

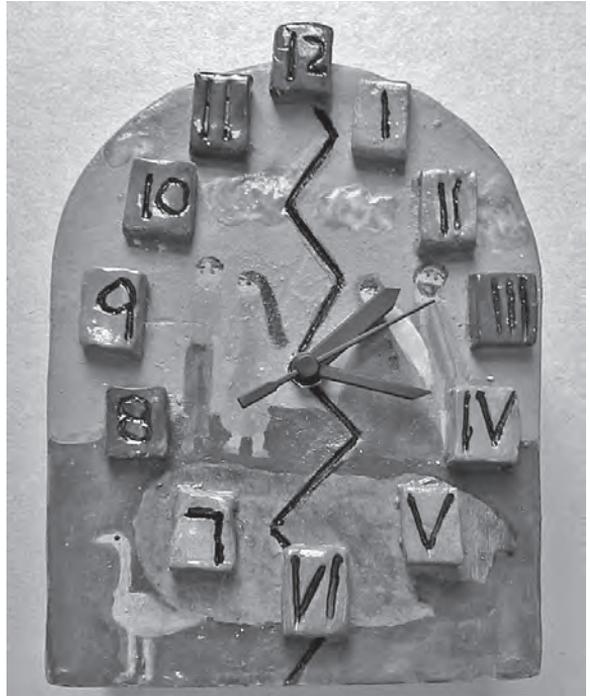
Chislehurst REPORT

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Well done Hannah Cumpson!

Alun & Joy Jones Environmental Awards 2011

Over 140 entries to this year's competition were assessed by Donna Bompas and the Awards judges on 13 May. The entries came from 13 schools, and involved more than 1,000 students, aged between 5 and 17, from across Chislehurst.

Hannah Cumpson, a year 9 student from Farrington's School, is this year's overall individual winner and recipient of the Joy Jones Award for her entry shown above, a working clock, Changing Time in Chislehurst. Babington House will be awarded the Alun Jones Award for the school with the most winning entries.

Prizes totalling over £1,600 and certificates will be awarded at Beaverwood School on 16 June, from 6 p.m., when all winning entries will be on view.

Graham Chiesman House

McCarthy & Stone are poised to submit an application to Bromley Council for the redevelopment of Graham Chiesman House and its grounds. The house is set back from St Paul's Cray Road, on the eastern side opposite Chesil House, and next door to The Chestnuts.

It is proposed that the house be preserved, and restored, to form the offices and communal space for

a 42-apartment sheltered housing-development. The apartments will be built in an L-shaped configuration as shown in the plan below.

It is good news that the proposal is for the house to be restored, and the gardens retained as open space, and the additional development will be largely out of sight. Some members are likely to be concerned about the additional traffic at this difficult and busy corner, though McCarthy & Stone expect that vehicle use by residents will be much lower than the average.

The existing entrance to the site is too narrow for the proposed development, and it is understood that the application will include a proposal to widen the access and to cut back the verges on either side of the entrance drive. This may create some difficulty, since this is common land, and the consent of the Trustees of the Commons is required as they have a duty to preserve the Commons.

We also understand that the development may be contingent upon retaining a right of way through to the allotments to the east of the site. This would enable access to the allotments if approval is given to proposals to build a new and larger school there to replace St Nicholas Primary School now on Crown Lane. We understand that these proposals have not been finalised and not made public, but are likely to cause concern to many of our members.

The Society has no direct involvement in either proposal, but will be watching them with interest.



Graham Chiesman House today



Other Planning News

The Society's Planning sub-committee continues to meet each month to review planning applications affecting Chislehurst. In the four months to the end of April, they reviewed 137 applications and made 17 objections and 5 observations. The objections can be summarised as:

- A – Inappropriate development, 6
- B – Development having adverse impact on other properties, 3
- C – In relation to proposed tree felling, 3
- D – Inappropriate shop signage or other commercial development, 3
- E – Proposal to site telecoms cabinet, 1
- F – Proposed development outside Bromley Planning Policy, 1.

We have received comments from members in respect of a number of issues, including the Ravensbourne College site on Walden Road, where work has started with the development for which permission was granted, despite the high levels of local objections, including those from the Society.

Members should continue to raise their concerns direct with Bromley Council, but we would be grateful if you could send copies of your communications to the Society so that we may be kept informed about local feelings.

The planning portal on Bromley's website has recently undergone a make-over, and more importantly, is now faster and easier to navigate. You can now request the system to send you automatic notification of any planning applications in your area (e.g. postcode, or wider), with follow-ups as the application progresses through the system. See <http://www.bromley.gov.uk/planning>

Plans for the High Street

Chislehurst is a special place, with wonderful open spaces, some stunning buildings, and (traffic levels apart) a great place to live.

The High Street is a disappointment. Dominated by Sainsbury's, it has lost much of the variety and quality of retail outlets it used to have, and which other similar-sized High Streets elsewhere have retained. Chislehurst High Street has the potential to be much better.

