



THE Chislehurst SOCIETY

Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2011

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to report to members of the Society on its activities during 2011.

PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

Biggin Hill Airport Ltd failed spectacularly to secure any changes to the terms of its operating lease during 2011, despite having lodged two separate applications, both of which were put out to consultation with residents. The first application failed to explain why the changes were required, given existing unused capacity, and did not give any convincing account of any benefits. The second application seemed to be relying on voter fatigue. The Society ensured that as many member and residents of Chislehurst as possible were aware of the proposals. Both consultations resulted in overwhelming rejection by residents.

The Society has been following the twists and turns of the Localism Bill (now enacted) and the National Policy and Planning Framework, under which the establishment of neighbourhood forums was proposed. We feel that The Society is the right organisation to set up any local forum for Chislehurst, but we have delayed applying for such status until the impact and consequences are clear. The matter will now be considered again in the light of the Act and the soon-to-be-published framework.

Our planning committee continues to meet every four weeks to scrutinise planning applications in Chislehurst. We owe a great deal to Terry Baskett and his committee (Bob Matthews, Reg Parry and Prof. Barry Redding) for their work, which we know



We were pleased to be able to finance much-needed repair to the cricket pavilion, built in 1898.



Hannah Cumpson from Farringtons School took top individual prize in the 2011 Jones Awards for this clock, representing changing times in Chislehurst.

is treated with great respect by Bromley's Planning Department. Following last year's stated concerns about some of the planning processes at Bromley, we have had a number of discussions with senior members of the Planning Department, and with more open dialogue we feel less concerned than we did.

During 2011 the planning committee examined 481 applications, made objections in respect of 50 of them, and offered observations in respect of 17¹. Most of the applications scrutinised were in respect of small scale development, and a large number, about one-third of the total, concerned felling or treatment of trees in the Chislehurst Conservation Area, on which prior decisions had already been made.

Bromley Planning Department has continued to provide our committee with

paper files and documents despite having transferred public access onto the new planning portal. We are currently reviewing whether we can now dispense with our paper files, but there are concerns about the lack of detail in some of the online applications, which makes a proper review impossible, and we will continue to press Bromley to insist that applicants provide sufficient information, especially with online applications, to allow proper scrutiny.

LOCAL STUDIES

We have continued to increase the amount of information about Chislehurst on our website. Working with Bromley Local Studies Library, our website now has galleries showing a large number of the old photographs, slides and drawings held at the Library. There are more than 500 images available, covering many of the best-known locations in Chislehurst. Taken together with the availability online of all past editions of *The Cockpit* and *Chislehurst Report*, this represents a significant local history resource for researchers and for our schools.

The Cockpit continues to be produced twice a year. In 2011 Roy Hopper devoted an entire edition to Scadbury, its history, and the work being done by Orpington and District Archaeological Society in uncovering its secrets. Roy is as busy as ever giving talks and responding to enquiries on local history, as well as editing *The Cockpit*.

¹ There were 443 in 2010, when we objected to 35, and made observations on 22.

Our work with schools in Chislehurst continues. Alison Stammers, new to our executive committee in 2011, has taken on the role of liaising with the schools for the Society. In 2011, the Chislehurst Schools Forum, with representatives from most of Chislehurst's schools, changed the format of The Mix to a debating event. Four students from each school came together for a day at St Peter and St Paul's school to debate matters of local interest, ranging from school uniforms to young people's needs and interests in the High Street. The forty or so students had great fun, and put on wonderful and interesting presentations, all researched and created on the day.

The 21st Alun & Joy Jones Environmental Awards were held at Beaverwood School, and, once again, we had a glittering array of art, poetry and other exhibits, full of imagination and energy, from local students on the subject of *Change in Chislehurst*. Hannah Cumpson from Farringtons School won the Joy Jones individual award, and Babington House won the Alun Jones Award for the school with the most winning entries. Many thanks to Donna Bompas for the hard work she puts into this event.

Chislehurst now has its own community map, enabling members and others to locate and identify local information, from history to community events. Anyone is able to add content relating to their own organisation or interest, and we urge everyone to consider adding content to the map, which can be found via our website. We understand that technology will enable us to use the map to show locations where planning applications have been made, although this will not be available until later in 2012.

