

# ***RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY***

## ***OFFICERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS AND TRUSTEES 2018***

### **President**

John Griffiths

### **Vice-Presidents**

Kenneth Bird  
Robert Bromley  
John Pope

### **Executive Officers**

David Bookless, Chairman; 01797 224650, *drbookless@gmail.com*  
Julian Lockett, Vice Chairman; 01797 252114, *millhousenorthiam@sky.com*  
Diana Hajikakou, Hon Treasurer; 01797 224046, *kyriacos2010@hotmail.co.uk*  
Wayne Jones, Planning Liaison; 01797 229795, *waynethurstonjones@me.com*  
Andy Stuart, Publicity & Membership Secretary; 01797 223831, *nikiandandy@hotmail.co.u*

### **Executive Committee Members**

Andrew Bamji	227961, <i>bamji@btinternet.com</i>
Mike Stott	224614, <i>mstott@btinternet.com</i>
Allan Thomson	<i>allan.r.thomson@gmail.com</i>
John Spencer	07957 971331, <i>jds@winsea.plus.com</i>

### **Planning Committee Members**

Julian Lockett, Chairman  
Alan Dickinson  
Rae Festing  
John Griffiths  
Wayne Jones

### **Honorary Consultants**

Alan Dickinson	Historical
John Royle	Maritime Affairs

### **Trustees:**

John Griffiths  
David Bookless  
Diana Hajikakou  
Andy Stuart

*Front cover photo: View of Rye from the Strand. Photo by JulianLockett*

# **RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

## **NOTICE OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING to be held in the Tudor Room, The Mermaid Inn, Rye, at 11.15am on Friday 17 May 2019**

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 27 April 2018 (pages 18 – 20 of this Report)
3. Matters arising
4. Reports from the Chairman and Officers; other reports
5. Treasurer's Report and approval of Accounts for the year 2018 (Section 2.4)
6. Elections: Executive Officers and Committee Members. (See note 1)  
The Committee wishes to re-appoint John Griffiths as President and Robert Bromley, Kenneth Bird and John Pope as Vice-Presidents.
7. Any Other Business (see note 2)

### **Notes**

1. Any member who wishes to nominate another member to be an Officer of the Society or to the Executive Committee should apply to the Chairman for a nomination form, which must be returned to him at least fourteen days before the meeting, i.e. by 3 May 2019.
2. Any member wishing to raise a matter under Any Other Business must notify the Chairman at least fourteen days before the meeting.
3. Please bring your copy of this report with you to the AGM as spare copies may not be available.

*David Bookless, Chairman  
Faraday House  
The Mint, Rye  
East Sussex TN31 7EW  
Tel: 01797 224650, email: ryeconservation@gmail.com*

# Rye Conservation Society Forty-sixth Annual Report for 2018

## 1 Chairman's Report *by David Bookless*

I am pleased to present Conservation Society members with this Report on our activities for the year. As always time seems to have passed quickly since our acrimonious meeting in April 2018 which I hope we can avoid this year. The Conservation Society exists to help retain the character of this special town of Rye, and to offer advice on developments, not always in a negative sense.

We have held a Special General Meeting which unanimously agreed various changes to the Society Constitution with respect to improving the election processes shown to be inadequate last year. The amended full constitution can be found at the end of this Annual Report.

It seems to me that the popularity of Rye as a tourist destination increases year by year which while mostly welcome to local business brings problems in its wake including parking issues, crowded narrow pavements and litter. However Rye remains a wonderful place to live with good hotels, various restaurants, several bars, a fine cinema and the historic citadel. The town regularly features in travel guides as a place to visit and has played host recently to the Netflix Crown TV film production albeit as a mock 1970s Scottish town! So it looks likely that it will retain its popularity especially if the Society and others are successful in maintaining its special appeal for visitors.

2018 saw the setting up by Rother DC of a Landgate working group including Council representatives, the Friends of the Landgate and the Conservation Society. The first stage of the work to restore and maintain the structure was completed with significant money from Rother Council. I hope members agree with me that this key feature of the town now looks much better, at last free of foliage and bird droppings. The skilled steeple jackers were good to watch. It was excellent to see the flag flying in time for Remembrance Day. We are hoping as further meetings of the Working Group are planned that we can progress works on the clock for which the Society proposes a town appeal and maintain pressure to have a simple hidden metal roof installed which would keep out rainwater as well as the pigeons.

Members can see from Julian Lockett's report that it has been a busy year on the planning front with several large schemes under consideration. I was happy that eventually the proposal from BP to build a 24 hour petrol station at the top of Udimore Road was rejected on Appeal. The strong objections of the Society were fully supported by the Town Council, local residents and Rother Planners. It shows that even large corporations can be defeated if our case is strong and well made.

I would like to thank Julian Lockett as Vice Chairman and Chairman of Planning and all the members of the Committee for their work for the Society during the year. In particular I thank Andrew Bamji who is taking a break from the Committee but will I hope still be on hand to offer me advice and support.

We have made some changes to this year's Annual Report to try and make it more readable, I am happy to receive any comments from members on any issues contained herein. I also always encourage members to take a look at our web site which covers topics in more depth than is possible in this Report.

## **2 Neighbourhood Plan** *summary by David Bookless*

The Rye Neighbourhood Plan will soon reach the final stage where it is put to the Rye Parish electorate in a referendum. The Application for a Rye Neighbourhood Plan was first proposed in the form of a submission to Rother District Council as far back as 2013 covering the area of the Rye Parish boundaries. Since then the Rye Town Council set up a Steering Group consisting of councillors and citizens to develop the Plan, Colonel Kimber as Vice Chairman of the Steering Group has been responsible for bringing the Plan to fruition and thanks are due to him that we have now reached the final stages.

The Plan is a lengthy document proposing a vision of Rye as “a thriving town for the 21st Century” and a number of planning policies to be used in the determination of planning applications locally. The Plan has the following strategic objective, “To plan a strategic and coherent development of Rye with the aim of improving the economic and social well-being of the community, considering in particular its role as a market town, a centre for tourism, leisure and culture; its enterprise and its commercial and fishing port, all in the context of its historic maritime character and vulnerability to flooding”.

