

# SUMMER 2011

AMERSHAM  
and district  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION





We've included a membership  
form with this Newsletter

Please ask a friend or neighbour to join  
**ADRA**

*Our strength is in our growing numbers!*





***Letter from the Chairman  
June 2011***

***Dear Members, Old and New!***

Welcome to the 2011 ADRA Newsletter which has the minutes from our AGM held on the 12 April at the Amersham Free Church, as well as the Committee Members portfolio reports as usual.

Our speaker this year was Councillor Nigel Shepherd, Chairman of the Amersham Action Group HS2 Committee. After Nigel's talk, Keith Hoffmeister gave a photographic presentation which starkly revealed the extent of the damage to our local environment in the Chilterns which HS2 would inflict.

If you have not as yet made a submission during the period of consultation on HS2, you have until 29 July to make your views known. In this Newsletter you will find a "how to" guide with some suggestions.

Thanks for your support. Please let us know how we can help you to express your views on issues that affect us in our communities. Please also consider volunteering a little of your time to help us.

Our January Social Evening will be held at the Large Barn Hall in the Community Centre on Wednesday 18 January 2012 from 7-9pm. Make a note in your diary and join us.

The 2012 AGM will be held on the Thursday 12 April 2012 at the Amersham Free Church Hall – 7 for 7.30pm. We hope to see you there.

Yours sincerely

***Bron Curley***

***Chairman***

***We are pleased to confirm that our recently membership drive has so far gained over 100 new members! Thank you to those who've helped.***

***Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join***



## *Minutes*

### Amersham & Districts Residents' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12th April 2011 at Amersham Free Church Hall

1. **Chairman's Welcome** The Chairman welcomed approximately 70 members to the 50th Meeting of ADRA.
2. **Apologies for Absence** Marcia Goffin, Victor Faulkner, Mary McKay, Bridget Woods.
3. **Minutes of AGM held on 13th April 2010** Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Brian Woods and seconded by Mr Holroyd.
4. **Treasurer's Report (Geoff Platts)**  
As attached. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Brian Woods and seconded by Carolyn Spencer.
5. **Planning Officer's Report** (read by Christine Summers in Guru Guruswamy's absence)  
As attached.
6. **Highways Report (Geoff Platts)**  
As attached.
7. **Environment Officer's Report (Ann Terry)**  
As attached.
8. **Membership Records Officer's Report (Michael Teychenne)**  
As attached.



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

As attached.

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

There were three Committee members up for re-election: Lyn Josey, Geoff Platts and Christine Summers. Their re-election was proposed by Roz Makins and seconded by Cllr Vera Head.

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

Ernest Newhouse has agreed to continue as Auditor. His re-election was proposed by Carolyn Spencer and seconded by Geoff Sherlock.

## **12. The Chairman introduced Cllr Nigel Shepherd, Chairman of Amersham Action Group HS2 Committee, who addressed the meeting on the proposed high speed rail link through the Chilterns.**

Cllr Shepherd informed the meeting of Amersham White Elephant Sunday on 15th May - King George V Playing Fields - in readiness for the HS2 Road Show, enabling supporters to obtain information, hear speeches from local and national figures and watch Chiltern Society's film.

The HS2 Road Show will be held at Amersham Rugby Club during 18th – 19th May (8am to 8pm).

A copy of the Chiltern Society film will be sent to every MP, following which supporters were asked to send e-mails to friends/family all over the country encouraging them to seek their MP's reaction and making the point that this phase alone will impact on every UK household to the tune of £1,200.

Websites: Two national websites: [www.hs2actionalliance.org/www.stophs2.org/](http://www.hs2actionalliance.org/www.stophs2.org/)

Local website: [www.hs2amersham.org.uk](http://www.hs2amersham.org.uk) (working alongside the above)



### **13. Open Forum**

The formal business of the meeting having been concluded, the proceedings continued in the manner of an Open Forum.

- A member highlighted the fact that the Library car park had been re-surfaced when many of the highways were still in need of repair. The Chairman pointed out that the Library and its car park were looked after by different authorities and their budgets varied in priorities.
- There was concern that one side of Woodside Road had been resurfaced and not the other. Geoff Platts offered to look into the matter.

(Due to the level of interest in the proposed HS2 link, the Open Forum was somewhat shorter than would normally be the case).

Meeting closed at 9.35pm.



## *Treasurer's Report*

The top left hand side of the Annual Accounts records the income during 2010, together with comparable figures for 2009. The increase in subscriptions in 2010 relative to those in 2009 reflect the new subscriptions rate of £5 per year per household mostly, and preferably, collected by Standing Order.

It's a consequence of the general world financial situation there was no Bank interest in 2010, but the Association Deposit Account funds have now been moved to another account, though even this account is only paying less than 2% but is the best that we have been able to find. The perhaps unusual donation amount of £34.54 is in fact the purchase of leftover wine from the AGM by committee members at cost price.

Moving on to Expenditure on the top right hand side of the Accounts. There was a doubling of printing, stationery, postage and telephone costs, largely due to advertisements for members, though in the event this was largely unproductive. Remarkably, in this financial climate, Affiliation and Insurance costs were unchanged. The cost of maintaining the Millennium Garden rose, but Newsletter costs were significantly reduced by volunteer members delivering some of the Newsletters and it transpired that many members welcomed the opportunity to meet other members of the Association. The donation of £25 to the Abbeyfield Society was in memory of Irene Robson who was for several years Chairman of the, now closed, Abbeyfield Home in North Road and the Membership Secretary of the Association for many years. Although the surplus over the year was lower than in 2009, this was only because the Association donated £500 for Christmas lights in 2010.

Moving onto the Balance Sheet, subscriptions paid in advance reflect the new annual, rather than three yearly subscriptions. Although assets at the end of 2010 were less than at the end of 2009 the Committee regard this as satisfactory taking into account the contribution for Christmas lights in 2010.

