

The One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Annual Report

of

THE  
**HASLEMERE**  
SOCIETY



*FOR HASLEMERE  
past, present and future*

1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Registered charity number 255287

*The Haslemere Society (registered charity number 255287)  
is a member of Civic Voice, the Open Spaces Society and is  
affiliated to the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and  
the Haslemere Educational Museum.*

**Our membership grows steadily, and most of our two mailings a year are delivered by hand, courtesy of committee members and non-committee members, in order to cut down on postage costs.**

**This is not an arduous task, as it is shared among many helpers, and can be an interesting and instructive way of getting to know what might be an otherwise unknown part of Haslemere and Hindhead - as well as including exercise and fresh air and being therefore *a good thing*.**

**Please let Diana Serman know  
(Tel: 01428-654 681, email: [RGandDC@haslemere.com](mailto:RGandDC@haslemere.com))  
if you would be willing to help with deliveries.**

**You would be given a bundle  
of between 4 and 15 envelopes, with plenty of notice  
and a few days to complete the task.**

# THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY- EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013

**President**

ROBERT SERMAN FRICS\*

**Chairman**

JANE STOPFORD RUSSELL

**Vice Chairman**

JOHN GREER\*

**Treasurer**

BRIAN DELLER

**Secretary**

ANN FITCHETT

**Membership Officer**

DIANA SERMAN

**Committee**

TONY BENNETT\* co-opted  
CHRISTOPHER HARRISON  
CERI-JANE O'HARA

MICHAEL DOVER  
JOE MACDONALD  
MIKE O'NEIL co-opted

**Hon Auditor**

CLARE DAVID MA ACA

\*Planning Committee

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 129<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting will be held on  
**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 7.30pm**  
In Haslemere Hall, Bridge Road.

### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome by the president
2. Apologies
3. Chairman's report
4. Treasurer's report and accounts - please bring the Annual report to the AGM
5. Proposal to raise subscriptions by £2.00 for single members and £3.00 for couples (see Chairman's report on pages 4 & 5)
6. Election of president, chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, secretary and auditor
7. Election of the following to the committee: Tony Bennett, Mike O'Neil
8. Any other business
9. Talk by James Ryan on the Edward Barnsley Workshop

### **THE SPEAKER AT THIS YEAR'S AGM**

The speaker will be James Ryan, director of the renowned Edward Barnsley Workshop near Petersfield. James will give a presentation to members on the history and current activities of the workshop. Edward Barnsley was one of the most gifted furniture makers of the 20th century and since his death in 1987, many talented craftspeople have carried on his work. As part of the presentation to the society, James Ryan will bring along a small number of current artifacts to give members an idea of the sort of specialist work carried out at the workshop. It is planned to organise a society visit to the workshop in 2014.

### **MEMBERS' BADGES**

Please let Diana Serman know (contact details on page 2) if you would like a member's badge.

*The subscriptions of members who pay annually by cheque are due on 1<sup>st</sup> December and may be paid to Diana Serman at the AGM if convenient.*

## **THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

Dear Members

I am very pleased to begin this report by welcoming the new members who have joined the Haslemere Society during the year. We are also delighted that two of our members, Mike O'Neil, the retired Town Clerk of Haslemere, and Tony Bennett, with his interest in planning matters, have agreed to join our committee. Their input will be highly valued. Alastair Vartan and Debbie Peet have decided to retire from the committee and we are most grateful for their enthusiastic contributions over the years.

This year "Haslemere Vision" was formed, following the Government's initiative to encourage residents to formulate plans for development in their towns, with the possibility of having more influence over decisions. The town launched this project in April in Haslemere Hall with informative displays and presentations. As a result many volunteers, some our own Society members, offered their services towards developing a vision of development in this area, while preserving a vibrant community life.

We have organised some interesting events this year including an outing to Worthing to see the back gardens of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century terrace, followed by tea at the ultra-modern East Beach café at Littlehampton. Our summer party was held at the Holy Cross Hospital where we were given a most interesting tour of both the Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy Departments and also the innovative sensory garden. This was followed by a party, including a harp recital given by Verity Foster, in the adjacent 19<sup>th</sup> Century Shottermill Hall. We were blessed with a window of sunshine for the event. We have organised a Children's Writing Competition to celebrate the life and work of our founder, Sir Robert Hunter, whose centenary is this year. Also to honour his memory, the Society has arranged a dinner (black tie completely optional - and no speeches!), on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November at the Georgian House Hotel, followed by musical entertainment from the Mazaika Duo which includes classical, Russian and gypsy performances. We hope you will join us at this event. Those on email will have received updated information on the dinner. Please speak to Brian Deller if you do not have an application form to apply for tickets (Tel: 642 636). The dinner will be a good way to meet other members and exchange views. We are planning to take a stall once again, as last year, at the Christmas Market when members of the public have an opportunity to discuss town matters. Your help manning this would be most welcome.

