

The Alton Society Award for outstanding services to the town



From another field of very strong nominations, the panel took great pleasure in giving this year's award to **John Sadler**, who retires in November after 33 years with the Council, for the latter half of which he has been the town's head groundsman.

John started working for Alton Town Council in 1979 and proudly tells how his first job under the then Head Groundsman, the late Fred James, was sorting coloured Christmas light bulbs! He was mainly based at Jubilee Playing Fields until he became Head Groundsman in 1997.

Since that time, although the Town Council has taken on additional maintenance responsibilities such as Flood Meadows, Holybourne Play Ground, Miss Bell's Fountain and the watering of summer floral displays, and in spite of an increase in vandalism the quality of the open spaces has increased immensely, leading to numerous Silver Gilt awards in the regional parks awards as part of South & South East in Bloom, but also from many sporting bodies, in particular cricket.

Although John has a fine eye for detail, he has always been keen to embrace new technology and equipment, which he uses with enthusiasm to maintain his high standards.

John has been an excellent leader of his small dedicated team who are greatly liked and respected by the public. Alton has been exceptionally lucky to have retained a Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) enabling staff to take pride in their various responsibilities, something that modern mobile contractor gangs can only dream of.

Apart from John's professionalism, it is his total dedication that has made him such a worthy contender for this award. Except for when he is actually on holiday his mobile phone is never off, and he is always ready to drop his dinner or weekly shopping whatever time of day or night to help sort out a problem. We know in the Alton Society only too well how helpful he has been to our Environment Group in their endeavours at Flood Meadows.

He retires this Autumn having been the key architect of the huge improvement in the appearance of the town which we have remarked upon so often in these pages in recent years. He is also a supreme example of dedicated public service. We wish him and his wife a long and very happy retirement.

Chairman's Corner – Home Rule for Alton?

A personal viewpoint from James Willis



Why am I not surprised that while Alton has a 'large' library, our little sister town Petersfield has a 'key' library which is so important that it has to be protected from the current round of cuts? Studying the

appropriate page of the Hampshire website bit.ly/EHantsLibraryChanges I was briefly pleased to see that there were three grades of library below our 'large'. But that was before I found Petersfield sitting grinning at us from the one above.

So there we go – Petersfield sails on unmolested; Alton's library is now to close all day on Wednesday – losing five opening hours per week in the common cause of saving public money. And we all know what effect it will have if we mount a colossal protest about that one too.

But by what possible logic can Petersfield enjoy so many privileges? I have often remarked that their Festival Hall has undergone two major re-vamps, including the installation of beautiful raked seating, during the period that successive minor alterations to our Assembly Rooms have, if anything, made it less suitable as a performance space. Just compare the two sports centres, the facilities at Heath Lake with King's Pond, the general lavishness of the two street-scapes, and I challenge anyone not to see a marked disparity. Or to guess correctly that Alton has the larger population by more than a quarter.

I know that the decision about library cuts was taken in Winchester rather than by EHDC, but it is part of a pattern. Now that Petersfield is inside the South Downs National Park and we are just outside it, and we are bracing ourselves for the imminence of having to take a lion's share of any development imposed on the region, it is perfectly obvious that it is we who need the infrastructure. Petersfield's insensitivity to Alton's priorities is shown by the way the precise moment of Tesco's recent triumph was chosen to cheekily stamp on the cliff-edge clinging fingers of our High Street traders by upping car parking charges. And then to rule discussion of an initial 30 minutes of free parking, as enlightened authorities everywhere now provide, simply out of court. Petersfield can't afford to lose the money, we are told. Well, at least the Alton Society is free to go on saying that that is what we want.

Physical links between Alton and Petersfield run across the geographical grain of the country with rudimentary public transport and roads which can best be described as pretty. With the coming of the National Park the two towns' situations now have very little in common. Transparent fairness of administration is essential from now on if calls for Alton's regaining home rule are not to become unanswerable.



Editor's Gloom Corner

The Editor duly grovels for two errors in the last edition, and offers apologies to both Jan Nicholas and Norman Isham for the misspelling of their names.

Alton Local List – an introduction

by Edward Hepper

Background

Local Lists contain those buildings which are important to a community because of their architectural or historical interest but do not quite attain the quality that would qualify them for statutory Listing Grades I, II* or II. Those buildings with statutory Listing have legal protection, administered by English Heritage, and planning applications for alterations to them are carefully considered by the local planning authority on behalf of English Heritage. Buildings on a Local List have no such statutory protection. However the Local List provides advice to building owners that their building is of special interest to the community and the streetscape, and provides a warning to the planning authority to consider planning applications affecting them with an extra degree of care.

