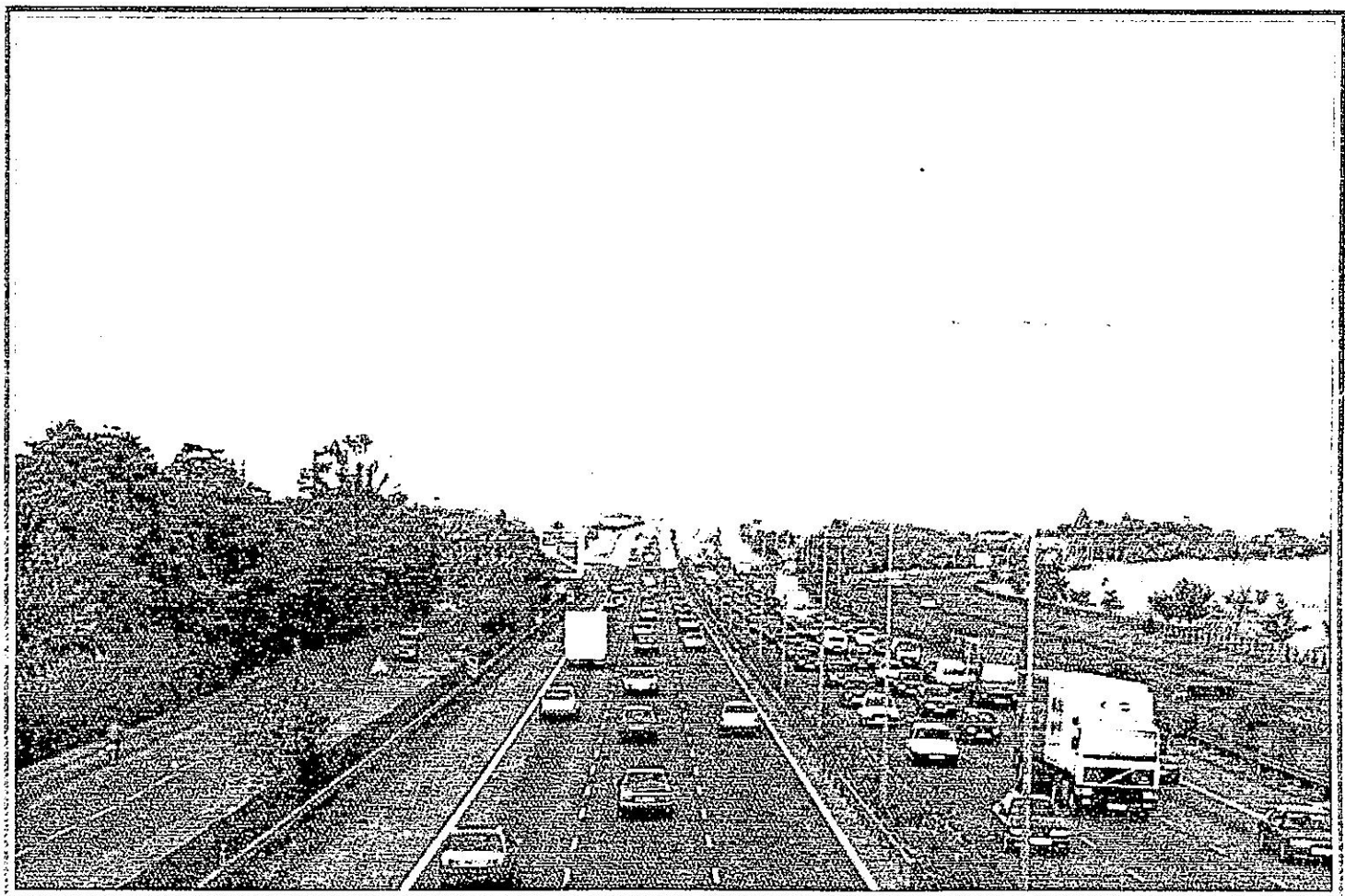


# Hitcham & Taplow Preservation Society

Newsletter no 65  
Autumn 1993



# Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society

## Objectives of the Society

The Society was formed in 1959; one of its most important objects is:-

".....securing the protection from disfigurement or injury of the countryside and rural surroundings and amenities of the Parishes of Hitcham and Taplow....."