In 2018 there was an extensive consultation process on the draft Plan by means of meetings and exhibitions to which the Conservation Society submitted detailed comments most of which have been incorporated. Details of the Consultation may be found on the Neighbourhood Plan web site, [www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk). Following the Consultation, Rye Town Council submitted the Plan to Rother for Examination by the Independent Examiner (Mr John Slater). He has made some initial comments and queries which have been responded to by Rother and Rye Town Councils. Once approved by the Examiner, Rye Town Council will organise a referendum to ensure that the community has the final say on whether the neighbourhood plan comes into force. Citizens who are registered to vote in local elections will be entitled to vote in the referendum. If over 50 per cent approve the plan then it will come into force. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is in force, decision-makers will be obliged, by law, to take account of what it says, when they consider proposals for any development in the Rye area. We very much hope that by the end of 2019 that the agreed Neighbourhood Plan will be up and running.

## **3 Treasurer’s Report** *by Diana Hajikakou.*

The accounts indicate another year with the Society being in a sound financial position. There were fewer outings so both Income and Expenditure on Events and Outings was down on the previous year. Subscription income rose very slightly as again we welcomed a number of new life members to the Society. From a financial point of view it is very helpful if people become life members!

Owing to the satisfactory state of the Society's accounts there is money in reserve for contingencies or one-off expenditure for projects which fulfil our objectives. This has recently included money towards the restoration of the Pump in Church Square and the society will, in due course, contribute towards the restoration the of the Landgate clock.

We thank our Independent Examiner, Mervyn Hayes, for once again auditing the accounts.

The balance sheet as of 31st December 2018 and income and expenditure account for 2018 appears on the following pages.

**RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY**  
**Balance Sheet at 31 December 2018**

<b>Assets at 31.12.18</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank balance LloydsTSB	22738.65
Charity Deposit Account (1)	
Less debts (2)	134.00
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>22604.65</b>

**INCOME 2018 AND 2017**

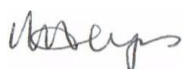
<b>Income</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Events & outings	2288.75	4249.52
Subscriptions	1159.00	1113.00
Donations	00.00	50.00
Gift Aid	207.97	179.56
COIF interest	0.00	0.00
Sundry	0.00	0.00
Bequest	283.17	9069.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3938.89</b>	<b>14669.22</b>
<b>Income minus Expenditure</b>	<b>72.39</b>	<b>7719.11</b>

**Notes**

- (1) COIF Charity account closed 23/7/17
- (2) Uncashed Cheques

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018 prepared by Hon. Treasurer,  
Mrs D J Hajikakou

I have examined the income and expenditure accounts of the  
Rye Conservation Society for the year ended 31 December 2018  
and have compared them with the books and vouchers supplied.  
In my opinion they are correct and in accordance.



Independent Examiner, Mervyn Hayes  
Date: 30/01/2019

<b>Assets at 31.12.17</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Bank balance Lloyds TSB</b>	<b>23155.65</b>
<b>Less debts (1)</b>	<b>592.84</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>22562.81</b>

#### **EXPENDITURE 2018 AND 2017**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Events &amp; Outings</b>	<b>962.34</b>	<b>2590.36</b>
<b>Affiliation fees</b>	<b>174.00</b>	<b>174.00</b>
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>212.80</b>	<b>181.50</b>
<b>Printing/Stationery</b>	<b>230.60</b>	<b>38.34</b>
<b>Post/telephone</b>	<b>295.85</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Administration (website)</b>	<b>97.50</b>	<b>27.31</b>
<b>AGM/Awards</b>	<b>1547.57</b>	<b>1641.60</b>
<b>Sundries</b>	<b>345.84</b>	<b>2297.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>3866.50</b>	<b>6950.11</b>

**(1)     Uncashed Cheque**

#### **4      *Planning Committee Report* by Julian Lockett**

During 2018 the Planning Committee considered and commented on some 68 planning and listed building applications, a reduction of some 16% on 2017. As always I would like to thank members of the Planning Committee who give their time and expertise in considering the applications.

Of the applications we considered, we objected on various grounds to 11, around 16% of the total. Our grounds for objection included lack of sufficient information, inappropriate design in form and scale, potential loss of historic fabric, access issues and, in some cases, the lack of appropriate parking provision. Where consent was granted, this was a result of changes to the design in the final submission, removal of the reason for our initial objection, regulatory changes or difference of opinion on the extent of problems such as overlooking. We do not seem to differ with Rother on such matters as design, with the singular exception of the new covered courts for Rye Tennis Club.

The Society objected to this application for an excessively large industrial shed-sized development outside Rye's development boundary. Against the advice of the officers and the area councillor, outline consent was granted, with matters to do with ecology, highways and flooding being delegated to officers for approval. Currently ecology and highways issues appear to have been resolved and a decision on flooding matters is outstanding. There will need to be a detailed planning application to cover design issues and landscaping which we will have to consider should the outline consent be confirmed.

The beginning of the year saw planning approval for the Rye Harbour Discovery Centre which the Society supported. We consider that this will be an exciting new building and an asset to the area.

The question of a planning balance was nowhere better illustrated than with the application for a care home at Rye Hospital. This is on a sensitive site adjacent to the AONB. We supported the development and are pleased to see that it has been given consent; we believe it will benefit not just Rye but the whole of the surrounding area. Any potential damage to the landscape was in our view not sufficient to justify a refusal.

This was not the case with the BP filling station, which we vigorously opposed. We submitted further documentation when the refusal by Rother was appealed and celebrated along with many others when the inspector upheld the refusal. One of the grounds for refusal was the effect on the amenity of the local residents of an illuminated 24/7 filling station and supermarket. This will be an issue for other potential locations for such a development in Rye.