# AMERSHAM AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2010 (including for comparison a summary for 2009)

<u>2009</u> £	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2010</u> £	<u>2009</u> £	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2010</u> £
2079	Subscriptions	2523.95	325	Printing, stationery, postage & telephone	683.06
			203	Hire of Halls	225.20
			33	Affiliation Fee	33.00
			225	Insurance	225.00
			59	Social Evening	83.29
86	Bank Interest	-	283	Millennium Garden	355.00
			50	Presentation to retiring Planning Officer	
			286#	Newsletters 2009*/2010**	86.31#
				Chesham Bois Fete Stall	10.00
				AGM Speaker 2010	50.00
				AGM Speaker 2009	37.96
			85	AGM Refreshments	89.54
				Christmas Lights	500.00
				Adverts for AGM	75.20
				Donation	25.00
13	Donations	34.54	1549		2478.56
			629	Surplus/(Deficit)	79.93
<b>2178</b>		<b>2558.49</b>	<b>2178</b>		<b>2558.49</b>

\*Cost for printing donated by a member of the Association. # Cost of stamps and envelopes for distribution.


\*\*Some newsletters delivered by hand

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2010

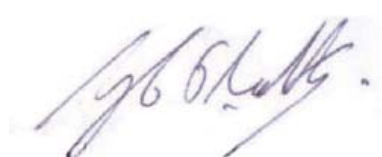
<u>2009</u> £	<u>2010</u> £	<u>2009</u> £	<u>2010.00</u> £		
2096	Opening Surplus	2724.84	230	Current Account	210.93
629	Surplus/Deficit on year	79.93	3042	Deposit Account	2622.07
			1	Cash in hand	0.77
<b>2725</b>	Closing Surplus	<b>2804.77</b>			
			10	Debtor 2009	
	529 Subs paid in Advance re 2010				
	29 2011	29.00			
<b>3283</b>		<b>2833.77</b>	<b>3283</b>		<b>2833.77</b>

## 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 subscriptions, advertisements, etc., which cannot be fully controlled until it is entered in the accounting records and is not therefore 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 31st December 2010, and of the Income and Expenditure for the period then ended.



**Ernest G. Newhouse: Hon Auditor**



**Geoff C. Platts: Hon. Treasurer**



## *Environment Report*

*Looking back on 2010 it is hard to be positive.*

The renewal of gas mains throughout the town must be nearly completed. The gas men have re-seeded the verges but it is sad so many residents park their cars on the grass.



Footpath and pavement maintenance is non-existent. If you see any serious defects please phone Transport for Bucks – 0845 230882.

We have had heavy rain which has caused some flooding. If it is caused by blocked drains please report them.

The stabilising of the railway embankment has caused some congestion but the work appears to be well advanced.

Litter is a big problem especially in the skate park. More bins may help but the council is not good at emptying them. The council employs a man, Nigel, who does a very good job but he has a big area to cover. One of our residents is also very good at voluntary litter picking.

Our Millennium Flowerbed is tended by Andy Chandler who does a good job for us. There are no children's play areas at the eastern end of town where the population is more dense and many families have no gardens.

A play area is to be built in the Rann's Road development. I have been trying to find out more about it and, more importantly, who will use it.

We will continue in our efforts to make our town more attractive.

The Town Council is to be re-located to the 2nd Floor of the CDC building.



## *Highways Report*

If 2008 and 2009 could fairly be described as the year of the potholes, 2010 is perhaps best described as the year of the potholes and failed traffic bollards. On occasion the majority of the bollards in Station Road, White Lion Road and in Amersham itself have not been operational either because they have been hit by vehicles or the lights therein have failed. Typically I report these shortcomings to Bucks CC 'Highways on Call' tel 0845 230 2882 on a weekly basis.



Last year I wrote to Bucks CC expressing the view of your Committee that limited time free parking in King George V Road should be retained (rather than effectively becoming a part of the multi-story car park) due to the proximity of the library, children's playground, CDC offices and the Health Centre. I am pleased to report the original parking provisions have been retained, including those in Hill Avenue, where it was proposed to introduce parking meters. I can also report that the proposal to close the public toilet in Woodside Road, near Boots the Chemist, has been abandoned.

I understand that it is not Council policy to road sweep cul-de-sac and minor roads on a regular basis, but by calling the phone number above the council will eventually do this.

Your Committee strongly opposed the proposal to raise the 30mph speed limit in Chesham Road in 2009 and we understand this proposal has now been abandoned.

It is perhaps worth noting that the differing pricing formula applied by London Transport and Chiltern Railways is an incentive for London commuters to drive to and park in Amersham, thus exacerbating the difficulty in parking in Amersham, which was further increased following the collapse of the Tesco store construction work on the line of Gerard's Cross resulting in even more commuters discovering the merit of commuting from Amersham when London Transport pricing applies to both services.



## ***ADRA Membership Report – Year 2010/11***

Two years ago the Association embarked upon a journey to change the collection of membership fees to Standing Orders.

In 2009, 72% of memberships due for renewal changed to Standing Orders, 6% paid by cash or cheque, but 22% failed to renew.

Similarly in 2010, 71% of renewals changed to Standing Orders, 4% paid by cash or cheque, but 25% failed to renew.

Now we are in the third and final year of this change and so far 49% of memberships due for renewal have changed to Standing Orders, 4% have paid by cash or cheque, and we are waiting for the remaining 47% to arrive over the course of this year.

The Standing Order is simple and neat to apply. If you want to cancel you simply tell your Bank, unlike the difficulty of withdrawing Direct Debits. Our auditor likes them because each subscription is uniquely identified and is shown on the Association's bank statement. But, as I have shown, we still do receive cheques and cash from members if they choose.

Of course, during each year we are told of those who relinquish their membership, mainly due to moving away or bereavement; in 2009 we lost 31 members, in 2010 we lost 28 and in 2011 we have lost 20 members so far.

So we currently have 529 paying members and we are waiting for 141 renewals due this year, giving a potential membership of 670. Then there are the 122 members who failed to renew in 2009 and 2010.

This loss may well be due to the decision not to collect subscriptions in person by our former team of collectors and the consequent loss of that personal connection with our members. But that decision relieved the team of an onerous, time-consuming task, begging for subscriptions and bearing the responsibility of carrying cash. Now we have started a new recruitment drive, with letters for each household which is not a member, the letters being delivered by our distributors. We hope that public interest in current local issues, such as HS2, will bring us some new members. Without the mandate that our membership confers we would become powerless and so it is essential that we recruit more in order to truly represent Amersham.



## ***Planning Officer's Report – Year 2010/11***

*[Guru Guruswamy apologises for his inability to present this report verbally at the meeting].*

It has not been an easy to act to follow the high standards set by our previous Planning Officer Bridget Woods. But she has smoothed the way for me with an excellent induction to Planning and guiding me through some case studies including a joint visit to a concerned resident. I am greatly indebted to her for sharing her knowledge and experience.

