

# Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society

Newsletter 85: Spring 2006  
£2.50 to non-members



[www.taplowsociety.org.uk](http://www.taplowsociety.org.uk)

# Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society

*Formed in 1959 to protect Hitcham, Taplow, and the surrounding countryside from being spoilt by bad development and neglect.*

President : Eva Lipman  
Vice Presidents: Tony Hickman, Derek Walker, Lincoln Lee, Professor Bernard Trevallion  
Chairman: Anne Hanford  
Treasurer: John Hanford  
Secretary: Jeremy Vanstone  
Asst. Secretary: Allyn Anthony  
Committee: Euan Felton, Heather Fenn, Karl Lawrence, Andy McKenzie, Barrie Peroni, Fred Russell, Louise Symonds, Esther Willmore (co-opted), Nick Horsfall (co-opted), Dr. Peter Maddocks (co-opted)  
Contact address: HTPS, 1 Saxon Gardens, Taplow, Maidenhead, SL6 0DD

*Cover picture: Old Court Hotel on the Bath Road, formerly one of the great houses of Taplow called Kenmore House and now due to be demolished and replaced with an apartment block (Fred Russell)*

## Editorial

Without doubt, the key event since the last issue is the significant victory we achieved at the Public Inquiry into the Cliveden affair. We all did well and the National Trust were forced to think again and accept that they were wrong to put profit before the wellbeing of the local peasantry. While technically it was the District Council who held their nerve and refused the application to build 191 houses on the Canadian Red Cross Hospital site, there can be no question but that their backbone was stiffened by the very vociferous and intelligent campaign waged by the the people of Taplow, and your Society was right in there with them all. Even so, together with the Dropmore Estate, we still end up with about 190 more houses - about a 25% increase on the parish housing stock.

For the first time grassroots opinion is being formally sought by the District Council in the preparation of a new Local Plan which will govern our environment for many years to come. These opinions will be embedded in a document called a Statement of Community Involvement which is now a statutory part of the of development of the Local Plan. Our input is in the form of a Taplow Parish Plan managed by Professor Trevallion on behalf of the Parish Council. To that end, volunteers from many sections of the community worked on the preparation of this plan, which represents our vision of what's needed to

maintain or improve our way of life. This Parish Plan has now been formally adopted by the Parish Council and seems to have caught the District Council on the back foot, especially since we are the only parish to produce such a carefully researched and comprehensive input to the District Council's deliberations about the future of the District. The result of this initiative of ours is that other parishes are using our plan as a model! Congratulations are due to all those who have given so freely of their time for the common good.

We may only just be in time to get our voices heard, for the Kraken has awoken! D.S.Smith, the owner of some 48 acres of prime Taplow riverside, which includes St Regis Paper Mills, Skindles, Windrush etc., has decided finally to do something with this investment. To that end they have initiated discussions with the natives on what we think would be an acceptable future use of that land. We trust they are serious. With the kind of money that must be at stake here we can expect some interesting times ahead.

We must hope that having meetings with the locals will not be just to show how caring they are about our feelings, but that they will take note of these, and it will lead to a positive outcome which will satisfy all parties.

*Fred Russell*

# Dropmore House - Past and Future

The Dropmore Estate, created by Lord Grenville at the end of the 18th century, at one time extended from Dorney to Egypt and included Burnham Beeches. The grounds around the house were renowned for an extensive pinetum, containing many rare species and considered to be unequalled in Europe, an Italian garden and a number of other interesting features, some of which are listed. The latter included a grotto, an ornate dog's tomb, an aviary, an ice house, a lake, terraces, gates and a loggia associated with the Italian garden, as well as extensive decorative trellis work adjoining the main house.

On Grenville's death the property passed to his wife and was subsequently owned by the Fortescue family, the newspaper proprietor Lord Kemsley, the University of San Diego and a diplomat cum property speculator. It is now in the hands of Corporate Estates.

