

The Beaconsfield Society NEWSLETTER June 2013

Dates for your Diary

Beaconsfield Now! 2013

**Saturday 15th June from
10.00 am until 2.00 pm**

Council Green

**Enid Blyton
week**

29 June-7 July 2013

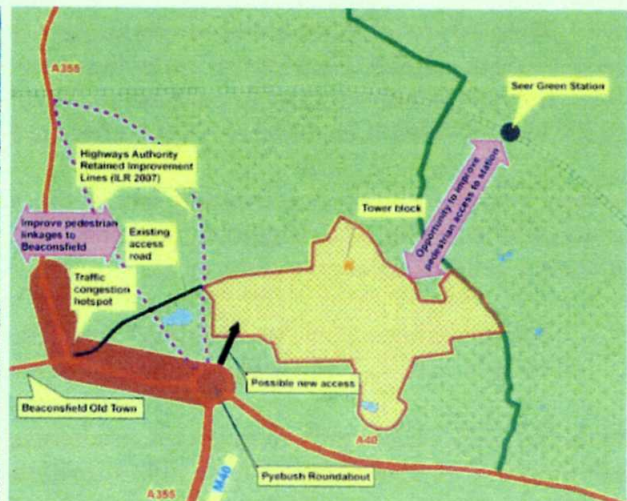
Wilton Park Watch

Wilton Park Development – The Beaconsfield Society co-hosts Open Meeting

SBDC's Core Strategy 2011 envisages the building of 300 new homes on the Wilton Park site, if and when the Defence School of Languages leaves. It recently transpired that Inland Homes had been designated the preferred developer and they held a Public Consultation Event in March seeking the public's views on the various options they had proposed. The Beaconsfield Society in collaboration with Beaconsfield Old Town Residents Association established a group, Wilton Park Watch, to maintain a watching brief on the proposed development. We met Inland Homes and attended the Consultation and sent a paper containing our initial views to Inland Homes.

While both societies applauded the consultation, they felt it raised many issues for the town that needed open debate. Accordingly, we convened an Open Meeting at the Curzon Centre on 9 April so that residents could express their views and concerns in an open forum. This was attended by representatives of Inland Homes, Bucks County Council and South Bucks District Council as well as representatives of a number of local societies and a packed hall of around 250 residents.

We were particularly pleased that our MP, Dominic Grieve, opened the meeting with a very cogent remark: "This development has the potential to be of great benefit to Beaconsfield, if undertaken well; if done badly, it will be to its detriment." His words found many echoes in the discussions that followed.



The meeting focused on three major concerns – the impact on traffic flow in the Old Town and the need for both better sports facilities and dedicated community amenities – before opening up for general discussion.

Traffic congestion, already chronic at London End, not surprisingly provoked a lively discussion, with speakers for and against a relief road. Traffic consultant Patrick Gurney explained that simply building a relief road would create as many problems as it solved, while Peter Hardy, BCC Cabinet member for Transport, was in favour of it, as were most speaking from the floor. All agreed that *something* must be done.

Keith Bowyer of Holtspur Football Club argued strongly that the Wilton Park development offered a real chance to gain much-needed sports grounds with decent changing facilities and a social space where they could build a real community atmosphere. Godwin Johnson from the Tennis Club reminded us all that, while adults might need homes, children need a place to play. A plea for a swimming pool in the town drew strong applause, though its long-term funding was not explored.

The third session, on community facilities, was opened by Deborah Sanders on behalf of *Churches Together*. She spoke strongly in favour of creating community facilities that served all aspects of our lives, spiritual as well as physical, from birth to death. Graham Southgate then spoke of the need for a permanent theatre. For more than 100 years the town's performing arts organisations have been using school halls and other multi-purpose venues. Here was a golden opportunity to build something of real benefit for the future.

In the final open session, wider questions were raised on schooling and medical care, given that local schools and medical practices are already full, and how we can protect the promise to build much-needed affordable housing and amenities open to all our communities – an important reminder of Dominic Grieve's opening thoughts.

The Beaconsfield Society and BOTRA sent a report of the views expressed at the meeting, together with a considered summary of their own deliberations based on the Public Consultation and the Open meeting, to Inland Homes, and SBDC. These documents were also circulated by email to some 120 residents who had attended our Open Meeting and supplied us with their email addresses. We will be holding a further open meeting in the autumn once the Supplemental Planning Document – based on the Development Brief submitted by Inland Homes to SBDC – is published.

