



THE STEYNING SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE

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

June 2026

Dear Members,

Trip to Chichester Festival Theatre

We started our trips this year on 2nd April with a backstage tour of Chichester Festival Theatre. This was followed by lunch in the Theatre's restaurant and then by a matinee performance of Roald Dahl's BFG. You can read Carole Powell's account of the visit on the Website or by following the link: [Chichester Theatre Outing April 2026](#)

AGM and Bowl Awards

The trip to Chichester was followed by our AGM, the presentation of this year's Steyning Bowl Awards and a short talk by Maddie Blackburn and Paul Dennison, which took place on 17th April.

This year, the Awards focused on those who have made significant contributions to music in Steyning. We received some truly outstanding nominations which showed what a vibrant musical life the Town has had for many years. The Bowl was awarded to Zoe Peate and Gary Prior for their lifetime commitment to music, and especially for their work with Cantatrice Voices and Kaleidoscope Singers. Each of the five runners up received Highly Commended Certificates. They were (in alphabetical order) Siobhan Denning for her work with Chanctonbury Chorus, Diane Gargano for her work with Strummers and Singers, Janet Gawn for her work with Steyning Jazz Club, Christabel Heasman-Cossins for her work with Sing Out Sister and Brian and Marion Sawyer for their contribution to music at Steyning Parish Church.

The Awards were presented by Neil Jenkins, the internationally acclaimed tenor, who told us how he and his wife decided to retire to Bramber and about making music in and around Steyning. The evening concluded with Maddie Blackburn and Paul Dennison telling us why they decided to move to Steyning and why it is such a special place for them.

You can see pictures of the evening by clicking on [this link](#) and then by clicking on an image.

Visit to Applesham Farm on 24th June 2026

As a sequel to Hugh Passmore's talk about Applesham Farm in January, we are planning an evening visit to Applesham Farm on 24th June. There will be a tour of the Farm which will start at about

6.30pm and will last for about an hour. We will see the Farm from a basic vehicle which can accommodate up to 30 passengers – it could be a bumpy ride. There are no facilities at the Farm for those with special needs. We are planning to end the evening with a bring-your-own picnic which will be held in a barn if it is wet. We are not arranging transport to the Farm but we are told that there is plenty of parking space there. There will be no charge for this visit. Further details will be announced once the plans have been completed. Please send expressions of interest to Nicola Mason (nickymason82@gmail.com).

Visit to the Sussex County Cricket Ground in October 2026

We are also planning a visit to the Sussex County Cricket Ground in Hove in early October, which will include a free tour of the Museum as well as a pub lunch. Transport will not be arranged for this visit. Further details will be announced nearer the date.

Access For All to the beautiful Steyning Downland Scheme (SDS)

Please consider supporting the SDS to purchase an all-terrain accessibility vehicle to enable those who can no longer walk up to the Downs to continue to access this beautiful landscape. The fund has already raised the funds for a splendid 4-person oak bench on the rifle range to commemorate two long-standing supporters of The Steyning Society - David Boyle and Martin Toomey much missed by so many of us. Click on the link below to donate and find out more.

<https://gofund.me/c0b852d94>

Church Street Railings

We are sure that everyone is pleased to see that West Sussex County Council has finally reinstated the railings and undertaken some repairs at the junction of Church Street and the High Street, just in time for this year's Festival. This was only achieved by Steyning Parish Council agreeing to pay just over half the cost and by the Society agreeing to contribute £1,500 to the Parish Council's share because the County Council refused to pay for anything more than basic repairs and modern safety rails.

Wine at Meetings

We are sorry to say that Andrew Betts, who has chosen the wine and run the bar at our meetings and Christmas Suppers for a number of years, has told us that he can no longer continue doing this because of commitments with the Church choir. We are grateful to him for continuing to do this after he retired from the Committee last year and are making the search for a replacement a priority.

Archive page on the Society's website

We have added an Archive page to the Society's Website which provides a record of some of the Society's activities since 2019. Back copies of the Newsletter since 2020 are available on the Newsletter page of the Website.

New programme of talks

Finally, our programme for the next series of talks is available on the Website and can be found by following the link [2026.27](#). Printed copies of the programme are available at our meetings.