

Newsletter

October 2018

No 62

Greetings from the Chairman

I hope that members of the Rye Conservation Society have enjoyed a good summer; certainly the weather has been excellent in this part of the world and encouraged a large number of visitors to our town. We had a warm sunny day for our Annual Garden Party in Nikki and Andy Stuarts lovely hidden garden with almost 100 attendees including new members and tourists to the town who all enjoyed conversation, tea, cream scones and 'Pymms'.

In August Rye welcomed the growing Jazz Festival with several top name acts in the Church and free concerts around the town. The Harvey's beer tent did good trade and appropriately took the form of a canvas Sussex flint house. The Rye Arts Festival seems to have been a big success with a wide range of talks, performances and films to suit all tastes. At the Rye Museum there is currently a cast of the original Rosetta Stone on loan from the British Museum which is well worth a visit. So with the Wild Boar Festival already being publicised there is plenty of activity in our small town even before Rye Fawkes and Christmas.

If there is anyone out there who would like to play an active role in the Society then we are looking urgently for two members to join the committee, we have a vacancy for Secretary and also for an events/trips organiser. The existing committee would help and advise anyone interested in either of these posts. The events post might interest someone who would like to get involved with other civic societies to organise trips and help organise our social activities.

In this Newsletter there is information on forthcoming events including an informal visit to Pevensey on 24th October and notice of our Christmas Party. We are asking for nominations for Conservation Society Awards and there has been some real progress on the Landgate although no works have started yet and we are aware that patience is wearing a bit thin. However work is expected to start this month.

I would remind members that our web site is now fully up and running. I would be happy to receive any feedback on the content. You can access details of local planning applications and our comments on the site at www.ryeconservationsociety.org

I would like to thank the Mermaid Inn who have let us use their Boardroom for our Executive Committee meetings.

Finally our best wishes to John Griffiths for a speedy recovery after his recent operation.

David Bookless

Visit to Pevensey Wednesday October 24

The Society is organising a visit to Pevensey in October. Although Pevensey is nearby and can be visited directly by train we think that many Rye people will not have been there. It was the original landing place in 1066 of William the Conqueror and the Normans who built Pevensey Castle on the original site of a Roman fort. In addition there is an interesting local museum and a fine large parish Church reflecting its prosperity in the 14th and 15th centuries. The proposed details of the visit are as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Train from Rye: | 9.48 |
| Arrive Pevensey & Westham | 10.30 |
| Visit Castle | 10.45 – 12.15 |
| Lunch in Priory Court Hotel | 12.30 |
| Visit Pevensey Court House Museum | 14.00 |
| | (www.pevenseycourthouse.co.uk) |
| Visit 14c St Nicholas Church | 15.00 |
| Afternoon tea or drinks | 16.00 |
| Train back to Rye | 17.02 |
| Arrive in Rye | 17.48 |

The Castle is about fifteen minutes stroll from the station through the ancient village of Westham with a number of interesting old timbered houses. Being a ruined castle there are steps and other obstacles that people should be aware of especially if you want to

visit the dungeon and sensible shoes are recommended. The Castle is owned and maintained by English Heritage and costs around £7.00 to visit but is free for EH members.

If you would like to lunch at the well regarded Priory Court Hotel then please let us know so a confirmed booking can be made. It is a half timbered Tudor building just outside the Castle walls. Cost of lunch would be about £20 per person.

If there are more than 20 participants we might split up for the afternoon visits to the Church and Museum, as the latter is quite small. The grade 1 listed St Nicholas Church has recently been restored with assistance from the Heritage Lottery. The Museum is only a few yards from the Church and as its name suggests is housed in the old Court House and Gaol. It was also the old Town Hall and is Grade 11 listed. This visit will be conducted by the curator.

Travel cost will be £7.75 return for the train with railcard. Admittance to the museum and church is free but donations would be appreciated. The visit is intended to be flexible so that you can opt out of all or part of the afternoon if you wish and get an earlier train (which are hourly) to Rye. There is parking at the Castle (£2) if you prefer to drive.