We have been monitoring the Council's Planning Website on a weekly basis for new applications. The website is comprehensive and very user friendly. One can see all the relevant details of the applications easily to form a view as to whether or not we respond – in addition to the cases raised by our members. There may be up to a dozen applications per week in our area.

The Council's decisions are influenced by a variety of factors as stated in their Core Strategy [Jan 2011]. The demographic changes – population trends – have a significant bearing on the nature of dwellings, size of schools etc.

For instance, in the Chiltern District:

- **People aged 65** or over will rise from 16,100 in 2008 to 23,400 by 2026.
- **Children under the age of 11:** There will be a 25% reduction by 2021 and then rise by 2026.
- **The target is to build an average of 120 dwellings per year** - that is a total of 2,400 dwellings between 2006 and 2026. The good news is that the total number is 500 below those quoted in earlier requirements.
- Another good news is that about **half of the total needs, that is 1,200 dwellings, have been either built or in various stages of planning process.**
- There will be an average of **33 new affordable dwellings per year.** (<75 sq.m)
- There should be no loss of employment floor space, and they are aiming for a year-on-year reduction in the number of shop vacancies.



*Moving on to some specific cases of interest:*

- **Redevelopment of site at 1 Ashdown Way to build four dwellings after demolishing one** – Although the appeal decision is in favour of the applicant, our wish list has been met in so far as strict conditions have been imposed on scale of the buildings and retention of a key boundary wall.
- A couple of developments are awaiting the outcome of appeals – both in ERASC area – (Established Residential Area of Special Character). One is for the development of eight flats by demolishing two houses at the **junction of Amersham Road and Clifton Road**. A previous application was turned down on appeal. The neighbours have formed an action group against the proposal as it would set precedence for flatted developments along Clifton Road. The other application awaiting an appeal decision is for a back garden development in **Parkfield Avenue**.
- **An Office development at former site of Robendene, Grimsdells Lane** – We were against the shape of the monolithic flat-roofed building proposed as it would be jostling in a residential area adversely affecting the character of the area. It went to appeal, and it was dismissed.
- **Conversion of Volkswagen Show Room/Garage into flats at Little Chalfont** - We were concerned with the loss of retail space and it would be out of character. The application was turned down by the Council. It would have also failed to provide a significant number of small dwellings (< 75 sq.m).
- **Waitrose Service Units** – In a hurry to meet their pre-Christmas opening day deadline, they installed some service units for refrigeration, air conditioning etc. even before a decision was made on the planning application. Neighbours complained bitterly and one resident even wrote to the MP. Waitrose have withdrawn the application and have presented a new one with a big apology to the neighbours and the Council. They seem to have taken into account neighbours' concerns seriously in their second application.
- **A new Bulk Transfer Station at Household Waste Depot in London Road** – Members may have read in the local newspapers about a proposed new Incineration Plant in Calvert (north of Aylesbury) and two proposed Waste Bulking-up Stations – one in Amersham and the other at High Heavens, Booker. The Council is faced with the prospect of huge bills for using land-fills and they will run out of space for land-fills. Incineration is an alternative. They will be deal-



ing with non-hazardous domestic and industrial waste. We understand the need for such plants. Our main concern at the Amersham site would be the level of increased traffic on A413, particularly at the point where they will be turning into and out of the depot at Amersham Waste Complex. Over an eight-hour day, there will be roughly 7 HGVs per hour (50 foot or 15 metre long) and 18 to 19 Refuse Collection Vehicles (33 foot or 10 metre long) per hour. Clearly, the sizes of the vehicles and their frequency will have a severe impact on the traffic. Following a second public exhibition by the company to the affected neighbours on 30 Mar, a detailed planning application will be made. We will check what traffic management plans are being proposed and to see how well they can be safely and efficiently integrated with the general public's current use of the facility.



I hope we have given you an idea of the range of Planning issues we have covered over the year. If you need further information on any of these, please contact me. We wish to thank our local Councillors who understand and take into account our Association's views.

Together with efforts by the Amersham Action Group's 'Vision for Amersham' and constant vigilance on our part for fair developments along the Council's guidelines, we can continue to make this area a thriving, pleasant and desirable one.



## *Chairman's Report*

Good evening and welcome again to the 50th AGM of Amersham and District Residents Association (Amersham Rural District Residents Association as it used to be). Nice to see a good turnout and welcome to those who are first timers and welcome especially to the Amersham Action Group HS2 Committee, whose Chairman Cllr Nigel Shepherd will talk to us later, along with Mr Keith Hoffmeister.

ADRA is now 50 years old. I remember when I thought that half a century was an unimaginable time span, but it's remarkable when I look in the archives to see that much hasn't changed. Newsletter No. 4 mentioned the upcoming AGM (the first). Dismay at planning issues and concerns about how money was spent. The aims of the Association now are broadly the same as they were then:



- To encourage action which improves the quality of life in Amersham, Chesham Bois and the surrounding area;
- To establish effective communication between residents and the Local Councils and other agencies;
- To maintain an active, non party-political stance, in local affairs in order to represent all residents;
- To nominate candidates for the local elections and to support them fully.

One notable difference however was that from a membership of less than 400, the committee numbered 19, quite the reverse of today's situation!

As you have heard me say before, we are a voluntary organisation which tries to act on issues affecting our community in ways that reflect the opinions and concerns



of the membership. We are totally reliant on the efforts of those who came forward and put their hand up to get anything done.

Fortunately for us all, we had no one resign from the Committee last year, but we still have vacancies. Geoff is still covering Highways as well as being Treasurer. I am still doing the Newsletter as well as being Chairman whilst still working in Essex five days a week. I am immensely grateful to your Committee Members who devote an enormous amount of time to the Association, but I don't think we can ask them to go on forever, so I make my annual plea for help. Michael mentioned that he has embarked on an external aggressive membership drive. We will letter drop every non-member household in Amersham. I hope we will be successful, because we really would benefit from an influx of new people to help keep the wheels going around.

Please consider joining the Committee. It involves only one meeting a month (3rd Wednesday) with August off.

As you've heard from your officers' reports it's been another busy year. Planning applications are increasing. We had a very interesting presentation from Thame Valley Police CSO's White and Soledolu in November, on their priorities which include tackling anti-social behaviour, speeding and burglaries. We have been invited to help set neighbourhood policing priorities and will make clear the concerns some of you have raised with us.

