



Pro-Biz



Web site - <http://www.probus-teddington-hampton.org.uk>

Issue No 229 News from Teddington and Hampton Probus

February 2018

TAKE A DEEP BREATH...

...though some members might well not feel so inclined after the sobering reality check on **Air Pollution and Public Health** delivered by **Professor Frank J. Kelly, Director of the Environmental Research Group, King's College London** at the Club's January Meeting. Depicted by Chairman Keith McArthur (tongue firmly in cheek) as a 'very clever geezer', Professor Kelly kept Probian's sitting (not too) comfortably throughout a scholarly yet down-to-earth exploration of a very



topical and relevant subject. There were two strands to the presentation, complemented by helpful graphics: an overview of the twin problems of climate change and air pollution in general, and more specifically how they were being tackled in London. The Climate Change Act of 2008 set an ambitious goal of reducing CO2 equivalents by 80% by 2025 compared with 1990, which if attained could result in great improvements in urban air quality. A report from the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change formed in 2016, emphasises that an integrated strategy is essential to meeting the challenges. The parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee has been influential in increasing cross-departmental collaboration. It was vital that current EU air quality standards were maintained or improved post-Brexit. In 1905 London's toxic mixture of fog, smoke and sulphur dioxide emissions was christened 'smog' by London physician and smoke abatement activist Harold Des Voeux. In December 1952 a lethal 'killer smog' episode claimed an estimated 4,000 – 12,000 premature deaths. This provided the impetus for the 1956 Clean Air Act, the primary thrust of which curtailed domestic coal burning in London and other major UK cities. This was followed by the Mayor's Cleaning London's Air strategy (2002) which gave birth to a Congestion Charging Scheme (2003) and a London-wide Low Emission Zone (2008). If more rigorously enforced, the Congestion Charging Scheme and the Low Emission Zone should lead to significantly improved London air quality and better health for Londoners.

After a wide-ranging round of quick fire questions, Hywel Thomas, in moving the vote of thanks, exhorted members to make their own individual contributions towards cleaner air. The consensus was that Professor Kelly's masterly dissertation had set an early 'gold standard' benchmark for the 2018 speaker programme.

(Jim Woodford)

Dinner at Imber Court – 10 March 2018

Please do not forget the Club Dinner on Saturday 10 March with entertainment by 'Vamp 'til Ready'. The evening promises to be very entertaining and there is still time to get in your applications to Chris Oprey. You are cordially invited to bring friends to this social evening.

WALK FROM THE SHY HORSE, CHESSINGTON, 6th FEBRUARY

Thirteen hardy walkers, plus our old friend Finn the dog, set off from the pub, a little late as there had been a very bad crash on the Hampton Court Road near Bushy Park Stockyard around 9.00 am resulting in the whole area becoming gridlocked. We would have had more, but some people couldn't get out of Hampton. Unlike our last walk from Claygate, this time the sun was shining although it was bitterly cold for the first part of the walk across open fields from Rushett Farm into the woods of Ashtead Common. Luckily for Denzil, there was only one stile to navigate, which he did without too much trouble and a fair amount of assistance. Ashtead Common is one of five that are owned by the Corporation of London, how they came to own Commons in Surrey is a little unclear, but it was something to do with maintaining open spaces for the masses and came about around 1870. Proceeding through the forested part of the Common, it soon came to light that it was on clay as the ground was extremely soggy with plenty of slippery mud and many large flooded areas, which suited Finn down to the ground as he likes nothing better than lapping up from a puddle or pond. The route took us to the edge of Ashtead village, where we picked up the circular metal path which surrounds the Common. This made the going very much easier, and there were several entrances to the Common with large boards showing various footpaths, which was quite handy as by then we had gone a little off piste. More by luck than judgement we came upon the correct path which led us by our famous Coal Post landmarks which we often see on our jaunts through Surrey. We passed close by to the Roman Villa, with its attached tile factory, all now completely hidden by the undergrowth. It was due to the clay in the area that the factory was established but certainly doesn't help the drainage in the area. Back across the open fields we once again passed through Rushett Farm, stopping to chat with one of the farmhands who was leaning on his shovel at a jaunty angle. The farm produces beans which are used for winter feed for cattle, at the princely sum of £170 per ton. The pub was now in sight, and with a burst of speed we were soon back in the warm, where we met 8 diners who were already well under way, and an excellent lunch followed. As this part of Chessington was the home of Enid Blyton we were looking forward to sharing a pint with the grown up Famous Five or maybe Noddy and Big Ears, instead we made do with Tony Cook and Phil Shepherd but there was lashings of lemonade, if you liked. A treat for Finn this time, (he had been renamed Timmy for the day in honour of Blyton) as The Shy Horse is happy to have dogs inside the pub, so he enjoyed his time with the odd titbit from Denzil and Eileen.

(Keith McArthur)



FUTURE EVENTS:

- Wed 21 Feb:** Theatre Visit – Theatre Royal Drury Lane – 42nd Street.
- Tue 6 Mar:** Pub Lunch/Walk – The Mint, Banstead. Organiser Keith McArthur
- Wed 7 Mar:** H.L.P.C. Theatre Trip – Wimbledon – Crazy for You
- Sat 10 Mar:** Dinner and Entertainment, Imber Court. Organiser Chris Oprey
- Tue 20 Mar:** Club Luncheon - Speaker – Mr John Pearson, Cheesemonger and tasting