It has been said that Grenville found a wilderness and left a paradise; the owner prior to Corporate Estates found a paradise, albeit somewhat run down, and after two fires (the first of which resulted in losses estimated at £60 million), left a wilderness. On acquiring the property, however, Corporate Estates began clearance to open up the major features of the estate as a preliminary to the restoration of house and grounds.

Plans were drawn up by Papa Architects for Corporate Estates in 2002. The proposals were comprehensive and included the restoration of the house and its subdivision into apartments, the development of the semi-detached property at Cabrook as a single dwelling, the conversion of the water tower into a house and use of the footprint comprising stables, outbuildings and other buildings to provide 18 terraced houses. In all, this makes up a grand total of 54 dwellings. Following an extensive landscape survey, outline proposals were prepared for the restoration of the formal gardens, lawns, woodlands and garden ornamentation as well as provision for new gardens in the curtilage of the house. The planning application was submitted in 2003 and permission granted in 2004.

On-site preparation for building work commenced in 2005. Currently two residents' car parks are under construction by MP Brothers and protection has been provided for

natural features to be retained. The architect's research in the British Library revealed the original design for the listed Oak Lodge and detailed plans to restore the lodge to its early state are being prepared. Plans are also being prepared for Taplow Lodge, which falls within Wycombe District. In view of the large numbers and species of bats found in buildings to be demolished, the architects, in association with English Nature, propose to apply for planning permission to construct a large bat roost. An architectural historian is being appointed to assist in the restoration of the aviary. Detailed landscape proposals are also being prepared.

A feature of this development has been the provision by George Kalopedis, the architect, and the developers for involvement of the community and also their concern that the proposals shall be sensitive to both natural and built environments. In order to continue to engage the community in this project the architect proposes to have another open day when a conducted tour will be arranged for interested parties. The Dropmore Society will provide information on this.

It is difficult not to compare all of the above with the arrogant approach of the National Trust and Countryside Properties, regarding their development of an urban housing estate in Cliveden Historic House and Garden, which was entirely contemptuous of local opinion.

*Bernard Trevallion*



**Village  
Green  
Party**

**Saturday June 17th  
See insert for details**

# Taplow Parish Plan update

Copies of the Taplow Parish Plan are now with the parish, district and county councils, the government of the South East, the constituency MP Dominic Grieve, and several environmental and community organisations.

The current status is that the Taplow Parish Plan has been adopted by Taplow Parish Council. It has received favourable reaction from the District and County Councils and has been commended as a model for other parish plans in the area. However, the Parish Council still awaits a formal response from South Bucks District Council.

Although, unfortunately, parish plans are not part of the statutory process, it is clear that it is the intention of government that they should form an integral element in reaching decisions on development matters and service provision as they affect the parish or town in question.

Taplow Parish Council has overall responsibility for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, updating and financing of its Parish Plan. In order to do this it has set up mechanisms to ensure effective implementation. It is in the process of appointing a Standing Community Forum, which will consist of representatives from interested groups in Taplow and the Parish Council. Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society was invited to send two representatives, so Anne Hanford and Eva Lipman were nominated by the society committee.

An Implementation and Monitoring Group will be set up in due course to carry out

executive actions. In the meantime, an Interim Implementation and Monitoring Group is already active in pursuing immediate issues. These have included the three major consultations with South Bucks District Council, i.e. Statement of Community Involvement, Core Strategy Issues and Options, and the Review of the Taplow Conservation Area. The submitted statement on the Statement of Community Involvement disagrees with the method of consultation; the response to the Core Strategy Issues and Options expresses the Taplow Parish Plan priorities, which, it is hoped, will be included in the Local Development Framework.

The Interim Implementation and Monitoring Group has also had two constructive meetings, firstly with South Bucks District Council Planning Policy representatives and secondly with representatives of Bucks County Council and Chiltern and South Bucks Transportation Area. These meetings provided the opportunity to raise key issues contained in the Parish Plan.

