



**THE STEYNING SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE**

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

February 2026

Dear Members,

Christmas Supper

We ended last year with our annual Christmas supper on 19th December 2025, which was attended by eighty 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 some Jazz from the SeaJam Quintet. We hope that everyone enjoyed the evening.

Trip to Chichester Festival Theatre

We have organised a backstage tour of the Chichester Festival Theatre which will take place on Thursday, 2nd April 2026. This will cover some of the theatre's history and architectural design but will focus on how shows are put together and on the technical aspects. We will visit the dressing rooms, wardrobe department, scene dock, auditorium and go on stage (set permitting). There are extra options of lunch at the theatre restaurant and staying on for a matinee performance of Roald Dahl's BFG before it goes to the West End. This is a collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company and has exciting puppetry.

The tour of the theatre starts at 10.30 a.m. and costs £14 per person. We will travel to Chichester by train, catching the 9.27 from Shoreham. We can help arrange lifts to and from Shoreham station but we cannot help with lifts to and from Chichester station. A day return ticket to Chichester costs £15.50 or £10.30 with a Senior's rail card. Members who prefer to drive to Chichester are of course free to do so. You can find a fuller description of the trip by following the link [Chichester trip](#).

You can pay for the tour by transferring £14 per person into the Society's bank account (sort code: 20-98-74 account number: 60832235) but please notify our Treasurer (adriangobat@hotmail.co.uk) that you have done this because places on the tour are limited. If you would like further information about the trip, please contact Nicola Mason (nickymason82@gmail.com)

AGM and Bowl Awards

We are holding the AGM and presentation of the Steyning Bowl Awards at The Steyning Centre at 7.30 pm on Friday, 17th April 2026. This year, the awards will focus on those who have made a significant contribution to music in Steyning and the surrounding area. They will be presented by Neil Jenkins, who is an internationally acclaimed tenor and now lives locally. The presentation will be

followed by a short talk by Drs Maddie Blackburn and Paul Dennison entitled “Discovering Steyning”, when they will tell us about their experiences of moving to the town.

Talks on 15th May and 19th June

We have had to reverse the order of the talks on 15th May and 19th June so that Dr Janet Pennington talks to us on 15th May about Celia Fiennes’ travels on horseback round England and Chris Hare talks to us on 19th June about folk song and folk song collectors. As usual, both talks will be held at the Steyning Centre and will start at 7.30 pm.

Church Street Railings

We are pleased to report that West Sussex County Council should soon be starting work on reinstating the railings and repairing the pavement, steps and retaining wall at the junction of Church Street and the High Street. Steyning Parish Council has agreed to pay just over £7,100 towards the cost so that the railings and original paving stones are reinstated and we, in turn, have agreed to contribute £1,500 to the Parish Council’s share. This was necessary because the County Council refused to pay for anything more than basic repairs and modern safety rails, despite its earlier agreement with the Society that it would be responsible for the future maintenance of the railings. We made every effort to persuade the County Council to honour this agreement before agreeing to contribute but we reluctantly concluded that we had no other option if we wanted to preserve the character of this part of Steyning. We know from old paintings that there have been wooden railings on this corner since at least the end of eighteenth century and that they were originally used to tether oxen being sold in the market held in the High Street.

Annual Subscriptions

Finally, we should like to remind you that subscriptions for 2026/2027 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.