Please write or phone David Bookless (01797224650) or e.mail Ryeconservation@gmail.com if you would like to come along, **by Friday 19 October please.**

Landgate – Latest Update

Following a constructive meeting at Rye Town Hall with representatives from Rother, Rye Town Council, Rye Conservation Society and Friends of the Landgate the following Press Release was issued.

Repair work on the way at historic Rye landmark

“An iconic ancient structure dating back to the 1300s is to undergo repairs to preserve its future.

The Landgate, in Rye, will also receive a thorough interior clean of both towers to remove pigeon droppings and other debris, while new pigeon netting will be installed on all openings to deter the feathered intruders.

The repair work will see the clock housing repaired, vegetation removed, an old wooden flagpole removed and the tops of all walls checked, weathered to

protect against the elements and secured where necessary.

The project is being funded by Rother District Council with contributions from Rye Town Council, The Rye Fund and Rye Conservation Society.

Malcolm Johnston, executive director at Rother District Council, said: “The Landgate is an iconic structure and it’s vital that we carry out these repairs. The work we’re carrying out will ensure the arch remains safe for residents and visitors, protect the structure of the building and preserve it for the future.

We’re grateful to the various groups that have contributed towards this project and this is a good example of partners working together for the benefit of the community.”

The district council is in the process of appointing a contractor, with work expected to begin in October and to take around four weeks to complete, dependent on the weather.

It’s expected that all high-level work will be carried out by steeplejack and no scaffolding will be required, meaning disruption will be kept to a minimum.

The work will create a safe access to allow a flag to be flown where appropriate and for potential repair of the clock, for which additional funding would be required.”

The Conservation Society intends to launch a financial appeal for the clock repairs once an estimate of the money required has been carried out by an appointed expert. It seems that all involved are now coming to the long held view of the Conservation Society that the Landgate should be maintained as a stable ruin. We are investigating the possibility of a permanent roof structure which we believe essential to prevent water and pigeon damage and will continue to support the future maintenance of the Landgate.

Planning Issues

BP Filling Station

The appeal against refusal by Rother of BP’s application is currently underway. The Society wrote to the Inspector reinforcing its objection to the application and supporting again the grounds for Rother’s decision to refuse permission.

Bridge Point Studios

The Society attended, as did many members, the exhibition put on by Martello Developments of the outline proposals for the Bridge Point Studios. The Society supports this exciting scheme and looks forward to commenting on the full application, which is expected before Christmas. One issue that has been raised is that of parking as the proposals include a performance space that could attract a large audience but similar fears were raised when the Kino was proposed and these have not been realised.

Parking in Rye

The recent application for the refurbishment of the old nightclub at 48 Ferry Road, to which the Society has objected on the grounds of design, loss of privacy of adjoining owners and parking, has highlighted the issue of the provision of parking space in new residential developments in the centre of Rye.

In the last two years 4 schemes have been accepted by East Sussex Highways in parking terms. These are Brewery Yard, The Kettle of Fish, 17-19 Tower Street and 48 Ferry Road. They will provide an additional 22 dwellings, primarily 2 bed flats, but with only 12 on-site parking spaces. East Sussex believe that any additional parking requirement will be found by on-street parking or in the paid for public car parks.

The Society believes that this is unacceptable and places an unacceptable burden on the existing parking and on local residents and we have taken the matter up with East Sussex Highways and have made our Rother Councillors aware of the situation and our concerns. If the Policy T2 in the Rye Neighbourhood Plan V11 is adopted then a total of 44 spaces would be required plus additional spaces for visitors. The Society believes that at the very least the parking requirement resulting from the imposition of the East Sussex Parking Demand Model should be provided, allocated for all proposed dwellings.

Rye Neighbourhood Plan

A revised version V11 of the plan has been issued following the Regulation 14 Consultation and taking into account the comments made following the consultation.