A group of traders, members of the Chislehurst Town Centre Management Group, are reviewing possible ways of working with landlords to improve the range and quality of retail outlets, and considering ways in which such a transformation could be achieved.

The Society is taking part in the discussions, and we will be reviewing options on traffic, parking and the street environment, matters which fall in our objects.

Planning and the Localism Bill

The Localism Bill now proposes giving communities the chance to shape their local areas by creating Neighbourhood Plans. This represents a potential shift in power and responsibility to local communities, and gives residents in Chislehurst an opportunity to establish general policies that will steer decisions when applications for planning permission are made to the Bromley Council.

The Society is considering whether to take the lead in establishing a Chislehurst Plan in consultation with local residents, local groups and businesses. We mention elsewhere in this *Report* plans for improving the High Street that could be incorporated into Chislehurst's Plan, but the plan could go much further and, for example, define specific developments or types of development that would have automatic planning permission without the need for any application to Bromley Council. The plan will be subject to a local referendum requiring the support of 50% of the local community in the area concerned – quite a high threshold.

It will be a big step for the Society to take the lead, but it has been pointed out to us by some members that we enjoy a wide network of formal and informal associations with many local organisations, and have a constitution that enables us to take on this role. If you have a view on this, we would be most interested to hear from you.

Police reports

Since the arrival of Sgt Richard White (pictured right), at the start of this year, there have been huge changes to the approach to policing by our Safer Neighbourhood Team, including a full review of duty rotas, more visibility, and more information.

The team now provides regular information on the calls to which it has had to respond, and this is now reported in *Chislehurst News*. In April there were 86 reports, of which more than a third were in respect of youth disorder, with theft from cars or from shops next in terms of occurrence.

An example of the responsiveness of the SNT is their reaction to the request by the Friends of the Rec to deal with anti-social behaviour there. 'Operation Pevsner' has led to four arrests so far, following an intensive period of patrols including plain clothes, off-road vehicles and even dog patrols.

More information is available at <http://chislehurstnews.wordpress.com/crime-reports>



Members' events

Yvonne Auld ran a series of family history classes at our offices behind the Methodist Church during March and April. The classes attracted a dedicated group of members keen on researching their own families. Thanks are owed to Yvonne for giving her time to lead these classes, which may be repeated in the autumn.

On Thursday 14 May the Society held the first of a series of occasional talks in our meeting room. Our aim, in the words of Lord Reith, is to enlighten, educate and entertain.

Jeremy Groeger Wilson, head of estates at solicitors Clarkson, Wright and Jakes, was our first speaker. He gave a very enlightening talk on protecting assets. Jeremy said that most of us think about inheritance tax mitigation but not about a far greater threat. He calls it community care tax. He explained that paying for care, as we age, can rapidly use up what we thought we would leave to our families. The cost of care for the elderly is extortionate and it doesn't take long for the local council to eat up our assets, savings and property. Putting one's house in trust would protect your hard-earned savings and property. Jeremy used easy to understand and sometimes amusing tables and diagrams to illustrate the pitfalls and solutions.

Our meeting was well attended and the question and answer session, during tea and biscuits, was quite lively. It certainly showed how worried people are about their own or elderly parents' futures.

There are two further talks in the diary:

Thursday 7 July 2.30 p.m. – David Ely will talk about his work as a local magistrate.

Thursday 1 September 2.30p.m. – Roy Hopper will tell us how the local geology formed Chislehurst.

Farmers' Market - an apology

We apologise to members for publishing what turned out to be incorrect information about the proposed Farmers' Market in April.

It was correct at the time of going to press but, shortly afterwards concerns arose regarding the reliability and quality of the proposed Market, and the Chislehurst Town Centre Management Group decided to abort that particular proposal.

Many apologies to those who turned up to find there was no market.

We are now advised that an alternative and better provider has been identified, and that the market is expected to operate on the third Sunday of every month in the car park behind the old police station, now the Mountain View restaurant.

Members are advised to confirm with the CTMG before making a long journey.

AGM, 19 April 2011

Our AGM was held on 19 April at the Methodist Church Hall. The timing of Easter and school holidays required us to change the venue. We were pleased to welcome 90 or so members and a number of guests to Prince Imperial Road.

The meeting approved the 2010 Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities, and voted to confirm the officers of the Society:

Tony Allen – Chairman

Lesley Pullar – Vice Chairman

Tony McClarty – Honorary Treasurer

Derek Nash – Secretary

The meeting also approved the election of members of the Committee, which is now composed of the following members:

Elizabeth Abels (community liaison), Christine Barrett (administration), Terry Baskett (planning), Frances Follin (communications), Keith Heselden (membership secretary), Roy Hopper (local history and conservation), Roger Lawson (traffic), Alison Stammers (schools liaison). Derek and Alison were standing as members of the Executive Committee for the first time, and we welcome them to the Committee.

Two long-serving members of the Committee retired. Bruce Hurn, who has been on the Committee for nearly 30 years, served as Chairman for 6 years, and has been our link with Chislehurst schools for most of his time on the Committee, and Ken Chapman, who joined the Committee not long after Bruce, led our activities on roads and traffic, and single-handedly created our database for members and Road Stewards.

