

THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31 December 2009

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to report to members on the Society's activities during 2009.

2009 was, as you must all know by now, our 75th anniversary, and we undertook a number of activities in the year to reflect and celebrate that landmark. Highlights of the year included:

- A successful and enjoyable first Chislehurst Festival,
- The launch of The Mix, a magazine written and designed by Chislehurst students,
- An increase in the number of local organisations seeking our support,
- An agreement to rent our first ever Society offices.

Planning

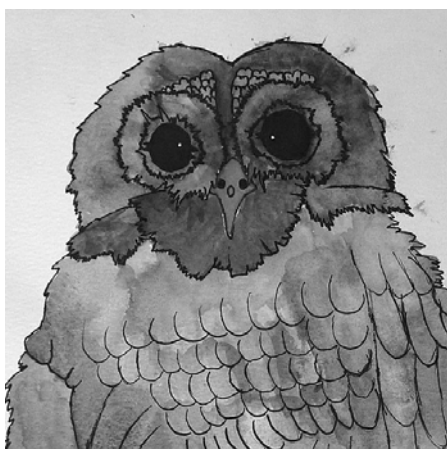
It will come as no surprise in the light of prevailing economic conditions that there were no major development proposals in Chislehurst, and the number of planning applications overall this year was down from 2008, though the fall was perhaps not as large as might have been expected. Last year we reviewed 425 planning applications against 462 in 2008. Against these we made 55 representations (13% of the total), being 38 objections and 17 observations. This was a considerable drop compared to the 89 we made in 2008, for two main reasons. First there has been a significant rise in the number of cases that are decided before we have an opportunity to comment. These are almost wholly tree applications, but not exclusively. We have brought this to the attention of the Chief Planner, and we shall continue to press for the process to remain subject to proper scrutiny.

The second reason is the relaxation of Planning Regulations which permit significant structural changes to be made without the need for formal Planning Approval. Providing it can be shown the proposed development falls within published criteria, no one can object. This applies even within the Conservation Area, though the criteria here are a little more restrictive. We continue to monitor the implications of the new regulations.

We are concerned about the increasing pressure on Bromley's Planning Department, not least the new arrangements on award of costs on the outcome of appeals which could make it significantly more risky for Planners to turn down borderline applications, which in times of severe cost pressures on local Councils can only lead on the margins to greater numbers of inappropriate development applications being let through.

Education

The 2009 Alun & Joy Jones Awards broke all records in terms of entries, prizes and ideas. More than one thousand students from nine senior schools, six primary and infant schools, and three other organisations submitted entries. The judges were delighted with the quality, imagination and energy displayed by the students. Farringtons School won the coveted best schools award, and Elysia Crockett won the individual award. 2010 marks the 20th year of the Awards and prizes will be presented at Coopers Technology College on May 20th. Come along for a rewarding and enjoyable evening.



All the schools in Chislehurst and some just outside are affiliated members of the Society, and are members of the Chislehurst Schools Forum. The Forum continues to develop ideas for joint action for the benefit of Chislehurst students and residents. In 2009 the Forum launched The Mix, a magazine for Chislehurst residents, written and designed by students drawn from across the schools. This was published by the Chislehurst Society and distributed to our members in September, and it won a commendation at the London Forum's Walter Bor Media Awards, to the delight of the schools and of course of the Society.

We hosted two interesting speakers for our members' evening socials last year, both of which were fully subscribed. In May, Jan Hendy, a former Trustee of the Commons, gave an absorbing talk on the maintenance of the vegetation on the





Commons, and in October, Professor Andrew Saint, of English Heritage, gave a fascinating illustrated talk on the partnership between William Willett and Ernest Newton, many of whose wonderful houses are still standing in Chislehurst. The October meeting was held at the Link, Christ Church, in Lubbock Road, and it is likely that in future we will hold social meetings in other locations other than Camden Place, where the increased costs of holding such events has made it difficult to justify holding regular events there.

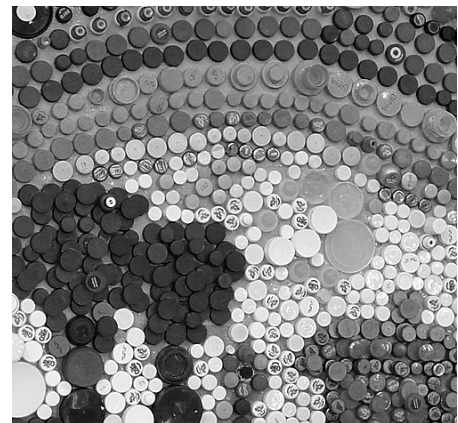
We continue to publish *Cockpit* twice a year, and its editor, Roy Hopper, remains as popular as ever as our local historian – he gave 12 talks in 2009, responded to queries sent to us by residents and non-residents, and continues to undertake his research for the benefit of us all. The Society is now affiliated to the Kent History Federation, and we have developed plans to launch Local Studies workshops in 2010 and beyond. Our website includes an increasing amount of

interesting information about Chislehurst's history and about local family histories, and we plan to increase the amount of information in the coming year.

