy Form can be found on the last page of this Newsletter, to be submitted by the 9th June 2016.