The Government paper “Review of Heritage Protection: The Way Forward (June 2004)” laid great emphasis on Local Lists and stated that about 40% of local authorities already had them. More recent Government papers have continued to encourage their preparation and use. The preparation of Alton’s Local List gained added urgency following the completion of the Alton 2020 report in 2005 and completion of the Alton Town Design Statement, one of its specifically mentioned priorities, in 2008. In the extensive public consultation undertaken for the TDS, it is noteworthy that over 95% of respondents “appreciated the historic buildings on the town and wanted more to be done to preserve them.” Alton’s Town Council gave the Local List its blessing in principle in 2004. It was in response to all the above, and recognising that East Hampshire District Council has not had the staff or resources to prepare it in house, that the Alton Society has been preparing the Local List ever since.

The Alton Society has done so in consultation with EHDC’s Conservation Officer, has drawn up criteria for selection of buildings for the List in agreement with him and has fed the draft lists for different areas of Alton to EHDC as they become available. The exercise has been undertaken by volunteers.

The field work surveys for the town were completed during 2011. We have now edited the whole into one document and submitted it to EHDC and we hope that it will be used by the planning officers in their consideration of planning applications. Photographs of the more interesting buildings will be added in the coming months. As stated above, the Local List has no statutory status but can provide officers and the general public with an early warning, in considering a building on the List or near to one on it, to give extra attention to the effect on the building in question and to the streetscape nearby. In addition to Alton’s large collection of statutorily Listed buildings (Grades I, II* and II), the town has many other fine buildings and streetscapes which it would be unfortunate to lose by carelessness and this is where a check on the Local List could be useful.

It is worth noting that, had the Local List already been in existence and adopted, then we might have been able to save the Treloar Hospital when it was abandoned by the NHS in the 1990s and also, more recently, the Old Maltings building in Lower Turk Street, before it was demolished by Aldi.

Grading System

We have given statutorily Listed buildings grade A. They are protected anyway by their Listing. There are some others which might originally have been statutorily Grade III, before that Grade was discontinued and so they lost their protection, and there are some others which have been on the list of Hampshire Treasures; both these categories have been given our Grade B.

Buildings that seem to us to be especially important or even candidates for statutory Listing have been given our Grade C and, in some outstanding cases, Grade B. Others of some but lesser interest have been Graded D.

Conservation Areas

These have been declared by the District Councils and similarly place the buildings in them and their appearance and the streetscape under a degree of protection under the planning system.

We have noted some areas of Alton where the streetscape is especially attractive and planning applications within them should be examined carefully in the same way as for the Local List. Indeed the Alton Town Design Statement (2008) recommended some areas of the town to be designated as additional Conservation Areas. We have given these areas the name "Local Area of Significant Streetscape"

The Documents

We have produced a comprehensive List covering all streets in Alton, although for many less architecturally interesting streets, the coverage is only in a summary descriptive form for the street as a whole. This is the Alton - Holybourne Combined List, Long version and is some 43 pages long.

We have also produced a briefer List, Alton - Holybourne Combined List, Short & Areas version, by using the putative conservation area description Local Area of Significant Streetscape, which means that the borderline buildings need not be listed separately unless they have particular local historical or architectural interest beyond their comparatively low grading. This List is some 18 pages long.

It should be noted that both these Lists include the officially designated Buildings Grade 1 & II, and the official Conservation Areas. The Short & Areas version could be reduced from 18 to about 7 pages long if these Grade 1 & II Listed buildings and the official Conservation Areas were omitted but we felt that they provide an essential context for the understanding of Alton's architectural and historical heritage and so prefer to leave them within the Local List – albeit clearly differentiated by highlighting.

An extract from Alton's Local List – Part 7, High Street

As the Local List has progressed, I have given a glimpse of some of the more interesting buildings we have studied. The first six articles covered: the Pilot Area between the Public Gardens and Queens Road (New Year 2007), the rest of Newtown (Spring 2007), the south east side of town from Turk Street to Mill Lane (Summer 2007), Anstey Road (Autumn 2007), Normandy Street (New Year & Autumn 2008). The lack of reports since then reflects the number of other important issues that have engaged the Built Environment Group's efforts. But the work has continued, focussing on the town's central Conservation Area. I shall devote this article and the next to the High Street and to its surrounding streets from Cross & Pillory Lane to Church Street.



First let us walk down the High Street from the Crown Hotel, one of the two surviving Alton Inns dating from the early 1550s when it was known as the Pelican. It is Listed as are nearly all of the buildings on the raised pavement as far as the alleyway next to the Weybridge pub, which was designed by local firm Format Milton. Nos 4, 6, 8 10 & 16 have eighteenth century facades on much older houses, as can be seen from the rear. No 4 was the residence of William Curtis, surgeon and doctor to Jane Austen. No 10 was the bank part-owned by Henry Austen, Jane's brother. No 16 probably dates back to the fourteenth century and its original timber framing may be seen on its side and rear.