The Society therefore scrutinises many Planning Applications and Appeals and makes constructive comments when appropriate; it also gives evidence at Local Planning Enquiries.

## Officers and Executive Committee Members

President	Dr John Kennedy
Vice Presidents	Mrs Eileen Law, Mrs Anne Milne, Mrs Sheila Horton, Mr Louis Freedman CBE and Mrs Helen Lee
Chairman	Mr Bill Ball
Vice-Chairman	Mr Michael Goss
Treasurer	Mr Hugh Nixon
Secretary	Mr Bob Hanbury
Committee Members	Miss Maureen Dennis, Mrs Eva Lipman, Mr Andy McKenzie, Mr Dick Nutt, Mr Barrie Peroni and Miss Gwen Pollock.

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*The front cover shows the M4 Motorway, looking Eastwards towards Jct 5, Langley with Riding Court Road on the left and Major's Farm Road on the Right - see article on page 2 and enclosed brochure.*

## Editorial

In the editorial to the last Newsletter, I was a bit blunt about the lack of support from you, the Members of the Society and readers of the Newsletter.

I am pleased to say that you turned up trumps - seven rang up or spoke to me when we happened to meet and four wrote to me. Thank you very much; I am very glad to realise that you are alive out there. The chief area where we still need help is:-

A volunteer to be nominated for one of the Society's posts which are vacant or one where the incumbent would like to be relieved.

The number on the Committee is now down to 11 as you can see from the list opposite (Vice Presidents are not included in the number) and we are allowed 15, so we have four vacancies; anybody interested please contact a member of the Committee; arrangements will be made for you to attend a Committee Meeting to find out what it is like - you don't have to commit yourself blind as it were.

The other unresolved problem is who on earth said the quotation I gave; I know it exists as it has been heard twice on the BBC. The general opinion is Burke but no-one can quote chapter and verse; one of my correspondents added:-

"Burke lived from 1730 to 1797; he was a politician and a wonderfully eloquent writer. Surprisingly Benham, who quotes about 150 of Burke's aphorisms, does not include it..."

The same writer gave three similar quotations, so we now have:-

"All that is needed for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." *Burke (?)*

"Evil comes of omission as well as commission."

*Aurelius Antoninus - 100 BC*

"He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it." *Martin Luther King*

Any further information will be gratefully accepted.

oooOOOooo

With this Newsletter is the brochure on the widening of "our" section of the M4. There is a Questionnaire for you to complete and return direct to the Department of Transport by 31<sup>st</sup> December 1993.

Tel:661588  
12<sup>th</sup> December 1993

Dick Nutt  
(Not the Editor)

## Village Green Party

Next year the Party will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1994 from 6pm to 10 pm as usual.

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

The Newsletter is published by the Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society. It is edited and printed for photo-copying by Dick Nutt, Lea Rig, Hitcham Road, Burnham, SL1 7DX; tel: 661588.

## **M4 Widening from Jct 5 to Jct 8/9**

*Below I have tried to give you the facts about this proposal. Any opinion expressed is that of the writer and not of the Committee or the Society. If you are interested, send in the enclosed Questionnaire to arrive by 31st December.*

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### **Introduction**

The proposals, from the Motorway Widening Unit, part of the Department of Transport, were announced in October and although well covered in the local press week ending 9 October 1993 the plans were virtually incomprehensible being in black and white.

Enclosed is the complete brochure from the DoT Motorway Widening Unit. Please note that the completed Questionnaire must reach them by 31st December 1993.

The full Assessment Report with plans @ 1/2,500 are available for inspection at Maidenhead Library and elsewhere.

### **The Proposal**

To build a new dual, 3-lane trunk road alongside the existing motorway from Junction 5 to Junction 8/9 and to realign and reconstruct M4 itself.