In July an application was received to redevelop the old night-club at 48 Ferry Road as nine flats with shops on the ground floor. We objected to the scheme on design, access and parking grounds and are pleased to report that the design has been revised and is now acceptable, although there is still a shortfall in the parking provision.

Right at the end of the year a revised application for the Thomas Peacocke site was submitted for 65 houses and a redesigned access requiring the demolition of the Queen Adelaide. We have objected on a number of grounds to a scheme that will mean the total removal of the

current tree belt on the site and the raising of the ground level across the whole site to avoid flooding issues.

We continue to be concerned at the acceptance by East Sussex Highways of a lower parking standard than their own model would require, particularly where it will force new residents to seek spaces on already full roads or have to pay for off-street parking. This is best illustrated with the development of four flats next to the Kettle of Fish where residents are expected to park at Gibbet Marsh. This is a particular issue with the proposed introduction of Civil Parking and a rigorous enforcement of pay & display on street parking in the central area.

Along with the consideration of the planning applications, 2018 also saw the Society responding to various consultations in particular to the two relating to the Rye Neighbourhood Plan, the Regulation 14 & 16 consultations. In addition we commented on the Rother draft Development and Site Allocation Plan, which is the second part of Rother's Local Plan along with the 2014 Core Strategy.

The year concluded with an approach from Martello Developments to view early proposals for the redevelopment of the old Bourne's site on Rock Channel as an arts and residential complex which would make use of the structure of the existing buildings. The planning application is expected in early 2019.

## **5      *Planning Liaison Report* by Wayne Jones**

The year has been a productive one, made even more so by our continuing and highly satisfactory relationship with the Rother Planning Liaison Officer: mutual exchange of information has resulted in positive -and sometimes very prompt results.

Whilst it would not be appropriate to discuss where we have been involved with issues concerning private dwellings; we are pleased that remedial work at the Rye Club has taken place. Concerns raised over the deterioration of the Boys Club in Mermaid Street have been met with a positive response from the trustees.

One consequence of the lamentable closure of three of the banks in the High Street (and the planned closure of the fourth and last) is that three key buildings are currently lying empty. Two of them, however, are undergoing alterations/renovations and we are monitoring developments.

Members have expressed concern that Martello Development has purchased land along Rye Harbour Road and appears to be conducting works of some sort on the site. We have been assured that the field is simply being cleared of detritus and that Martello has acquired the site to protect the outlook from their Bridge Point development. We have also queried inappropriate street lighting and the over painting of the town crest on lamp posts.

Some issues highlighted last year still, however, remain unresolved. Key among these concern alterations to premises in the High Street and the Strand. These now have enforcement orders in place (and in one case a court file) so we very much hope for positive conclusions to these in due course.



## **6 Membership and Publicity** *by Andy Stuart*

Membership. Numbers enjoyed a wonderful fillip in 2018, with 30 people joining providing a record year for new membership since 1975, which is great news for the Society. Despite this, we can always do with more new membership as age takes its inevitable toll, and so we do not intend to sit on our laurels! Once again, I'd like to point out that one of the most efficient and successful marketing strategies is 'member get member', so if you know anyone who might be interested in joining please encourage them to do so.

In the meantime, I would like to welcome the following as members during 2018: Mr R & Mrs E Bishop, Mrs Judith & Mr Martin Blincow, Mr A Blincow, Joe Dodds, Mr Mike Boyd, Sarah Cooper, Mr Neale East, Mrs J Farrington, Mr J Jarrold, Mrs Georgina & Mr David Kite, Mr Phil & Mrs Julie Law, Mr Tony McLaughlin & Mr Tim Gorman, Mr M & Mrs Y Metcalfe, Ms Sue Muddiman, Mr A & Mrs D Payton, Mr R Payton, Mr J Phillips & Ms T Atabay, Mr Gary Poole, Mr Chris Robus, Mrs C & Mr A Spacey and Mr S Willats.

Publicity. The society's steadfast belief that Rother District Council needs to take care of the Landgate Tower and ongoing watching eye has paid off, with remedial repair works finally undertaken by RDC during 2018. The Society was happy to present significant funds towards the repairs and will continue to work alongside RDC to ensure the stability of this iconic landmark.

Once again, I would like to give a big thank you to those wonderful volunteers who have helped me with the distribution of newsletters, pounding the Rye pavements and driving the roads to far-flung places – Helen Griffiths, David Bookless & Heather Stevenson, Denny Nicol, Jill Johnson, Gill & Paddy Harvey, Allan Thompson and Anne Wood. Their help is very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank our Chairman David Bookless for his unstinting work in putting together the regular newsletters – writing, editing, and laying out the publications with minimal or no help from me, the titular editor. David has stepped into the large shoes vacated by the former Chairman John Griffiths, whom I likened to Harold Evans, although I think he is perhaps more the Katherine Viner of Rye!

But the biggest thanks must go to our members. Without you we would be nothing and it is your ongoing involvement and subscriptions are what keeps the Society going.

## **7 Events**

### **Summer Garden Party**

It was wonderfully sunny summer and it continued to shine for the annual Conservation Society Garden Party on Sunday 8 July. In fact members sought the shade in Niki and Andy's lovely garden which they had kindly loaned to the Society for the afternoon. There were also tea, coffee and lovely traditional scones supplied by Fletchers with jam and cream made in the traditional Cornish way. Niki Stuart made a great version of 'Pymms' which went down a treat on such a hot day.

The Chairman of Bexhill Heritage had been invited and we had a useful discussion about how we might work together on conservation matters of common interest. We will be

organising a visit to Bexhill in the future to learn more about the history and architecture of the town.

We were pleased that over 100 people attended including the Deputy Rye Mayor, Rebecca Gilbert, some new members and a couple of people new to Rye who joined up having tasted the scones and 'Pymms'. All in all a successful afternoon.

### **Rye Conservation Society trip to Pevensey** *by David Bookless*

A group of Conservation Society members had an enjoyable outing to Pevensey on 24 October visiting the Castle, the Old Court House Museum and St Nicholas Parish Church. We took the Marsh Link train from Rye, alighting at Pevensey and Westham station, with a fifteen minute walk to the Castle through the village of Westham which has a number of historic houses and a 14c Church.