On the other side of the road, Hill House, No 1 High Street, belonged to Admiral Rodney's brother, James. He also owned next door, No 1 Normandy Street, the garden of which he incorporated into the High Street house. He sold to William Terry who came from Dummer and whose wife was a niece of Gilbert White of Selborne; they are both buried in a vault in St Lawrence Church. Next comes Crown Court, the Curtis Museum (formerly the Mechanics' Institute established by Dr JW Curtis in 1837) and Assembly Rooms complex designed by CE Barry, the grandson of Sir Charles Barry, the celebrated architect of the Houses of Parliament. He also designed the two Bell fountains, one of which used to be here but is now in the Public Gardens – the other is in

Butts Road opposite Boverve where Miss Bell lived. The cairn is an unusual war memorial which is said to have a stone for each soldier commemorated, like the US national war memorial in Arlington Cemetery, Virginia. No 15, Dataprint, was once Kins' Library, a shop for books, stationary and music. No 15a is on the site of the "Fighting Cocks" pub and was purpose built in 1901 as Alton's first post office. At the side of No 17, Domino's, and behind can be seen the new (1990s) entrance) and the restored older building that is the office of Format Milton, architects. The circular wall plate (the end of a tie-rod) on No 19 is by Hetherington & Co of Alton, iron founders from Vicarage Road. Nos 21 and 21a, now Halifax and Curry's, are on the site of the old Manor House for Eastbrooke; it had very extensive gardens alongside the River Wey stretching back through the brewery to what is now the railway.



Some of the post-war buildings in the High Street are unattractive to modern eyes, especially compared to the eighteenth century frontages. However, if you look again at Nos 21 & 21a, 24-28, and 46 & 46a, you will see that their architects have tried to emulate the verticality and overall scale of the neighbouring 'Georgian' buildings.



Continuing along the north side of the High Street, the Weybridge pub is another example of Format Milton's work. 24-26 was the site of Kerridge's garage and old postcards show it equipped with petrol pumps beside the street. Some readers will remember that No 30, Just Pets, was the site of Kingdom's ironmongers. No 32, The Baker's Arms, was originally a timber-framed bakery. If you examine the old seventeenth century map of Alton, you will see that it once projected into the High Street and the front portion was pulled down soon after the map was made as coach traffic increased.

To be continued in the next edition

Flood Meadows wins Silver Gilt Award

by Mike Heelis

Yet again Flood Meadows has won recognition for being a wonderful open space in the town of Alton on a Southern regional area basis. The award this time was from the South and South East in Bloom panel and the award was Silver Gilt (only one step short of gold!). We should all feel proud and very pleased with ourselves to have access to this wonderful facility within our great town.

However, Flood Meadows does not just happen to be like it is with no effort to make it so and considerable effort goes into the maintenance of a balance between conservation and offering just a bland open featureless space with close mown grass. The primary contributors to the maintenance and conservation of Flood Meadows come from Alton Town Council (ATC) and Alton Society working in partnership. ATC delivers grass cutting, maintenance of listed paths (tarmac covered) lighting etc. The Society focuses on keeping the watercress bed area open for all (the paths there are not listed) the Trees for life area to the North and West sides of the area and general conservation by litter picking etc. Monthly meetings are held where usually between 10 and 15 volunteers, always capably led by Martin Gibbs, work on the third Sunday morning of the month for 2 hours, followed by refreshments. It is due to this tremendous effort for the last 20 years or so that the watercress beds remain accessible to all, Trees for Life are maintained and the area is such a fabulous place to be.

During September the Society spent time clearing the invasive Willows that are growing across the water in the watercress beds and almost taking them over. Much pruning and cutting back has to take place to ensure that the area does not become completely overgrown. With no water in the river or beds at this time access to do this becomes very easy although the mud under foot is difficult going for the volunteers. It must be mentioned that the lack of water at this time is purely seasonal and water table orientated not due to pumping out up stream. Confirmation of this is at the back of the beds where there are a series of springs which in addition to the river have also run dry.



This year there have been some comments from the public as to how and why the area is maintained a certain way. For instance there was a good growth of grass with flowers growing within at one stage and to the dismay of one member of the public this was cut. The reason for this action is that several years ago the Alton Society drew up a management plan for the area and this is not widely known. It is my intention therefore to set out the basic framework of this plan as follows:

It is the overarching intent of the Alton Society, which is believed to be supported by the people of Alton, to maintain the balance of recreational and semi natural woodland, grassland and riverside nature of Flood Meadows (a piece of the countryside in the town). It is not the intent that this facility becomes another town public gardens with manicured trees and lawns.

Flood Meadows is characterised by the following features:

- The River Wey which runs from a spring some 1 Km West of the site through the meadows and then on through the town of Alton.
- The disused watercress beds, which are formed by the river and have their own spring reaches.
- Grassed recreational play areas.
- Natural grassland areas where the grass is allowed to grow long to encourage wild life, flora and fauna and give a countryside ambience.
- Natural woodland copses.
- “Trees for Life” areas 1 and 2 (native species).
- Network of grassed and tarmac pathways.
- Various hedgerows (native species).