Dealing with the changes to M4 first; there will only be junctions at No 5, Langley and No 8/9, Maidenhead. The long distance motorist will have an easier run as there will be no local traffic and there will be no vehicles changing lanes after coming on or about to leave at Junctions 6 & 7 which no longer connect to the motorway.

The New Trunk Road will run from Junction No 5 to Junction No 8/9 and will have junctions:-

- ♦With London Road A4 at Junction No 5.
- ♦With Datchet Road B376, but only to or from London.
- ♦With Slough Road B3022, but only to or from London.
- ♦With Eton Relief Road/Tuns Lane A355 - previously Jct. No 6.
- ♦With Huntercombe Spur - previously Jct No 7.
- ♦With A308M - previously Jct. No 8/9.

In addition, at Junction 8/9, the New Trunk Road will connect directly with A404M (no junction to worry about) and hence straight through, via the new stretch of A404, to Junction No 4 of M40 at High Wycombe.

Thus if you want to go to London, you would enter the New Trunk Road at one of the Junctions shown above and travel to Junction 5 where a simple slip road (not available to any other traffic) will put you on M4. You would reverse the process on returning from London. If your destination was Westbound down M4 you would enter the New Trunk Road (but not by junctions at B376 or B3022) and travel to Junction 8/9 where, again, a simple slip road would put you on M4; you would reverse the process on returning. In all these cases you would only have to negotiate one roundabout to enter M4, just as at present.

### **The Reasons**

These are given by the DoT and include:-

- ♦Growth of traffic on the M4 is exceeding the National average.
- ♦Queuing is occurring over increasingly long periods.

♦About half of all the existing traffic is local from Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor.

♦The existing surface of the motorway is becoming worn out and major maintenance works will soon be necessary.

### Effects

A4. At certain times of the day M4 is so congested nowadays that knowledgeable local motorists prefer to use A4 Bath Road and we all know how congested that gets. As the New Trunk Road will not carry any of the through traffic (which is on M4), it seems that it will be able to handle this local traffic (especially as there are two new junctions - see above) and, hence, reduce the congestion on A4. *This sees to be an infinitely preferable solution to the proposal for dualling A4 with new roundabouts.*

In our area, the main disturbance will be the demolition of a few houses in Old Marsh Lane (according to the 1/2,500 plans, Nos 6, 8, & 10). *There is an Alternative Proposal for this section where all the extra land will be taken on the South side leading to demolition, according to the 1/2,500 plans, of No 2 and next door in Meadow Way, Dorney Reach; please see the brochure under "Alternative" for details and note that this is specifically selected for comment on the Questionnaire.*

### Conclusion

Please read the Brochure and send in the Questionnaire to the Department of Transport by 31<sup>st</sup> December.

Dick Nutt

### Notes on Aircraft Noise

*These notes are contributed by the Society's Secretary, Bob Hanbury; please note the action suggested in the last paragraphs.*

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It is proposed to change the rules about night flying. A complicated set of new rules has been proposed by the Civil Aviation Authority which purports to be "better" and or "fairer". Essentially it means more night flights.

Personally I am not interested in the technical details; the matter is simple; I do not want to be woken up in the middle of the night. If I am woken by an aircraft making a certain noise level, it doesn't make any difference if it makes twice as much - I am still woken up!

The proposal is that instead of having one really noisy aircraft (which wakes you up) we will have two flights each making half the amount of noise. Since they both wake you up this is a very poor argument.

Letters or comments, in favour or against, should reach the following address by 31<sup>st</sup> December for the rules that will apply next summer and by 11<sup>th</sup> February for the rules that will apply for the period Winter '94 to Summer '98:-

Mr Kearsey  
Head of Noise Certification  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Aviation House  
South Area  
Gatwick Airport  
West Sussex  
RH6 OYR.

If aircraft noise concerns you, please write today.

