

## Chair's Report 6 November 2019

Thank you all for coming tonight. The purpose of the AGM is to give a rundown of what the Hampton-In-Arden Society has done over the past year and how we have spent your subscriptions. I'll try to keep it brief and then we can take some questions afterwards.

### **I'm going to start with our Conservation Group:**

Conservation Group meetings have occurred regularly over the past year and will go ahead as planned for the 2019/20 season. However, the group is desperately short on members. They really have just six active members of which one is over eighty, one in his seventies and the rest over sixty. The group does very important work maintaining the Spinney and some of the Fentham Trust land.

Work includes monitoring our growing Orchid population and wildflower species, in the past they laid the paths and put up bird and bat boxes. But this cannot continue without more members. I would ask you all to have a think to see if you could volunteer two Thursday mornings a month.

### **Programme of events:**

- The Hampton Local History Group presented a very informative talk, on Wednesday 6th March, How the Peels Said Goodbye to Hampton – a Centenary, and we were very lucky to have representatives of The Peel Society attend.
- Monday 6th May, the ever popular Village Walk, led this year for the first time by Simon Jephcott.
- Unfortunately, we had to cancel our social this year through lack of interest
- Stall at the Village Fair, asking what we can do better to represent the residents and a raffle in aid of the Village Christmas Lights, which raised £221.05.
- On Tuesday 10th September we held our first ever Village Freshers' Fair, which was an introduction to Hampton life, information and stalls by all the groups and organisations active in the village. We've had excellent feedback on this event, so we will be holding it again.
- Our President formally represents us at Remembrance Day, and many villagers help with arrangements, road closure and martial, including the laying of a wreath and involvement in the ceremony.
- And after this AGM a talk by our Ward Councillor Alison Rolf.

### **Planning:**

The Society continues to scrutinise all planning applications which affect the parish and its environs and where considered necessary a formal response, representing the views of our members, is sent to Solihull Council. Applications for development within the Conservation Area and in the green belt receive particular attention. Applications for any work to trees which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders or within the Conservation Area are carefully considered and often subject to expert advice.

This year we created a subcommittee to respond to Armac's planning proposal which adversely affected a right of way at the edge of residents' property. We continued to argue against the development of a care home on the Green Belt land at Oak farm, responded to Solihull's Draft Statement of Community Involvement and remain involved in the discussions around the MSA and M42 junction 6 improvements.

### **Airport:**

The Society has representation on the Airport Consultative Committee which enables the concerns of residents on matters relating to Birmingham Airport such as departure routes, aircraft noise etc., to be made known at a high level.

We have represented the village in discussions around the Airport's Master Plan and the committee is aware of disturbance suffered by residents, from aircraft regularly veering off track. Complaints from villagers need to be addressed about noise levels and the Society is going to write to the airport expressing this.

### **HS2:**

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The Society continues to work with the Parish Council by lobbying for best mitigation and outcomes through HS2 officers, attending and speaking at Solihull Council's implementation committee and working with our MP. Construction camps are starting to be built and clearing has taken place, despite the independent review currently being carried out into the future of the HS2. We therefore sent a letter to Dame Caroline Spelman expressing our concern at the environmental destruction, a concern she agreed with and replied that she will be following this up.

### **Traffic:**

Unfortunately, despite all the hard work of the Society and the Parish Council, the HS2 Community Fund has decided that they are no longer giving out grants for Road Safety projects. We now have our hopes on receiving something from the Road Safety Fund, although this decision will be taken by Solihull MBC.

In better news the Gardening Club has filled the two new station planters provided by West Midlands Trains.

### **History Group:**

This year the Society made the History Group a loan towards publishing a new book, Historic Houses. We are delighted that this book has been an outstanding success. They have also held a number of well attended talks around the village, most recently on the Vicars of Hampton. Together with Councillor Alison Rolf, the History Group are leading a discussion on the future of the library, which may need community engagement to survive.

### **Constitution:**

The year the Society has decided after long discussions to change the Constitution and to officially become a Residents' Association. There are a number of reasons for this change, we feel that calling ourselves a Residents Association will make it easier for villagers to come to us with their worries about the village and we feel it reflects the extension of the Parish Boundary to include Catherine de Barnes, who have their own Residents' Association. The other parts of our Constitution, for example protecting the feel of our village and encouraging social events, will not be changed, we feel this will represent our actions better. To this end we will be asking you to vote on a resolution.

### **Other items:**

Fundraising this year has been in aid of the Parish Council's Christmas lights, £221.05 from the raffle at the village festival and the proceeds from the new village reusable bag, available in The Corner Shop.

The suggested minimum donation from households for the Society remains £2;

The Chair thanks members of the Executive Committee for their continued hard work and commitment to maintaining the character of the village and its surroundings.