There is a cycle of routine maintenance, which is enshrined in contracts let and maintained by EHDC. These are:

Two grass cutting regimes as follows:

1. Areas immediately in front of the approach down Tanhouse Lane bordered by North of Cress Beds and line of trees opposite (North East) plus triangle of grass to West edge of Cress Beds and tarmac path opposite (West) to be maintained as an amenity area with grass kept at a short level throughout the spring summer and autumn. Grass pathways are to be cut as marked through area 2 and a distance of 1 metre from the borderlines with hedges and tree lines is to be maintained at the same level.
2. Areas to North of path and tree line on approach down Tanhouse Lane and other areas West are intended to be maintained as a meadow regime to encourage biodiversity and the growth of natural wild flowers (note natural indigenous varieties are required). Requires 2 x cuts per year (end Jul and Oct) to reflect a meadow grass cropping function which also involves cutting around the Alton Society sponsored “Trees for Life” areas (to North and then North West of area). Mowers are to cut the grass up to a point 1 metre away from each tree and the edges of each area with the exception of the wall border with Amery House where the grass is to be cut right up to the wall. The grass must be collected and removed to encourage the biodiversity where practicable.

The mixed hedge, which runs along the Flood Meadows outer borderline with, to the North is to be cut once per year in December. Cuttings are to be removed from site. On no account is the young Yew hedge which runs across the tangential NE corner that borders the Cloisters roadway and Amery House to be cut or removed.

All trees within the boundaries of Flood Meadows are to be allowed to grow naturally to reflect the ambience of the area. However they are to be maintained in a safe condition to ensure that public safety is not compromised. Trees, which are beyond their normal life expectancy, are damaged by the weather or are a hazard, are to be removed. With the exception of minor pruning all of the major tree work is to be undertaken by EHDC. Special care is to be exercised on the Alton Society Trees for Life trees, due to their association with various individuals and the emotions they engender, so they are not to be maintained without the approval of the Alton Society.

Flood Meadows is a truly unique and superb open space in our town accessible and usable by all. Evidence of this is the many awards that have been won for the area in recent years. It must be nurtured and preserved to ensure all current and future generations benefit. If you feel strongly enough to comment on the above regime or even participate in the monthly volunteer meetings do please contact Mike Heelis on 01420 82780.

Improving the appearance of Alton

by Norman Isham.

The appearance of the Market Square has been enhanced considerably by the improvements made by the new owners of the Market Hotel. The black-and-white decorative theme introduced to the building frontage and the sitting-out enclosure on the Square is very successful, particularly with the unusual black umbrellas over the smart, clean, white-painted bench-tables.

It is clear that much thought was given to this scheme and it has resulted in a significant contribution to the visual quality of our attractive Market Square.

Regrettably, there remain still some aspects of the scene in the Town that need attention – notably, removal of graffiti on the front of some buildings, moving of the ugly bins at Ladyplace car park near the Market Square, painting of the Gardens railings to match the dark green of the new gates alongside and replacing the bollards in the High Street. It is to be hoped that these can be undertaken soon in order to achieve the good visual standard that we all wish to see for our Town.

The Local Development Framework and Core Strategy. Predictions of Future Housing Provision in Alton

by Edward Hepper

Readers will have seen the two articles in The Alton Herald of 30th September drawing attention to the recommendations for future housing in Alton. They are drawn from Chapter 7 Housing of the 'pre-submission draft' of the Core Strategy. It is intended to be published next February, submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in May, subjected to examination in August and adopted in December 2012. **It will then govern development in East Hampshire until 2028.**

The Strategy is the result of extensive public consultation over the last six years or so led by the now disbanded South East England Regional Authority based on overall housing targets set by central government. Our comments during this time were led by the Alton Town Partnership (ATP). In 2009, the ATP led a public consultation to alert Altonians to the possibility of having to accommodate extensive new housing and to try to form an opinion on where they would prefer it to go. In order to do this, we had first to estimate the numbers of new houses required over and above those already under construction, and with planning permission. We looked at the three alternative strategies (CP1, 2 and 3) proposed by EHDC in its then draft Core Strategy and eventually based our estimate on its CH2 which concentrated new housing in Alton and Petersfield plus the principal villages of Four Marks/Mestead, Liphook and Liss, allocated pro rata to their populations; we adjusted this to assign 50% fewer houses to Petersfield because of the anticipated effect of the South Downs National Park. Altonians expressed a firm preference for sites to the north between Holybourne and the A31, and the lower slopes of Cadnam's Farm; they also liked Borover Farm alongside the railway and the Selborne Road although this would endanger the Chawton Gap and contravene the guidelines of the Alton Town Design Statement.