The Interim Implementation Group is chaired by Professor Bernard Trevallion. He is anxious to ensure that further work on the Parish Plan is representative of the wishes of the Taplow community. He would be pleased to provide further information on the Parish Plan and its future development. (Contact details: [trevallion@btopenworld.com](mailto:trevallion@btopenworld.com) Tel. 01628 523887.)

*Anne Hanford*

## The Spy in the Wheelie Bin

Beware! Be very aware! Radio Frequency Identity is about. A chip is embedded in your wheelie bin and it identifies your bin. It tells the waste collectors and their masters that the bin and its contents are exclusive to you and your household. Today the information is used only to

assure the Masters that the bin has been collected, emptied and returned to the right place. Tomorrow the information will have added value. The Masters will know the quantity and make-up of your household waste. Perhaps to charge by weight for the waste collection. Perhaps to charge a penalty for placing 'recycle and compost' waste

in the wrong bin. Perhaps to build a picture of the life style that creates such types of waste. Even perhaps to link to your ID card, to expand your security profile. An Orwellian fantasy? Of course! But the first building block is in place - the chip-in-the-bin.

*Karl Lawrence*

# Cliveden Victory

On November 7, 2005 the Society won a famous victory over the National Trust and Countryside Properties, with the announcement by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that he had rejected their appeal for 191 residential units on the Canadian Red Cross Hospital site at Cliveden. The Trust has now announced that it will build only the 135 age-restricted units for which it had planning permission.

It is worth remembering that the planning officers of the SBDC had recommended that the 191 scheme be accepted, and had even warned of significant costs of a lost appeal being awarded against the Council. If the councillors had accepted their advice, we would be facing the environmental and traffic problems which (everyone now agrees) would have ensued from this huge development.

On hearing of the original application, the very effective 'Cliveden No' campaign was launched under the inspired direction of Euan Felton, with posters designed by Sheila Horton (and generously printed free by one of our members) put up throughout the village (and even on the Red Cross Hospital site itself!). An exhibition was held in the barn on the Village Green, a website created, and MPs and councillors lobbied. We packed the council meeting room on the day of the decision, and although some members of the planning committee (including the then chairman) supported the application, Councillors Lidgate and Sandy persuaded a majority of the committee to reject it.

We thought that the rejection by the SBDC, the 'Cliveden No' Campaign and a survey of Taplow residents showing overwhelming opposition to the plans, would persuade the NT - who always claimed to take note of local objections - to drop the plans. However, they did not, and in fact launched an appeal against the decisions. Karl Lawrence and Euan Felton, among others, proposed a motion at the AGM of the NT condemning the NT for this decision. The vote was won on a count of members' votes by 32,000 to 28,000. However, the chairman of the NT cast his 19,000 proxy votes in favour of the NT so the motion was officially lost! During the meeting the NT chairman claimed that the 135 option was not viable and denied that it had received a formal offer for this from a developer. The NT later had to retract this when the developer produced a letter from them acknowledging the offer!

At this stage we were depressed. It was almost taken for granted that the NT would win on appeal, since the SBDC officers had said so. The first suggestion that the NT case might not be as strong as had been thought came when they suddenly put in another application for 170 houses, without the affordable houses that had been in the original application. They claimed this took account of local opinion, and indeed were successful in persuading a councillor and an ex-councillor that this was the best option available. They claimed that it was not only better than the 191 application, but would also save the council a substantial amount of money in legal costs for the appeal. However, we were successful again in persuading the councillors at SBDC to reject the application, although on this occasion the officers also recommended this on a technicality (ironically, the lack of affordable housing!).

There were some who certainly felt we should have accepted the 170 option. However, the next sign of weakness from the NT came with an extraordinary letter from Fiona Reynolds, the NT's chief executive, saying that they had done a survey and, lo and behold, the 135 option was viable, and that they would now build it if the 191 was rejected.