The Inland Homes / SBDC website on Wilton Park is at <http://www.wiltonparkfuture.com>

Enid Blyton Celebration Week

29th June – 7th July

Saturday 29th June –

Noddy Weekend at Bekonscot Model Village
See a full sized working Noddy car.
Treasure hunt with prizes and much more.



Tuesday 2nd July - A Social Evening for Society members and their guests has been arranged at Bekonscot Model Village (Warwick Road entrance) starting at 6.30 pm. The evening will include an entertaining talk by Jacqui Hogan entitled 'Enid Blyton – life, literature and lashings of language'. Wine and light refreshments will be served. Cost £5 per head for members and their guests. Please make your booking using the tear-off form to be found on page 5 after the Society Matters section. Numbers are limited.

Thursday 4th July - Enid Blyton Evening 7pm, at the National Film and TV School
Portraits of Enid in film - £10 suggested donation to support the Enid Blyton festival
To include a complimentary welcome drink.

Tickets available from Beaconsfield Library Reynolds Road Beaconsfield HP9 2NJ
Tel 0845 2303232, email: lib-bea@buckscc.gov.uk or via www.beaconsfieldsociety.org.uk

Saturday 6th July - Children's Activities at Beaconsfield Library
Creative writing workshop, Enid Blyton talk, special story time and a Green Hedges Party with lashings of lemonade and sticky buns. Quiz and colouring competition prizes to be announced.

Enid Blyton and Beaconsfield

Kari Dorme

There are few reminders of the connection between Beaconsfield and the world famous children's author Enid Blyton. This is about to change as The Beaconsfield Society is organizing an Enid Blyton Week from 29 June-7 July 2013 celebrating the 75th anniversary of Blyton's arrival in Beaconsfield. This is part of the society's remit to preserve, protect and promote the best of Beaconsfield.

In 1973 Green Hedges, Enid's home was demolished. Today the area where it used to stand at Penn Road is called Blyton Close and is the only clue to the fact that she lived here until her death in 1968.

Enid and her first husband Hugh Pollock bought an eight-bedroomed house set in two and a half acres, and in 1938 paying £3000 for it. As a trained teacher she was already building a reputation as a writer with stories and articles regularly appearing in magazines. She invited her *Sunny Stories*' readers to name her new home, and from the young readers' suggestions she chose the name Green Hedges. She received a large postbag every week, particularly from teachers and schoolchildren who found her poems and stories inspiring. She answered most letters herself with Green Hedges becoming a world famous address.

Despite a blossoming career, she had personal problems and a rocky marriage. By 1943 she had divorced Hugh and married the surgeon Kenneth Darrell Waters. They were very happy together and Enid became an increasingly prolific and popular writer.

During her years at Green Hedges she wrote all 21 *Famous Five* books as well as all the *Secret Seven* and *Adventure* series. In the 1950s, she created her most successful character: Noddy, who was born in Beaconsfield! Noddy with Big Ears and Toyland sold over 20 million copies alone.



In Beaconsfield Enid was involved in many local charities, particularly the Shaftesbury Society Babies Home for babies from the East End of London. And she contributed a portion of her royalties to the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She loved to take her children Gillian and Imogen to Bekonscot Model Village and she even wrote a small book about it called *The Enchanted Village*. At Enid's centenary in 1997 a beautiful model was made of Green Hedges for Bekonscot. The family loved the town and both daughters attended High March School.

Enid became one of the most successful writers of the 20th Century being translated into over 40 languages. In 1957 it was estimated that she was earning £100,000 a year and today her books are still selling by the millions.

However in the 1960s, Blyton suffered a major setback: she was criticised for being politically incorrect, xenophobic, even racist in her writing. Trouble makers were 'golliwogs' or foreigners, boys were dominant and in the *Little Black Doll* (1937) a doll wanted a pink face. Her books were banned in some library authorities. But since the early 1990s all newer editions of her books have been updated and the language and the text changed to reflect modern speech and attitudes. Golliwogs have disappeared.

Enid should be appreciated as a marvellous story teller, who encouraged hundred and thousands of children to read for pleasure. Recognition should be made of the great contribution she has made to children's literacy and it is time to honour her legacy. The town can and should be proud of her.

