



THE STEYNING SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 269859 WWW.STEYNINGSOCIETY.ORG.UK

October 2021 NEWSLETTER

Dear Members,

It has been a pleasure to be back in the Steyning Centre for our talks. For the time being numbers will be limited and members are asked to get free tickets in advance at the Bookshop, with £3 for guests. Any leftover tickets will be available at the door. We shall welcome members from 7pm; wine and soft drinks will be available at all meetings and we are experimenting with having books, jigsaws and DVDs or CDs on show, with any donations helping to fund our grants.

Many of you will have seen the attractive display mounted by Jane Oxley and Mike Kelly at the Mini- Festival last month which highlighted some of the Society's past achievements and illustrated the varied grants made to local groups. The Society is keen to hear from any organization which might be interested in applying for one of our grants, awarded twice a year, (November and May), for a scheme which will improve or maintain the amenities of Steyning. Please submit requests to the treasurer: adriangobat@hotmail.com

We would welcome members' views on any innovations or other aspects of the Society. You can speak to any Committee member or email [cmantsteyning \[society@gmail.com\]\(mailto:society@gmail.com\)](mailto:cmantsteyning_society@gmail.com)

STEYNING GRAMMAR SCHOOL SITE

Five members of the Committee attended one or both meetings held on 18 October with the Steyning Grammar School Foundation.

The meeting in the morning dealt with all the buildings west of School Lane up to and including Chatsfields. This last building will be bought by the developers and used as a common area for the over 55's housing proposed for the rest of the school site.

The Foundation own all the other buildings: Brotherhood Hall is a Grade 1 Listed Building. Brewers Hall and the Headmaster's House are Grade 2 Listed. They are all in a poor state of repair. The Foundation would like to find a use for them and to maintain the Foundation's charitable purposes and intentions. Namely some sort of education facility for the under 25's. The problem is this has to be financially viable. Brotherhood Hall is an iconic medieval building which will be difficult to convert and re-use. The Society is suggesting that the Foundation should employ top heritage consultants to undertake a feasibility study to recommend how best to secure its future.

The rest of the school site will be cleared and used for over 55's housing. The Society suggested social housing to the developers but they stated that this was a matter for Horsham District Council. The lay out plan is for low rise in front of Brotherhood Hall and higher apartment blocks on lower ground to the east. The outlook for surrounding houses was in general improved. These are preliminary plans which have not been agreed by Steyning Parish Council or Horsham District Council, nor has the difficulty of access been discussed with West Sussex County Council. Everything is at an early stage and there will be a public consultation.

GLEBE FARM SITE

The Society is also aware of the proposal for development at Glebe Farm behind Kings Barn Lane. This is a site identified in the Draft Horsham District Local Plan, which is currently delayed. The outline plan is for 265 houses with access from the Steyning by-pass. This is a major development which will impact on traffic, schools, health facilities and housing in the town.

The developers want HDC to deal with the outline application in advance of approval of the Local Plan. Several issues arise including:

- a new roundabout access onto the by- pass will require a speed limit to be enforced on the A283.
- We do not consider an emergency access to Kings barn lane should be built until this A283 access is completed.
- It is important that Steyning's Social Housing needs are included, as this will not be possible on the SGS site. HDC has stated that there are 148 people on the Steyning Housing List waiting for affordable housing (80% of market price). As 80% is not affordable, HDC and Steyning PC should address this Social Housing issue urgently when dealing with Richborough Estates.
- The scale and design of the proposed housing should be consulted on widely as part of the application process.

There is to be a meeting of Steyning PC at 7.30pm on Monday 25 October at the Steyning Centre which interested members are encouraged to attend and if they wish to speak they should let Steyning PC know beforehand.

STEYNING FOR TREES

This autumn SFT will be planting trees and/or hedges at the following sites: the Football Club, St Andrews Church, Brabourne Egg Farm and Shooting Field green – all to provide wildlife corridors through Steyning. This will support bio-diversity here (nesting birds, hedgehogs, etc).

Also an additional 33 semi-mature trees (with WSCC) will be planted on street verges, to add to the 21 already planted. These will all help with carbon and pollution capture in Steyning.

OUTINGS

We do not feel ready yet to arrange coach outings, but hope to do so next year. We have agreed to organize some joint outings with Vintage Years.

EVENTS

Christmas Supper: this will take place on Friday 17 December in the Steyning Centre with a reception at 7pm before supper at 7.45pm. This enjoyable annual event is run jointly with the Museum. Tickets for the 3 course meal with wine and tea/coffee cost £24 for members and £26 for non-members. Numbers will be limited to 80 in order to maintain Covid security. There will be the usual raffle and a short musical entertainment by the Cheer Up Mollies after the meal. Tickets can be obtained now at the Bookshop; payment by cash or cheque only.

GOOD NEWS

The Committee is pleased to welcome on board Nick Bennett, a distinguished lawyer with a commitment to the town, being Steyning born and bred. His expertise will be of great value in the complicated issues facing us.

We have been the recipients of bequests from two former officers of the Society, who cared deeply about Steyning and gave long service to the community. Our President Peter Harris has decided to give up that position now that he is living permanently in Norfolk, though he will remain a valued member. He has made a generous donation to the Society. The present Committee, now 12 strong, owes a tremendous debt to Peter for holding the Society together over many years and ensuring that we can continue to play a useful part in our town and community.

Millicent Honeywood, who died last year and who was a former Chair and Secretary, was involved in all aspects of Steyning life for many years, raising money for many worthy causes that would benefit the town. She has made a generous bequest to the Society, for which we are very grateful. We shall think carefully about how to commemorate these gifts and their donors.