CONSERVATION

The new playground at Chislehurst Recreation Ground was finally opened on Summer Bank Holiday in 2011. It is a great improvement on the old playground, and is being well used. The Society was pleased to have supported this major improvement, and we congratulate the Friends of the Chislehurst and Walden Road Recreation Ground for



Some of the equipment installed in the new playground at Chislehurst Recreation Ground

their hard work and tenacity in getting this completed.

The Society has also continued to sponsor and support the Chislehurst Youth Forum in its work in identifying opportunities to help young people in and around Chislehurst. An early project has involved working with Chislehurst Police to consider a scheme at Edgebury. The Edgebury Action Group, led by Alison Stammers, with a partnership of the Police, the Youth Forum, Churches Together Youth Club, and local members of the community, has agreed in principle to erect a youth shelter. Similar shelters have been shown to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour elsewhere in London and the UK; local opinion is being canvassed as to how to proceed.

Our new police team in Chislehurst, led by Sgt Richard White, has taken a number of other initiatives to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime in Chislehurst, and should be congratulated for its hard work, even through cuts in budgets are making it hard for Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) to maintain their same level of support. Christine Barrett has continued to attend, on our behalf, meetings of the SNT Ward Panels both in Chislehurst and Mottingham (which covers the northern part of Chislehurst), and we are pleased to see that more local residents are participating in the panel meetings. Both SNTs hold police surgeries and 'meet the team' meetings. The fixed police presence on Chislehurst High Street during the past few months has proved popular with everyone.

One category of anti-social behaviour that is all too evident in Chislehurst is the unacceptable amount of litter dropped, especially by a minority of the many students who travel across Chislehurst to school. The Society's clean-up team, led by Tony McClarty, continues to operate every other month to help clear litter, particularly around the Common, but certain areas, especially the Common between the War Memorial and Coopers College, require daily attention. A group of local residents formed an anti-litter action group during the summer, and at the last count had more than 150 registered supporters. The Group continues in discussion with Coopers College about how best to deal with the problem in a way that substantially reduces the amount of litter dropped rather than increasing the level of litter picking. The Society is supporting the initiative.

There was a flurry of excitement in November and December when we heard of a renewed proposal to build a new M&S Simply Food Store at and around the site of Chislehurst Library, with new library facilities on the first floor of a much larger building. Reaction from members was mixed. Many liked the idea of an M&S store in Chislehurst, but many others were not happy for a variety of reasons. The proposals included some designs of a striking modern building; once again opinions on whether Chislehurst wanted an 'iconic' building were decidedly mixed.

A new building on the library site would have a significant impact on the look and feel of the northern end of Chislehurst High Street, and the future of the High Street and the streets that feed into it, continues to be a focus for attention. During 2011, Derek

Nash, (who has also taken on the role of Society Secretary) has been working on behalf of the Society with the Chislehurst Town Centre Management Group, and with Bromley Council, to look for ways in which improvements can be made. The Portas Review on the future of high streets, presented to the Government last year, confirmed many of the concerns that we have about the future of Chislehurst High Streets. Last year we commissioned a visit by Ben Hamilton-Baillie, a distinguished urban design consultant, who gave us some interesting insights into how some of our concerns might be dealt with in innovative ways, and Roger Lawson has been following through some of the recommendations, including discussions with Bromley Council. The results from our High Street questionnaire will be the subject of discussion at our meeting in April, and we plan in 2012 to establish a working group to start the process of improvement that will make the High Street a place people want to visit and spend time in.

We are pleased to see that the Farmers' Market has been a success in its location behind the old police station, and this shows how relatively simple innovations (though often quite difficult to implement) can create a more vibrant feel in a location. We also hope that the new specialist shops that opened in 2011 are successful.