The new draft of the Core Strategy derives its housing distribution from a mix of CH2 and CH3, which includes the rest of the villages throughout the district. This largely makes up for Petersfield's smaller contribution. Alton is left with a figure of 1231 new homes, fairly similar to the prediction in our 2009 consultation. Of this, 772 have already been or are under construction or have planning permission; 259 are expected through windfall sites in the town; and 200 will be on new Greenfield sites. This latter number depends on whether Petersfield maintains its presently planned contribution of 422+ new homes and the other villages their allocations, despite most of them being within the SDNP. These numbers are not finally fixed and depend on the other towns

and villages maintaining their shares. The Core Strategy document implies that EHDC is thinking of the Borovere Farm site as the best greenfield site for development. This is despite the Core Strategy's emphasis on the importance of the Chawton Gap (para 12.9) and the Town Design Statement, which is recognised (para 12.8). One of EHDC's reasons is that developers' contributions would go towards improving the Butts Railway bridges junction. But surely that would require much larger amounts of development to cover that expensive project? **While we think of that, let's have suggestions from you readers as to the ideal form of the replacement bridge!** Wouldn't it be nice to have a really open structure giving arriving travellers a welcoming view of the Butts? However, let us not forget the possible disadvantage to Whitedown Lane, its junction with Chawton Park Road, and to Selborne itself if this improved junction encourages yet more traffic.

This exercise for Alton is also supported by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This has moved on from the unanalysed long list of a couple of years ago. Each site has now been analysed for its potential housing capacity, whether it fulfils planning requirements and the Town Design Statement, and whether there are particular difficulties of access, flooding or other physical problems. The list is being updated annually. .

The table below (edited from Core Strategy para 7.5) shows the proposed distribution of new housing in the EHDC district, excluding the southern fringe near Portsmouth and outside the SDNP which will provide 1300 new homes in addition to Central Hampshire's 4400. [The Whitehill/Bordon eco-town has been omitted from this analysis as it has always been treated as a separate central government project, although EHDC is committed to it; however whether it will be 'eco', have the necessary wider infrastructure, or still have the proposed central government funding are all points to be resolved.]

EHDC [excl southern fringe, outside SDNP and next to Portsmouth] from Core Strategy Table para 7.5 (edited)						
Settlement	No. of completions 2006/07 – 2010/11	Large sites with planning permission* (at April 2011)	Windfall Large & Small urban Potential	No. of dwellings on new greenfield sites	Local affordable housing need allocations	Total 2006-2028
EHDC – Central Hampshire (OUTSIDE National Park)						
Alton	249	523**	259	200		1231
Liphook	223	372	59		25	679
Four Marks/South Medstead	226	85	64		25	400
Grayshott	34	0	21		25	80
Rest of Central Hampshire	323	25	174		100	622
Whitehill Bordon (exising)	155	51	106			312
Sub-Total	1210	1056	683	200	175	3324
EHDC – Central Hampshire (INSIDE National Park)						
Petersfield	273	61	88	X		422+ X
Liss	81	21	60		25	187
Rest of National Park (East Hampshire District part)	172	20	196		150	538
Sub-Total	526	102	344	X		1147+ X
Total	1736	1158	1027	X	350	4471+ X

Note: X = figure to be included from work currently being carried out for the Petersfield Plan.

* Allowance made for those large sites unlikely to come forward.

** Includes 150 dwellings on the former Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital site.

One of the problems of the relatively small number of additional houses to be built in Alton over the next 20 years is that the provision of new affordable housing here – or indeed anywhere in the neighbourhood – under the existing mechanism for building affordable homes will make little impression on the large number of families listed as requiring it, 800 or more in Alton alone.

Some people may be relieved that Alton does not have to provide too many more homes. Others will be disappointed that it does not have the opportunity to grow even further in order to provide the support for a more vibrant town centre. Another issue altogether is whether we would prefer Alton to remain the largest single centre in the District. Should the Whitehill/Bordon eco-town go ahead, it is likely to overtake Alton in size.

Your reactions to this draft of the Core Strategy will be welcomed in this Newsletter and are sought by EHDC.

Planning applications

by Edward Hepper

- **2 Ackender Road.** Scheme by McCarthy & Stone for sheltered 1 – 2 bed flats on 2 – 3 storeys round a courtyard, similar to Willow Court. Pre-application consultation with the public. Scheme generally OK, picking up on a selection of recent developments in Alton.
- **Junior Football Hub, Anstey Park (33615).** We have meetings planned with both Anstey Residents' Group (ARG) and with Coors.
- **73 High Street, Old Post Office (25247).** Scheme for Wimpy take-away and restaurant OK but opening hours as early as 0800am on Sunday mornings, to which we have objected.
- **Chandos Lodge, London Road (50167).** Application to change some housing plans and elevations. Quality not good before and no better now. We are still worried by the lack of commitment to energy efficiency and the access over the Holybourne Gap to traffic lights. We would prefer access to London Road between Chandos Lodge and Claines with a mini-roundabout. We are also concerned that the access road across the Holybourne Gap seems to have spawned a large parking area in the middle, a further erosion of the Gap. We wrote but nevertheless EHDC has permitted.
- **Grange Hotel, London Road. (24917).** Following consultation with the public, an application has now been submitted for a scheme of 11 detached houses on the hotel site. A rather pedestrian 'safe' scheme with no imagination for this important town-entry site nor high enough sustainability levels. A missed opportunity.
- **75 Queens Road (51404).** Side extension to one half of a large Edwardian pair of semi-detached houses. Well designed and even the new front dormer window is unobtrusive. The road is narrow enough that one cannot see both ends of the pair simultaneously so the lack of symmetry is not perceived.
- **14/16 Victoria Road (53645).** Application for two new front porches which will be convenient to the houses but out-of-keeping with small scale Victorian terrace. However there is already precedent nearby so we did not object.

