



THE STEYNING SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE

Registered Charity No. 269859 www.steyningsociety.org.uk

February 2024

Dear Members,

Christmas Supper

We ended last year with the Annual Christmas Supper, which included a magic show by David Croucher and was attended by 59 members and their guests. We had a new caterer, SuperDoux of Brighton, because our previous caterer has moved away. SuperDoux provided a splendid meal but there are undoubtedly some lessons to be learnt before the next supper, which we have taken on board. We hope that you will agree that, overall, it was nevertheless a most enjoyable evening.

Talks

We began the year with a fascinating talk by Geoff Mead about Daniel Defoe's tour of South East England, which included a visit to Steyning and Bramber. Our next talk will be on Friday, 16th February when Kevin Newman will be talking to us about Clock Towers of Sussex.

Visits

We have resumed the programme with two visits to Embassy Court (see Mary Travers' article, which is available on the Latest News section of the website). Thanks to Maddie Blackburn and Paul Dennison for hosting them. Unfortunately, the visit to Brighton and Hove Reform Synagogue was not possible because of events in the Middle East.

We are still looking at a visit to Chatham Historic Dockyard, probably in mid-April to be clear of Easter and Bank Holidays. It will be relatively expensive at an estimated £55 per head. It is about 1 ½ hours drive away and would last all day, returning to Steyning about 5.30 to 6. The main attractions include;

- The dock where HMS *Victory* was built
- The historic ships – the Victorian Sloop *Gannet*, World War Two destroyer *Cavalier* and Cold War Submarine *Ocelot*.
- The RNLI historic lifeboat collection
- Locations for the TV Series *Call the Midwife*.
- The Historic Railway including working industrial locomotives
- Historic architecture including the Queen Anne Commissioner's House, the oldest naval building in the country
- The Old Ropery with demonstrations of ropemaking

The exhibitions *Hearts of Oak* on building Georgian warships, *and Steam, Steel and Submarines*, on the later history of the yard with a focus on social history
And many others, including restored locomotives, traction engines and military vehicles, and the timbers for an old warship found under a building

Brian Lavery, who worked there for two years and met his wife Sarah there, will talk on the history of the yard on the way there, and offer guidance about which areas to visit

It is a large site of about 80 acres, so be prepared for some walking, or use the internal transport

It is essential that people indicate their interest in the Chatham trip by 16 February so that we can get on with planning and booking. Email Brian Lavery at brianblavery@aol.com

Increase in Annual Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due to be paid on March 1st each year. The subscriptions for 2023/24 are: Single membership £15; Double membership £20. Do please change online banking payment details if you pay this way. It really helps the Treasurer if all subs can be paid during the month of March if at all possible.

Steyning Bowl Awards 2024 and Annual General Meeting on 19th April 2024

Last year, we initiated the Steyning Bowl Awards to recognise those who have made major contributions to Steyning and its local community. This year, the focus of the award will be on individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community in the last few years by working on a voluntary basis with children and young people.

Nominations for the Awards may be made by anyone who lives locally, using the nomination form provided on the Society's website. This can be found in the Latest News and AGM sections of the website. ***Please make your nomination by Friday, 29th March 2024.***

The Bowl and Certificates of Merit will be presented at this year's Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Friday, 19th April 2024. We are not planning to hold as big a presentation event as we had last year. Instead, Dr Susan Roe will be giving a talk about Charleston, which is where members of the Bloomsbury Set used to meet.

Quiz Night on 12th July

We are planning to hold a Quiz Night on Friday, 12th July 2024, not just for some good, old-fashioned fun but also to raise money so that we can continue to award grants to local organisations which benefit our community. Food will be included and our usual wine and soft drinks bar will be available during the course of the evening. Canon Nigel Hartley has kindly agreed to be our Quizmaster. We hope that it will be a memorable evening, so please put the date in your diary. Full details will be provided later on.

Public Consultation about Horsham District Council's New Local Plan

Horsham District Council has published its new local plan for development in the District in the period up to 2040. The Plan is now out for public consultation. ***Comments and representations about the Plan must be lodged with the Council by 5 p.m. on 1st March 2024.*** These will be passed to the Planning Inspector who will be appointed to conduct a formal Examination of the plan. Any objections will need to set out the changes needed to resolve the objection.

The Council's website contains a copy of the Plan and explains the procedure to be followed by those wishing to make objections to the plan. The Plan can also be inspected at Steyning Library. Those wanting a much shorter read will find one on the Planning Section of the Society's website.

In bare outline, the Plan shows that most of Clay's Field is to remain a green space. However, a strip of land abutting Castle Lane is excluded from this. We will consult with Bramber Parish Council on this issue.

The Plan also records that Horsham, like all local planning authorities, is required by the Central Government to calculate a "local housing need" figure which, in the case of Horsham is 911 dwellings a year or 15,487 in during the life of the Plan.

The Plan identifies previously allocated strategic sites at Horsham, Kilnwood Vale and Southwater together with new strategic sites at Ifield, Southwater and Billingshurst to provide nearly 10,000 of this need. The additional needs will be met by allocating sites in the other towns and villages in the District, such as Henfield (55 homes); Partridge Green (255 homes); Small Dole (40 homes) and Storrington (125 homes).

Steyning is allocated 265 homes, all of which are on the Glebe Farm site. This does not mean that there will be no other development in Steyning in the period covered by the plan or that planning permission will automatically be granted to build 265 homes on Glebe Farm. All applications will be considered on their individual merits in the usual way.

In this respect, the application for planning permission to build 265 homes on the site which was made in October 2021 has still not been decided. The Society's objections to this application can be found on the Society's website.

Membership Survey

We received 29 replies to the membership survey, which represents approximately 12% of the membership. We are very grateful to those who replied and to those who also made suggestions, which we are considering carefully. Overall, we interpret the replies as indicating that those who replied were mainly satisfied with the general structure of our programme of talks and with the way in which the Society is run.

In respect of talks, seventeen members thought that we should not change our present model, which is for talks to be predominantly about local matters, such as local history, subjects of local interest and local geography, while three members thought that this should

be changed. Nobody thought that we focus too much on any subject. Five members thought that talks should be confined to local subjects, while fifteen members thought that talks should not be so confined. Seven members stressed that talks should be mainly about local subjects. Five members thought that some talks should be given on Zoom, another seven members agreed with this but said that they preferred, or much preferred, actual meetings, twelve members did not think that any talks should be given on line and one member was ambivalent about this.

Twenty members expressed an interest in going on coach trips. Nine members thought that we should organise other events and six members thought that we should not do so.

Local Heritage List

We still have a few copies of the printed version of the Local Heritage List which will be on sale at meetings for £10 each while stocks last.