The enquiry lasted eight days and took place in August 2005 at the SBDC's offices in Capswood. For the NT were a QC (rumoured to be on a retainer of £30,000 a day!) and about five other expert witnesses, who all remained for the eight days. Against the appeal were, for the SBDC, a barrister and planning and traffic experts, who, with the exception of the barrister, were only present when giving evidence. Taplow Parish Council was represented for the whole period by Euan Felton, and on a number of days by Mary Trevallion. The Society was represented by Anne and John Hanford for the eight days, and by numerous others who came and went during the proceedings. The people who gave evidence included Karl Lawrence, Prof. Bernard Trevallion, Richard Dawson and Eva Lipman.

The nub of the case for the NT, presented by the QC, was that whereas the application for the 191 had been rightly rejected on sustainability grounds by the SBDC (so much for the advice of the planners!), new evidence had now emerged, which was the basis of the appeal. The 'new' evidence was that the NT had declared that if the 191 application was turned down, they would

now build the existing application for 135 units - hence the Fiona Reynolds letter. Under the Byzantine rules of planning applications, this meant that the 191 had to be compared with the 135 against current planning guidelines. Of course the 135, which had been allowed much earlier, did not comply with many of these, and the QC stated he would show that therefore the 191 appeal should be allowed. The rest of the enquiry therefore consisted of comparing the two schemes against current guidelines.

Before the opening of the enquiry, however, the two sides agreed that some facts would not be disputed and it was in one of these that the NT's traffic expert made a critical error. To support their case, the NT had commissioned traffic surveys on two communities, which they claimed most nearly resembled the traffic liable to be generated by the two schemes. Naturally these were carefully chosen to support the 191 scheme, and indeed the NT's traffic expert's evidence showed that it would actually generate 20% less traffic than the 135. This was surprising, but the NT liked the conclusion so much they didn't check the figures too well, and put them forward as evidence supporting their case. Unfortunately, as the SBDC's expert was able to show, in the calculation they had compared a 24-hour survey for the 135 scheme with a 12-hour one for the 191. When the correct figures were inserted it was found that the 191 scheme generated over twice the traffic of the 135 scheme! The NT had to accept this conclusion, which was critical to the appeal.

The second argument put forward by the NT was that the 191 scheme complied with the requirement that there should be at least 30 units per hectare, but the 135 did not. Clearly, the number of units per hectare depended not only on the number of units, but also on the area of the site. The NT had included the whole area up to the boundary with the Cliveden estate. However, the SBDC's expert argued that this was wrong and that under the regulations significant buffer zones at the boundary should be excluded.

Esoteric arguments then took place as to what was a significant buffer zone and what was a significant open space, which should be included. The NT had done a superb landscape job around the houses (including the provision of low scrub and holly bushes) and as a result the inspector agreed in his report that the SBDC were right and the 135 did meet the 30 units per hectare requirement.

Justice cannot be done in the space available to the significant contributions made by a number of the Society's witnesses, but a couple of amusing incidents are worth recording. In the first of these, the condescending QC cross-examining Euan Felton produced a document referring to the area, which Euan had been unable to find. Unfortunately for the QC, as Euan pointed out to laughter in the public gallery, it referred to the area around Taplow Court, not Cliveden and had been signed by Lord Desborough, not Lord Astor! In the second, the timetables for the buses, which the NT claimed would be used by all the schoolchildren and commuters to the station, were challenged by Richard Dawson, who asked if the NT had actually tried running buses over that route at that time in the morning. There was a deadly silence from the NT. It was clear they had not, and as a result Richard was able to pour scorn on the proposals.

The Inspector in his report felt that the NT had greatly over-estimated the contribution the buses would make to reducing car usage. He also said that the attempted restriction of car ownership, and therefore usage, by providing only 1.5 car spaces per unit in the 191 proposal (as opposed to 2.2 in the 135) would be unlikely to have the effect the NT claimed and quoted evidence we put forward from Cedar Chase (which has only 1.5 spaces per house) to show it does not.