The proposed parking meters have been abandoned, and the public toilets on Woodside will remain.

Our new Town Clerk, Janet Wheeler, thanked us for our participation in the clean up days and asked that I also pass on to you the request for ideas for civic activity during the Queens Jubilee Celebration which will take place next June.

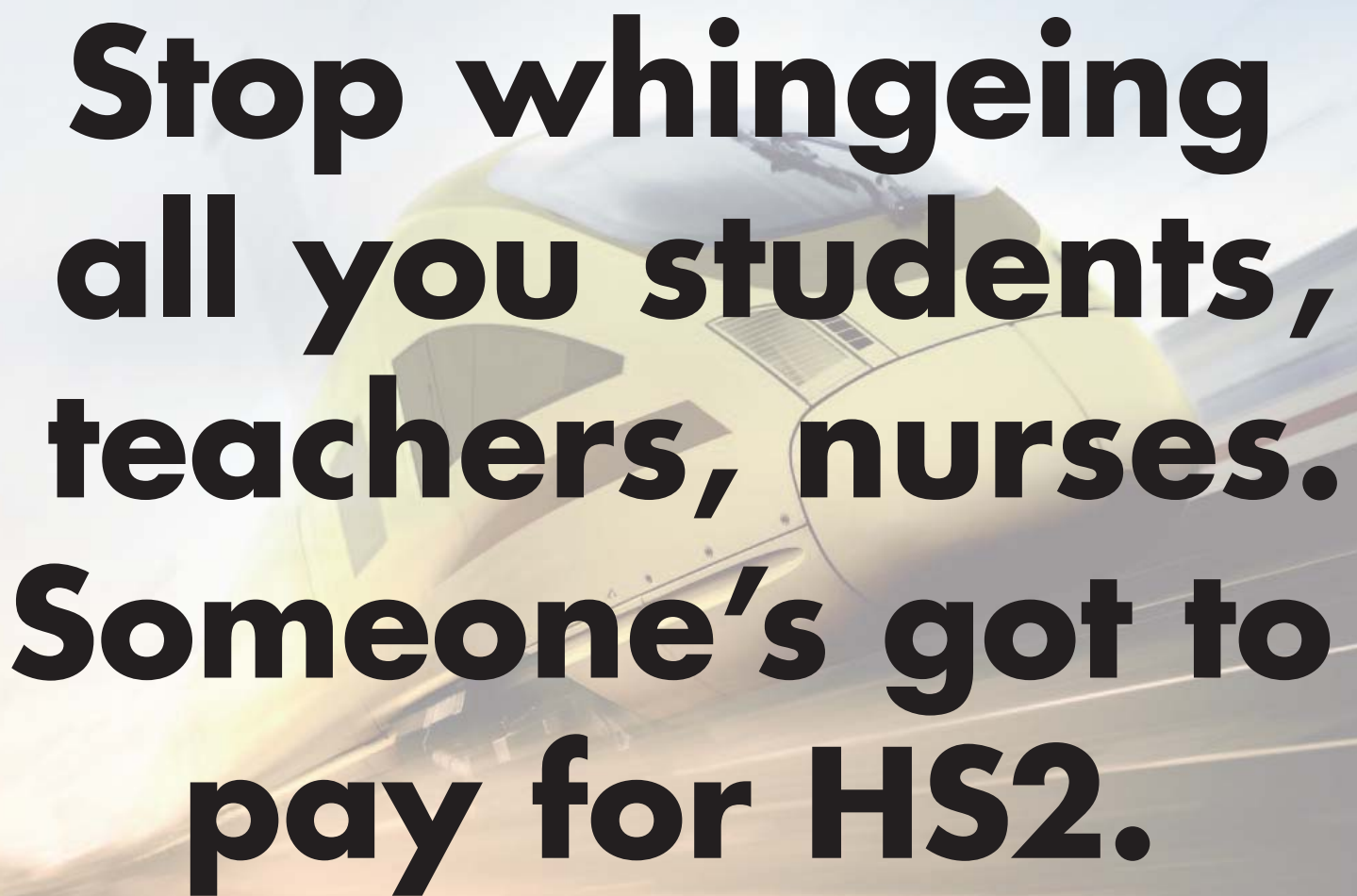
Amersham in Bloom is progressing well. One of the signature beds will be planted with red poppies to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the British Legion. And on potholes, Bucks County Council tells me that the infrastructure budget has been substantially increased and a draft list of repair works has been prepared and sent



to Councillors, asking for their input by the 20th April. When approved this will be made public. White Lion Road is planned for major resurfacing, rather than tar and chip or slurry surfacing which was recently used on Grimsdells Lane.

And finally on to HS2. Last year you may remember I spoke of the embryonic emergence of protest groups and said that I would follow developments. I have affiliated us with the HS2 Action Alliance and we are working with the Amersham Action Group's HS2 Committee, whose Chairman, Councillor Nigel Shepherd, is our speaker this evening. After Nigel and Keith Hoffmeister we will have open forum, where of course they will be available to take questions on HS2 and of course the Committee will address whichever other areas you choose.

Thank you, and please do consider volunteering to help us.



# **Stop whingeing all you students, teachers, nurses. Someone's got to pay for HS2.**

In fact everyone's got to pay for HS2.

Every household will have to stump-up £1,200. Every constituency £52 million.

Yet The Financial Times can't see the case for HS2 and The Sunday Telegraph claims it's a criminal waste of scarce resources.

The Greens insist it isn't green and the government's own environment advisor says it should be abandoned in favour of improving local transport.

The tragedy is, all the important benefits of HS2 can be achieved at a fraction of the cost by improving existing lines, stations and rolling stock.  
(And how they need it!)

To be fair, one man does speak up for HS2. Kelvin MacKenzie. If it gets 'the likes of me' to Birmingham in forty-nine minutes it's 'fantastic'.

So cheer-up all you who are out of work, out of cash, out of hope.  
Your sacrifice is not in vain.