If you have not been to Pevensey Castle the scale of the site is impressive. The original castle was built by the Romans between in about AD290 and it housed it is thought a thousand soldiers , the area enclosed by the roman walls is free to enter and provides today a park and dog walking area. In 1066 these ruined Roman walls were refortified by William the Conqueror and used to surround a great Norman castle which survived until the early sixteenth century, latterly as a royal prison, when it was abandoned. However it was fortified with guns at the time of the Spanish Armada and much later during the Second World War when there were Canadian and US troops billeted within the ancient buildings. The whole site is now managed by English Heritage with an entry fee to the inner castle.

The Keep dominates the inner bailey and was once a grand building containing domestic apartments and provided a useful spot for a machine gun post in the last war. The Keep now is completely ruined and indeed for centuries was covered beneath a mound of earth and rubble. Today much of the architecture remains a puzzle.

Following a tour of the inner castle ruins assisted by audio guides the party adjourned for a good lunch at the Priory Court Hotel nearby.



*Inside Pevensey Castle*



*Inside Court House Museum*

In the afternoon the group visited the Pevensey Court House and former Town Hall which is now a tiny but very interesting museum set above 19c prison cells.

The benches and even the dock of the Court, in use until 1886, are still in place and we sat there while the museum curator Peter Harrison gave an interesting talk about the long history of Pevensey since its fame as the landing point of the 1066 Norman invasion.

There remained time for a quick look at the 15 century St Nicholas Church, the size of which indicates the wealth of Pevensey in Tudor times. Thanks to lottery funding the Church has recently been restored to a high standard after years of decline.

The day ended happily with the train back to Rye running on time and the weather had remained mild and sunny all day. Plans for further trips which will be publicised in the Conservation Society Newsletter are now underway.

### **An Enjoyable Christmas Party** *by Andy Stuart*

Over 70 people gathered as Rye Conservation Society held its annual Christmas Party in Rye Town Hall on the evening of Friday 7th December.

Over splendid canapes supplied and served by Pete and his team from Fletchers and wines carefully selected by Kyriakos Hadjidakou, a happy evening was had by the Society's members and selected guests.

Heading up the VIPs were Councillor Jonathan Johnson, chairman of Rother District Council (RDC), and his wife and fellow RDC councillor Gill Johnson. Also invited were the Rye pair of RDC councillors – Lord David Amptill and landlord of popular Crown Inn Gennette Stevens. Sadly, Amber Rudd MP was unable to attend but wished everyone an enjoyable evening! While extra entertainment was provided by the Society's recently retired chairman but new president and master of levity, John Griffiths, who cracked a series of jokes that raised the already warm spirits even higher.

The Society's current chairman David Bookless said: "It was delightful to enjoy such a friendly and happy occasion which serves to kick off the Festive season for so many of us. And I was delighted to welcome our honoured guests as well as our members both old and new. I was especially delighted to see Priscilla Ryan, who has been an active member since just after the society's inception and, of course, her brother was a long-standing and much-loved former Chairman."

David also commented on how happy he was that work had finally got going on the Landgate and that the tower was able to fly a flag to mark the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. "The Society has had the Tower on its radar for many years and has been lobbying the district council for work to be done on this iconic landmark. The Society would like to congratulate all concerned in getting the much needed remedial work started, and it was splendid that a flag was able to flown from it to mark the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice."

Although primarily a social occasion the annual party also provided the formality of the announcement of the Society's annual Townscape Awards, which serve to recognise outstanding work which has conserved and/or added to the town's amazing built environment. "This year there was a single winner," says David, "and a thoroughly deserved

one too – the Ship Inn on the Strand. And we made the award in recognition of the high-quality restoration of the Ship’s sign – a large painting of the Madeira Pet, built in Rye under full sail. The original sign had all but disappeared due to weathering and the society had been in conversation with the Ship’s previous owners about conserving it without any real progress. So we were thrilled when the new owners, Hush Heath Estates, hove into sight, and rapidly got on board with the project! The result is smart and well looked after!”

The Conservation Society’s vice chairman and chair of the Planning Sub-committee, Julian Luckett, presented the Townscape Award certificate to Edward Gardner, commercial director of Hush Heath Estates, and Diana Turner the very popular general manager of the Ship Inn.

After more delicious nibbles and a glass or two of wine the throng disappeared happily into the evening after a thoroughly enjoyable time all warmed up and ready for the rest of the Festive Season!

## 8 *Rye Highways Forum: report for 2018* by Andrew Bamji

This is my last report as I am standing down from the Committee this year. The Highways Forum has had a quiet year but a few issues remain on the agenda.

### **Parking**

As most members will know, the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement has been agreed at District Council level and its imposition is now inevitable. Draft proposals for the siting of meters, residents’ entitlements and disabled bays among others have been displayed, and RCS have commented extensively on them.

There is much concern about the payment machines which seem over-large for the proposed sites and may obstruct footways and interfere with property access and services. See left for an example of such a meter in Eastbourne pictured with our Vice Chairman.



Traders have expressed anxiety over limitation of parking for commercial vehicles. It is apparent that the needs and wishes of tourists, traders and residents are not uniform and despite the unhappiness of many residents over the present lack of enforcement, these proposals have met with considerable resistance.

Rye Town Council (RTC) convened a meeting of interested parties on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and it was noted that a formal consultation process will take place following the informal process to which RCS contributed.

It should be noted that the CPE proposals concern street parking only off-street parking is a separate issue; however, the provision of car parks is being pursued by RTC and is considered extensively in the Neighbourhood Plan. Two possibilities include laying reinforcing material on the grassed part of the Gibbet’s Marsh car park and on the part of the Salts used on Bonfire Night, so these might be used for summer car parking and/or events. The rugby ground has also been suggested for overflow

parking, although this is further from the town centre than Gibbet's Marsh. The possibility of developing the old school site for parking is dependent on the outcome of the planning application for housing currently in progress.