His report rejected the appeal, citing the unsustainability of the site in terms of traffic generation as the main reason. His conclusion was in fact that the 191 scheme was 'an inappropriate use of the Green Belt'. To our surprise the findings were not only accepted but endorsed by the Office of the Deputy Minister. One must ask what on earth the NT is doing, promoting for its own interests something which even John Prescott thinks is an inappropriate use of the Green Belt.

The NT is now clearing the site and has announced it will build the 135 scheme. Their plan to call it Cliveden Village has aroused considerable opposition. There is no church, school or pub, or indeed any other facilities in the scheme that one would expect in a village. It is obviously an attempt to mislead potential purchasers, and it is to be hoped that the Parish Council or SBDC (who we understand have to approve the name) will not do so. The units, incidentally, are said to be priced at between £400,000 and £1,000,000, if you are interested.

*John Hanford*



See Cliveden Road and entrance details  
at the top of drawing 7/100 Issue 4,  
7/100 Issue 4, 7/100 Issue 4

**Plan of the proposed development at Cliveden  
(The '135 plan')**

*Reproduced by kind permission of the National Trust*

# Church Recorders



If you had been into St Nicolas Church on the last Friday of each month at the beginning of 2003, you would have found it alive with the members of Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross Church Recorders,

who are not players of shrill woodwind, or even weird young men with earphones and recondite technology, but an enthusiastic group of folk armed with notebooks, binoculars and tape measures who were making an exact record of the interior of the church, its roof, walls, floor and furnishings.

The completed record was presented to the church on Sunday, December 4, 2005. Highlights are the Rosencrantz stained glass windows, the floor brasses and the drawing of the old church. The record may be viewed by arrangement with the Rector, the Reverend Alan Dibden.

Church recorders are devoted amateurs who work in churches of all denominations in England, Scotland and Wales, building a national record of what Simon Jenkins has described as 'a gallery of vernacular art... where the breeze of history makes its imprint' (*England's Thousand Best Churches*, published by Penguin Books).

Taplow residents have been involved in church recording since its inception in 1971 following the great Victoria and Albert Exhibition of Church Art. The exhibition revealed that many parishes were unaware of the treasures in their churches; perishable items were at risk and robberies were increasing at a frightening rate. Curators at the Victoria and Albert Museum discussed these problems with leading members of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) and with the support of the Bishop of Buckingham, members of NADFAS in South Buckinghamshire set about establishing a Church Recording Scheme. Mrs Jane Wright, who lived at Elibank and who is fondly remembered by her many Taplow friends, was one of those founder recorders and took part in the trial records of churches at Chalfont, Hambledon and Nether Winchendon.

Early supporters of the infant movement were Sir Roy Strong and Sir John Pope-

Hennessey, and Kodak were generous in their help with photographic costs. By the end of 1973, seven groups of church recorders, including our own Thames Group, were in action, led by a national executive in London. Ahead lay the task of recording as many as possible of the 16-17,000 churches of the United Kingdom. Those original seven groups have multiplied to more than 200 and new groups form every year.

The early records were simple A4 sheets stapled between uniform green paper covers; today's are handsome bound volumes with almost every recorded item illustrated by coloured photographs or line drawings. The building and its contents are recorded in eight categories: memorials, metalwork, stonework, woodwork, textiles, paintings, library, windows and miscellaneous. Members of a group usually build up considerable expertise in their chosen category. The church is tackled systematically, starting from the north-east corner of the chancel and working round the compass, not forgetting the bell-chamber! Notes are made and the fair copy written up to a common format, starting with a general description, which may well be long and very detailed, for example in the case of a finely carved pulpit or a large stained glass window. The materials, measurements, age and provenance of each item are listed and references given wherever possible. Mysteries arise and, occasionally, exciting discoveries are made, especially when the silver is taken out of the bank or when the detritus in the tower is dusted and sifted.