One of the particularly rewarding events of the Festival was the St Nicholas Churchyard Celebration. Among the many guests at the Church service and in the Church yard afterwards were 21 descendants of the Tiarks' family who lived here for more than a century from 1875 to 1980, and who were great benefactors to the community. Among the guests was Henrietta, Duchess of Bedford, whose father Henry Tiarks was born in Kemnal Road, and was a benefactor to the Society. After the service the family visited Foxbury, the former family home. Of course, if fate had not taken the course it did in 2009, there may have been an even more famous resident at Foxbury. Who knows, Michael Jackson may even have been persuaded to take part in our Festival! Sadly, he died before he was able to take up residence here.

Conservation

I am pleased that there has been an increase in the number of requests for financial support for local initiatives – mostly in the area of conservation. We were pleased to support Bullers' Wood School in restoring a Victorian Pond, which is now a thriving wildlife area, and to help Red Hill School develop a wildlife meadow at the rear of the main buildings. We supported the Friends of Scadbury in buying and installing new benches, and provided the funding to ODAS for the new information boards at the site of the moated Manor. A number of other grants were agreed in 2009 for payment this year.



We continue to be alert to traffic issues and we were delighted that Roger Lawson joined our Committee last year. We maintain good relations with traffic engineers at the London Borough of Bromley, and have been liaising with them in a number of key areas, including Elmstead Lane, Summer Hill, the Railway Bridge on Chislehurst Road to name a few. With the Chislehurst Town Centre Management Group we are following up ideas for

ways of dealing with the congestion in the High Street and to brighten up our public car parks.

We organised six clean-up mornings during the year, and I would like to thank the ever growing number of volunteers who give up their time to help keep our town free of litter and graffiti.

Unfortunately I have to report that policing arrangements in Chislehurst have not gone so smoothly. Both of our Safer Neighbourhood Team panels, Chislehurst and Mottingham, have had difficulties during the year caused by personnel changes and illness, which has made it difficult to maintain the level of oversight and scrutiny which we have been used to. This is a particular concern as there are reports that the previously downward trends in crime and antisocial behaviour of previous years are now reversing. The Society continues its attempts to help restore the health of the Panels.



One of the objectives of the Festival was to develop our links with other organisations in Chislehurst, and we hope this will enable all of us to be more effective in our areas of activity. Most recently the Society has been pleased to support the formation of the Friends of the Recreation Ground, and to offer significant financial support for its first major project. I would urge anyone who uses the park to become a friend and support the transformation which the Friends are planning.

Membership

Our membership fell slightly last year but we remain one of the largest Civic Societies in the UK. We are seeking new ways of reaching out to the various communities and age groups in Chislehurst, which was one of the reasons for running the Festival.



The various and diverse activities throughout Chislehurst increased our visibility in and around Chislehurst, and demonstrated that our work covers a wide range of activities. The Festival was a great success, and was fully reported in Chislehurst Report in 2009. We plan to sponsor another in 2011. Please contact us if you want to be involved in any capacity in the Festival.

During 2009 the Civic Trust, an umbrella organisation for Civic Societies in the UK, was put into receivership and ceased operating. A new organisation, Civic Voice, is being launched in 2010 to take on some of the roles previously undertaken by the Civic Trust. We support the setting up of a new organisation, but we wish to ensure that its activities and annual membership fees are appropriate to the needs and budgets of all Civic Societies. The early signs are encouraging. I may be able to say more at the AGM.

We have transformed our publications and have now brought them more up to date in terms of style and content, and we have continued to increase the content and quality of information on our website. Some 40,000 people from the UK and overseas visited our website last year, and we receive regular requests for information about Chislehurst and its residents past and present.

Our Road Steward network is critical to way we operate. During the year, 7 Road Stewards retired and 5 new Stewards were recruited, leaving us with 135 at the end of the year. A big thank you to all our Stewards, past and present who give their time and effort to support our membership. We continue to need new Stewards who can devote a small amount of time to the important role of making the vital link between the Society and its members. We ran two events for Road Stewards which were both well-attended, and our next event on 22 May will be at our new office.