# Rebutting the six myths about HS2

*'The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie - deliberate, contrived and dishonest - but the myth - persistent, persuasive, and unrealistic'* JFK 1962

## 1: HS2 is NOT 'green' – it doesn't fit as part of the low carbon economy

The Government say HS2 will be 'broadly neutral'<sup>1</sup> for carbon. But it is unlikely to even be that:

- Trains that travel at 360km/hr use three times the energy of 200kmph trains<sup>2</sup>
- 87% of journeys on HS2 indisputably create more emissions – all the brand new journeys (22%) and all those switching from existing rail services (65%)<sup>3</sup>
- DfT say just 6 in every 100 travellers<sup>4</sup> on HS2 switch from flying. But this assumes the decline in relevant air routes reverses, and satisfying 'suppressed' not real air demand<sup>5</sup>
- The air emissions savings depend on the freed-up slots not being used for long haul, which BAA say they will<sup>6</sup>, and using out of date numbers on the modal switch from air<sup>7</sup>.

A showcase £30bn transport investment such as HS2 should contribute to UK's target of reducing emissions by 80% by 2050.

Environmental organisations agree HS2 is not green: Green Party, those signing the Right Lines Charter (CPRE, FoE, Greenpeace, Woodland Trust, RSPB, ELF, Civic Voice, Chiltern Society).

## 2: HS2 WON'T bridge the North/South divide, or deliver economic benefits

Government claims for transformational benefits are based on belief, not evidence<sup>8</sup>. The evidence on regeneration (where HS2 acts as a catalyst) points to London winning:

- DfT say more than 7 out of 10 of the 30,000 jobs created by HS2 around stations will be in London<sup>9</sup> ie not the Midlands or the North. (Old Oak Common, with 20,000 jobs wins most)
- Most of the jobs claimed will not be genuinely new jobs but ones that have moved from other areas in the region. HS2 Ltd concluded this, after consulting respected academics<sup>10</sup>
- DfT say 59%<sup>11</sup> of extra HS2 trips are for leisure; given DfT assume<sup>12</sup> trips to London grow at twice the rate of those from London, so more people and more money will go to London
- HS2 impacts on the service sector, in which London is dominant. So work is more likely to move to London, not away from it – another reason it re-enforces the North/South divide.

The evidence for the wider economic impacts (of the HS2 investment itself) is also small:

- The productivity benefit from shorter journey times is the key benefit, but it's already in the business case (and is overstated now DfT admit that time-on-board is not wasted<sup>13</sup>)
- The Wider Economic Impacts of better connectivity are relatively small, £4-£6bn<sup>14</sup>, and are mainly driven by use of freed-up capacity, which will need a new further subsidy to realise
- HS2 Ltd asked Imperial College if faster connectivity had any further direct benefits – they said 'very little' (max £8m/a)<sup>15</sup> – but their conclusion was left out of the White Paper and not even referred to in the consultation materials.

## 3: HS2 is NOT a sound investment – it's not value for money

There is no commercial case for spending over £30bn on HS2 or justification for its subsidy:

- The extra fares (£27bn) don't cover the capital (£30.4bn) and operating costs (£13.9bn), even for the full "Y" network<sup>16</sup>, so it needs a subsidy – £17bn.
- The subsidy actually encourages travel (10m/a new journeys<sup>17</sup> for Phase 1 alone) despite DfT's other initiatives to reduce travel, and in particular business travel
- Existing rail services will worsen – this is proven in Government's own case for HS2<sup>18</sup>
- It benefits the affluent – 47% of long distance rail travel is by the top 20% earning families<sup>19</sup>

The latest 2011 business case cuts the benefits by over a third. The Government's headline £44bn of benefits for the full "Y" network<sup>20</sup> was well over £70bn just last year, when an independent report by FTI Consulting<sup>21</sup> confirmed the business case was flawed.

But key assumptions have not changed and are still invalid – if corrected, the case that benefits exceed costs collapses:

- *Benefits are overstated by about 60%* they total more like £19bn not £44bn for the full "Y"<sup>22</sup>. The largest benefit (time savings) is based on all time spent on trains being wasted, with DfT disregarding this fundamental error on spurious grounds<sup>23</sup>
- *Demand forecasts are still excessive*, they misuse (through projecting growth for too long – 35years) an out of date forecasting model (with discredited forecasting factors). This gives a doubling in background demand to 2043 – 47%<sup>24</sup> higher than it should be
- *Appraisal uses an unrealistic 'do minimum' comparator* with virtually no improvements for 35 years and so inflating the benefits such as reduced crowding and shorter waiting times between trains. They disregard valid alternatives to improve the existing railway

The overall effect of this is to greatly worsen HS2's value for money. The Net Benefit Ratio falls<sup>25</sup> from 1.6/2.0 to just 0.3/0.5 for London - West Midlands, and from 2.2/2.6 to 0.4/0.6 for the "Y".

So HS2 in fact delivers just 30pence to 60pence benefit for every £1 of subsidy spent!

The economic case for HS2 also:

- Fails to learn the lessons of HS1 on demand forecasting and competition
- Takes no account of new technology or Government's own initiative to reduce travel
- Fails to develop the 'best' alternatives, and repeatedly misrepresents the alternatives it does develop (including in the March 2010 Command Paper), see Myth 4
- Fails to properly explore the uncertainties in the long term forecasts, despite HS2's sensitivity to the level of demand forecast

## 4: A new railway is NOT needed to solve the rail capacity problem

The Government say there is a major capacity issue that only HS2 can solve. This is not so:

- *The 'best' option:* DfT didn't require the 'best' option be developed: ie to make incremental changes against demand; do low cost rolling stock and capacity changes first; address pinch-points when demand is strong enough. Rail experts say the 'best' WCML<sup>26</sup> option is:
  - Rebalance first and standard class; add more carriages (ultimately to 12 car except for Liverpool). Just this delivers 67% more capacity (112% in standard class), need not wait to 2026 and may be possible without any subsidy
  - Eliminate the acute crowding problem on the Northampton/Milton Keynes to Euston commuting services by modifying Ledburn Jcn without delay
  - Do other low cost infrastructure changes as needed, with the potential for a total of 177% extra standard class capacity providing an increased train frequency from 9 to 11/hr. This is against DfT's forecast background demand increase to 2043 of 102%, and delivered at greatly less cost than HS2

Rail experts also say there are low cost 'best' solutions for ECML and Midland Main Line too.

