



**Celebrating the past, promoting the present and influencing the future of Beaconsfield** encapsulates the mission of the Society. I am pleased to say we have been active in all aspects since my last Chairman's message.

The Enid Blyton celebration was a huge success and raised the profile of the Town with some national newspaper interest as well as extensive local coverage. The events included something for everyone, films for the adults, family activities and art competitions and reading for the children. We received excellent support and involvement from the team at Bekonscot and I would like to formally record our thanks to them for hosting both the opening day and a special evening event for the Society; what a shame that the weather in an otherwise excellent summer did not oblige. The Film School and the Library also made major contributions to the celebration and we are very grateful to the Frost Partnership for their kind sponsorship.

Beaconsfield Now! 2013 was oversubscribed and attracted increased numbers of visitors. It was an absolute pleasure to host Mary Berry who, despite having an event at her own home later in the day, gave so generously of her time. Her interest in the activities of the exhibitors was clear to see. Well done to all the stall holders who stayed to the end .... and were thoroughly drenched for their trouble! Our thanks to the Shanly Foundation for their generous support. We already taking bookings for next year's event and I would advise organisations to get their names down soon!

Your committee continues to take the lead in Wilton Park Watch. There is a more fulsome update on the page opposite but since our very well-attended open meeting in April we have met both Dominic Grieve and Beaconsfield Town Council and have had exchanges with SBDC and BCC. It has been difficult to get SBDC and BCC to engage with us but we will be redoubling our efforts in the weeks ahead of publication of the Supplementary Planning brief due in the autumn. The interesting and potentially positive development is that another player has entered the arena, Jansons Property, who are based in Beaconsfield. We have met both Inland Homes and Jansons and seek an active dialogue with both in the months ahead and as the project unfolds.

Our vigilance in all matters planning continues but it seems almost impossible to stem the tide of overdevelopment, contrived retrospective applications, loss of green space and tree removal. TBS objects and supports residents' objections but the policy framework and the risk of expensive litigation means that developers have the upper hand. We are told that the sewerage, utilities and road infrastructure can cope with increased dwellings in the town but overflowing drains, power outages and peak-hour traffic chaos suggest otherwise. We can claim some success with scheme modification but outright refusals are rare.

With planning and development constantly on all our minds, I hope that many members will take the opportunity to attend the ANTAS meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October, this year held in Beaconsfield. I know that we will be warmly welcomed.

I hope many of you will be able to attend the AGM on 6th November and you will see from the agenda that there is a time set aside for an open floor to allow members to air their aspirations and concerns. I listed some potential issues in the last Newsletter, I am sure you can think of many more! My list: over development, infrastructure capacities, traffic, the changing mix of retail offering, affordability of dwellings for future generations, general upkeep and litter, road and pathway maintenance, open spaces use, lack of youth amenities, street clutter, uncut verges, overhanging hedges and bushes ... to name but a few.

We should take a pride in our "top twenty place" to live and actively keep it that way, please tell us where you think TBS priorities should lie.

I will say more at the AGM, but I feel like the conductor of a very fine orchestra, the quality of the performance very much depends on the orchestra and little on the conductor. My appreciation to President Les, for his fine counsel, to Sandy for his transition year as Vice President, a special thanks to Tony who is standing down after five excellent years as your Treasurer, to Laurence for his tireless contribution as Secretary, to Kari and John for Enid Blyton, Debbie and Graeme for their watchful eye on planning matters, to John for his vast knowledge and input on Wilton Park and to Nanu, Debbie and Laurence for BN! 2013.

## Wilton Park Watch

Following the open meeting in April, WPW has continued to engage with the parties concerned and has held meetings with Dominic Grieve, BTC and Inland Homes. Continued requests will be made to the SBDC Cabinet member responsible and the BCC Cabinet member for Transport in the hope that they will both find availability for meetings. Conversations with Inland have been entirely positive to date and they are outwardly mindful of the concerns of local residents expressed so well at our open meeting.

Many will have seen press reports of the results of the initial consultation, are available via following link.

