

AMERSHAM  
and district  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION



Amersham and District  
Residents Association  
**Winter 2016/2017**





## Letter from the Chairman 2016

Welcome to the Winter 2016/2017 Newsletter. Following our usual format you'll find your Committee members' portfolio reports as well as the Minutes from our AGM held on Tuesday 26th April 2016 at the Amersham Free Church Hall.

As you know, one of our objectives at ADRA is to provide an effective interface between you the membership and the various layers of Town, District and County Councils upon whom we rely for effective administration and the provision of services. By making your views known to us we will be able to do this better. We are a volunteer organisation which means we rely on volunteers. If you could devote even a little time it would be most helpful. Please contact a committee member or come to a meeting. They are held on the third Wednesday of each month, except for August and January, at 8pm in the Small Barn Hall at the Amersham Community Centre.

Finally please note that our next AGM will be held on Tuesday 25th April 2017 at The Amersham Free Church Hall, at 7 for 7.30pm.

Yours sincerely  
Bron Curley  
Chairman



## Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 26th April 2016

### **Agenda**

- 1 Chairman's Welcome
- 2 Apologies for Absence
- 3 Minutes of AGM – April 2015
- 4 Treasurer's Report – Geoff Platts
- 5 Planning Officer's Report – Les Jayatilaka
- 6 Highways Report – Geoff Platts
- 7 Environment Officer's Report – Linda Flett
- 8 Membership Records Officer's Report – Carolyn Spencer
- 9 Chairman's Report
- 10 Election of Committee (those up for re-election)
- 11 Election of Honorary Auditor
- 12 HS2 Update
- 13 Open Forum



## ADRA - Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held on 26st April 2016 at Amersham Free Church Hall

### **1 Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed approximately 50 members to the 55th Meeting of the Association.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Lyn Josey, Simon & Vanessa Opie, Sylvia & Lionel Avery, Liz Walsh, Ernest & Jean Newhouse, Tony & Lynda Wright, Mr & Mrs Kirchheimer, Joan Shepherd, Bridget & Brian Woods, Jacky Harvey, Mr & Mrs D Cash.

### **3 Minutes of AGM held on 21nd April 2015**

Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Tony Westhead and seconded by Guru Guruswamy.

### **4 Treasurer's Report (Geoff Platts)**

As attached.

Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Vic Faulkner and seconded by Ros Makins.

### **5 Planning Officer's Report (Les Jayatilaka)**

As attached.

Liz Jones updated the meeting on the proposed Waste Transfer Station, London Road East, Amersham. A year on from the Development Control Committee passing a resolution to approve the WTS, there has still been no decision notice issued. We don't know why Bucks CC is delaying things in this way. Our lawyer advised us to write to Bucks CC and state all the problems, they have replied and said there are no problems so now waiting to see. At the moment all we know is that they intend to approve it. Looking to see if we go to Judicial Review.



Bron Curley commented on Cargo/Iceland site redevelopment. It's important to remind ourselves that although there is a lot of emotion around this site we comment on planning applications based on planning rules. Is it appropriate use of space, does the new planning application satisfy the requirements in terms of change of use etc. We can't comment on who buys the space. Planning rules do not include whether you want a discount supermarket. Commercial issues should be separated from the planning issues.

**Draft Development Plan – comment from Mark Flys, Chiltern District Council.**

If we don't create a plan one will be imposed upon us. Joining with South Bucks does have some advantages. Between the two authorities they are looking for potentially 15,000 dwellings of all types. There is planning in for about 1,500 of those. There will still be a shortfall of approx. 7,500. What they then do is start negotiating with bordering authorities like Aylesbury Vale to see if they can take some of that into their area. At the moment they are looking at potential sites, will then test infrastructure and what can be done with it. This is worst case scenario if we don't hit targets. 7,500 shortfall includes affordable housing allocation.

**Question from Bron Curley to Mark Flys: Is there any provision for schools and essential amenities?**

Mark Flys: My understanding is that comes in stage 2, where they have identified those sites and they then look at infrastructure, schools etc. It is part of the process and they have to cost that into the site about what is needed to support the site. Stage 2 consultation will be in October/November.