- *DfT's own option:* even the rail options developed for DfT solve WCML's capacity issue:
  - Rail Package 2 (RP2) involves more rolling stock and removing seven pinch-points. This delivers 151% more capacity<sup>27</sup> against DfT's background demand growth of 102%, not the 54% Government misleadingly claim<sup>28</sup>, and RP2 has less crowding<sup>29</sup>

## Rebutting the six myths about HS2

- RP2 looks like being over twice the value for money of HS2 for just one sixth the net cost, and this is despite Government latest attempts<sup>30</sup> to distort and bury RP2
- RP2 won't be disruption-free but neither is it comparable with the wholesale replacement of WCML under the last upgrade, or the 8-year rebuild of Euston that HS2 requires – described as like 'open heart surgery on a conscious patient'

The other rail options developed for DfT for other parts of the Y network generally produce huge amounts of additional capacity, which unsurprisingly are not good value for money.

- *Other alternatives:* these are not properly considered eg Government's own initiative to reduce travel (by faster connectivity with broadband, videoconferencing); rail pricing options.

### 5: HS2 will NOT greatly reduce domestic air travel

HS2 can only replace domestic air journeys served by its route. No one flies between London and Birmingham, and rail already has 79% of the Manchester market<sup>31</sup>.

- For Phase 1 the relevant air market is the 3m/a<sup>32</sup> who fly the NW/Scottish lowlands route using Heathrow (just 15% of all passengers), and 6m/a for all London airports (30% of total).
- The full "Y" adds Leeds and Newcastle, but scheduled flights to Leeds ended in March 2011, and HS2 in 2032 only matches the current fastest train from Newcastle to London<sup>33</sup>.

The Feb 2011 business case has fewer people switching from air to HS2, but is still optimistic:

- DfT say 6% of HS2 trips (8,166/day or 2.9m/a) for Phase 1 switch from air – 25% less than before (11,000/day)<sup>34</sup> – and 6m/a for the full 'Y' ie twice the relevant Heathrow route traffic
- To generate even 6% modal shift DfT have to assume the domestic air market will grow – they say by 128% by 2043 (last year DfT said 178% by 2033) – and their forecast is no longer constrained by supply, meaning it's not even real air journeys that switch to HS2. That much real growth could not occur without extra runway capacity for London.
- The NW/Scottish lowlands air route has been shrinking (by 32% from its 2004 peak), not growing. Some domestic air routes have grown (where surface transport links are poor, eg Aberdeen to Exeter), but overall domestic passengers have fallen by 22% from 2005 peak.

Overseas experience shows air can be decimated if HSR delivers very big reductions in journey times<sup>35</sup> and rail gets below the 3hr journey threshold. Given the 2011 timetable already shows Edinburgh can be reached in 4hrs, albeit by just one train, the HS2 promise of about 3:30-40 mins 21 years later (in 2032), makes any impact on air look marginal, at best.

### 6: The UK does NOT need to catch up with Europe – it is still ahead

The UK – unlike Europe – has had a fast national railway system for a long time. As Sir Rod Eddington said in 2006<sup>36</sup>: '...with [rail] journeys between London and other UK major cities performing particularly well relative to journeys from other European capitals.'

We also have routes capable of 200km/h (125mph) – and still have quicker rail journey times between the capital and the five largest cities than in other major West European countries<sup>37</sup>:

- Averaging 145 minutes in UK (or 148 mins using the same 5 cities as Eddington)
  - 151 minutes in Spain
  - 184 minutes in Italy
  - 221minutes in France
  - 244 minutes in Germany

Even Frankfurt/Cologne, which is a comparable distance and often quoted as a high speed rail success story, is in reality more like an intercity railway: while it halved its journey time it brought it down to little less than the fastest train we already have from Birmingham to London<sup>38</sup>.

*'When the facts change I change my mind. What do you do sir?'* John Maynard Keynes