Financial Overview

Our accounts show that, despite the formidable economic problems encountered in 2009, the foresight of our investment committee in late 2008 enabled us to maintain a satisfactory income during last year to enable us to continue to support our activities. As the accounts show, our investments increased in value last year, and we remain vigilant in safeguarding our financial assets and income.

At the start of 2010 we entered into an agreement to occupy a large room at the Methodist Church in Prince Imperial Road. The agreement runs for three years, and we are delighted to be able to have our own office and storage space for the very first time.



We learned during the year that we are due to receive a large bequest from the estate of the late Charles Dunn following the death last year of his wife. Charles was an untiring supporter of the Chislehurst Society until he died almost 20 years ago. He always wanted the Society to have its own premises and the terms of the will require us to use the bequest to acquire property for use by the Society. We have resolved to do so within the next three years. We have already refreshed our premises sub-committee which is looking at the various options open to us. Our experience of using our new offices will clearly be very important in deciding what premises we should acquire.

Your Executive Committee

None of the above activities would have been achieved without the hard work and imagination of the members of the Executive Committee. Committee members are all volunteers and give up large amounts of their own time for the Society. I would like to thank all the Committee members for everything they have done in the year to Keep Chislehurst Special.

I want to say a particular word about Reg Parry. I am sorry to say that Reg, my predecessor as Chairman, has decided not to seek re-election to the Committee this year. He has offered to remain on our planning sub-committee, and we are pleased that we will continue to benefit from his knowledge and experience. Reg has worked tirelessly for Chislehurst as a Committee member and as Chairman for more than 20 years, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Reg for all the help he has given me, and all our thanks for everything he has done for Chislehurst over the years.



As ever, we have ambitious plans for the current year and beyond, and we can only achieve them if we have enough volunteers. Please let me know if you are interested in helping the Society in any way.

I look forward to reporting on another successful year in 12 months' time.

Tony Allen
Chairman

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

Administrative Information

The Chislehurst Society is a Registered Charity, No 298413, with principal address at PO Box 82, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5TT and is established under a constitution adopted in February 1989.

Trustees (and members of the Executive Committee) during 2009, and to the date of the this report, were:

Tony Allen (Chairman)	Terry Baskett	Roy Hopper
Lesley Pullar (Vice-Chairman)	Ken Chapman	Bruce Hurn
Colin Saxby (Treasurer)	Nicolette Comporte	Roger Lawson
Sue Thorogood (Secretary)	Frances Follin	Anthony McClarty
Christine Barrett	Keith Heselden	Reginald Parry

The four Officers (listed) relinquish their office every year but are eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting; one half of the other (longest serving) members of the Executive Committee retire at the AGM, and are also eligible for re-election

The Custodian Trustees for the Access Drive are Messrs Chapman, Parry, Saxby and Turner (see note in the Accounts).

Objectives and achievements

The Society's objects are to promote high standards of planning and architecture in Chislehurst, to educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of Chislehurst; and to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic, environmental or public interest in Chislehurst.

The highlight of the year was the Chislehurst Festival organised by the Society to celebrate its 75th anniversary. This was a people's festival with over 30 events during a two week period, offering something for all ages. These showed off the talents and achievements of local people in a variety of events highlighting the cultural, artistic and historic features of Chislehurst, in our open environment. It was well supported by local clubs, churches, schools, traders and other groups, and proved a great success.

Although recessionary pressures have dampened down larger developments, those for smaller schemes such as extensions, still require our critical examination and representation to the local planners - especially those which challenge our conservation area. Our publications have been redesigned to be more appealing and our website increasingly provides up-to-date information about Chislehurst, the Society and local events. Regular talks about local history and the environment continue to attract interest; a number of buildings of historic significance featured in the local participation of London Open House, an important part of the first weekend of the Chislehurst Festival. We remain involved in clearing graffiti and litter, and maintaining links with the police.

Our annual competition for students for the Jones Environmental Awards attracted a record number of 1,100 participants in 2009, with prize winners sharing £1,660. The local Big Draw event proved very popular during the Festival and closer links with local schools were also evident. The Festival also saw the first Chislehurst Chase for over a century; more than 300 runners took part.

Grant making totalled £10,978. Grant applications increased during the year, with a number remaining to be finalised in 2010. Details of grants and affiliations are noted in the Accounts.

Financial Review

The dramatic fall in interest rates during the year resulted in our total deposit and investment income falling by over 25%. This would have been worse but for the decision in 2008 to rebalance our COIF investments - this process being completed in 2009. The COIF holdings produced an income substantially above deposit, whilst the capital performance of the Investment Fund outweighed the fall in the value of our Fixed Interest Fund shares. Subscription income with associated tax credit from gift aid was maintained in 2009.