**Question from member: Concerned that Green Belt and AONB is proposed as part of this test local plan. Also concerned that ADRA did not think it necessary to take a position as an organisation. Best**



**responses have been from Chesham Bois Parish Council, Chiltern Society. ADRA seemed to dismiss vast chunk of land which will link Chesham and Little Chalfont on the back of Amersham which is a sizeable piece of Green Belt/ANOB.**

Reply from Les Jayatilaka: Have looked at it from our Amersham Residents Association point of view, we seem OK in terms of what we need to deliver. Would rather things stay the same but faced with having Central Government telling us what to do I would rather see control than an imposition.

Comment from Mark Flys: These are Green Belt sites that we're talking about which is part of the process, they are also looking at every brown field site in the area and also part of the plan is to look at opportunities for employment as well. Green Belt area is a last resort.

#### **6 Highways Report (Geoff Platts)**

As attached.

#### **7 Environment Officer's Report (Linda Flett)**

As attached.

#### **Member comment on Hyrons Bridge:**

Many years ago the roundabout between Batchelors Way and Highland Road was a proper roundabout and there were no problems with people coming from Highland Road and turning right to the bridge. Since the roundabout has been removed and a mini roundabout put there people turn right the wrong way. Have witnessed accidents there and written to Council but nothing has been done.

Linda Flett: Met with Martin Tett who said to let him know the number of accidents or near misses, but he has not received any information.

Member suggested a raised kerb might help.



Member said that at the Orchard Lane end the white lines should be painted more regularly because it is not clear who has right of way.

Mimi Harker: A number of people with mobility scooters use the bridge and they have complained about road surface.

### **8 Membership Records Officer's Report (Carolyn Spencer)**

As attached.

### **9 Chairman's Report (Bron Curley)**

As attached.

### **Discussion about planting trees in Sycamore Road and Hill Avenue:**

Steve Catanach from Amersham Town Council said they were very small conical trees which won't affect anything underground other than services. They go straight up, don't affect the traffic. Bring a bit of shade and colour to the area to lessen the harshness of the concrete. Concerns from members about leaves dropping on road and not being cleared away regularly.

Mimi Harker: Amersham Action Group consulted the community on numerous occasions and people voted in favour of trees. Suggested asking the question again at the Amersham Carnival.

Member questions: Will there still be space for the market and pedestrians? Steve Catanach replied that there would be more space because they would take up less space than the concrete planters currently in use.

Member concerned about tree roots damaging and lifting the pavements. Steve Catanach replied that these trees have a small root ball that won't damage the pavement.

Number of trees proposed: 14 in Sycamore Road and 7 in Hill Avenue. Funding needed for survey to check the services in the pavements.



Mark Flys and Steve Catanach to talk about it at next council meeting.

### **10 Re-election of Committee**

This was proposed by Guru Guruswamy and seconded by Mimi Harker.

### **11 Election of Honorary Auditor**

Ernest Newhouse has agreed to continue as Auditor. His re-election was proposed by Vic Faulkner and seconded by Liz Jones.

### **12 HS2 Update**

See Chairman's Report

### **13 Open Forum**

Vic Faulkner commented on WW1 memorial crosses and congratulated Town Council on the maintenance of the impressive display. Long term plan is for them to be on show for another 18 months, then returns to Shardeloes for one year. 4 year plan.

### **Amersham Common Village Hall**

Chairman, Treasurer and Booking Secretary stepping down. Looking for people to take over. Amersham Town Council have been approached and are looking at taking over the running of it, there are some legal issues which need to be resolved.

Member: Commenting on ways in which top Amersham and Old Amersham could co-operate, suggested identifying common problems like parking and condition of roads. Lots of groups and societies in the area, could they form a joint committee with one member from each group if they felt the need to discuss common problems.

Bron Curley response: This has been discussed in the past but not taken any further yet.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

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AMERSHAM AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015

(including for comparison a summary for 2014)

<u>2014</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2015</u>
£		£	£		£
3290	Subscriptions	3060-00	159	Printing, stationary & postage	134-55
			287	Hire of Halls	281-90
3	Donation	3-00	45	Affiliation Fee	-
			227	Insurance	227-15
			163	Social Evening	150-64
26	Bank Interest	23-58	156	Millennium Garden/Flower Bed	250-00
			20	Opposition to HS2 ( petition)	-
			1500	Amersham Action Group	-
			-	Newsletter	1059-88
			45	Misc Items/Speaker	-
			103	AGM refreshments	89-24
<u>3319</u>		<u>3086-58</u>	-	Presentations	49-99
			-	Town Show & Heritage Day	210-00
			30	Bank Charges	-
			-	Refund of Subscriptions	<u>15-00</u>
			2735		2468-35
			<u>584</u>	Surplus/ (Deficit)	<u>618-23</u>
			<u>3319</u>		<u>3086-58</u>