Prickend Pond, by the High Street, is one of the related 'problems' that needs to be solved, and we were pleased to be able to arrange a study by students at Greenwich University into its viability and options for the future. Many ponds across the South of England are struggling to cope with the dropping water table and low rainfall, but Prickend is not a natural pond (it was a gravel pit originally), and it will need special attention if it is to remain a viable habitat for plants and pondlife. Rush Pond on Ashfield Lane has its own problems. In 2010 the Society agreed to finance the sinking of a bore



We fear that Prickend Pond is in need of serious attention to avoid terminal decline.

hole, which took longer to complete than anyone expected. It operated for a while at the start of 2011, and then the pump stopped working. On inspection the Trustees of the Commons found that the ropes placed to haul the pump to the surface for repair had come loose and had fallen to the bottom of the bore hole! The Trustees of the Commons are in discussions with the contractor to remedy the situation but no one is confident that there will be a quick or satisfactory outcome.

M^{EMBERS}

Our membership numbers have fallen slightly, as we struggle to replace retiring Road Stewards, such an important and reliable way of maintaining direct contact with our member households. We have invested heavily (in terms of time spent) during the year to upgrade our membership database and will be seeking to use this more effectively to reduce administration costs in the future. It has been hard work to upgrade, to our new system, but following the retirement of Ken Chapman this year we have had no option. Apart from those new members who join us at the Summer Fair, almost all new members now come via our website, and most communications with new members are via email. It is important that we continue to maintain high quality communications to attract new members, and of course for existing members for which Frances Follin provides excellent professional support; feedback indicates that members like the new A5 format for newsletters, and we welcome feedback on the success of the latest colour edition of *Chislehurst Report*. We will be asking members this year to provide us with email addresses so that we can quickly communicate critical information at low cost.

We had two meetings for Road Stewards during the year, both well attended at our offices/meeting room behind the Methodist Church, covering a number of different topics at both meetings. We did not hold an evening social; we have found in recent



The Methodist Church has been transformed into a community space

years that there is less interest in this style of meeting, and costs have risen for such events such that it is difficult to cover them effectively. In 2011 we introduced a series of afternoon meetings for Society members covering a range of diverse subjects from the geology of Chislehurst, to the role of a local JP. We have continued with the meetings in 2012, and hope that they will become regular features for members.

As part of the Chislehurst Festival we held two guided walks, one covering interesting architecture in Royal Parade, Bull Lane and Shepherd's Green, and the other focused on our churches. They were well attended, and we will offer similar walks this year.

The 2011 Festival itself was bigger and better than in 2009, with a number of day-long family events, such as Chislehurst Rocks in the Recreation Ground, and the Country Fair on the common. The Festival attracted significant business sponsorship, for which Liz Abels performed miracles, and which enabled us to advertise more widely. While we didn't cover our costs, and never expected to, there are clear indications that the Festival will be self-funding as its momentum grows. Other community organisations were hugely supportive of the Festival, and we suspect that the Methodist Church received some Divine support to ensure their remarkable refurbishment of the church interior was completed on time so that the Methodist Art Collection could open for viewing on the opening day of the Festival. This bi-annual event remains a key part of our strategy to get the Society better and more widely known, and we hope to run the next Festival, in 2013, in conjunction with other Chislehurst Community Organisations.

FINANCE

We received a second tranche of funds from the Charles Dunn Estate in 2011, taking the total received to £670,000. This is earmarked for investment in our own premises, but thus far I have to report that our search for suitable premises has not been successful, and in the meantime we have invested the money to protect the capital.

The financial outcome in 2011 was mixed, as the accounts show. We continued to earn reasonable levels of return on our investments, though like most investors we suffered when the stock markets fell significantly during the year; they had not fully recovered at the end of the 2011. We budgeted to make a surplus on our normal activities and achieved a surplus before grants and the Festival of £25,495.

Our grants expenditure in 2011 of £79,021, was abnormally high, explained by the slippage of both major ventures, the Rush Pond bore hole and the Recreation Ground playground from 2010. In addition, Lesley Pullar oversaw decisions to finance the repair of the Chislehurst and West Kent's cricket pavilion, which was in a poor state of repair; to help Coopers School with a wildlife garden, and to enable St Nicholas School finish the work on the play ground area behind the school.

We installed a bench in the garden of Age Concern on the High Street in memory of Nicolette Comport, who served Chislehurst for many years before her untimely death

in 2010.

PEOPLE

As ever we are extremely grateful to our Road Stewards who provide a vital link between the Society and its members, and enable us to maintain one of the highest levels of membership among similar charities.