### **Pedestrianisation**

The possibility of introducing full or part pedestrianisation of the High Street is being considered by RTC. However it should be noted that the experimental "shared space" in Exhibition Road in London has proved a failure; traffic speeds have increased rather than decreased and there have been some serious accidents.

### **Traffic calming measures**

RTC is to purchase a moveable speed indicator which can be sited on the approach roads to Rye in rotation. Research suggests this is a more effective speed deterrent than fixed machines and is also considerably cheaper. The possibility of erecting white "village gates" on the four main entry roads, also deemed effective, is under consideration.

### **Road safety**

Previous disquiet over the risks to pedestrians from the restriction of sight lines following the completion of the Jempson's extension can be allayed; monitoring shows that the closure of the external Post Office has changed crossing behaviour. Fewer people attempt to cross between the railway car park access road and the bus stands and more use the existing crossing.

## **9 Awards 2018**

As mentioned above the Ship Inn won the Society Award for the alteration and refurbishment of an existing building. For some years members of the Society had been concerned about the deteriorating state of the sign depicting a 19<sup>th</sup> century Rye built sailing ship, the Madeira Pet.



**Hessel and Holmes** built the **Madeira Pet**, a wine and fruit schooner of 83 tons, 97 feet long, 18 feet beam. She was launched by Don Miguel, Pretender to the throne of Portugal. In 1857, while in Guernsey ownership, she became the first ship ever to sail from Europe to Chicago. She sailed there from Liverpool, with 240 tons of cutlery, pottery, paints, glassware and chinaware, and she loaded 4,000 cured cattle hides back, together with a barrel of cured whitefish as a present for Queen Victoria! Her arrival in Chicago, so far from the sea, caused great celebrations in that city.



In the middle of the nineteenth century plenty of these fruiterers and wine carriers were owned in Rye. They were very fast schooners, driven hard by small crews of tough men. Many a time a fruiterer has left London, reached the Downs at a time of south-west wind, sailed straight through the fleet of merchant shipping anchored there waiting for the wind to change, loaded in the Mediterranean, and sailed

home to find the same ships still waiting in the Downs! These handy little schooners with their fore-and-aft rig, fine lines, and liveliness on the helm, could be driven against the wind like modern ocean-racing yachts. If steam had not come to knock them out who knows how sailing ships might have developed?

The Society sought the help of a professional sign writer to recreate the old sign which was found to be past restoration. We are grateful to the owners of the Ship for funding the work which looks very smart.

The hotel accommodation also has been refurbished to a high standard sympathetic to the original fabric of the building.

## **10 Maritime Affairs** by *John Royle*

25 commercial vessels traded into Rye Wharf during the year to April 2019 carrying a total 53,800 tonnes of mainly stone, aggregates, slate and marble (one shipload). Only 3 laden ships left Rye with a total of 5,000 tonnes of wheat from Romney Marsh. Handling these cargoes of stone at the wharf is now better organised as, after it is offloaded it s all bagged up in 2 tonne bags and stored across the road before distribution to wherever it is wanted in the country.

The Environment Agency is carrying out some improvements to the harbour infrastructure at present. The pontoons laid south of Jempson's moorings along the west bank are being extended by 80 metres. These berths will provide a temporary home for fishing boats displaced by the unsafe and dilapidated Admiralty jetty. This old timber jetty was built for the Admiralty during the last war and is long overdue for scrapping. It is now to be rebuilt at a cost in the region of £2.8 million.

There is much talk at present of what is to be the next project for Martello Developments at Rock Channel. Their planning application for phase 2 of the housing development has now been submitted and includes 9 houses along the river front, and a complete upgrade of the two former Bourne's warehouses'. One being for artists' workshops and artist's studio accommodation and conversion of the former River Cafe to a restaurant with flat above. Looking further down Rock Channel, Martello have bought the leases from Gary Fox of the Fox Marine Yard (formerly Phillips boatyard) and Sandrock Marine and have stated that they will be generally tidying up and pulling down some of the derelict timber sheds on these sites.

## 11 Conservation Society Photograph Collection *by Andrew Bamji*

In December 2018 the Society was able to purchase two postcard albums from Rye Auction Galleries. Containing 357 cards from a number of different manufacturers they illustrate Rye from the turn of the 20th Century to the 1970s. The earliest postmark is from 1902. They cover the streets and buildings of the town, mainly in photographs but with a good selection of reproductions of watercolours and etchings. Many can be dated from their postmark or the publisher's imprint and some have interesting and sometimes cryptic messages. Who, for instance, was the Mr Hermitage that one writer was so anxious to hear singing? There are two cards written by First World War soldiers billeted in Rye, and one addressed to Mr Sweatman, a Rye resident whose occupation was an early example of nominative determinism; he was a blacksmith. Another appears to be a blackmail threat.

Judges of Hastings still produces postcards. (Another local maker, Shoemith and Etheridge, who produced cards under this name and the "Norman" imprint, ceased production in the 1960s. The Francis Frith archive contains 106 Rye photographs. The other widely-known manufacturers, Salmon (Sevenoaks) and Valentines (Dundee), are no longer in the postcard business. The Valentines archive to 1967 is held by the University of St Andrews. Several Rye firms produced cards; Deacons was one; another, C. Holland, a photographer in the High Street, was vain enough to include his shop as the central vignette of a multi-view card.

Many of the views are what one might term "popular. The Mermaid Inn and the Old Hospital are heavily represented, as is Mermaid Street, St Mary's church, the Ypres tower (or castle) and the Landgate. There are no cards showing Market Street or East Street. Watchbell Street has a number of cards. Upper West Street is shown on several looking towards the church (one with the trees artfully trimmed to show the West window) but none looking west to Lamb House, and no cards show the old Garden Room. There are several river and sunset scenes, but why the steep steps leading up to Hilder's Cliff merit a card is a mystery! I would not have been impressed to receive that one. There are distant views from all compass points, and one view from Rye Hill shows a train of cattle trucks in the station, presumably ready to load up from the market.