Most parish churches can be recorded in under two years but the record of Manchester Cathedral took nine years. When the checking and rechecking, collating, printing and, finally, the binding are complete, five handsome copies are ready. The principal copy is presented to the church, usually during a regular service; further copies go to the diocesan archives, the Council for the Care of Churches, the Victoria and Albert Museum Art Library and NADFAS archives. For obvious reasons, these volumes are kept



secure and are open only to scholars and readers with a legitimate interest.

The well-equipped recorder has warm socks, thick trousers and fingerless gloves for winter work and there is always a flask of coffee in their large recording bag alongside a notepad, pencils, tape-measure and a copy of the recorders' bible, *Inside Churches: A Guide to Church Furnishings*. The vocabulary of the recorder is rich indeed; terms such as 'parclose', 'credence', 'entablature' and 'iron loop-drop twist latch' slip from his tongue and are very useful when solving crosswords!

Over 1,000 churches have been recorded in the 33 years since 1973. Mrs Sheila Peroni leads the recorders of Thames ADFAS in the South Mercia area, which covers Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, and the recorders from Taplow work on metalwork and woodwork. They have completed records of churches at Chinnor, Hughenden, Lane End, Cadmore End and Nether Winchendon and in April will start at Radnage.

*Helen Grellier*

## Hands Off Our Bridge!

Maidenhead Bridge, listed Grade 1, is the symbol of Maidenhead. So the astonishing proposal from a South Bucks councillor to knock it down and replace it with 'something classy' was met firstly with disbelief and then with horror. If there is a traffic problem along A4 between Maidenhead Police Station and Lake End, it is not caused by the single carriageway road and bridge, but by the junctions, traffic lights and roundabouts along the route. Even if the problem is sufficient to justify another river crossing, which is debatable, that is not a reason to demolish the most handsome of the many 18th century stone bridges across the Thames. If either the South Bucks or Royal Borough should pursue this bizarre suggestion, Maidenhead Heritage Trust will make its protest heard, loud and clear. So will the rest of Maidenhead: the *Advertiser* has rarely received so many letters of outrage.

Replacing a timber bridge dating back to the mid-13th century, our bridge was built between 1772 and 1777 to designs by Sir Robert Taylor, whose other works include Harleyford Manor and Lincolns Inn. It was originally designed with 15 arches 'in the manner of Westminster (bridge)', but was actually built with 13 arches. The *voussoirs* around each arch are in Taylor's signature style, known as 'vermiculated rustication' – very deeply cut, and they look like cheese which has been nibbled by a mouse.

Until very recently the Borough boundary, which generally runs down the centre of the river, went ashore at Skindles and round the

Taplow end of the bridge, precisely so that both ends of it should be in Maidenhead. Now the boundary goes straight down the river, and half the bridge is in Bucks, the other half in Berkshire.

*Reprinted from Maidenhead Heritage Centre Newsletter No. 42, March 2006.*

*Ed. It appears we have gained half of the bridge as a result of the boundary change - so when can we start calling it the Maidenhead and Taplow Bridge?*



# A Good Neighbour

One of a number of people living in South Bucks, whose community and volunteering work has been recognised by the Chairman of South Bucks District Council (Councillor Dr Barry White) is Mrs Joy Marshall of Ellington Gardens, Taplow, who was recently presented with a framed certificate for her individual long service community work in Taplow.

Joy was a council member of the Taplow Parish Council for 13 years where her helpfulness and diligence were much in evidence, particularly in the research / planning field. Her work is still of assistance to local residents who, in receipt of planning applications, are sometimes at a loss as to the impact these might have on their homes. It means nothing to her to access Council records by travelling to Windsor or Denham, or even Aylesbury, by public transport, whilst her continued long-standing work in voluntarily checking 25 local footpaths on foot (accompanied by her dog Sammy), for



missing gates, walk markers, overhanging tree branches, etc., for the Parish Council is a further example of her public service. Perhaps her most unusual way of protecting our local heritage is by keeping an eye on the possibility of unauthorised damage or destruction of listed trees.