There have been a number of retirements among our Road Stewards, who we thank for their hard work, and we extend a special thanks to those who have volunteered to take their places. It is not easy to manage this system, and I want to place on record my thanks to Keith Heselden for continuing to undertake this role during a time when he was extremely ill. We are pleased to see Keith back to good health, and back to his usual winning ways in identifying new Road Stewards.

I am very grateful to the Road Stewards who have volunteered to assist the executive committee in a number of different ways. We remain committed to making a difference to Chislehurst for the benefit of its residents, and our ambitions are only limited by the numbers of people who can help realise them. If you would like to help in some way, please let me know.

Ken Chapman and Bruce Hurn both resigned from the executive committee after very many years service to the Society. Ken had served as vice-chairman, and was active on the Transport Committee. He also computerised the membership database and maintained it for us annually. Bruce was chairman of the Society in the 1990s, and it was Bruce who introduced the Jones Awards to Chislehurst as a tribute to a former chairman, Alun Jones. Bruce still has a passionate interest and involvement with Chislehurst and Art.

We were pleased to be able to present both Ken and Bruce with Honorary Life Membership of the Society for their contributions to Chislehurst.

Tony Turner, secretary of the Society and active in so many ways for the Society for as long as many can remember, was sadly stricken with illness late in the year. We wish him a complete and speedy recovery.

Finally, I turn to the individual members of our hard-working executive committee. The work is entirely voluntary, and many long hours are put in by committee members to achieve our objectives. On your behalf I thank them for the work they are doing for you and for the community of Chislehurst.

**Tony Allen, Chairman
March 2012**



More equipment in the playground.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY is a Registered Charity, No 298413, with principal address at P0 Box 82, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5TT and is established under a Constitution adopted in February 1989.

Trustees (and members of the executive committee) during 2011 and to the date of this report were:

Tony Allen (Chairman)	Ken Chapman (until April)
Lesley Pullar (Vice-Chairman)	Frances Follin
Derek Nash (Secretary)	Keith Heselden
Tony McClarty (Treasurer)	Roy Hopper
Liz Abels (from April)	Bruce Hurn (until April)
Christine Barrett	Roger Lawson
Terry Baskett	Alison Stammers (from April)

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

The Custodian Trustees for the Access Drive are Messrs Chapman, Parry, Saxby and Tony 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.

Our planning committee continues to scrutinize all applications for development in Chislehurst; changes at Bromley Planning Department require continual changes to the way we operate. We continue our quarterly publications, and have introduced new regular members' meetings on a variety of different subjects.

We organised the second Chislehurst Festival in 2011, which once again show-cased Chislehurst's open spaces, important buildings, and vibrant community. Two guided walks were organised. More than 500 images of Chislehurst were added to our website, which is now an unrivalled resource of Chislehurst past and present, and we have added a community map.

We continue to review options for the Town Centre, working with local traders and residents, and with Bromley Council, and support the Chislehurst Youth Forum, which is working with the police in seeking ways of reducing anti-social behaviour.

The Society's Alun & Joy Jones Environmental Awards reached its 21st year, and we again supported the annual Big Draw

Financial Review

The Bank of England kept its base interest rate at a record low level throughout 2011 with no sign of any change. The trustees agreed to further reduce the Society's cash deposits, transferring funds into higher yielding Investment and Fixed Income funds. With the help of the trustees' Investment Managers, a formal review of investment objectives, asset allocation and fund performance was undertaken, and a formal investment policy was agreed.

During 2011 our Investment and Fixed Interest Funds produced an income substantially above deposit rates and a positive result on a total return basis. This income supplemented our subscription income which, with the associated tax credit from Gift Aid, showed a reduction of 5% over 2010.

A second distribution was received from the Trustees of the Charles Dunn Will. The funds are

being treated as restricted, and the capital protected.

Receipt of this legacy again pushed our income for the year above the Charity Commission's threshold of £250,000, which requires us to present the accounts on an accruals basis.

Grants and affiliations, some of which were held over from 2010, totalled £79,021, a five-fold increase over 2010; the festival ran a deficit of £11,540.

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 2011 and it would be imprudent to repeat this on a regular basis. However, our current reserves are considered large enough to give financial support to local schemes whose activities meet the Society's objectives as laid out in our constitution, and to meet the costs associated with delivering this support.