Note:- The Residents' Association agreed to act as Banker for Silver Sundays, Charity Events organised by Mimi Harker, former Mayor of Amersham. (Income £2750, Exp. £1216-63, Surplus £1533-37)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2015

<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>		
£	£	£	£		
5038	Opening Surplus	5621-61	326	Current Account	1375-12
584	Surplus/Deficit over year	618-23	6343	Deposit Account	6417-27
			1	Cash in Hand	-
			(1048)	Creditor(Silver Sunday)	(1533-37)
				Creditor(Mimi Harker)	(19-18)
<u>5622</u>		<u>6239-84</u>	<u>5622</u>		<u>6239-84</u>

Auditor's Report

I have audited the above accounts having regard to the matters referred to below. This Association, in common with many others of similar size and organisation, derives a substantial portion of its income from subscription, advertisements, etc., which cannot be fully controlled until it is entered in the accounting records and is therefore not susceptible to independent audit verification.

In my opinion, subject to the foregoing, the accounts give a true and fair view of the Association's affairs as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, and the Income and Expenditure for the period then ended,

Hon Auditor

Hon. Treasurer



## ADRA Planning Report 2016

As I suspect that there will be a lot of discussion on a certain project, I will efficiently run through all the projects, which ADRA has commented on, this past year identifying the outcomes so that we can get to the comment ASAP.

The proposal for the development of an all weather pitch and flood lighting at the Amersham and Wycombe College for the Hockey Club was refused permission and went to appeal. The Appeal was upheld as the development was deemed to fit, amongst other things, in the framework of having open-air sports facilities in the green belt and that it was on ground that was already approved for sporting activity. It was advised that the sports facility would be seen as part of the education facility and hence will not look out of place.

The proposal for further development of a residence in 11 St Leonards Road from one to two dwellings was rejected and the subsequent appeal was dismissed. The design was resubmitted and the developer modified the design to accommodate the inspector's comments with regards to the buildings. As the inspector had concluded that the development in their opinion was not detrimental to the overall character of the street the number and architecture of the buildings was not altered. The development was approved subject to conformation of legal terms.

The 5 dwelling development on 54 Clifton Road, Chesham Bois is still registered but to date there is no decision.

The rear extension to 10 Bois Lane has been granted permission. This was a situation where one side of Semi-Detached residence is building a single storey extension past the rear line of the neighbour. The argument that the extension will compromise the access to light was dismissed, as it was a civil matter and not a planning issue. I am baffled to see that the



approving of a design that could lead to civil action between neighbours is not a planning issue.

A development on 16 Piggotts Orchard, which is the addition of a further dwelling on a subdivided plot, has been refused planning permission. The appeal has been upheld as the inspector determined that the design was modified enough to mitigate any issues that the neighbours have.

The proposed support living development at the North end of the High Street in Old Amersham has had its planning application refused. There has been no further movement with the development to date.

The Old Alpha garage development has been given planning permission. There has been some “movement” on site so it appears building works have begun.

The Pheasant Pub site has had a new upgraded scheme and this has been submitted. The scheme is as per their public consultation presentation and we do not see any issues with what has been proposed. The development has been approved subject to conditions.

The Waste Transfer site looks like it will go ahead. See AGM Minutes for update.

There is a development application currently submitted for 67 – 75 Sycamore Street. The proposal proposes the reconfiguring of ground floor retail with residential above. There is an anomaly with the application as there is no change of use nominated for the ground floor space although change of use is applied for. The Architecture for the development needs to be further addressed, as we do not believe it is in keeping with the rest of the street. We have opposed the development based on the anomaly of what the proposed ground floor class is and that the Architecture of the building is not in keeping with the rest of the street. The project is going to committee on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016.



The Latest Draft Development Plan was released for public consultation in January 2016 and the 8-week period finished at the end of February 2016. This revised version is the result of the consultation process of early 2015 and is incorporating the comments, ideas and sites put forward at that time. It must be noted that it is now a joint Plan and that a lot more sites for development are being proposed.