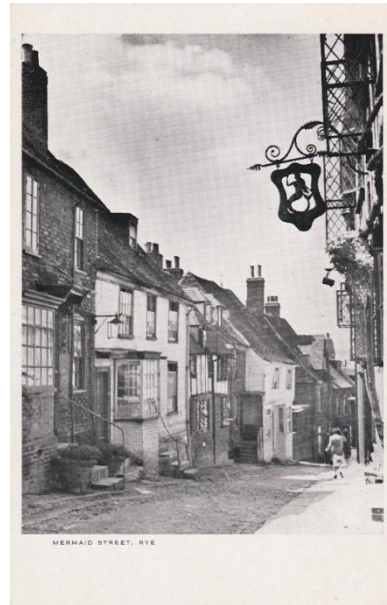
The cards provide an interesting perspective on what has changed in Rye, and what has not. Some views of the church pre-date the construction of the War Memorial in 1921. The paths in the churchyard itself were hedged, and heavily pruned trees surrounded it. There was a great deal of ivy climbing up houses. Very few were painted white. The church's East window is the pre-1939 version, although the individual panels cannot be clearly made out.

A view down West Street towards what is currently Barclays Bank shows it has a first floor bay window; the Santa Maria has yet to undergo a facelift. In Church Square what is now No 44 appears to have been two houses. The Mermaid Inn itself is shown in some cards before the entrance from Mermaid Street was widened. Nos 2 and 3 Mermaid Street can be seen in views looking east; they, and the cluster of buildings in Gun Garden were destroyed on the Second World War. An aerial view on a card postmarked 1920 shows these latter very clearly; some look perilously close to the cliff edge! The bank by the steps leading from Gun Garden to Fishmarket Road was just grass. The terraces in South Undercliff are unobscured by the Bournes and Jempsons warehouses and the development along Rock Channel. The fishing quay is but a couple of huts on the bank. Today's windmill is relatively modern; one card records that the old one burnt down in 1930 and the new mill sits further from the River

Tillingham. A card of Rye Station by A H Homewood of Burgess Hill (the back design indicates it was from a series produced in 1908) shows three tracks.

However many views are just the same; much of the citadel is as it was at the beginning of the 20th Century and some shops may have changed their name but remain in their longstanding trade, such as Simon the Pieman at the top of Lion Street. Not for nothing did a guidebook from the 1930s complain that Rye was overrun by tea shops and antique businesses.

Below is small selection; the remainder may be found on our web site.





**Rye Conservation Society**  
**Minutes of the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**  
**held at Rye Town Hall on 27 April 2018**

1. The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Rye Conservation Society was held in the Council Chamber of Rye Town Hall on 27 April 2018 chaired by John Griffiths and attended by some 88 members.
2. **Apologies for absence**  
Judith Blineow, Alan Downend, Mike and Madeleine Eve, Rae Festing, Kyriacos Hajikakou, Jo Kirkham, Phil and Julie Law, David and Susie Nelson, Ernie and Veryan Pollard, Ray Prewer and Linden Thomas, Liz Royle, Bill Taylor, Iain and Gilly Webb-Wilson.
3. **Minutes of the 2017 AGM**  
These were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman as correct, proposed by Judith O'Connor and seconded by Priscilla Ryan.
4. **Matters Arising**  
None
5. **Chairman's Report**  
John Griffiths referred members to his summary of the year's activities in the Annual Report which had been distributed to all members of the Society.  
At the time of writing, he said he had been unaware that there would be a contested election for the post of Chairman. This was a first for the Conservation Society. With the benefit of hindsight, it was clear that the fact that he was standing down as Chairman should have been more widely publicised than it had been, enabling others to put themselves forward to be considered for the post. He regretted the confusion and bad feeling this had caused.  
He thanked his committee for all their efforts during his Chairmanship and congratulated them.
6. **Treasurer's Report**  
Diana Hajikakou, the Treasurer, spoke briefly as all points of note were in her written report including the complete accounts for the year. She thanked Mervyn Hayes for auditing the accounts.  
The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Nikki Frith and seconded by Julian Luckett and unanimously approved.  
The Treasurer proposed that Mervyn Hayes be appointed as auditor for another year. This was seconded by Kenneth Bird and approved.
7. **Election of new Chairman**  
Kenneth Bird, Vice President of the Society, explained that he had been asked by the Executive Committee to take the chair for the election. This was proposed by Pamela Buxton, seconded by Priscilla Ryan and approved by a show of hands. He would forgo his voting right as Chairman but would use it if necessary in the case of a tie.

The Committee had decided that each candidate should speak for a maximum of four minutes and then answer questions. Kenneth requested that members be courteous when asking questions and refrain from personal observations.

### **David Bookless**

David Bookless said that he had been Secretary since 2015 and believed that he understood how the Society worked. He was committed to a high standard of architecture and urban design. He would seek to improve communications with members by improving the style and content of the website and by sending out a quarterly newsletter. He would work to widen the range of social activities, ensure that the RCS Awards continue and would seek to improve links to other organisations

### **Col Anthony Kimber**

Col Anthony Kimber referred to the present “self-perpetuating committee”. His record spoke for itself, he believed, he had played a very active role in many local organisations and activities and assured the meeting that he would be a strong leader of the Society and make it more of a welcoming, inclusive organisation.

Paddy Harvey asked what the Society had learned from the *débat* surrounding this election. In his view many changes were needed; for instance the timing of AGMs should be considered as younger working people were unable to attend; the website needed further improvement.

Pamela Burgass asked why no proxy voting arrangements had been put in place. In her view the whole voting system should have been overhauled. Members were mainly from the local community and there was a risk of pitting neighbour against neighbour if there was an open vote. In her view a postal vote was needed. David Bookless responded that the constitution could not be changed quickly to facilitate an alternative voting system but he assured all present that this would be reviewed in the future.

