



Greetings from the Chairman

I am very pleased that I was elected to be the new Chairman of the Rye Conservation Society at the crowded AGM on 27 April. I am also sorry that some members were unhappy about the nature of the meeting and the decision reached.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to apologise again for the late notification of John Griffiths' decision to stand down, due in part to the Committee's efforts to get him to change his mind. The arrangements for the election were communicated to both candidates and accepted by us both. This included a vote by a show of hands as set out in the Constitution. On the day, at the request of members, it was agreed to adopt a secret ballot.

In mitigation I would say that this was the first time that the Society had held a contested election and that clearly our constitution needs to be reviewed to take account of similar contests taking place in future. The Committee is to set up a sub group to carry out a review of the constitution and will be inviting interested people from outside the Committee to assist in this process.

The review will include, but not be limited to, a study of alternative voting methods, the timing of meetings, makeup of the Executive Committee and membership procedures. The intention is that recommended changes to the constitution will be put to a vote at a specially convened EGM in the autumn.

On a brighter note the number of members has shown a healthy increase and I hope that we shall continue to attract more members with an interest in conservation from all parts of Rye and the surrounding area. By attracting more members we can have more influence on Rother planners and other legislative groups.

We also had a successful enjoyable lunch at the Mermaid following the AGM where the outgoing Chairman John Griffiths was presented with a loud gong, which might have been useful at the earlier meeting. Our retiring Legal Adviser, Nicola Frith was presented with a bunch of flowers as a well deserved token of appreciation for her long service for the Society.

In this Newsletter you will find information about the new General Data Protection Regulations and the RCS Privacy Statement. We are having a Summer Garden Party on 8th July in the lovely garden at 3 West Street where we hope to invite a few local musicians. If any member can assist with the party, please get in touch with Andy Stuart on 01797223831 or email ryeconservation@gmail.com.

I have been delighted that, after discussions with Hush Heath Estates, the new owners of the Ship Inn, there is a new sign befitting of the building which has replaced the very badly worn old one. It depicts a large sailing schooner, the Madeira Pett, locally built in Rye in 1850. Even better they agreed that Hush

Heath would pay for the work which we commissioned. This could be an early contender for an Award from the Society.

I have written to Barclays Bank to commend them for improving the look of the High Street Bank where the woodwork was badly rotted. We had previously complained to them about the state of the building. I also asked for some reassurance as to the future of the branch since the news that both Nat West and Lloyds are closing leaving Rye with only two of the five banks still remaining is obviously of concern to local traders and others who rely on personal banking.

David Bookless

General Data Protection Regulation

The General Data Protection Regulations come into effect 23rd May 2018. These regulations make significant changes to the current Data Protection Act and how organisations keep data records of members. Although as a voluntary membership organisation we are covered by “legitimate interest” to enable RCS to fulfil its contractual obligations (providing information to members about events and activities of the Society) we still need to have and publish a privacy policy as below:

RCS will collect personal information that may include name, title, postal address, e-mail address, telephone number, Gift Aid status (if applicable), Direct Debit bank details (if applicable), willingness to offer expertise to the society (if applicable) and your contact preferences. We will use this information to inform you of events and any other information relevant to your membership of the society deemed necessary to fulfil our contractual obligations to you. Your data will never be sold or passed onto any third party for any other purpose. There will be no unauthorised access, no improper use or disclosure and no unauthorised modification of the data which RCS holds. The privacy policy will be kept under review annually to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate.

Financial and legal information is kept for the required length of time. Digital data is deleted as necessary by the membership secretary.

This policy will be communicated via the Newsletter and website including an opt out option.

Society to make financial contribution to the Landgate

In March of this year Rother District Council agreed at its Cabinet Meeting to ‘carry out urgent works to the Landgate Rye up to £74,000, to be met from the Repairs and Renewals Earmarked Reserves and to include a contribution of at least £7,000 from local stakeholders including Rye Town Council and continue negotiations with local stakeholders to secure a long-term solution’ as it accepted that it has a duty to look after its heritage assets. Rye Town Council has agreed to underwrite the contribution of £7,000 and the Rye Fund has recently agreed to find £3,000 towards this figure.