Webwise ...

You can view and comment about planning applications online by entering the application number in the EHDC planning webpage:

<http://planningdevelopment.easthants.gov.uk/donline/acolnetCGI.gov>

There is a one-click link to the EHDC planning search page on the planning page of our website: www.altonsociety.org.uk/planning.html

Landscape Planting

EHDC has advised the local tree wardens that there are funds for more planting and we will be liaising with them. The failed tree in Draymans Way will be replaced.

Alton Community Association and the new Community Centre

We attended the excellent AGM of the Amery Hill Residents' Association and were encouraged by them to support their campaign for reducing after-hours anti-social behaviour. For the Community Centre, we still await a joint meeting with the AHRA to discuss options and then a joint meeting with EHDC.

Core Strategy

EHDC has now issued its "pre-submission draft" of the Core Strategy, which we have examined – *see separate article in this Newsletter*. It looks as if it will include 200 new

homes to be built before 2028 on greenfield sites in Alton, in addition to the 772 already constructed or under construction and the 259 'windfall' sites expected within the town. This draft is expected to be adopted by the end of 2012 after going through the necessary processes, next year.

Transport

EHDC propose to increase car parking charges with the first hour going up from 40p to 50p. Illogically this is before the results of the study they say will take place early next year. We object anyway to this policy of charging for car parking which only discourages people from coming into the town centre which we are trying to make a more viable place. We also object to its inequitable implementation throughout the District and the fact that the large supermarkets' car parks are free, enormously to their advantage and again to the detriment of the town centre.

Draft agenda for the 41st AGM of the Alton Society

Saturday 19th November 2011, 10.30am, Alton Assembly Rooms, Crown Hill

Presentations

- (i) The Society's Individual Award: to John Sadler (retiring Head Groundsman, ATC)
- (ii) The John Ambrose Award – to be announced

Formal Business

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Approval of Previous Minutes (20 November 2010)
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Treasurer's Report
- 6 Adoption of Annual Accounts
- 7 Resolution (proposed by the Committee): that the Individual Subscription be increased from £10 to £12.50 per annum with effect from 1 October 2012
- 8 Constitutional Amendment:

Clause 3(d) currently reads "Membership subscriptions in categories (i), (ii), and (iii) will be decided at the Annual General Meeting for the subsequent year." The Committee recommends that this be replaced by the following wording: "Membership subscriptions in categories (i), (ii), and (iii) will be reviewed and may be adjusted as necessary by the Committee when considered appropriate. Any changes will become effective at the beginning of the financial year (1 October) which follows the Committee's decision, provided that at least two months' notice has been given to members."

- 9 Election of Officers and Committee
- 10 Other Previously Notified Business

Open Forum

Open forum for members to exchange ideas about fostering the health and prosperity of the town centre.

The image shows the letters 'AGM' in a large, bold, teal-colored font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance as if they are floating or standing on a surface.

Unconfirmed Minutes of the 40th Annual General Meeting of The Alton Society held in the Alton Assembly Rooms at 10.30 am on Saturday 20 November 2010

[For confirmation or amendment by the 2011 AGM]

PRELIMINARIES

James Willis (Chairman) welcomed the Mayor of Alton, Councillor David Willoughby, to a gathering attended by 40 members and 5 guests. Before the commencement of formal business, the Chairman presented two awards for Outstanding Services to the Town. These went to Greg Burt (Deputy Town Clerk) and to Tony Cross (Curator of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery), each of whom expressed appreciation of this recognition from the Society. Dr Willis then made a further presentation, of an Alton print, to Les Packett who had chaired the inaugural meeting of the Society on 9 November 1970. In response, Mr Packett offered some reminiscences about the circumstances under which the organization had come into existence, relating most particularly to a scheme (happily defeated) to demolish the Inwood Cottage Hospital building in favour of a new car park. He had compiled an album of relevant documentary material from that period, and he now presented this to the Society as a contribution to its archives. The Chairman thanked him both for this gift and for his address to members.

FORMAL BUSINESS

1 Apologies for Absence

These were received from Herta and John Deverill, and from Don Hammond.

