



THE STEYNING SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE

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

February 2025

Dear Members,

Christmas Supper

We ended last year with our annual Christmas supper on 20th December 2024, which was attended by sixty-nine people. We had an excellent supper, expertly cooked by Normandy Dining. We were given a number of generous prizes for the raffle by businesses in the High Street. We ended the evening with a splendid musical entertainment from the Cheer Up Mollys. We hope that everyone enjoyed the event.

Talks

Our next talk is on Friday, 21st February, when Marcus Rayner-Ward will talk to us about winemaking at Wiston. Marcus has worked at Wiston since 2018 and has been Head Winemaker there since 2022.

AGM and Steyning Bowl Awards

This year's AGM will be held at The Steyning Centre on Wednesday, 16th April at 7.30 pm, and not on Friday 18th April as advertised in our programme. The AGM will be followed by the presentation of the Steyning Bowl Awards. This year, the awards will focus on people and organisations which have made significant contributions to Steyning through voluntary work with the older generation. Nominations can be made by people who are not members of the Society and should be made on the nomination form which can be found by following the link on the News Section of the website. The closing date for nominations is 2nd March 2025. After the presentation, Catherine Mant and Nick Bennett will share some of their memories in a light-hearted way about growing up in Steyning in the 1950s and 1960s.

Photographic Competition and Calendar for 2026

We invite members to submit recent photographs of Steyning and the surrounding area through the various seasons of the year for inclusion in a Steyning Society Calendar for 2026. The best photograph for each month will be published in the calendar. There will be a prize for the best photograph of all, which will consist of a bottle of Smock Alley sparkling wine and a tasting at the vineyard, both kindly donated by Sarah Lavery.

You can submit your entries any time between now and 31st August 2025. Within reason, you can submit as many photographs as you like and can make as many submissions as you like

during this period, so there is no need to wait until August before sending in some photographs. You will find more information about the competition on the News Section of the Society's website, including information about how to submit your entries and some useful tips.

Trips

We are hoping to arrange two trips this year. The first trip, which is being planned for May, will be to Winchester Cathedral and the nearby Hospital of St Cross. At the Cathedral, we will be able to see the 12th Century Winchester Bible and the Kings and Scribes Exhibition, which is about the Wessex Royal Family - including King Aethelwulf whose body was originally buried in our church but was subsequently moved to Winchester. The Hospital of St Cross is a medieval alms house which has a fine Norman church. The masons who carved in the church are thought to have carved in our church as well. A financial scandal at the Hospital provided the idea for the plot of *The Warden* in Trollope's Barchester novels. We are organising this trip in conjunction with the Friends of Steyning Parish Church.

The other trip, which is being planned for the autumn, will be to The Tangmere Military Aviation Museum.

It would be very helpful expressions of interest, without any commitment, could be sent to Nicola Mason whose email address is nickymason82@gmail.com.

Subscriptions

We would like to remind you that subscriptions for 2025/2026 fall due on 1st March. The subscription is currently single £15 and £20 double (i.e. at same address). If you do not already pay by standing order, and we encourage you to do so because it simplifies the Treasurer's work, you can pay online to The Steyning Society's bank account (which is Sort Code 20-98-74 and Account Number 60832235), at the next meeting or by sending a cheque to the Treasurer, Adrian Gobat, at 41 Goring Road, BN44 3GF.

Horsham Local Plan Review Examination - Inspector's suspension

The Horsham Local Plan 2023 - 2040 Examination was due to take place during December 2024 and January 2025 with a series of hearings about specific topics. These included the allocation of housing at Glebe Farm.

However, the Examination Inspector wrote to Horsham District Council on 16th December stating he had "significant concerns about the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan in a number of areas" and that given the "seriousness of these concerns it would not be efficient to hold these hearings."

We understand that the Council has now submitted extra information to the Inspector and argues that it will be able to carry out any updates within the Government's preferred six-month timescale, opening a pathway to resume the hearings and progress the current plan.

The Council's response to the Inspector also notes that the Government's proposals for devolution would result in local government reorganization, which could impact any requirement to prepare a new plan. This would, it warns, create a "planning policy vacuum" that could last several years and is contrary to the Government's aspirations for plan-led development while creating "considerable uncertainty and potential harm" to communities from prolonged speculative developments. The District's housing target rose from 917 homes to 1,357 a year after the National Planning Policy Framework was revised in December.

We do not know what is likely to happen next but obviously the suspension could have serious implications for future planning in the District and the way housing allocations are progressed.

A mayor for Sussex?

Finally, West Sussex County Council are working in conjunction with East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council on a proposal to create a combined authority for Sussex which would be led by a mayor as part of the Government's plans to reorganise local government and for more devolution. You can find out more about this proposal on West Sussex County Council's dedicated website, which is called Future of Local Government in Sussex, by following the link [Future of local government in Sussex - West Sussex County Council](#).