## References

- <sup>1</sup> 'High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future' DfT, February 2011, Section 2.5.5 page 53
- <sup>2</sup> The Institute of Mechanical Engineers estimate that travelling at 360km/h instead of 200km/h increases energy consumption by over 200%, 'Transport Policy Statement 09/03, High Speed Rail', Table 1
- <sup>3</sup> Sources of HS2 passengers from 'Economic Case for HS2', Table 3, Feb 2011
- <sup>4</sup> Op cit. Also for the full "Y" section 2.2.3 page 10 gives 6m trips per annum but without specifying total trips.
- <sup>5</sup> See HS2AA 'Review of Feb 2011 Consultation Business Case', April 2011, Section 3.2 for evidence sources
- <sup>6</sup> According to ENDS ('HSR set to boost UK emissions from aviation', 18 March 2011) and statement by Nigel Milton
- <sup>7</sup> The max reduction (23.2mt CO2) is unchanged from the March 2010 business case despite 25% less air modal shift (8,200 passengers/day in Feb 2011 case compared with 11,000/day in March 2010 case)
- <sup>8</sup> Professor Overman (LSE) in his October 2010 evidence to Transport Select Committee said: "...*Claims about the "transformational" nature of transport investments for particularly areas should be generally discounted in assessing these benefits because they have no convincing evidence base to support them.*"
- <sup>9</sup> Clarified by e-mail of 2 March 2011, between Phil Graham, Deputy Director HSR, DfT, and Hilary Wharf, HS2AA
- <sup>10</sup> 'HS2 Demand Model Analysis' HS2 Ltd, February 2010, Appendix 3, S A3.1.1 says advised by Roger Vickerman & Reg Harman. S A3.1.6 concludes its not a 'win win situation', envisaging activity re-locating within a region & to London
- <sup>11</sup> 'Demand for Long distance Travel' HS2 Ltd, April 2011, section 6.18, page 15, gives the split of extra passengers HS2 causes: leisure 59%, business 37%, and commuting 4%. All leisure/commuting, which includes the HS2 uplift, is 70%,
- <sup>12</sup> This is a consequence of the values of the income elasticities on demand used in the demand forecasting
- <sup>13</sup> 'Economic Case for HS2: The Y Network and London – West Midlands', February 2011, section 7.3.2 page 51
- <sup>14</sup> The Phase 1 benefits (NPV) total £20.6bn. Out of this, £4bn are due to the Wider Economic Impacts (WEI) – £3bn from 'agglomeration' and £1bn from imperfect competition, the former being due to freed up WCML capacity. The WEI is therefore on top of the other transport user benefits. For the full 'Y' the WEI are £6.3bn out of total £43.7bn (ie 13.7%).
- <sup>15</sup> 'Advice on assessment of Wider Economic Impacts: report for HS2' Daniel Graham/Patricia Melo March 2010 page 37
- <sup>16</sup> London West Midlands (phase 1) figures: extra fares of £13.7bn that don't cover the £24bn of capital costs (£17.8bn) and incremental operating cost (£6.2bn), and so require a subsidy of £10.3bn. All figures NPV
- <sup>17</sup> Estimated from 'Economic Case for HS2: The Y Network and London – West Midlands', Feb 2011 Table 2, page 19
- <sup>18</sup> The case assumes £5.4bn savings on existing services ('Economic Case for HS2', February 2011, Table 9, Page 41 Table 2, and at Page 12, item 11. E-mail exchange with HS2 Ltd confirmed both figures apply. The list of cities losing is at HS2AA's 'Review of Feb 2011 Consultation Business Case' April 2011, Section 9
- <sup>19</sup> 'Modelling Long-Distance Travel in the UK', Charlene Rohr, James Fox, Andrew Daly, Bhanu Patruni, Sunil Patil, Flavia Tsang RAND Europe, 2010.
- <sup>20</sup> The latest Feb 2011 business case cuts the benefits for the 'Y' by over 40% (from over £73bn (in March 2010 case) to £44bn), and by 36% for Phase 1 (from over £32bn in March 2010 to £20.6bn). All figures NPV
- <sup>21</sup> 'Review of the Business Case for HS2', 13 December 2010, FTI Consulting
- <sup>22</sup> See HS2AA's 'Review of Feb 2011 Consultation Business Case', April 2011, Section 5.7
- <sup>23</sup> DfT argue the reduction in crowding and modal shift would fully off set taking time on board being productive into account ('Economic Case for HS2' page 51). But compared to a realistic alternative HS2 has greater crowding, and only the 7% of journeys transferring from cars have potential productivity gains. Business unit time is also over valued using 10-year old figures that now equate to £70k/a (see HS2AA's 'Review of Consultation Business Case', April 2011, S 5.2)
- <sup>24</sup> Analysis given at 'Review of Feb 2011 Consultation Business Case', HS2 AA, April 2011, Section 3.1.5
- <sup>25</sup> See HS2AA's 'Review of Feb 2011 Consultation Business Case', April 2011, Section 5.7
- <sup>26</sup> See a summary on HS2AA website 'Options for increasing passenger capacity on WCML'
- <sup>27</sup> See HS2AA's 'More capacity on WCML: an alternative to HS2', April 2011, where the 151% increase in seats in traffic over 2008 WCML base is calculated solely from published Rail Package 2 provided in DfT/Atkins reports
- <sup>28</sup> The 54% is in Table 3.7 ('High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study – Strategic Outline Business Case', March 2010), showing the increase in RP2 seats over the 'do minimum' of 54%. This is then stated in the White Paper (page 51, Table 2.4) as about 50%. But analysis shows the figure is based on the capacity over and above the 'do minimum' for WCML and Chiltern Line and not over the 2008 base for WCML (which is the basis of DfT's 102% forecast in background growth). This is discussed in HS2AA's 'More capacity on WCML: an alternative to HS2'
- <sup>29</sup> RP2 has 51% loading ('HSR Strategic alternatives study: Strategic Alternatives to the proposed Y Network', Feb 2011, Atkins for DfT, Table 4.2, Scenario B). In 'High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study, London to West Midlands rail alternatives: update of economic appraisal', Table 4.2, Feb 2011, it is shown as 55% loading (albeit with a higher 'do minimum' demand than HS2). HS2 loading is 58% ('Economic Case for HS2', Feb 2011 Page 19, Section 3.3.12)
- <sup>30</sup> RP2 was re-assessed by Atkins for DfT in a Feb 2011 report, released late March 2011 ('High Speed 2 Strategic Alternatives Study, London to West Midlands rail alternatives: update of economic appraisal') to bring it in line with HS2. It fails to do this by using a different 'do minimum' comparator to HS2, and so deflating the benefits. It doubles rolling stock costs and increases operating costs by 70% (applying the same 41% optimism bias as HS2, despite obvious knowledge of RP2 operations). Even using all these changes except the 41% optimism bias, RP2's Value for Money criteria is over twice HS2 (3.4 NBR compared to 1.6 for HS2) and has one sixth the net cost (£1.7bn compared to £10.3bn for HS2). This is reviewed in the HS2AA report 'More capacity on WCML: an alternative to HS2' April 2011
- <sup>31</sup> ATOC press release 5 April 2011
- <sup>32</sup> All air passengers numbers are from CAA 'Table 12.2 Dom Air Pax Route Analysis 2010' and earlier editions
- <sup>33</sup> 'Economic Case for HS2' DT, February 2011, Table 1 gives London – Newcastle journey time of 2hr 37 mins (for 2032), which is exactly the time as the fastest Newcastle - London train in the summer 2011 timetable.
- <sup>34</sup> Sources of HS2 passengers in Section 3.5 of HS2AA 'Review of Feb. 2011 Consultation Business Case', April 2011
- <sup>35</sup> Osaka to Tokyo halved journey times with High speed Rail from 6hrs 30 mins to 3hrs 10 mins (then 2hrs 30 mins); Madrid to Seville (was 6hrs 30 mins and became 2hrs 45 mins, then 2hrs 30 mins)
- <sup>36</sup> 'Eddington Transport Study: Main Report: Volume 2', section 2.18
- <sup>37</sup> Detailed workings in 'Myth 6- The UK lacks a fast national railway network' HS2AA, January 2011
- <sup>38</sup> Frankfurt Cologne is 180 kms and reduced its journey time with HSR from 2hrs 20 mins to 1hr 10 mins., compared to London Birmingham (182 kms), where fastest train from Birmingham is already 1hr 12 mins.



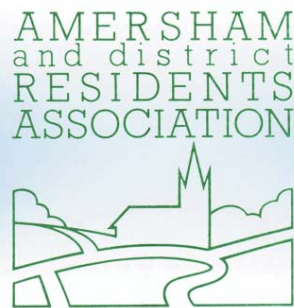
The vast majority of people in our area are strongly opposed to the proposed HS2 project. There's no business case, there's no environmental case and it's not affordable. Indeed, recent surveys are showing a growing majority of people throughout the country do not support it. There is no cause for complacency however. The government has committed itself to HS2 and is doing everything it can to push it through.