The Society gratefully acknowledges generous sponsorship of our celebrations by **The Frost Partnership**.

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Much has happened since our last newsletter, well covered on the preceding pages. Our focus has been on the Wilton Park development and it was good to see many of you at our open meeting. Our voice is made stronger through such obvious interest and support, please continue to make your views known to the committee as this story unfolds. We have gained a lot of press coverage and will continue to work hard to do so and we will put any fresh developments on our website to keep you informed.

You may be reading this as a paper newsletter or as a pdf from our website. Distribution of paper copies will continue to all members who would like them. If you are happy to receive newsletters and other more frequent updates by email then please advise us of the email address to use. This does help us to get things to you more quickly and reduces the costs to the Society.... and saves a few trees as well!

You will have seen details of the special evening at Bekonscot for members and their guests. Numbers are limited so do reply early if you are interested. It will be a chance to meet the committee in a convivial atmosphere and share your thoughts on the issues that you feel are important.

Many spring to my mind: 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, where should our priorities lie?

We are active in all the four purposes of the Society as shown below in an extract from our Constitution. Do bring guests who care about our Town who may support the Society in the future, perhaps by becoming members or sharing our objectives. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Purposes of the Society*from the Society's Constitution*

The Society is established for the following purposes and for the benefits of its members and local residents:

- Promote an awareness of the beauty, history and character of the town and neighbourhood
- Encourage the preservation, development and improvement of the features and amenities which go to make pleasing, convenient conditions in which to live and work
- Stimulate public consciousness and appreciation of areas of outstanding beauty
- Encourage residents to become actively involved in the community

In furtherance of the said purposes but not otherwise, the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:

- To publish papers, reports and other literature
- To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit
- To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions
- To educate public opinion and to give advice and information
- To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person whatsoever by way of subscriptions, donations or otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose
- To do all such other things as are necessary for the attainment of such purposes

A note from the Treasurer

Through its enlarged and active committee, This year the Society has already in 2013 continued the marked increase in profile and activity seen last year and has attracted many new members as a result. As well as supporting local clubs and societies by staging the Beaconsfield Now! Event (generously sponsored this year by The Shanly Foundation) and celebrating our literary heritage with performances and displays, we have now taken the lead in providing the vehicle for residents to channel their views, preferences and concerns about the large new development proposed by SBDC on our very doorstep at Wilton Park. Our Open Meeting on Wilton Park, co-funded by BOTRA and not receiving any grant from any council or from the developers, was very well attended – testament to the interest of today’s residents in preserving the character of Beaconsfield – exactly the Society’s charter!

We always seek members’ ideas for future such events, your active assistance to the Committee in organising and delivering them and all possible help in recruiting new members, whose subscriptions will enable us to increase these activities for the benefit of all in the Town and provide particular enjoyment for attendees. Please speak to any member of the Committee at any of our events – the Society needs you!

Do please show your friends this Newsletter. Enclosed is a Membership Application form. Please give it to a friend who may be interested in joining us to keep Beaconsfield as we would like it, building a growing voice on our community’s behalf.

Please turn over for The Chairman’s letter >>>>>>>>>>

Tear off here >>-----<<

I/We would like to lodge the following **nominations** with the Committee. **Please contact me/us.**

Committee or Officer of the Society: _____

Citizen/Building of the Year Award _____

Name _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

Signature _____ Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Please send to: the Secretary, Laurence Smaje, 22, Hampden Hill, Beaconsfield HP9 1BP or email him at laurence@smaje.co.uk at any time. The deadline will be announced in the next Newsletter.

Tear off here >>-----<<

Tuesday 2nd July 2013 ENID BLYTON WEEK Enjoy Bekonscot on a summer’s evening.

A Social Evening for Society members and their guests has been arranged at the Bekonscot Model Village (Warwick Road entrance) starting at 6.30pm. The evening will include an entertaining talk by Jacqui Hogan entitled ‘Enid Blyton-life literature and lashings of language’. Wine and light refreshments will be served. The cost of the evening will be £5 per head (payable with this application) for members and guests.

I/we wish to book _____ places and enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to “**The Beaconsfield Society**”.

Name _____ Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Please apply to Mr John Burton, 11, Gibson Road, High Wycombe HP12 4QW
(Tel: 01494 538206 E-mail jgb_burton@hotmail.com)