The proposed option areas, which is probably most important to you, identified in the plan will be tested for development and the January consultation forms part of that process. Some of these areas would have been put forward by the owners or interested parties in the last consultation. The area of the sites proposed is in excess of what is required and this will be reduced after the testing process to the target number for a preferred options consultation in October November 2016.

There is no firm commitment that any area identified in this draft will be allocated for development.

ADRA did not make any contribution to the current public consultation, as we had already contributed as an organization to this plan through our input into the previous consultation. We had found no glaring issues with the document.

- The **Public Consultation** commencing in **January/February 2016** incorporating an 'Issues and Options' Consultation
- **Preferred Options Consultation** commencing in **October/November 2016**
- **Publication (Draft Plan) Consultation** commencing in **March/April 2017**
- **Submission** of the Plan to the Secretary of State in **September 2017**
- **Examination** in **December 2017**
- **Adoption** in **June 2018**



CH/2014/2274/FA	<p>Development of an all weather pitch, erection of a clubhouse, floodlights and fencing - <u>Amersham and Wycombe College Amersham Campus Stanley Hill Amersham Buckinghamshire HP7 9HN</u></p> <p>The development was deemed to fit, amongst other things, in the framework of having open-air sports facilities in the green belt and that it was on ground that was already approved for sporting activity. It was advised that the sports facility would be seen as part of the education facility and hence will not look out of place.</p>	<p>Refused Permission</p> <p>Appeal has now been upheld</p>
CH/2015/2318/FA	<p>Redevelopment of site to provide two residential dwellings and associated vehicular access – <u>11 St Leonards Road Chesham Bois Buckinghamshire HP6 6DT</u></p> <p>This is the resubmission of the refused appeal last year. The developer has modified the design to accommodate the inspector's comments with regards to the design. As the inspector had concluded that the development in their opinion was not detrimental to the overall character of the street it was not a consideration.</p>	<p>Application was approved at the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> April subject to agreement on legals.</p>
CH/2014/2287/FA	<p>Demolition of existing dwelling and replacement of five detached dwellings, garages and associated driveways – <u>High Beech 54 Clifton Road Chesham Bois Buckinghamshire HP6 5PP</u></p>	<p>No Decision available</p>
CH/2015/0528/FA	<p>Single storey rear extension, fenestration alterations – <u>10 High Bois Lane Chesham Bois Buckinghamshire HP6 6DG</u></p>	<p>Conditional Permission Granted</p>
CH/2015/075/FA	<p>Detached house served by new vehicular access and hardstanding and new access and hardstanding for existing dwelling - <u>16 Piggotts Orchard Amersham Buckinghamshire HP7 0JG</u></p>	<p>Refused Permission Appeal has been upheld, development to go ahead.</p>



CH/2015/1063/FA	Demolition of existing derelict buildings and construction of a specialist housing facility comprising 33 supported living units (C2 Class Use) with associated vehicular and pedestrian access, parking facilities, landscaping, community orchard and allotments - Land North Of High Street Old Amersham.	Refused Permission
CH/2015/1742/FA	Erection of five residential units, renovation and conversion of grade II listed former public house to provide a sixth residential unit and day nursery facility, associated landscaping access and parking - The Pheasant Public House 35 Plantation Road Amersham Buckinghamshire HP6 6HL	Approved subject to conditions
CH/2015/2243/FA	Redevelopment of site to facilitate erection of mixed use building comprising ground floor retail restaurant use (Class A1/A3) with associated access parking, servicing, residential accommodation (Class C3) on first, second and third floor roof space comprising 35 studio 1 and 2 bed flats, associated access basement parking, private communal amenity space - 67 to 75 Sycamore Road Amersham Buckinghamshire HP6 5EQ	To planning committee 28-04-2016



## Highways

I have continued to report the location of pot holes, damaged or defective road furniture, including road advisory and mandatory signs rendered ineffective by growing vegetation at road junctions. I do this by phoning Highways on Call – tel no. 0845 230 2882. I encourage everyone to do the same as things do eventually happen. Ask for a reference number from the person taking your call as I feel this ensures that your notification will be recorded and you can make further enquiries if nothing has happened after a reasonable time. The very sunken drain cover on the Chesham bypass - a real car suspension breaker - has now been rectified.