Julian Lockett commented that in his view there was a conflict of interest if Col Kimber became Chair of the Conservation Society. He was Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan, the impartiality of the Plan could be compromised. Several of those present strongly objected to this intervention. Pamela Burgass observed that Mr Lockett was reading from a prepared statement so had clearly planned his intervention, she was concerned that his comments might well skew the vote. Given the views of a number of members Julian Lockett withdrew his comment regarding a potential conflict of interest.

Many members were appalled by the bad feeling generated by the poorly-managed election process, it was clear the Society needed advice on how to be better organised to deal with such eventualities. There were objections to the ballot being by a show of hands. The committee had proposed two ballot boxes, one for each candidate, when it would be apparent who was voting for whom. However those present voted overwhelmingly for a secret ballot with one ballot box and a card upon which voters could name the candidate of their choice.

John Pope, Nicky Frith and Julia Farrington were appointed tellers. There were 50 votes for David Bookless and 35 votes for Col Kimber, with four spoiled votes.

## **8. Elections to the Committee**

David Bookless took the Chair to oversee the elections to the Committee.

**Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Planning Committee**      Julian Lockett

Anthony Nunn strongly objected to the election of Julian Lockett as Chair of the Planning Committee and Vice-Chairman. In his view the intervention had been seriously out of order and the proceedings had been conducted abysmally. Paddy Harvey also objected.

Despite two objections Julian Lockett was elected.

<b>Treasurer</b>	Diana Hajikakou
<b>Membership</b>	Andy Stuart
<b>Planning Liaison</b>	Wayne Jones

All were elected unopposed and the following committee members stood for re-election:

Andrew Bamji

Mike Stott

John Spencer

Rae Festing

All were elected unopposed.

David Bookless reported that the Executive Committee wished to nominate John Griffiths as the Society's new President. Julian Lockett seconded the proposal and gave the meeting a resumé of John's career in architecture and of his longstanding relationship with Rye. The meeting unanimously supported the proposal.

## **9. Any other business**

Linda Harland referred to the problem of containers and planters on the narrow pavements of the Citadel, creating a trip hazard and potential obstruction to those with push-chairs or mobility aids. It was suggested that this be taken up with the Highways Agency, Nicky Frith's view was that it might constitute a criminal offence. It was pointed out that the stones extending from house walls 1½" on to the pavements are part of the curtilage of the property.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 12.15 and was followed by The Annual Lunch attended by many of those present.

**CONSTITUTION  
OF  
RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

**1. NAME**

The name of the Society shall be Rye Conservation Society.

**2. AIMS and OBJECTIVES**

The Society is established for the public benefit for the following purposes in the area comprising the Civil Parishes of Rye Town, Playden, Rye Foreign and East Guldeford, also the Civil Parish of Icklesham (Rye Harbour Road and Rye Harbour and Camber Castle areas only), which area shall hereinafter be referred to as "the area of benefit".

1. To protect and enhance the visual and historic environment and setting of the town of Rye and its immediate environs (see area of benefit), particularly in relation to its setting in the marsh and the quality of life therein, to the benefit of residents, visitors, businesses and their employees.
2. To stimulate public interest in the area of benefit.
3. To promote high standards of planning and architecture in the area of benefit.
4. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features and buildings of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

In furtherance of the said purposes but not otherwise the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:

1. To promote research into subjects directly connected with the objects of the Society and to publish the results of any such research.
2. To act as a coordinating body and to co-operate with the local authority, planning committees, sanitary, drainage and all other local and statutory authorities, voluntary organisations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Society.
3. To promote or assist in promoting activities of a charitable nature throughout the area of benefit.
4. To publish papers, reports and other literature in print, electronically or by any other media as deemed appropriate by the Committee.
5. To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit.
6. To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
7. To educate public opinion and to give advice and information.

8. To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation or otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purposes.
9. To take and accept any gifts or property, whether subject to any special trusts or not.
10. To sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Society as shall be necessary.
11. To borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Society on such terms and on such security as the Executive Committee shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Society shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.
12. To recommend to the appropriate body the listing of any building of special architectural/historic interest.
13. To subscribe to any body or organisation that, in the opinion of the Committee, furthers the causes which coincide with the Society's objectives.
14. To do all such other things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be open to all who are interested in furthering the purposes of the Society. No member shall have power to vote at any meeting of the Society if his subscription is in arrears at the time. Corporate members shall be such societies, associations, educational institutions or businesses as are interested in furthering the purposes of the Society. A corporate member shall appoint a representative to vote on its behalf at all meetings but, before such representative exercises his or her right to vote, the corporate member shall give particulars in writing to the Honorary Secretary of such representation. The subscriptions of a member joining the Society in the three months preceding 31 December in any year shall be regarded as covering membership for the Society's year commencing on 1 January following the date of joining the Society.

### **4. SUBSCRIPTIONS**

The subscriptions shall be:

	Annual	Life
Individual members	£6.00	£75.00
Joint subscription for two members living at the same address	£10.00	£100.00
Corporate members	£15.00	n/a

or other such reasonable sum as the Executive Committee shall determine from time to time, and it shall be payable on or before 1 January each year. Membership shall lapse if the subscription is unpaid six months after it is due.

(Rates as agreed at the 33rd AGM held on 24 April 2005).

## **5. MEETINGS**

The Annual General Meeting shall be held in or about April of each year to receive the Executive Committee's Report and audited accounts and to elect Officers and Members of the Committee. The Committee shall decide when ordinary meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give **21 days' notice** of such meetings to all members. Special General Meetings of the Society shall be held at the written request of members representing not less than 10 per cent of the existing membership of the Society and whose subscriptions are fully paid up. Twenty members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a Meeting of the Society.

## **6. OFFICERS**

The Officers of the Society shall consist of

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- Honorary Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Chairman of the Planning Committee
- Planning Liaison

all of whom shall relinquish their office every year and shall be eligible to be re-elected at the Annual General Meeting. A President and Vice Presidents may also be elected at a General Meeting of the Society. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill casual vacancies occurring among officers of the Society

In addition to the above officers there is provision for four other non officio committee members.