2 Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes of the 39th AGM, held on 14 November 2009, were agreed to be a true record, as proposed by Norman Isham and seconded by Tony Cohen.

3 Matters Arising

With reference to Item 9, the Chairman confirmed that Mike Heelis had acted for the Society in expressing to the Northern Wey Trust our concerns about some aspects of the river's condition.

4 Chairman's Report

The Chairman read his detailed report covering another busy and active year. The text of this was also made available in printed form to those attending.

5 Treasurer's Report

A detailed written statement of accounts for the year ending 30 September 2010 (confirmed as acceptable by the Independent Examiner on 3 November) was presented by Jan Nicholas. In her accompanying comments, she noted in particular that at the final accounting date the Society's current assets within its unrestricted fund stood at £6,876. The reduction from last year's figure of £8,312 was broadly in line with the Committee's budgetary intentions, and reflected almost exactly the amount especially ear-marked for the Planting Project. Some additional cost had also been incurred through enhancing the presentation of the quarterly Newsletter. The Treasurer asked members to note that most of the accounting for the 'Celebrating Alton' event held on 13 November would be included in next year's report. She thanked Jim Dickinson, as Tree Warden, for continuing to donate proceeds from some of the talks that he gave in the area, and she also placed on record her gratitude for the assistance given by Jack Webb, the Independent Examiner of the Society's finances. She concluded by mentioning that, if re-elected, she would be willing to hold the office of Treasurer for one final year, and that within the next twelve months she would be happy to begin to be 'shadowed' by a potential successor.

6 Adoption of Annual Accounts

Adoption of the accounts was carried unanimously, following a proposal made by Edward Hepper and seconded by Jenny Lewis.

7 Resolutions

None.

8 Election of Officers and Committee for 2010-11

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Chris Chappell, who was now standing down, for her valuable contributions to the work of the Committee. He reported that all of the other current members were willing to be re-elected, and that no additional nominations had been received. On a proposal from Stephen Lewis seconded by Geoff Nicholas, the meeting was unanimous in re-appointing the existing team as follows: James Willis (Chairman), Jan Nicholas (Treasurer), Brian Alexander, Mike Biddiss, Nick Carey-Thomas, Jerry Cullum, Mike Heelis, Edward Hepper, Norman Isham, and Jackie Slack. It was noted that the posts of Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Membership Officer remained vacant. The Chairman stressed that he and his colleagues were empowered to make additions to the Committee during the course of the year, and that any members of the Society who might like to 'sample' one of its monthly sessions prior to possibly offering themselves for co-option should let him know accordingly.

9 Other Previously Notified Business

Stephen Lewis offered particular congratulations to the Chairman and the Committee for their sterling work in leading the arrangement of the outstandingly successful 'Celebrating Alton' event held in connection with the Society's 40th anniversary. He hoped that something similar might be arranged in the town on an annual basis, albeit without the main burden of organization necessarily falling on the shoulders of the Alton Society itself. In thanking Mr Lewis for these congratulations, the Chairman mentioned his and the Committee's own appreciation of the particularly vital and direct support that Lesley Willis had given to their preparations.

CONCLUDING SESSION

After the ending of formal proceedings at 11.30 am, members and guests participated in an Open Forum devoted to the current situation concerning planning applications for supermarket development (introduced by Edward Hepper) and Hampshire County Council's policy of severely reducing its funding for the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery (introduced by Brian Alexander). This session concluded at 12.30 pm.



Treloar & Gauvain Memorial Fund

Report on progress to the Alton Society after eight years – Autumn 2011

Dr Christopher Everett

Background

Following the closure of the world famous Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital in 1994, it was decided at a public meeting in 2002 to raise money by public donation for several memorials including

1. A travelling scholarship for an orthopaedic registrar to work in Africa;
2. An annual Book Prize for an orthopaedic nurse from the South East of England and Channel Islands who was nominated by their consultants and who have made a significant difference to the hospital's orthopaedic nursing and patient care.
3. A Commemorative book that could be signed by staff & patients, which is kept in the Alton Museum.

A committee was formed under the umbrella of the Alton Society and until this February Geoff Nicholas was our chairman.

Treloar & Gauvain Travelling Scholarship

Each year £500 is awarded by World Orthopaedic Concern (WOC) and to it is added £1,000 from the Ginger Wilson Fund to total £1,500. We are due to receive a report every year on the work done in Malawi.

Current balance of Alton's donation: £12,447 in the care of WOC.

Treloar & Gauvain Memorial Book Prize Fund

Every year since 2004 the committee have written to 10 or so hospitals south of London asking the consultants to nominate an outstanding orthopaedic nurse. The latter are in turn asked to provide a resume of their achievements and ambitions. Nominees have been of a very high standard and the committee then decide, often with great difficulty, on the winner who is asked to choose a suitable book, up-to £75 in value and it has a beautiful dedication to them, designed by Luath Grant-Ferguson. This year we decided that all the "nominated" nurses should be given an inscribed Certificate.