Mains water leaks should be reported to Affinity Water on 0345 357 2404 or 0800 376 5325. Affinity Water then contacts the Local Authority to schedule repair work.

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## Environment 2015

We are continuing to monitor Hyrons Bridge regarding pedestrians.

We look out for overgrown footpaths which may cause obstruction to users, if you notice any issues in the area please let us know.



## Membership Records Officer's Report

We currently have 1152 members in 702 households. These are almost exactly the same numbers as at this time last year. The flow of new members has again kept pace with the flow of those departing.

We are still trying to add members' e-mail addresses to our records. If you received an e-mail from Les reminding you of the date of this meeting, it means that we have your current e-mail address. If you did not, then we do not. If that is the case, please would you add your email address to the list which is circulating, or send me an email. My address is in the recent newsletter and will be in the next one. Also, please try to remember to let us know if you change your email address. We promise not to bombard you with messages and we do not allow other people or organisations to have access to our database, but there are occasions when it is helpful to the committee to be able to canvass members' opinions quickly, or when we feel it appropriate to make members aware of local matters requiring a swift response. Email also enables us to remind the majority of members of dates for the AGM and the January Social.

We are, as always, very grateful for the assistance given by Road Stewards. People have so many demands on their time these days that we are very conscious of the need not to overburden them. Indeed we did not give many Road Stewards any tasks last year. However, there is a danger of us becoming rather detached from members, particularly those who do not use email, if we do not make use of Road Stewards.

We are still in need of help in:

- Beech Grove
- Black Acre Close



- Bois Lane
- Chequers Hill
- Clare Park\*
- Darlington Close
- Devonshire Avenue
- Devonshire Close
- Grimsdells Lane
- Hardwicke Gardens
- High Bois Lane
- King George V Road
- Milton Lawns
- Quarrendon Road
- Sheepfold Lane
- Stanley Hill Avenue
- Sycamore Close\*
- The Copse
- The Drive
- The Rise
- Woodside Avenue.

These are only the roads in which we have a number of members, but no Road Steward. There are quite a lot of roads in which we do not currently have any members and we need to try to find a way to reach them.

Apart from new membership campaigns, being a Road Steward mainly involves delivering the newsletter each year, although we do sometimes ask for other assistance, such as collecting subscriptions from the very few members who still prefer to pay in cash. It is also a great help to us if you let us know if you become aware of any members moving away.

Please let me know if you no longer feel able to act as a Road Steward and/or would prefer not to be involved in delivering the next newsletter.



You will have noticed that the last two newsletters were delivered by post. There were exceptional circumstances, which made the committee feel that, in view of the timing, this was the most expeditious delivery method and indeed it seems to have worked very efficiently, but we may revert to hand delivery for at least some of the next issue.

I would also like to thank Les for undertaking to be the sender of emails to members, this being beyond my technological skills. However, I am going to need to take lessons, as Les may not be able to help me in this way for much longer.

May I also add my plea to Bron's for some more new committee members. It is great that Penny and Liz have joined in the last year, but unfortunately their arrival has only maintained the status quo. It would be a huge advantage to have several more committee members, not necessarily to be officers, but to attend committee meetings, give the benefit of their views and occasionally assist in manning a stall at, for example, the Carnival. I think that there is a strong possibility that we could run out of steam without some extra volunteers.

\*At the end of the meeting members came forward to offer to act as Road Stewards in these roads.



## Chairman's Report 2016 AGM

Welcome to the 55<sup>th</sup> AGM of Amersham and District Residents Association.

We are glad to see so many of you here. We are particularly glad to welcome new members and members who have not previously attended an AGM.

As usual, I will start with changes to the committee. We have been delighted to welcome Penny King and Liz Jones onto the committee and I am grateful to them for having agreed to take on officer positions. Penny has kindly agreed to become our secretary and Liz is taking over from Les as our planning officer.

Lyn Josey had been our secretary for something like fifteen years and has contributed greatly to the working of the committee. She is now retiring from the committee. We are very sorry to lose her, but thank her for all that she has done for the Association.

Les Jayatilaka has only been on the committee for a comparatively short time, but has been a very effective planning officer and has also represented ADRA on the Amersham Action Group. We received news of his intention to return to his native Australia with much regret, but are glad to know that he will be with us for a year or so yet.