[http://www.wiltonparkfuture.com/wp-content/uploads/Wilton-Park-Consultation-Report\\_Version-2.pdf](http://www.wiltonparkfuture.com/wp-content/uploads/Wilton-Park-Consultation-Report_Version-2.pdf)

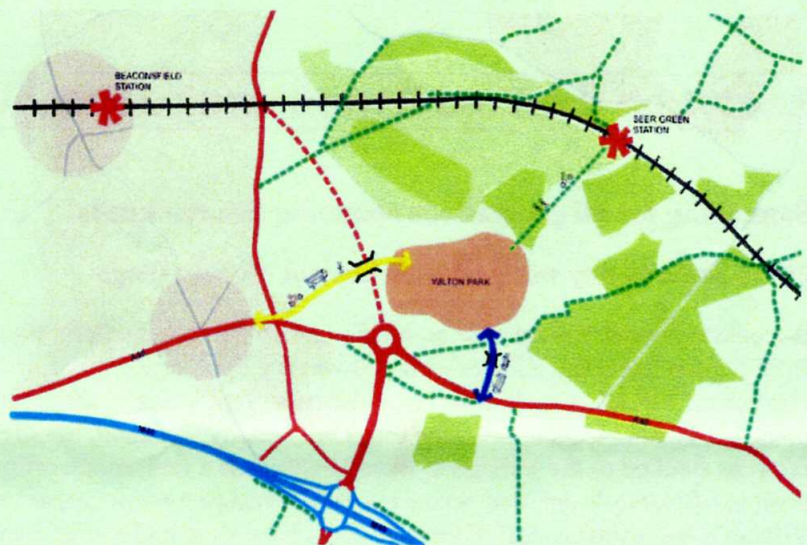
We gave an extended version of the following summary thoughts on the consultation to Inland Homes:

*A very useful start but (perhaps inevitably) somewhat shallow. The exercise indicated the level of interest in the Town and confirmed the need for more detail to allow a reasonable assessment of the project by our members and residents. The scores for Question 1 speak for themselves. [Have we identified the key issues... Yes 35%, No 50% Don't Know 15% !!] To have had a preliminary exhibition was most welcome and a promising step that should be commended – the turnout confirmed this. The level of information presented was limited and gave little chance for attendees to grasp the nature of the likely development and how it would affect them. Conspicuously absent from the presentation were a) expected dwelling sizes and hence the profiles of occupants affecting local infrastructure, b) any form of architectural ambition, c) a project timetable and an estimate of blight during construction and d) an environmental impact assessment.*

The news that another developer, Jansons Property, has expressed interest in the scheme as a potential rival bidder to Inland Homes is a positive development in our view. The fact that there is another scheme on the table must help in realising maximal value to the public purse but importantly it allows competing and contrasting schemes to be compared, resulting in a better overall project whichever group is successful.

We have had an initial and positive meeting with Jansons and shared our views. Jansons have been in the wings for some time and seemed already well briefed having had representatives attend our open meeting. They are proposing an alternative access to the site (marked in dark blue on this map) and are keen to consult on community use aspects of the scheme, including potential reuse of existing buildings for this. Jansons have launched a website to explain their proposals and to watch for further developments.

See them on <http://wiltonpark.info/>



The Defence School of Languages continues to run down its operations and we believe the last course will finish in December. Whilst the housing will continue to be used for military personnel for the foreseeable future, uncertainty remains as to exactly how long. The camp as we know it will cease operation in the New Year. One positive to report is that Holtspur Football club have been given permission to use the pitches for this season (until May 2014) under a license from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation on behalf of the MoD that will transfer to purchaser if site is sold in the meanwhile.

The publication of the consultation results was a little delayed when compared with the declared timetable. WPW are led to believe this will lead to a delay in publication of the Supplementary Development brief, possibly until late Autumn. If accepted by SBDC then this will go out to further formal consultation leading to SBDC consideration/potential approval early in 2014. A detailed planning application would follow with approval expected late 2014 and the first sod cut early in 2015. If appropriate, we shall be holding a further open meeting once more plans are available.