At the last Executive Meeting, it was agreed that the Society would guarantee a further £1,000 towards the overall figure that Rye will need to find. This will come from its financial reserves, which have been boosted by a recent bequest from a previous Chairman, the late Paul Blomfield. As part of the repair works, the Society will look to ensure that a separate electrical supply will be maintained to the clock and to the external floodlights together with safe access to the clock. This is to allow for separate projects to repair

and maintain the clock as well as to reintroduce the floodlighting, to be taken forward without additional future cost.

Planning Matters

BP Filling Station, Udimore Road

The Society has written again stating its opposition to the revised scheme, primarily on the grounds of damage to the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the setting of Rye as well as the effect of the proposals on the amenity of the adjoining properties. Our objections are supported by both the High Weald AONB Unit and the Campaign to Protect Rural England as well as the East Sussex Landscape officer. Sadly ESCC Highways still maintain that the development will not have a deleterious effect on the traffic in Udimore Road!

Former Thomas Peacocke site

This application for 72 dwellings has been granted an extension of time until June 2018. Highways England has accepted the proposed road access but this has yet to be accepted by either East Sussex Highways or Network Rail. The latest traffic information does not appear to address the deficiency in the parking provision either. The most crucial factor in the overall design is the effect of the future flood levels as residential developments have to cope with a 1 in 200 year flood that overcomes the flood defences. The Environment Agency has recently remodelled the Romney Marsh flood plain and the effect of this revision on the design criteria for this site is still awaited. To date, all residential projects in this area such as the withdrawn Tilling Green scheme have required all habitable accommodation to be at first floor and above. If this proved to be the case at the Thomas Peacocke site, it would require the whole scheme to be reconsidered.

Gibbets Marsh Supermarket

This policy in the Pre-submission Rye Neighbourhood Plan has caused great concern amongst residents in the Gibbets Marsh area. The need for additional shopping floorspace has arisen because of a policy in the Rother Core Strategy 2014. This policy was based upon a Retail Floorspace Report and assessment carried out in 2009 and updated in 2013. In 2013 the schemes for Sainsbury or Tesco were still live and this appeared to substantiate the proposed increase. With their withdrawal, additional provision in Hastings and Hawkhurst and a massive change in retail trends, the need for additional shopping floorspace on the scale envisaged in the Core Strategy is highly questionable. It is understood that Rother accepts that, given the current retail situation, an allocation such as Gibbets Marsh may well unnecessarily blight land. It is likely that this policy in the Pre-submission will be reconsidered and withdrawn, which is in line with our comments made as part of the recent consultation.

Rye Neighbourhood Plan

Following the Regulation 14 Consultation, it is understood that the RNP Steering Group will publish all of the comments which the Society welcomes. The full text of the Society's comments can be seen on the RCS website. Before the formal submission of the Plan to Rother and its second Regulation 16 consultation, the requirements of Regulation 15 have to be met. These include the provision of a consultation statement. This will give details of those persons and bodies consulted, how they were consulted and a summary of the issues and concerns raised. It will describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Plan.

Rye Conservation Society's
ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY
SUNDAY 8 JULY 2018
2.30 - 5.00 pm

Little Orchard House, 3 West Street, Rye TN31 7ES
A superb garden and tower giving unusual views over Rye

All welcome

Pay at the door, admission includes cream tea

We are looking forward to seeing all our existing members in our first gathering since the recent AGM and Annual Lunch, and also welcoming new members of the Society. Plus, of course, we will be delighted to see non-members, so why not bring along friends or family to enjoy a secret garden of Rye, a chance to view the 18th century 'Smugglers' Tower and hopefully to listen to some gentle live music from local performers.

Admission £4.00 for members, £5 for non-members.

Access: please note that there are some half a dozen steps up to the entrance door and a couple of steps into the garden. Please take care.

Rye Conservation Society to Sponsor Arts Festival Talk

During the Rye Arts Festival the Society is sponsoring a talk by Alastair Fairley on his book "The De La Warr Pavilion: The Modernist Masterpiece".

The book traces the history from the design competition and construction through to post war decline and recent restoration.

Communication

At present our communication with the membership is by mailings such as this Newsletter. Other organisations such as Rye Museum make much more use of email, which would necessitate a revamp of our systems, but in the long run would save us a lot of printing and postage costs. If in the future you are happy for us to email you the Newsletter and other Society notices please opt in by sending an email to ryeconservation@gmail.com. The Newsletters and other Rye Conservation Society information can be downloaded off our web site.

If for any reason you wish to unsubscribe from these Newsletters, please email or write to the RCS address below:

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