If you think HS2 is a bad idea, and have not yet made a your feelings known, please do so now.

We would suggest you consider doing four things;

1. Write Cheryl Gillan, MP for Amersham and Chesham and make clear how you feel about the project.
2. Write Philip Hammond, Transport Secretary expressing the same sentiment.
3. Ask six friends or relatives who live elsewhere in the country and are not directly affected by HS2 to write to their MP's, using the sample letter overleaf or something similar. Even if they aren't directly affected in the way we will be, they'll still be bearing their share of the outrageous cost for decades to come. This is particularly important because it is expected that the views of those of us who will be most directly impacted will be considered less relevant than those from elsewhere in the country, because we're expected to be biased against the project.
4. Respond to the Consultation before July 29. You can do this on-line at [highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk](http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk) by following a seven question form, or by writing with your views to;

HS2 Consultation  
Freepost RSLX-UCGZ-UKSS  
PO Box 59528  
London SE21 9AX



Dear [ MP ]

Re - High Speed 2

Although I will not be directly affected by the construction of the proposed high speed link from Euston to Birmingham and on towards the north I am writing to you as my MP to express my huge concern about the whole project which will cost every family in the country over £1,000 and every constituency over £50 million.

The present and previous governments have put forward various arguments over the past 15 months seeking to justify the need for such an incredibly fast railway and many of those arguments have already been shown to be wrong or based on extremely optimistic assumptions. There isn't the time to set out in detail in this letter all these arguments and their errors but by way of example:-

1. We were originally told that HS2 would be "green" and would reduce air traffic. Now even the DoT accepts that it will be broadly neutral for carbon emissions and this takes no account of the fact that any short haul airport slots will almost certainly be taken up for long haul flights. Also how can it possibly be "green" to plan for trains traveling at 360 kmph which use 3 times more energy than trains traveling at 200 kmph?
2. The business case is, to put it mildly, less than convincing. It assumes that all time spent on a train is wasted whilst we all know that people work on trains particularly in these days of modern communications. The traffic forecasts appear highly optimistic which is, of course, typical of the various forecasts previously made for high speed rail travel within the UK and the business case also assumes that nothing is done to improve the existing rail infrastructure. When these and other fallacies are taken into account it can be seen that there is no justifiable case for spending over £30 billion of taxpayers money, particularly at a time when the whole country is reeling under the cuts currently planned to public expenditure.
3. The latest argument being put forward by the government is that HS2 will help reduce the "north/south divide". There is absolutely no evidence to support this assertion and why it is thought that a passenger only (no freight) railway will lead to more money being spent in the north, rather than encourage those in the north to come to London, is beyond me. It would be far, far better for some of the £30 billion to be spent improving both passenger and freight infrastructure in the north if the desire really is to close the gap between the two areas of the country.

In summary, there is no convincing case for spending so much money on this vanity project. I understand that the current rail infrastructure needs improving but this could be done incrementally at a fraction of the cost as the need arises. There is no need to travel at 360 kmph in a country the size of the United Kingdom and that speed not only requires far more energy as mentioned above but also dictates that the route must be virtually straight with the consequent destruction of large areas of outstanding natural beauty in the Chilterns. The government states that it has done much to mitigate that destruction but a walk along the proposed route will show you that this is just not the case.

Can I therefore ask you to look again at all the evidence and bring your influence to bear to halt this folly before it becomes too late. There are so many other matters of much greater importance to the country that could benefit if only the vast amounts of money about to be spent on HS2 could be redirected to more pressing causes. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



## *Amersham Town Council Calendar of Events 2011*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Venue</i>
<b>Saturday 9 July</b>	<b>Amersham Carnival</b>	<b>King George V Playing Field</b>
<b>Sunday 17 July</b>	<b>Chinnor Silver Band</b>	<b>Memorial Gardens</b>
<b>Sunday 17 July</b>	<b>Amersham in Bloom Photographic Awards</b>	<b>Memorial Gardens</b>
<b>Sunday 31 July</b>	<b>Sound Force Big Band</b>	<b>Memorial Gardens</b>
<b>9-14 August</b>	<b>Amersham Festival of Art</b>	<b>Market Hall</b>
<b>Sunday 28 August</b>	<b>The Jazz Brothers</b>	<b>Memorial Gardens</b>
<b>Sunday 11 September</b>	<b>Heritage Open Day</b>	<b>Old Town</b>
<b>Sunday 11 September</b>	<b>The Amersham Band</b>	<b>Memorial Gardens</b>
<b>Thursday 1 December</b>	<b>Christmas Late Night Shopping Event</b>	<b>Old Town</b>
<b>Wednesday 7 December</b>	<b>Town Carol Service</b>	<b>St Mary's</b>
<b>Friday 9 December</b>	<b>Christmas Late Night Shopping Event</b>	<b>Amersham-on-the-Hill</b>



## ***ADRA Committee Members***

### ***Chairman***

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

### ***Treasurer***

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

### ***Secretary***

Lyn Josey  
13 Parkfield Avenue  
Amersham HP6 6BE  
725319  
lynjosey@hotmail.co.uk

### ***Planning Officer***

B.A. Guruswamy  
28 Clifton Road  
Chesham Bois  
HP6 SDP  
728812  
b.a.guruswamy@btinternet.com

### ***Highways Officer***

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

### ***Membership Records***

Michael Teychenne  
Greenacres  
27 Copperkins Lane  
Amersham HP6 6QF  
727278  
(m) 07990 525592  
teychennem@hotmail.com

### ***Environmental Officer***

Ann Terry  
79 Grimsdells Lane  
Amersham HP6 6HH  
724061

Christine Summers  
43 Woodside Close  
Amersham HP6 5EF  
433903  
kathlineam@btopenworld.com

AMERSHAM  
and district  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION



## ***ADRA Social Evening***

Please join us for a Social Evening on Wednesday 18th January 2012  
between 7pm and 9pm.

Venue: Long Barn Hall, Amersham Community Centre.

*Come and have a drink and meet some of your fellow members.*



## ***ADRA 2011 AGM***

*Thursday 12th April 2012*

*Amersham Free Church Hall  
7:00pm for 7:30pm*



*Woodside Road signature flower bed.*

*Planted with a design by Alfie Nagle,  
Chestnut Lane Infant School marking the marriage of*

*Will & Kate*