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## Report on Beaconsfield Now! 2013

Debbie Marsden

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Beaconsfield Now! 2013 on 15<sup>th</sup> Jun, generously supported by the Shanly Foundation, was a memorable day for everyone. The Council Green was full this year with over forty stalls. Mary Berry and Dick Smith our town crier opened the event supported by our Mayor Sandy Saunders. Bob Massie hosted the day's events, introducing and promoting the many clubs, societies and charities present who gratefully give their time and efforts to worthy causes. Thank you to the many who voiced their enjoyment of the day.

Entertainment was provided in full volume by the Holtspur School Samba band, followed by the talented 'In a tin' quartet and concluded with the ever popular Beaconsfield High School Jazz band. The Scout and Guide barbeque and cake stalls were very well received.

We expect that the success will be repeated on June 14<sup>th</sup> 10 -1pm in 2014 and look forward to welcoming you to another enjoyable event.



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## Report on the Enid Blyton week June/July

Kari Dome

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**Something for all generations spanning two weekends!**

**29-30 June: Noddy weekend at Bekonscot Model Village**

Bekonscot Model Village was an ideal place to begin our celebrations. Enid Blyton knew the Village well and wrote a book especially for it, *The Enchanted Village*, which is still on sale there. And you can see a fine model of Green Hedges. Over the thankfully sunny weekend, hundreds of families flocked to the Village to meet Noddy, see a real, roadworthy version of Noddy's car, and go on a special treasure hunt organised by the Village's enthusiastic staff. Gerrards Cross bookshop had a stall displaying a large selection of Enid Blyton books.



The celebrations began in style with our grand opening ceremony, as our Town Crier, Dick Smith, boomed out in the traditional way: "Oyez! Oyez!, the beginning of Enid Blyton Week and Noddy Weekend!". Mayor Sandy Saunders welcomed all and especially our guest of honour, nine-year-old Olivia Cannings. A huge Enid Blyton fan, Olivia had been upset by some initial controversy and opposition to the celebrations in the papers. So she set up an e-petition to support the festival and campaign to have a plaque for the author. On behalf of the Beaconsfield Society, I presented her with a gift of a Noddy doll.

## **Tuesday 2nd July: Society Social Evening at Bekonscot Model Village**

This was a unique opportunity for Society members and their guests to see Bekonscot on a quiet summer's evening when it was closed to the public. We met first in the cafeteria for drinks and a warm welcome from our Chairman Mike Elliott. Maura Buckland, the Village's Marketing Manager gave us a brief and interesting history of Bekonscot, followed by an entertaining talk by Jacqui Hogan entitled "Enid Blyton: life, literature and lashings of language" (during which we learned, among other things, that Enid *never* wrote about 'lashings of lemonade'). There was plenty of time to explore Bekonscot and an opportunity to take a ride on their train. A big thank you to all the Bekonscot staff, who stayed on to look after us so well.

## **Thursday 4th July: Gala Evening at the National Film and TV School.**

The Gala Evening of three films about Enid Blyton provided an opportunity for local Beaconsfield residents, whether genuine fans or just intrigued by her, to find out more about her life and work, meeting beforehand, having a drink and seeing a display loaned by the National Centre for Children's Books in Newcastle. The audience of nearly 100 also included many who had travelled a long way to join us. One party of three friends included Lucie Nottingham, who had come all the way from Cornwall and who had apparently been the inspiration for "*Lucy Loud Voice*" as a noisy next-door neighbour of Green Hedges!. Our Chairman Mike Elliott welcomed everyone and introduced Mike Shaw, the producer of the first film, *Enid Blyton: The Beckenham Years*, an authenticated account of Enid's early life. Mike and his team from Footprint Productions had travelled up especially from Kent to be present. They made the film in 2012, but this was its premiere in front of a large audience. Mike was keen to stress the care they had taken to ensure the film's accuracy, which showed a bleak childhood broken by parental rift. Fantasy was her escape.