Bob Hanbury

## **Burnham Abbey**

*This is contributed by Michael Bailey, local Architect, Historian and Society Member. With his permission, it has been condensed; the Editor hopes that Michael's sense or intention has not been altered.*

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As an outlying member of the Society it is pleasant to have an architectural project nearer home for once and I thought that fellow members of the Society might be interested.

The project concerned Burnham Abbey, one of the most important Listed Buildings in the area. First of all there was the provision of better facilities for the more elderly Sisters and then the investigation of the causes of new cracks in the old walls and in the concrete roof beams of the 1960s Gatehouse.

### **The Gatehouse**

It appeared that the flat roof of the Gatehouse was moving fractionally with varying wind and snow loads and this was causing the cracking. The only solution seemed to be to provide a conventional pitched, plain tile, roof and this, with a new bow window, would create more space in the library.

This led to providing lift access to the library. I had the intricacies of the workings of the rather basic existing two-storey lift explained to me by an elderly lady who deftly turned her walking stick round to use the hooked end to operate door handles at a distance.

### **The Cob Wall**

While digging the new foundations, which had to go down to the same depth as the old Abbey church, we discovered that the soil in that area was a gritty form of brickearth with an admixture of fine particles of chalk. It was exactly the same colour and consistency of the material in the cob wall which still exists on the Abbey's eastern boundary and can be seen when driving down Huntercombe Lane. As you can see from the drawing opposite, it is lime-washed and has a small roof.

It is a pity that other people do not appreciate it and care for it as much as the Sisters do. Huntercombe Lane has encroached onto the broad verge which, 50 or so years ago, held a line of large old elm trees. Then, apart from accidents when motor vehicles run into it, it has been damaged by youngsters climbing onto it and running along the top.

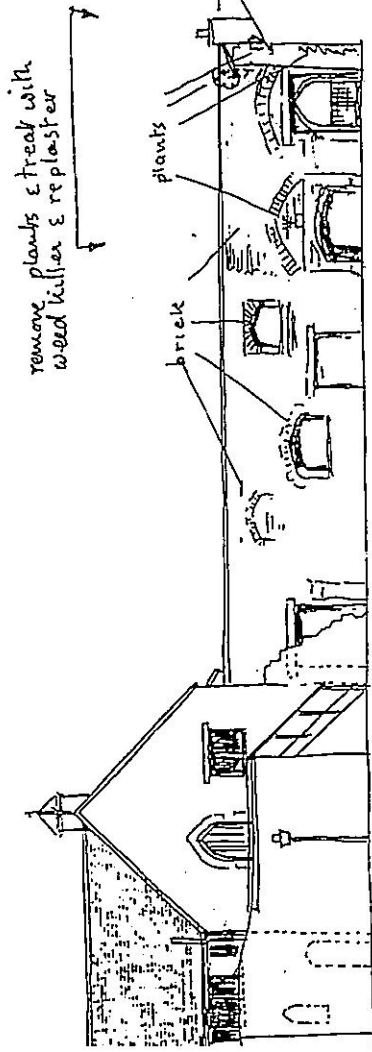
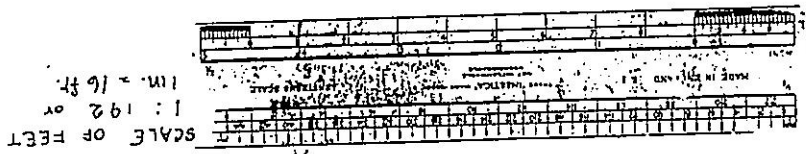
### **Remains**

Besides those parts of the Abbey which are in use, there are walls and ruins in the grounds which it would be nice to retain for their historical interest and beauty - see drawing opposite. Personally I would love to be able to put a roof over the old Infirmary, but all we can probably hope to do is to treat them with lime mortar to help them stand up to the weather better.

Understandably, the maintenance of ancient structures that have no practical day-to-day use is not high among the concerns of the Society of Precious Blood. I have, however, been given their permission to apply for a grant to cover the cost of £30,000 from English Heritage to slow down or even stop this deterioration but, in the present economic situation, my expectations of the size of a grant and the extent of possible work is rapidly diminishing.