Now for my annual appeal for help. We are desperately in need of more committee members. Although we currently have enough to fill all the officers' posts, we really need at least four more members, so that we have the benefit of a wide selection of opinions at our monthly meetings. Meetings take place in the Small Barn Hall on the third Wednesday of each month at 8.00pm. There is no meeting in August, and the December meeting is usually brought forward to the second Wednesday. Meetings



generally last between about forty five minutes and an hour and a half, so committee membership is not an onerous commitment for those who do not take officers' posts. If you feel that you might be able to contribute, please do come along to a meeting.

As I have said at several recent AGM's, I would like to stand down as Chairman, having now held the post for thirteen years, which is far too long for anyone to be chairman of any organisation. Are there any volunteers in the room?

HS2 rumbles on and it is, unfortunately, looking increasingly likely that it will go ahead.

Amersham in Bloom goes from strength to strength; Heritage Day in the Old Town is a huge success attracting numerous visitors to our town. We are lucky to live in this lovely area, but we need to be vigilant to ensure that it stays that way.

As you have heard, we have been very active again this year in commenting on planning matters and we hope to continue to be so, but we really do need more help.

Please carry on contacting either me or another committee member to let us know of your concerns about local matters. We will do our best to represent the views of members, but if we write to one of the local authorities about a particular matter, our letter is counted as only one comment, despite the fact that we have over eleven hundred members. If there is something which concerns you, please make sure that you write to the relevant council as well as raising it with us.

Thank you all for coming.



## ADRA Officers

### **Chairman**

Bron Curley  
Hyrons Lodge  
129 Woodside Rd.  
Amersham HP6 6AW  
724988  
broncurley@aol.com

### **Treasurer**

Geoff Platts  
12 Runrig Hill  
Chesham Bois HP6 6DL  
725063  
gcplatts@talktalk.net

### **Secretary**

Penny King  
11 Piggotts End  
Amersham HP7 0JF  
722613  
penny@tympani.co.uk

### **Planning Officer**

Liz Jones  
Glendevon  
London Road East  
Amersham HP7 9DT  
lizjoneshr@btinternet.com

### **Highways Officer**

Geoff Platts  
12 Runrig Hill  
Chesham Bois HP6 6DL  
725063  
gcplatts@talktalk.net

### **Membership Records Officer**

Carolyn Spencer  
37A Highfield Close  
Amersham HP6 6HQ  
725094  
carolynmspencer@virginmedia.com

### **Environmental Officer**

Linda Flett  
14 Hyland Road  
Amersham HP7 9AU  
lindacollings@talktalk.net



## Amersham Playgoers Theatre Group

The group was formed in 1946 as an offshoot of the Playhouse Theatre Club. In its heyday the Playhouse Repertory Theatre was the starting point for many aspiring actors, including the young Dirk Bogarde. Their first full-length production was 'Quiet Wedding', which they performed in November at St Leonard's Hall in Chesham Bois.

Another presentation of four one-act plays followed in March 1947. The first of these, 'Ag and Bert', featured George Marks and his wife Vera. George was one of the founder members of our group and was President until his death in May 2006. For many years George was the owner of the Pram and Toy Bar in Amersham, which was purchased by Gary Grant and became the first of his chain of Entertainer toy shops. The Marks family link continues today with George's granddaughter Louise, who is regularly seen on stage.

In Feb 1948, the group took to the stage of the Playhouse Theatre with 'Lucky Dip', although they returned to St Leonard's Hall later in the year.

In 1950 the group moved to St Michael's Hall in Amersham, where they stayed until 1956.

Between 1949 and 1951 Playgoers entered a number of drama Festivals with mixed success, but culminating in being awarded a Certificate of Merit for their production of 'A Provincial Lady'. In the early 1950s the group were usually known as PADS.

1952 appears to be the last time that the Playhouse Theatre was used and any reference to ties with the theatre disappeared, although it had gone by 1956.

Two well known names appeared in the 1955 production of 'Thunder Rock'; David Tench who later became popular for his involvement



with The Consumers Association, and Dorian Williams who became television's voice of show jumping and who spent some time as the group's President until 1960. Dame Wendy Hiller was Vice-president in the 1950s.