The second film, an addition to the advertised programme, was loaned to us by the Programme Director of the *Seven Stories* exhibition, a recent event at the National Centre for Children's Books in Newcastle. This was a documentary made for their exhibition featuring many interviews with modern-day Blyton fans of all ages and backgrounds, who explained why they loved her work and what it meant to them. We also saw both Imogen Smallwood (Enid's daughter) and Sophie Smallwood (her granddaughter) talking to camera.

After those two short films we showed *Enid*, the BBC biopic starring Helena Bonham Carter. Many people were shocked by its characterisation of Enid Blyton as an unfeeling mother and wife, driven by her work and a sense of 'duty' to her readers, but there were many comments afterwards that the first documentary had helped them to understand why she was like that. They said it made for a very well balanced evening.

## **Saturday 6th July: A day of activities at Beaconsfield Library**

The Library put together a most enjoyable, action-packed day for children. A creative writing session in the morning was followed by an Enid Blyton talk from Jacqui Hogan. In the afternoon, actress and writer Jan Moran Neil vividly read a special Noddy story, after which the Director of High March School, Belinda Avery, presented prizes for all the week's children's art competitions. Our thanks go to the school, which organised and sponsored all the prizes. (Both Enid Blyton's daughters attended High March.)

The afternoon, and our Enid Blyton Week, drew to a sunny end with a Green Hedges party for the children, with – of course – lashings of lemonade, cakes, sticky buns, doughnuts, and sandwiches. All the party food was kindly provided by Jung's of Beaconsfield. Wonderful weather made for an outdoor picnic. The Noddy car was on the forecourt and Noddy himself was there to entertain the children all afternoon. Our Mayor, Sandy Saunders, and County Councillor Adrian Busby also joined in the party. Adrian had very kindly found money from the BCC Community Leaders Fund to buy new Enid Blyton books for the library.

Our thanks go to all who helped to make this celebration week such a success: our major sponsor The Frost Partnership for covering the main expenses of advertising, BCC for their kind grant and recognition, Brian Newman MD and Maura Buckland Marketing Manager at Bekonscot for their hard work and enthusiastic contribution to the event and Micheline Katts, Librarian, and her staff at Beaconsfield Library.

I would also like to thank our Town and County Councils, and the County Library, all officially behind the Enid Blyton Week celebrations. Special thanks go to Mayor Sandy Saunders and his wife Rosemary, who attended every Enid Blyton event. I really appreciated both the formal and informal support they gave. And a final grateful thanks for all the help from my fellow Committee members whilst working on this successful Enid Blyton Week

With the promise of a commemorative plaque now confirmed, I feel that Enid Blyton has at last been properly acknowledged by, and belongs to, Beaconsfield. Let us all keep her flag flying.

The Annual General Meeting for the year 2012/2013  
will be held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall  
on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 starting at 7.30 p.m.

### PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Welcome by the President
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the last AGM and matters arising not covered below
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Election of Officers and Committee
7. Presentation of the Society's awards
8. Any other business

The meeting will be followed by a talk by our Guest Speaker:

Mr Paul Brett, Land Director, Inland Homes plc

Refreshments will be available at the end of the talk with time to meet the Speaker and the Committee. *All are welcome and members are encouraged to bring guests!*

### NOTES

The current Committee is as follows:

Chairman: Mike Elliott  
Secretary: Laurence Smaje  
Treasurer: Tony Bristow, who will be standing down after the maximum five years  
(Graeme Richards has been nominated and it willing to stand)  
Committee: John Burton, Kari Dorme, Nanu Hodson, Debbie Marsden, Jess McEvoy, John Page,  
Graeme Richards

If you would like to make any other nomination either as Officer or Committee member, please make your recommendation to the Secretary, Laurence Smaje, on 01494 681165 or email him at [laurence@smaje.co.uk](mailto:laurence@smaje.co.uk) not later than Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

**The Society's Website** [www.beaconsfieldsociety.org.uk](http://www.beaconsfieldsociety.org.uk)

Any contributions, suggestions or criticisms members may have will be gratefully received by the Secretary who may be contacted via the website or directly by phone, 01494 681165, or by email to [laurence@smaje.co.uk](mailto:laurence@smaje.co.uk).