For this part of the work I am donating my services. Is there any possibility of using the fund-raising expertise of the Society for this bit of really worthwhile Preservation? (*I will put this to the Executive Committee; if anyone would like to help directly, please contact Michael Bailey on 20576 - Ed.*)

Michael Bailey



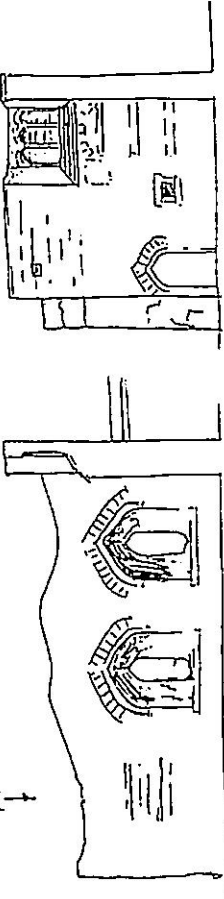
NORTH ELEVATION

INTERIOR of SOUTH WALL of RUINED FRATER

cleans & create steps.

brick patch

brick



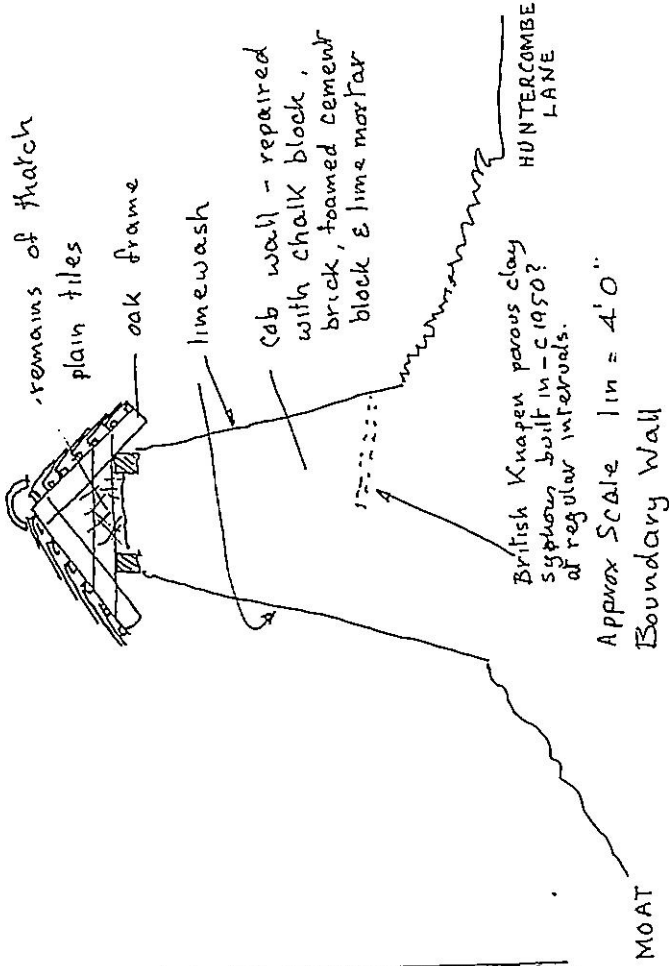
INSIDE WEST WALL OF RUINED INFIRMARY

INSIDE NORTH WALL OF RUINED INFIRMARY

J

K

SCALE 1" = 16'0"



Approx Scale 1 in = 4'0"

Boundary Wall

MOAT

British Knapsen porous clay system built in - c.1950? at regular intervals.

cob wall - repaired with chalk block, brick, foamed cement block & lime mortar

remains of thatch plain tiles oak frame

lime wash

HUNTERCOMBE LANE

L

make good to cracks with lime mortar & lime wash both sides See page 5

### **Introduction**

My qualifications to write these notes are two-fold - firstly, I feel the cold a lot so I have an intense personal interest in the subject and secondly, when in Korea, we were given a set of special clothing for the winter of 1951/2 (the second winter of that war) and instruction on how to use it.