There was a brief return to St Michael's Hall in the early 70's, until in February 1973 Playgoers took up residence in their current home, the Drake Hall at Amersham Community Centre.

In 1982 Derek Jacobi became President of the society, a position he held for a number of years.

In recent years they have also received acknowledgements from NODA (The National Operatic and Dramatic Association). The first was in 2001; 'Swansong' written by Playgoer Doug Elkins, which received a nomination for best set in the London Region.

Since then many more plays have received nominations and in 2009 'Dangerous Obsession' claimed the Flame award for the best overall production in the area followed in 2011 by the Pat Redhead Drama award for the best drama in the entire London region for their production of 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest'. The November 2011 production of 'Happy Families', again won the area Flame Award followed by a Highly Commended Scenic Award and Runner-Up in the Drama Award for The Flint St. Nativity in 2013.

In December 2004 the society name was changed from the long standing Amersham Playgoers Dramatic Society to Amersham Playgoers Theatre Group, which was considered to be more suited to the modern generation.

Playgoers are delighted to be presenting Alan Bennett's 'The Lady in the Van' for their May 2017 production. Directed by Janice Gray, this play is a bitter-sweet comedy which tells the true story of Mary Shepherd, an

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elderly woman who lived in a dilapidated van on Bennett's driveway in North London for 15 years.

Add these dates to your diary now - May 18th- 20th 8pm, Drake Hall, Amersham Community Centre, Chiltern Avenue, HP6 5AH

Tickets £11 each, available soon from [www.aptg.co.uk/tickets](http://www.aptg.co.uk/tickets)

If you would like to help with this production, please see above website for more information.



## Amersham Band – a long history and ambitious plans for the future

Many of you will be familiar with the sound of Amersham Band playing in the Memorial Gardens during the summer, or perhaps at Christmas, adding to the festive spirit with traditional brass band carols. In fact, the band has a very long history of serving the local community and is part of our heritage stretching back over 170 years.

Over the last few years the band has expanded its programme of performances and in 2016 played at over 30 different local events. These include formal concerts at the Wycombe Swan, Elgiva Theatre and Kings Church, together with local fetes and private events. The band also supports a wide range of civic events including the Carnival, Remembrance Sunday, and Community Christmas events.

The band has been growing strongly and there are now 3 bands; the main Amersham Band caters for experienced players, Amersham Community Brass is an intermediate band for developing players and a new Brass Roots initiative provides group teaching for beginners. In total there are now nearly 100 members of all ages and abilities. Based on recent success in attracting more people, the band is aiming to start a youth band and to launch a Brass Academy offering group and individual tuition.

An important part of the band's purpose is in delivering music education. In 2016, the band launched a pilot teaching scheme together with Woodside School which enabled 20 children the chance to have group lessons. This together with the regular Brass Roots sessions is enabling more people to experience the fun of learning music in a group. For children, music can contribute to the development of self-identity and is seen as a source of support when young people are feeling troubled or lonely. For older people, playing in a group can reduce social isolation.



The band is in need a new home in Amersham. Currently the rehearsals take place in a church hall in Winchmore Hill. This venue is now under threat of closure and is too small and difficult to access by public transport. In 2015 the band set out on a project to find a new rehearsal premises with the aim of returning to the town and securing a long term sustainable base.

After much searching, the band has decided to make a planning application for new building at the bottom of Rectory Hill, adjacent to the Doctors Surgery. An appeal fund has been started and an architect has been retained to design a purpose built premises. Care is being taken to minimise the visual impact and a traditional single storey barn-style building is being proposed to fit in with the surroundings.

When not in use by the band, it is hoped to be able to offer limited use of the building to other selected community groups, particularly music groups which could benefit from the facilities included within the building. This will be a useful additional provision as there is a recognised shortfall of indoor community space in Amersham.

Amersham Band is a fantastic community asset with a long heritage; it is hoped that the new bandroom will enable the band to continue to thrive for the foreseeable future.

You can contact the band for more information about joining the band, concerts and events, or about the new bandroom project via its website at [www.amershamband.com](http://www.amershamband.com)

Amersham Band is a registered charity.

Article provided by Fred Harrison, Chairman of Amersham Band

AMERSHAM  
and district  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION



Notice of the Amersham and District  
Residents Association AGM

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017

7 for 7.30pm

The Amersham Free Church Hall