The chairman thanked them both for their service to the Society and to Chislehurst. The meeting voted to award honorary life membership to Bruce and Ken, and they were presented with life membership certificates.

In the energetic discussions that followed the formal part of the meeting, a number of issues were raised including:

Funding of the Trustees of the Commons,

Improving the High Street,

Curbing speeding traffic,

Policing issues for Chislehurst,

Changes in the Planning Law, and

The Dunn Legacy received by the Society.

A copy of the annual report is available for reading on our website, together with draft minutes of the AGM, already circulated to Road Stewards.

Chislehurst Festival 2011 - become a Friend of the Festival

Many members will be aware that we are planning the second Chislehurst Festival, which will be held this autumn across Chislehurst. It opens on Saturday 17 September, and runs until 1 October.

As in 2009, the theme is 'Celebrating Chislehurst', and we are focusing on highlighting the range of activities that take place across Chislehurst, giving local groups the chance to showcase their activities.

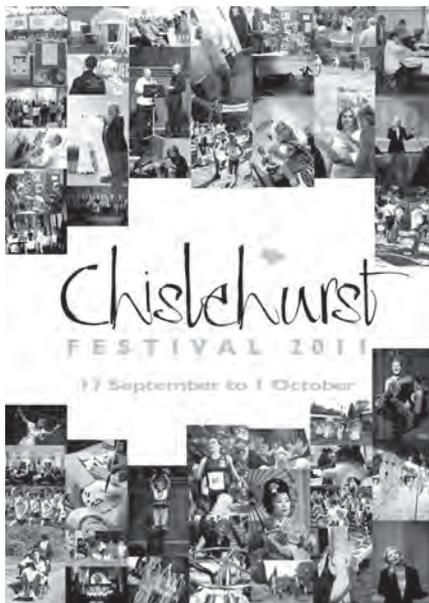
In addition, there will be a number of music concerts and drama events. The Big Draw and Chislehurst Chase will be held during the Festival, and we will be providing guided tours round Chislehurst. Plans are being finalised for a talent show aimed at young people, an international food day, and a dog show.

The Events are being held in the Recreation Ground, school halls, and other local venues. A special treat this year will be the opening of the Methodist Church, which, by September will have completed a major internal refurbishment to provide a space for community events. To mark its opening, the celebrated 'Collection of Modern Christian Art' will be on show throughout the Festival and beyond.

Once again we plan to keep entry prices as low as possible, with free entry to as many events as we can.

We are delighted that this year we have attracted sponsorship from local businesses, and we are offering members the opportunity to become **Friends of the Festival**. Friends will be offered priority booking for events, will get discounts on tickets to paid events, and may receive a free ticket to an event of their choice, subject to availability. We are also negotiating with local businesses the availability of special offers to Friends during the period of the Festival.

If you are part of a group that would like to participate, please contact us at festival@chislehurst-society.org.uk You can follow the progress of the Festival by going to the Festival website (www.chislehurstfestival.org.uk) and following us on twitter (@ChislehurstSoc) or Facebook (Chislehurst Festival). A programme will go to all members well before the Festival.



Road Stewards update

Since the Spring issue of the Chislehurst Report two Road Stewards have decided to retire: Mrs Sue Thorogood (Marlowe Close), 24 years' service, and Mr John Petley (Marlings Park Avenue), 9 years' service.

The Executive Committee extends the Society's sincere thanks for all the help and support these members have given. We wish them well for the future.

We also take this opportunity to welcome three new volunteers who are joining our Road Steward network: Mr Michael Owen (Elmtree Close), Mrs Jean James (Manor Park Road), and Mrs Judy Thompson (Ingleby Way).

There are several roads with current members with vacancies for stewards: Marlowe Close, Marlings Park Avenue (even numbers, 38–70), Marlings Close and Croft Close.

If you would like to assist with one of these roads or want more information please contact Keith Heselden, Membership Secretary, on 0208 467 5503.

The Big Draw wins another award

The Chislehurst Big Draw 2011 will take place on Saturday 17 September, the opening event of the Chislehurst Festival, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and the theme will be 'The World in Common' and once again the Chislehurst Society is pleased to be one of the two main sponsors, with JDM Estate Agents. This year the Big Draw will be celebrating Olympic fever with creative opportunities inspired by cultural heritage from around the world. Writing in many languages using calligraphy; creating Delft tiles; kites from Afghanistan; aborigine art; Russian dolls; and Italian masquerade masks are just a few of the 30 activities planned for this year.



The Chislehurst Common Big Draw Initiative, and organiser Donna Bompas and her team, are about to receive their second consecutive Trailblazer Award for their outstanding project, Artists in Common. This special Award is for inspired organisers who use The Big Draw as an experimental platform and who have committed to drawing in the long term. Chislehurst Commons' Big Draw programme was selected as a Trailblazer from over 1500 events that celebrated drawing throughout the UK – and in 20 other countries – in October 2010. Indeed the only other group to have won twice is the National Gallery.

Well done Donna and team!