The most important item for insulation is air but it must be imprisoned in very small pockets. If it is allowed to circulate, it will pass heat by convection. This is why it is no good as an insulator in large spaces.

### **Clothing**

The material that clothing is made of consists of yarn which is held together so as to leave small pockets and it is here that the air is trapped; there are also, in most materials, pockets for air within the yarn itself.

For the air to be an effective insulator, it must not be moved or blown around; thus a garment with a loose knit or weave is less effective if worn as an outer garment - it must be protected from the wind by an impervious layer. A simple example of this is that a string vest is very warm when worn next to the skin with a number of layers on top but it is, clearly, useless as an outer garment.

**Maintaining the Pockets.** The air can be forced out of the pockets in two ways:-

**Dirt.** Dirt can force the air out of the pockets in the clothing and its insulating properties will be destroyed. Any garment that has been worn for a few days, especially the innermost or outer one, must be washed and thoroughly dried (see below).

**Moisture.** This is another way of destroying the insulation; the most likely source of the moisture is sweat! If you are working moderately hard even in a cold climate, you will sweat; this **must** be avoided. As soon as you start heating up, outer clothing, scarves etc must be removed or opened. If you leave it too late, the sweat in the inner garments will start to evaporate and, by that process, cause cooling.<sup>1</sup>

The result, in extreme cases, is that the garment fabric becomes so matted and squashed that it is very inefficient as an insulator.

Air can also be trapped between the layers of clothing for example by wearing an extra layer of light wind-proof material such as waterproof over-trousers. The trousers should be made of "breathable" fabric and, of course, should be gathered at the ankle to trap the air.

### **What to Wear**

You should wear a number of layers of clothing all with good air retaining properties. The outer layer should be wind- and, if appropriate, water-proof. All the garments should be a good fit - too tight and you force out the air

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<sup>1</sup> Natural fibres like wool, cotton, etc absorb much more moisture than man-made ones.



between the layers, too loose and the air can move around and the insulation is spoiled.

It will help to keep the air in place between the layers of clothing if you seal the openings - wear a scarf, tuck your trousers into your socks and overlap your cuffs and gloves. Apart from sealing the air in the layers, this keeps the blood warm at these places and prevents your shoulders, feet and hands from getting too cold; this also applies to the head - so always wear a hat of some sort.

**Footwear.** This is difficult; you can't put lots of socks on or your footwear won't fit. Wearing lined boots doesn't work very well because the lining underneath your feet, where you want it most, is compressed by your weight so the air is driven out and the insulation breaks down. You can keep a pair of extra large boots to wear with heavy socks but gumboots or other completely impervious footwear should only be worn for short periods as the sweat can't evaporate.<sup>1</sup> If you must wear them for longer periods, change your socks when you get in as otherwise you will still have cold feet. In Korea we had special boots the foot of which was extra deep to accommodate the special insole; this was about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick and consisted of a wire mesh which trapped the air in small pockets. The insoles could be taken out to be cleaned or dried. The boots were beautifully warm. Even if you are not in Korea, wearing ordinary ankle boots does help to keep the feet warm!

## Conclusion

I wish you luck with your efforts to keep warm; if successful, you will be warmer at home and can turn down your heating which will save you money, reduce the effect of global warming and cut down pollution. This, I hope, justifies use of the word "Economy" in the title above.

oooOOOooo

## *After-thought*

*Two years ago I wrote (in response to adverts in the "quality" newspapers) to the Department of the Environment for their series of pamphlets on "Helping the Earth begins at Home" issued jointly with the Department of Energy. There are three excellent booklets in the series:-*