Unfortunately we have seen no progress at all in creating a multi-storey car park at the station. Surrey CC have recognised that some of their parking proposals are not working and may be reviewing the situation 6 months after implementation, We have also been dismayed by the quiescent line taken by the South Downs National Park Authority on most of the local development proposals. We are undeterred and continue to present our arguments, thanks to our vigilant and hard-working planning group: John Greer, Robert Serman and Tony Bennett. The planning group is not convinced that the proposed controversial design for a bandstand on Lion Green will be in the best long term interests of the town.

Civic Voice, the national body to which 290 civic societies belong, is taking a lead in promoting the continued support for our high streets. It is hoping for a more strategic approach from the Government to address the serious problems facing our high streets today and is calling for a fundamental review of the role of the high street. We hope that by joining our Society members will feel encouraged to support our causes and our local businesses, and play a part in keeping the life of our town vibrant.

Our subscriptions were last raised in 2005 and, inevitably, costs have increased since then. Over the last few years our income has broadly matched our regular expenditure but it does not cover any unusual costs that can, and do arise from time to time. The costs of arranging the meetings to discuss the parking issue are a good example and we also make occasional sponsorship awards to appropriate local causes. The current Government proposals regarding "localism" issues also seem likely to add to these requirements. The overall consequence is that we have lost money in 4 of the last 5 years (albeit only just, in 2012/13).

Although we have a total of £10,000 on deposit, the Committee feels that this should be maintained as a "fighting fund" for any major battles that we feel are justified in the future and should not be used to subsidise day to day expenditure.

**In view of the above, the committee believes that subscriptions should be increased by £2.00 p.a. for individual members and by £3.00 p.a. for couples, with effect from the start of the next financial year, ie 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014. Members will be asked to approve this at the Annual General Meeting in November.**

*Jane Stopford Russell*

## **THE HASLEMERE SOCIETY WEBSITE**

The website has served its purpose well and done most of what it should, but things are changing and the website needs to as well. Is there a Haslemere Society member who would be able to design a new website for us – this we do understand is a considerable task. However, once we have this new website, is there anyone who would then be willing to update it and add to it items of current interest, and also to forward the occasional email from members of the general public to the appropriate member of the committee? This would not be an arduous task, but it would be a huge help to the committee for, while many are perfectly computer literate, they do not really have the extra time to take this on. Is there someone out there who could fulfil one or both of those requirements? Please tell us if so.

*Diana C Serman*

## **PLANNING REPORT**

Due to a very significant number of objections by the public to Waverley Borough Council's application to develop the Wey Hill car park common land and install pay & display parking the Government Inspector has decided that a Public Inquiry is necessary next year (date to be announced). This is a key site in the town and an opportunity to enhance this area as part of Haslemere Vision's Neighbourhood Plan. The Society intends to submit evidence to the inquiry opposing Waverley's proposals.

We continue to await an announcement regarding the necessary multi-storey car park at the station but the continuing silence is not encouraging. Meanwhile SCC has increased the yellow lineage on roads and some residents parking permits have been introduced.

Following the Inspector's rejection of Waverley's proposed Core Strategy document a reassessment of future housing needs is being carried out. An increase on previous projections is likely and sites for housing construction in the Borough will have to be identified.

At the time of writing there are planning appeals under consideration relating to a development of 9 flats in Kings Road and the insertion of a further house on a site in Hill Road following Waverley's refusal of these applications. The Society has made submissions opposing the proposed developments.

**'Haslemere Vision'**, established under the Localism Act to prepare a Haslemere Neighbourhood Development Plan, held a useful exhibition in the summer to gain reactions to its establishment and seek suggestions from the public. Their work starts in earnest in the autumn this year and there will in due course be consultation with the public before the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. Society members are urged to take an interest in this initiative and to complete the on-line survey. **By so doing it will help to confirm how much community involvement there has been.**

Other towns in Waverley have bandstands which are popular and currently plans are being drawn up for one on Lion Green. An application for planning approval in due course will provide the opportunity for the public to express their views on the proposal.

The appeal against Waverley's refusal of planning applications for polo development on green belt land at Barfold Farm to the east of the town has been allowed, albeit with many conditions imposed by the Inspector. The Society made submissions opposing the development. Clearly for those living nearby the impact will be greatest but Haslemere itself will be affected by the large vehicles transporting the polo ponies, and there are doubts as to how and if the conditions imposed will be monitored.

***John Greer***

## **THE SUMMER PARTY**

On a glorious evening, coinciding with the summer solstice, the society had a superb summer party hosted by Holy Cross Hospital. Members were treated first to a visit to the excellent facilities of the hospital, including the hydrotherapy pool, the physiotherapy unit and the sensory garden recently developed for the benefit of severely disabled inpatients and their families. They then went on to spend an evening in and around adjacent Shottermill Hall, the original base for the hospital at its inception. Members were given a brief presentation on how the hospital was set up in 1917 by the sisters of the religious order, Daughters of the Cross. They had bought the Hall from its original owner, Miss Elizabeth Forster, and set it up as a TB hospital. It gradually changed its function over the next eight decades until it morphed into one of the currently most renowned neurological hospitals in the country. After the presentation members heard a beautiful harp recital by the talented Verity Foster and spent the rest of the evening in each other's company enjoying food provided by Gilly's and wine from Haslemere Cellar. The venue was voted as first class by members, and the staff of the hospital have offered to host similar evenings in the future as one of a number of possible venues.