The revised version is a much more concise document which the Society welcomes. We have made a small number of comments mostly factual.

The proposed timescale for the Regulation 16 consultation, the independent examination and, subject to the examiner's approval, the referendum, is set out on the Rye Neighbourhood Plan website at

www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk

Lamp Posts

During September East Sussex County Council, the body responsible for the roads in our area, repainted the lamp posts which they were very much in need of. So far so good, but unfortunately the contractors did not notice that many of the lamp posts had small Rye emblems and gold bands. These were overcoated with glossy black paint. Rye Town Councillors are considering whether the crests can be repainted as before and are looking at options. At our last meeting the RCS Committee agreed to offer to contribute to the cost perhaps by purchasing the paint as it is small things like this that help to keep Rye a special place.

Society Constitution

The committee with help from interested members has been considering some changes to the constitution in light of problems at the last AGM. It is hoped to bring forward proposals to the membership at a special meeting later this year. It is not thought that there will be major changes but we do need to define the arrangements for elections. At present we are convinced that in future, elections should be by secret ballot and reserved to eligible members at the time of calling of the AGM. We are still considering whether officers should be elected for three year terms and whether the committee should be elected before the officers so that the Committee would then elect a Chairman as is the case with other local organisations. Prior to the special meeting there will be a paper issued outlining the options.

Conservation Society Awards

Each year the Society likes to make a number of Awards for buildings or works which have improved the appearance of Rye and its surroundings.

We are therefore inviting nominations for the 2018 Rye Conservation Society Awards.

Proposals will be welcome for the following:

- **A new building of architectural merit**
- **An alteration or refurbishment of an existing building**
- **The re-use of an historic building for a new purpose**
- **A good example of sensitive redecoration and use of colour**
- **Repair using and demonstrating craft skills.**

Suggestions need to be received by **Wednesday 31 October 2018**.

They should be sent, preferably by email, to the Chairman: David Bookless ryeconservation@gmail.com (by post to 3 Faraday House, The Mint, Rye TN31 7EW). The Executive Committee will consider the entries and Awards will be presented at our Christmas Party (see below)

Rye Conservation Society Christmas Party

The Society Christmas Party which we are told marks the true start of Christmas in Rye will be on **Friday 7 December at 6pm in Rye Town Hall**. All members are invited to attend and we will be inviting the Rye Mayor, local councillors and other dignitaries. The Rye Conservation Society annual awards will be presented during the party. Wine and canapés will be available.

Rye Conservation Society Christmas Party
Rye Town Hall
Friday December 7 2018
6.00 – 8.00pm
All welcome
Members £6.00 Non Members £8.00
Pay at door

Building Problems

A wander around Rye the other day highlighted that a number of buildings seem to be in serious disrepair. Despite rising house prices some owners may be financially struggling to keep up with the essential maintenance of old buildings.

One example is the Rye Club in Market Road which has recently lost part of its iron guttering which fortunately did not fall on a passerby. We have brought this example to the attention of Rother as there is a hazard involved. Where gutters are not maintained, water penetrates and loosens the fittings. Another example is at the Old Bell Inn, although here a lorry may have been to blame for structural damage.

At the corner of Mermaid and West St, the former Swan Art Gallery building while being painted has shed some large pieces of plaster exposing the wooden slats behind. This seems likely to be a complicated restoration job which we have also drawn to the attention of Rother.

The Conservation Society is building good links with Rother Planning enforcement and Conservation officers. We can report building issues and hopefully resolve them to the benefit of all.

Maintaining old buildings is expensive but essential and repairs can be difficult. There is also a shortage of builders with the requisite experience and qualification, but ultimately owners are responsible for upkeep within the planning rules.

Plaques on Buildings

The Society is considering whether or not to support plaques on buildings to record important local residents or history. They can be seen amongst other places in Cirencester where they are sponsored by the Civic Society and in Hampstead supported by the Old Heath Society. I noticed some grey ones in Faversham so we will consider further. Any Views?

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 much 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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