- 1. Energy in your home.*
- 2. Insulating your home.*
- 3. Heating your home.*

*Although most of the information was not new, I did look at the seal between the bottom of the curtains and the windowsill, especially where there was a radiator under the window. Where they did not seal satisfactorily it was sometimes possible to lift the bottoms up onto the sill - unsightly but effective. In other cases I thought about re-siting the rail and altering the length of the curtains - both rather large jobs. In the end I decided to fit a piece of beading to the sill to hold the curtain in. On the one room that I have done, the total width of curtain is 6m (nearly 20 ft) so I needed about £6 worth of beading but the results were sensational. The room got too warm so I had to turn down the main thermostat in the hall by about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ °C; according to the pamphlets, that is a saving of 10% of heating cost in a year!*

*The conclusion is the same as the one above!*

Dick Nutt

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<sup>1</sup> If you have to wear thin smart shoes, leather is warmer than anything else.

## **Planning News-pieces**

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*The Minutes of the various Committees of the District Council from 27<sup>th</sup> April 1993 to 5<sup>th</sup> October 1993 have been studied and extracts (shown within quotation marks) or precis are given below. Dates in brackets indicate when the Committee met.*

### **Annual Meeting (18 May 1993)**

#### **Standing Committees**

Dr Kennedy was appointed to serve on the Policy Board and the Planning and Transportation Committee and was elected Chairman of the Resources Committee.

### **Planning and Transportation Committee (5 May 1993)**

#### **Enforcement Notice Appeal**

**Site between White Gables and Redwood, Berry Hill, Taplow (S/91/0911/TP).**  
Use of land for boat construction Appeal Dismissed  
Enforcement Notice Upheld.

### **Planning and Transportation Committee (2 June 1993)**

#### **Variation of Legal Agreement - Meca Riding School.**

Planning permission had been granted originally in 1986 and for an extension in 1988. As the school had successfully operated since 1998 and, for the last three years, with 25 horses without detriment to the Green Belt, it was:-

RESOLVED to vary legal agreement to permit 25 horses to be kept at this site.

#### **Land at River Road, Taplow.**

(a) Under the County Boundaries Order of 1991, land at River Road, Taplow had been transferred from South Bucks District to Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead who then claimed that their ownership did not transfer and this dispute had been referred to arbitration.

(b) The final award of the arbitrator, that the land South Bucks District Council were the owners of the land, had been issued on 19 May 1993.

### **Council Meeting (20 July 1993)**

#### **Local Post Offices**

(a) Mrs Mallinder moved a motion that the Council viewed with concern the fact that Department of Social Security seeks to promote the payment of benefits through banks to the detriment of local post offices. She said that many people find local post offices the most convenient way of collecting benefits and that the reduction in benefits payment business could threaten the viability of local post offices which provide a vital community service.

(b) The motion was seconded by Mrs Smith and put to the vote; it was carried nem con.

### **Planning and Transportation Committee (22 September 1993)**

#### **M25 - Jct 12 (with M3) to Jct 16 (with M40).**

(a) "The Committee expressed the strongest possible objections" to the Department of Transport's proposals.

(b) They agreed that the proposal should (among other things) be integrated with a "thorough and informed debate about the direction of transport policy in the south-east".

(c) They resolved that the DoT be informed of the views set about proposals to construct link roads between Jct 15 (with M4) and Jct 16.

*There was much more in the Minutes, but it is too lengthy for inclusion in this Newsletter.*

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## **Planning Applications**

*Planning decisions given by the SBDC  
Planning & Transportation Committee*

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*The Minutes of this Committee from 27<sup>th</sup> April 1993 to 5<sup>th</sup> October 1993 have been studied and extracts are given below.*

**Days Gone Bye, The Bishop Centre, Bath Road, Taplow (S/90/0856/FF).**  
Single storey extension to antique shop. Deferred for Planning Obligation

### **The Bishop Centre, Bath Road, Taplow.**

There are 10 applications by the Company starting with S/92/1006/FF; they are summarised below quoting last digit(s) of Number. All were:-

Deferred for Planning Obligation

- No 6. Rebuilding garden centre.
- No 7. Redevelop industrial area to provide new small businesses.
- No 8. Remove existing retail display areas and replace with shop etc.
- No 9. Convert shop to motor display unit etc.
- No 10. Remove timber display building etc and replace with 2 shops.
- No 11. Provide new independent access to car park at Bishop House.
- No 12. Continue to use building as veterinary surgery.
- No 13. Continue to use building for sale of musical instruments.
- No 14. Continue to use building as a wine merchant.
- No 15. Continue to use buildings for retail purposes.