**Joe Macdonald**

## **ANNUAL OUTING BY COACH TO AMBROSE PLACE BACK GARDENS AND EAST BEACH CAFÉ**

*Our England is a garden and such gardens are not made  
By singing:- 'Oh, how beautiful!' and sitting in the shade.  
And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,  
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that grows.*

**Rudyard Kipling**

We all, experts and idlers, enthused over the inspiration and enthusiasm shown in the 14 small back gardens hidden between the frontage of the white Regency houses and their back garden walls in a small terrace in central Worthing. Surprise pockets of tranquility and privacy, these gardens are a short step from the shops and the sea. Stalls selling plants led to the coach home having the air of promise of a flourishing greenhouse. Onwards for tea to the steel-built East Beach café, designed by Thomas Heatherwick (designer of the cauldron at the Olympic opening ceremony) and built in 2007 on its long narrow site. On our wild sunny afternoon, it demonstrated the rationale behind its design, with uninterrupted shelter on the land side and wide open views onto the shore. For a real day at the seaside, some members chose fish and chips, paddling, shopping, the seaside amusement arcade and a fearsome climb onto the local church roof.

**Diana C Serman**



## **THE SPRING MEETING**

Our speaker was Ben Cowell, Director of the National Trust Eastern Region. He spoke entertainingly on the life and work of one of the great men of the Victorian era, Sir Robert Hunter, who was the pre-eminent architect of the National Trust, along with Octavia Hill and Canon Hardwick Rawnsley, but of perhaps even greater significance for Haslemere, he was the man responsible for founding the body which was to become the Haslemere Society.

Ben Cowell has researched the archives of the Trust and other sources and written a lively and interesting book about the Great Man. And Hunter really was a great man, for it was his dogged determination, vision and drive which led to the creation in 1895 of what is probably the world's greatest conservation body. His thinking was informed by his recognition of the vulnerability of our environment locally and it was his concern over the loss of open heathland here that led to the creation of the Haslemere Commons Preservation Society in 1884.

Ben's book will be available (£5.00) at the AGM and also at the Haslemere Society dinner on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

***Robert Serman***

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Things are getting better! After two years of losses we very nearly broke even in 2012/13 and finished with a loss of just £5.

Our subscriptions and donation income rose by around £460 thanks largely to 3 new life members and a welcome donation from The Haslemere Conservation Volunteers. This boost was partially offset by a fall of just over £100 in the surplus on members' activities. The summer party at Shottermill Hall proved both popular and profitable but there were a couple of outings in 2011/12 that yielded small gains and these were not repeated in the year just ended.

Expenditure rose by nearly £250 due to our contribution to the Design Awards for Waverly B.C. and the costs of some promotional material invested in during the year. To compensate for this we made savings in insurance and no car parking meeting as held the previous year.

We retain a healthy bank balance, boosted at the year-end by money received in advance of the dinner in November to celebrate the life of Sir Robert Hunter, and our contingency fund of £10,000 remains available on short term deposit.

The Accounts are set out on the following page. A signed copy, audited by our Honorary Auditor Mrs. Clare David, will be available to members attending the AGM.

***Brian Deller***

## The Haslemere Society

### Annual Accounts for the year ended 30th. June 2013

<u>2012</u>		<u>2013</u>
£	<u>INCOME</u>	£
3170	Subscriptions & donations (incl.gift aid)	3632
37	Bank interest	37
284	Members activities & events - surplus	171
<b>3491</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3840</b>
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
282	Insurance	245
-	WBC Design awards	250
1080	Printing & stationery	907
108	Postage & telephone	50
612	Amenities societies	654
1511	Meeting expenses - members & committee	1340
-	Advertising and marketing	308
106	Miscellaneous	91
<b>3699</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>3845</b>
<b>-208</b>	<b>Net gain/-loss for the year</b>	<b>-5</b>
	<u>BALANCE SHEET</u>	
12425	Opening Balance	12217
-208	Net gain/-loss for the year	-5
<b>12217</b>	<b>Total funds</b>	<b>12212</b>
	<b>Represented by:</b>	
10000	Bank deposit bonds	10000
1769	Bank current account	2512
-100	Sundry creditors	-1026
548	Sundry debtors	726
<b>12217</b>		<b>12212</b>

Brian Deller Hon. Treasurer

I certify that the statement set out above corresponds with the books and vouchers presented to me and fairly represents the financial position of the society.

Signed by: Clare David MA, ACA ( Hon. Auditor )