## **7. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Nominations for the election of officers shall be made in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations to be supported by a proposer and seconder who must be paid up members of the Society and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. The nominee may produce a written manifesto at the time of nomination which will be circulated to members by the Society.

If there is more than one nominee for an officer post, an election will be held at the AGM, and if there is a contest for Chairman then this will take precedence. During any election for Chairman, the President or other agreed member shall chair the meeting. There will be provision for candidates to address the meeting and for questions to the candidates. The form of any election will be by secret ballot with printed voting slips on a "first past the post basis".

The elections of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of further Committee members. Nominees for election as Officers or Committee members shall declare at the Annual General Meeting at which their election is to be considered any financial or professional interest known or likely to be of concern to the Society.

Following election of officers, if there are more than four nominees, an election for committee members shall be held by secret ballot (first past the post) at the AGM.

In order to be eligible to vote and participate, members should be paid up at the time of the calling of the AGM, and thus are not eligible to participate if joining within 21 days of the AGM. However existing members may pay overdue subscriptions at the door and participate at the AGM, provided such subscriptions are no more than six months overdue.

## **8. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the management and administration of the Society. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers detailed in section 6 and not more than four other members. The Committee shall have power to co-opt further members (who shall attend in an advisory and non-voting capacity).

The President and Vice Presidents may attend any meeting of the Executive Committee but shall not vote at any such meeting. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. The Executive Committee shall meet not less than six times a year at intervals of not more than two months and the Honorary Secretary shall give all members not less than seven (7) days' notice of each meeting. The quorum shall, as near as may be, comprise one third of the members of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee may, by majority decision, expel with immediate effect until the next AGM any committee member whose actions, in the view of the Committee, are prejudicial to the best interests of the Society or who shall have, without the prior written consent of the Committee, disclosed confidential information to any third party.

## **9. COMMITTEES**

The Executive Committee may constitute such committees from time to time as shall be considered necessary for such purposes as shall be thought fit. The Chairman and Secretary of each committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and all actions and proceedings of each committee shall be reported to and be confirmed by the Executive Committee as soon as possible. Members of the Executive Committee may be members of any committee and membership of a committee shall be no bar to appointment to membership of the Executive Committee. Committees shall be subordinate to the Executive Committee and may be regulated or dissolved by the Executive Committee.

## **10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

It shall be the duty of every Officer or member of the Executive Committee or other committee who is in any way directly or indirectly interested financially or professionally in any item discussed at any Committee meeting at which he or she is present to declare such interest and he/she shall not discuss such item (except by invitation of the Chairman) or vote thereon.

## **11. EXPENSES OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPLICATION OF FUNDS**

The Executive Committee shall, out of the funds of the Society, pay all proper expenses of administration and management of the Society. After the payment of the administration and management expenses and the setting aside to reserve of such sums as may be deemed expedient, the remaining funds of the Society shall be applied by the Executive Committee in furtherance of the purposes of the Society.

## **12. INVESTMENT**

All monies at any time belonging to the Society and not required for immediate application for its purposes shall be invested by the Executive Committee in or upon such investment, securities or property as it may think fit, subject nevertheless to such authority, approval or consent whether by the Charity Commissioner or the Secretary of State for Education and Science as may for the time being be required by law or by the special trusts affecting any property in the hands of the Executive Committee.

## **13. TRUSTEES**

Any freehold and leasehold property acquired by the Society shall, and if the Executive Committee so directs, any other property belonging to the Society may be vested in trustees who shall deal with such property as the Executive Committee may from time to time direct. Any trustees shall be at least three in number or a trust corporation.

The power of appointment of new trustees shall be vested in the Executive Committee. A trustee need not be a member of the Society but no person whose membership lapses by virtue of paragraph 3 hereof shall thereafter be qualified to act as a trustee unless and until reappointed as such by the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary shall from time to time notify the trustees in writing of any amendment hereto and the trustees shall not be bound by any such amendments in their duties as trustees unless such notice has been given. The Society shall be bound to indemnify the trustees in their duties (including the proper charge of a trustee being a trust corporation) and liability under such indemnity shall be a proper administrative expense.

## **14. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting of the Society, provided that 14 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members, and provided that nothing herein-contained shall authorise any amendment the effect of which would be to cause the Society at any time to cease to be a charity in law.

## **15. NOTICES**

Any notice required to be given by these Rules shall be deemed to be duly given if left at or sent by prepaid post addressed to the address of that member last notified to the Secretary.



## **16. WINDING UP**

The Society may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Society confirmed by a simple majority of members voting at a further Special General Meeting held not less than 14 days after the previous meeting. If a motion for the dissolution of the Society is to be proposed at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting, this motion shall be referred to specifically when notice of the Meeting is given. In the event of the dissolution of the Society, the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Meeting of the Society at which the decision to dissolve the Society is confirmed. On dissolution, the minute books and other records of the Society shall be deposited with the East Sussex County Council Record Office.

*(As amended at the Special General Meeting held on Thursday 28 February 2019)*

## NOTES

## DIARY DATES FOR 2019

Friday 17 May, 11.15am

Annual General Meeting  
The Mermaid Inn, Tudor Room

*to be followed at 12.30 by*

Society Annual Luncheon

Sunday 30 June, 2.30 - 5pm

Annual Garden Party  
Little Orchard House  
3 West Street  
Rye TN31 7ES

Late September visit

Bloomsbury Group Theme  
Charleston House and around

Friday 6 December, 6 - 8pm  
(tbc)

Christmas Celebration  
Rye Town Hall

### **The Purposes of the Society**

The Society was founded in 1972 and under the Constitution, which it later adopted, is concerned with the area comprising Rye Town, Playden, Rye Foreign, East Guldeford and the Rye Harbour area of the Civil Parishes of Icklesham and Camber.

The principal objects of the Society within that area are: to stimulate public interest in the area, to promote high standards of planning and architecture, and to secure the preservation, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest.

In the course of promoting its work the Society has secured registration as a charity. It is a member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages and the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

Registered Charity No 283888