It was no surprise to anyone knowing her that when a local distributor for the Jubilee River Churches Parish Magazine was needed in a part of Taplow that she should have volunteered for the job. At the end of each month the familiar sight of a figure bent against a winter's wind and rain, with scarf flying, one hand firmly on hat and the other holding a bag of magazines and Sammy's lead, tells us that Joy is on her way.

Bless her for all that.

*Lee Grey*

*Reprinted from the Jubilee River Churches Parish Magazine*

## Notice of AGM

The Annual General Meeting of Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society will take place at 8 pm on Friday October 13 at the Taplow Village Centre, High Street, Taplow.

A detailed agenda will be included in the autumn edition of the Newsletter, which will be distributed shortly before the AGM.

Nominations for the President, Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and committee members should be sent to: The Secretary, Jeremy Vanstone, 8 Stockwells,

Taplow, SL6 0DB, no later than September 22.

Please ensure that nominees are members of HTPS and are willing to stand. Nominations should be signed by the proposer and seconder.

### Warning!!

The Chairman, Anne Hanford, has served for 4 years and does not wish to continue in that role. The Secretary, Jeremy Vanstone, has served for more than 6 years and also does not wish to

continue. Several of the other committee members have also served on the committee for some years. The Society is in urgent need of active contributors to serve in these roles. Unless they are forthcoming, there is every danger that the Society will cease to operate. As can be seen from items in the Newsletter, and on the website, much work has been done that is valuable to the Taplow community. It would be a pity to lose this in future through lack of local support.

# The Paper Mill Site

St Regis Paper Company Ltd is beginning a process of investigating options for the future of its Taplow site. This has been prompted by the emerging Local Development Framework for South Bucks that will replace the existing Local Plan to provide a new planning policy context for the District.

This presents a unique opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of the area known by some as the 'Taplow Triangle'. Various factors, such as the potential for improvements to the River Thames and landscape setting within the Green Belt, open space provision, transportation and access, public accessibility and the consideration of sympathetic redevelopment can all be discussed.

The company has appointed property advisers GVA Grimley LLP to assist St Regis in assessing alternatives and in liaising with South Bucks District Council, the local community and other interested parties. Part of the process will involve evaluating local needs including residential, employment, leisure and community requirements.

During this process, Taplow Mill and its associated activities will continue to operate as usual and provide customers with a full service. It is inevitable that the planning process will create speculation about the future of the Mill but St Regis is taking this action in order to establish the options open to it. The timescale for the consultation process is likely to be around nine months, running in parallel with the preparation of the Local Development Framework. Once it is completed, St Regis will be seeking a new policy context for the site and may apply for planning permission to develop appropriate parts of the site within a comprehensive environmental framework.

The whole freehold site covers approximately 48 acres and comprises the Mill, the former Skindles Hotel, Windrush Garage (on a lease) and the Severnside Recycling Depot, as well as large areas of open space with potential amenity value.