The winner of the prize is announced on the last day of the Royal College of Nursing Annual Orthopaedic and Trauma Conference each September and this award has recently been described as being 'prestigious'.

Recent winners are listed below, and next year we may ask for less senior nurses to be nominated, and they will be invited to submit an essay on a subject suitable for publication.

Current balance: £1,467.82 is held in an account at LloydsTSB Alton to which the first three committee members are signatories.

Lord Mayor Treloar and Gauvain

Orthopaedic Nursing Memorial Book Prize – Winners 2009 – 2011

- 2009 Clare-Louise Sandell specialist nurse at St. Mary's Hospital, Newport ISLE OF WIGHT received her prize at her hospital at a special ceremony in the presence of her peers and orthopaedic surgeons.
- 2010 Nicola Potter Senior Sister North Hampshire Hospital at BASINGSTOKE received her prize at a special ceremony with her peers and orthopaedic surgeons at the hospital.
- 2011 Allison Armstrong Elective Nurse Practitioner at SOUTHAMPTON General Hospital will formally receive her prize at her Hospital shortly. Her success was announced at the RCN Orthopaedic and Trauma Conference in Bath in September.

Proposed change to subscription rates and to our constitution

At our AGM, on Saturday 19th November, we will be proposing :-

- a) AN INCREASE TO THE MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION, **from £10 to £12.50** – to be implemented from 1st October 2012.

This is less than suggested in the last newsletter but it reflects our awareness of the constraints on members' disposable income and our commitment to a continuing prudent eye on expenditure. It is however important to note that this will be the first increase **for 5 years**.

- b) CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION, to enable any future increase to membership subscriptions to be implemented more promptly (within months). Currently we are constrained by the constitution to await members' approval at the AGM which means nearly a whole year before any increase can be implemented.

Constitution currently reads:-

“Membership subscriptions in categories (i), (ii), and (iii) will be decided at the Annual General Meeting for the subsequent year.”

We wish to change it to:-

“Membership subscriptions in categories (i), (ii), and (iii) will be reviewed and may be adjusted as necessary by the Committee when considered appropriate. Any changes will become effective at the beginning of the financial year (1 October) which follows the Committee's decision, provided that at least two months' notice has been given to members.”

This means that **the management committee** of the Alton Society will be able to assess, determine, approve the need for and issue new Standing Order forms in time for the new start date in that same year.

Any decisions taken will be based upon a **Development Plan** to help clarify where we will designate our diminishing legacy fund (£5658) over the next three to five years and a **Reserves Policy** that ensures that the residue of our capital bequest won't be relied upon for shoring up running costs.

Just as we sought ideas and views from our members about how to spend the Tesco £1million, we will also be seeking your views on suitable projects for our legacy fund.

Look forward to seeing you on 19th November!

Jan Nicholas
Treasurer



THE ALTON SOCIETY

**Alton, our town,
A great place to live**

Working together for the future of Alton

Home The Society Committee Links Planning Membership

"It's good to know you're keeping an eye on things..." (a member of the Society)

www.altonsociety.org.uk

Join the Alton Society now – have a say and a role in the future of our town.

The membership subscription is only £10 per individual (but a second person at the same address can be added free) payable annually on 1st October. You can join by completing a short application form which you can download from our website www.altonsociety.org.uk or ask for our leaflet with standing order form – please agree to the subscription being treated as Gift Aid if you can.

For existing members who already pay by standing order, please note that if you have not done so already, you need to instruct your bank to increase the amount payable to £10. ***For those who pay by cheque, please note that you annual subscription is now due as from 1st October. Please also note the article on p15 and AGM item.***

Contact our Treasurer: Jan Nicholas, 10 Barton End, Alton, GU34 1LD.
Phone: 01420 88411 e-mail: jnich1515@aol.com

Committee Members

Brian Alexander	01420 549552
Mike Biddiss	01420 543132
Nick Carey-Thomas	01420 82195
Jerry Cullum (Newsletter)	01420 543881
Martyn Dell	01420 82978
Brian Good	01420 542819
Mike Heelis MBE	01420 82780
Edward Hepper	01420 544176
Norman Isham OBE	01420 542114
Chris Matthews	
Jan Nicholas (Treasurer)	01420 88411
Jackie Slack	01420 85646
James Willis (Chairman)	01420 83416



**Working
together for the
future of Alton**

info@AltonSociety.org.uk

Please come to this year's AGM – on Saturday 19th November 2011, 10.30am, at Alton Assembly Rooms.

Highlights include the presentation of the Alton Society Individual Award to John Sadler and an open forum for members to exchange ideas about fostering the health and prosperity of the town centre.

See page 11 of this newsletter for the full agenda (subject to change).



Check our website regularly for photos, details of meetings, local news, planning information and more:

www.altonsociety.org.uk