This Report was approved by the Trustees on 21 March 2012 and signed on their behalf by:

A.S. Allen, Chairman

A.J. McClarty, Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts (shown on page 11)

Note 1: 2nd part distribution of Charles Dunn legacy bequeathed to the Society

Note 2: 1st part legacy deposit matures 1 February 2012; 2nd part on 7 day notice deposit

Note 3: Investments are represented by holdings in COIF Fixed Interest and Investment Fund Income units.

Note 4: 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.

Note 5: Grants fund for local environmental purposes and the Jones Awards; Environmental Contingency fund to meet the cost of challenging any major threat to the local environment; Premises funds for set-up costs of possible future premises for the Society, and (restricted fund) to purchase premises under the terms of the will of Charles Dunn.

Grants and Affiliation fees:

A total of £79,021 was distributed to local bodies for specific purpose in the furtherance of the Society's charitable objects:

Friends of Chislehurst Rec Ground	£42,000	Willow Wildlife Rescue	£1,500
Christ Church	10,000	Nicolette Comport Bench	1,185
Trustees of the Commons	9,381	Coopers Technology College	1,000
Chislehurst Invicta Scout Group	8,000	Chislehurst C of E Primary School	1,000
Chislehurst & West Kent Cricket Club	3,500	The Big Draw	900

Smaller donations and affiliation fees totalling approximately £500 were paid to institutions such as London Green Belt, London Forum, HACAN, the CPRE and Royal British Legion

The accounts on page 11, and the notes above, having been reviewed by the Independent Examiner, were approved by the Trustees on 21 March 2012, and signed on their behalf by:

A.S. Allen, Chairman

A.J. McClarty, Treasurer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2011

(For notes, see page 10)

	2011	2010
Receipts		
<i>Voluntary</i>		
Members' subscriptions & donations (inc tax reclaimed)	£ 10,232	£ 10,817
Legacies (note 1)	322,000	352,000
Investment income	38,756	33,181
<i>Charitable Activities</i>		
Promotional sales	114	468
Cultural events	-	1,617
Festival	7,691	-
Total receipts	£ 378,793	£ 398,083
Payments		
<i>Costs of Generating Funds</i>		
Voluntary income	2,936	2,054
<i>Charitable activities</i>		
Grants to third parties	79,021	14,603
Planning/conservation	6,995	8,304
Local study	4,603	4,638
Cultural events	-	2,114
Festival	19,231	59
Jones Environmental Awards	3,669	3,025
Governance costs	4,449	4,909
Total payments	£ 121,859	£ 39,706
Revenue surplus/(deficit)	256,934	358,377
Gains/(deficit) on investments, unrealised	(15,374)	30,552
Accumulated funds b/fwd	1,239,385	850,456
Total funds c/fwd	£ 1,480,945	£ 1,239,385

STATEMENT OF ASSET AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2011

Cash and short-term deposits (note 2)	£ 61,450
Fixed-term deposits	673,767
Debtors	6,140
Investments at market value, 31/12/10 (note 3)	739,842
Heritage property (note 4)	Nil
Creditors	(254)
Net assets	£ 1,480,945

THE FUNDS OF THE SOCIETY (including funds designated for particular purposes)

General Fund	£ 155,252
Designated funds (note 5)	
Grants Fund	614,666
Environmental Contingency Fund	16,692
Premises Fund (unrestricted)	20,568
Premises Fund (restricted)	673,767
Total funds	£ 1,480,945

THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
and
OPEN MEETING ON
THE FUTURE OF CHISLEHURST HIGH STREET
Thursday 26 April 2012
7.30 for 8.00 pm in the Methodist Church
Prince Imperial Road, Chislehurst

AGENDA

1. Reception, with refreshments (from 7.30 pm)
2. Introduction and welcome by the chairman (8 pm)
3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 19 April 2011
5. Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2011
6. Opportunity for members to raise questions on the Annual Report
7. Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. Election of officers
9. Election of members of the executive committee
10. Closure of formal Annual General Meeting. (by 8.30 pm)
11. Presentation and open discussion on options to improve Chislehurst High Street

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

The 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 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