Reserves policy: we need to retain sufficient reserves to generate a regular income to supplement our modest subscription income and enable us to finance our objectives. Our grants fund ran a deficit in 2009 (largely because the Festival was financed by the fund), but this overspend should not become a regular trend. Nevertheless, in the short term, our current reserves are considered large enough to give financial support to local schemes which provide "civic benefit". Uncommitted funds are required as a buffer against any variation in cash flow and the possibility of lower company dividends.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 17 March 2010 and signed on their behalf by:

A.S. Allen, *Chairman*

S.E. Thorogood, *Secretary*

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	2009	2008		2009	2008
Receipts	£	£	Payments	£	
Voluntary:			Costs of generating funds:		
Members' subscriptions & donations	9,474	10,285	Voluntary income	1,332	1,350
Tax reclaimed	1,118	1,071			
Investment income from deposits & investments	30,995	42,348	Charitable activities:		
Charitable activities:			Grants to third parties	10,978	12,911
Promotional sales	693	2,648	Planning/conservation/environment	7,188	6,444
Cultural social events	2,434	2,486	Publications and local study	7,189	4,870
Festival	947	-	Cultural socials	2,851	3,255
			Festival	15,059	-
			Jones Environmental Awards	3,933	2,505
			Governance costs:	3,487	3,276
Total	£ 45,661	£ 58,838	Total	£ 52,017	£34,611
Revenue (deficit)/surplus	(6,356)	24,227			
Gains (losses) on investments (unrealised)	24,521	(71,431)			
Accumulated funds brought forward	832,106	879,310			
Total funds carried forward	£ 850,271	£ 832,106			

Statement of Assets & Liabilities as at 31 December 2009

Cash & short term deposits	254,197
Debtors	1,410
Investments at market value 31.12.09 (Note 1)	594,664
Heritage property (Note 2)	nil
Liabilities	nil
Total net assets	£ 850,271

Note 1: Investments are represented by holdings in COIF Fixed Interest and Investment Fund Income units.

Note 2: This freehold access drive off Lubbock Road, Chislehurst is being retained indefinitely for environmental reasons: to enable enforcement of a covenant restricting development to one dwelling on land previously owned by the Society. With no cost available and valuation methods lacking reliability, the Trustees place no value on it.

The funds of the Society are all unrestricted and include funds designated for particular purposes:

General Fund	140,938
Designated funds (Note 3)	
Grants fund	630,248
Environmental Contingency fund	46,542
Premises fund	32,543
Total funds	£ 850,271

Note 3: Grants fund for grants made for local environmental purposes and the Jones Awards; Environmental Contingency fund to meet the cost of challenging any major threat to the local environment; and Premises fund for set-up costs of possible future premises for the Society.

Grants and affiliation fees totalled £10,978 to local bodies in furtherance of the Society's charitable activities:

Red Hill Primary School	£ 3,000	Friends of Scadbury	£ 575
Bullers Wood School	2,100	St Nicholas Church	380
Orpington & District Archaeological Society	2,049	Smaller donations and affiliation fees, including the Civic Trust (and Civic Voice), The London Forum, Hacan, London Green Belt Council and CPRE	574
Willow Wildlife Rescue	1,500		
The Big Draw	800		

These Accounts were approved by the Trustees on 17 March 2010 and signed on their behalf by:

A.S. Allen, *Chairman*

C.S. Saxby, *Hon Treasurer*

THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 27 April 2010

8 pm in the School Hall

Red Hill School, Red Hill, Chislehurst

Agenda

1. Reception, with refreshments (from 7.30 pm)
2. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman
3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 28 April 2009
5. Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2009
6. Appointment of Independent Examiner
7. Election of Officers
8. Election of members of the Executive Committee
9. Open discussion on topics raised in the Annual Report and other matters of interest

Note: Only members of the Society are entitled to vote or speak at the Annual General Meeting

The four officers of the Society, and approximately one half of the executive committee, are elected annually. Under the Charities Act 1993, persons elected are required to be acceptable as trustees. Nominations to serve as officers or members of the executive committee should be made in accordance with the Constitution of the Society. It is convenient, but not essential, for nominations to be made on the forms available. These may be obtained from the Secretary, PO Box 82, Chislehurst, Kent. BR7 5TT For further information telephone our answerphone service: 020 8467 0900

email: membership@chislehurst-society.org.uk

Copies of any of the documents contained in this report, and the Independent Examiner's Report, are available on our website: www.chislehurst-society.org.uk

The Chislehurst Society is a Registered Charity, No. 298413