**Hazeldene, Marsh Lane, Taplow (S/92/0229/FF).** Deferred  
Demolition of existing dwelling & erection of a for Planning  
3-bedroom detached house & double garage. Obligation

**Hill Farm, Hill Farm Road, Taplow (S/92/1003/FF).** Deferred for  
Demolition of farmhouse and conversion of barn to Planning  
dwelling house. Obligation

**Nightingcroft, Hunts Lane, Taplow (S/93/0292 & 3/FF).** Conditional  
First floor extension. Permission

**Feathers PH, Cliveden Road, Taplow (S/92/0988/FF & LB)** Conditional  
Partial demolition of Listed Building, extensions and Consent  
alterations. Convert detached store building to WCs,  
store & office. Provision of new car parking, beer  
garden and play area.

**Buffins, Taplow (S/93/0180/FF)** Conditional Permission  
Provision of parking spaces.

**Bridge Cottage, Bath Road, Taplow (S/93/0391/FF)** Deferred  
First floor side extension to provide additional accommodation.

## Un-Buried Treasure

*This piece is contributed by Lincoln Lee; the sketch referred to is a charming little vignette and you will find that you haven't got many clues as to where all the walls are; you will have to work hard to solve it.*

Who hasn't noticed the old walls of Taplow Village? In the area around Berry Hill and Rectory Road these brick walls, many of them remarkably high, are commonplace. On the thumb-nail sketch below, the thicker lines show some of those which are old, of brick and still six feet or more in height.

Some were built, there's little doubt, to keep the beastly burglars out. Ironically enough, the walls themselves now have a value, in that the old stock bricks from which they have been built are in great demand; one local resident, whose wall was being repaired, arrived home just in time to stop thieves from making off with a lorry-load. Hence the title "Un-buried Treasure".

But the walls were built for various other reasons too; when Lord Riversdale (or whoever it was who had the 32 acre estate of Berry Hill landscaped) tried to ensure privacy by planting a screen of trees around most of the grounds, he may have decided that on the east side of the area, where fruit and vegetables were to be grown, a high wall would be better. The wall would provide warmth as well as privacy and, despite some alterations, most of the high wall alongside the road is still there to-day.

Of course walls to protect fruit gardens were commonplace. When Taplow House, now the hotel, was owned by the Skimmings family (who are said to have employed seven full-time gardeners at some time in the past) and before that by the Grenfells, a number of walled gardens were devised, each of which is now occupied by at least one house. At Taplow Court there were (as described in the notice of the famous sale of 1852) melon grounds with extensive pits, vineries and peach houses, warmed with hot water pipes. Of course you can buy your melons and peaches in the local supermarket today but the high walls which surrounded these exotic gardens still stand.

There may have been other reasons for building some of these walls: in a few cases it is said that the construction was organized in order to provide employment during periods of recession. When you come to think about it, even the manufacture of the bricks, probably in nearby Burnham, would have kept a number of men employed. And in other cases, the walls may have been built because it was fashionable to have them - like owning an Audi rather than a SEAT.

Most of these walls are well over a century old. Readers of this newsletter will not want a dissertation on the techniques used in their construction but the walls often deserve a second glance. Some are remarkably high; some are curved (have you ever tried to build a curved wall?); and various types of buttresses are incorporated. Perhaps most intriguing of all are the pillars which stand at the end of many of them; some are square, some octagonal and some completely circular. Next time your dog takes you for a walk around the village take a better look; some walls have already been brought down as the result of being overgrown with ivy and there are others which will not see the beginning of the next century.