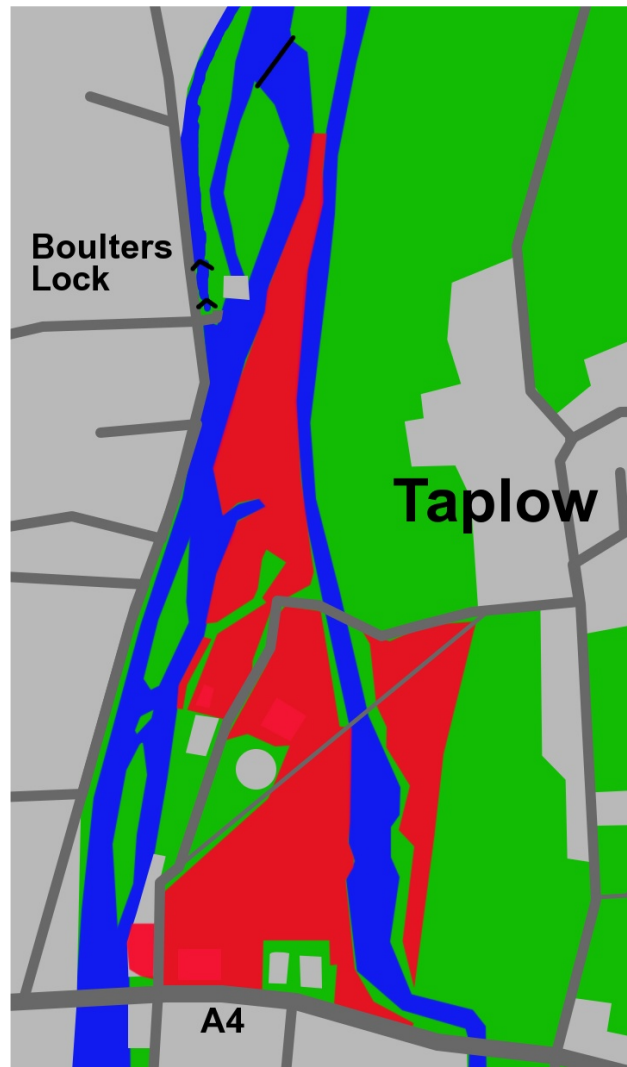
A number of base line studies of planning, transport, flood risk, ecology, landscape, archaeology and contamination are being undertaken. These will help to develop a

planning framework for the site and ensure that due regard is given to all important environmental considerations.

St Regis will keep interested parties informed at major steps throughout the process. Initial discussions with Taplow Parish Council and other local amenity and stakeholder groups have already commenced.

There will be a public consultation exercise to seek opinions on any indicative proposals for the site. Details of this exercise and further news announcements, will be released when appropriate and notices placed on the St Regis website.

*Statement by the St Regis company*



*The St Regis land is marked in red.*

# Letter to Lincoln

This issue of the Newsletter bears the unhappy burden of the news that for personal and family reasons you will no longer be providing us with your regular contributions, which gave us all such interesting insights into life in Taplow. Your involvement with the Society's newsletter goes back at least 25 years and I count 47 articles over that time. (I am missing copies of the newsletter predating issue number 38 and a few intermediate ones so I have no means of knowing of contributions earlier than that.)

I have now been editor since issue number 70, in autumn 1998, and have produced 16 issues during that time, and it was always your copy arriving earlier than anyone else's that finally got me off the pot and signalled the beginning of the production stage. (Usually, in fact, the arrival of your copy triggered an almighty panic since I

am an inveterate last-minuter.) Your stories were the anchor pieces and allowed me to start the process of deciding how it was all going to look, since my amateur editorial method used to involve me in using the format of the previous issue as a pro-forma of the current issue, and I gained great satisfaction from putting your material into place. I had started. Without this impetus, how am I going to cope in future?

However, I have been browsing through the old copies of the Newsletter and I intend to resurrect a number of my favourite ones to reprint from time to time and I hope you

won't mind. I think I speak for all your faithful fans, Lincoln: your whimsical contributions will be greatly missed in these pages.

*Fred Russell*



## TRUG

According to our man at TRUG (Taplow Rail Users Group), Jon Willmore, the World Rowing Championships are to be held at the Eton Rowing Club this year and Taplow Station will be used as one of the main 'feeders' for club members and visitors. So around August we can expect a major influx of both drivers and rail passengers. This should put Taplow on the

map. And although it is rather a long way ahead, at the 2012 Olympic Games Taplow will be one of the main rail feeders for the rowing events, again at Eton.

Incidentally TRUG has an office at the station (usually open on a Thursday), which is collecting and displaying a variety of historical information as part of the Brunel bi-centennial celebrations.

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Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society or its Committee.

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