

Friends of Lewes



the Lewes Civic Society

Summer 2011 Newsletter

ON STREET PARKING

The Society was pleased that in the second consultation it was proposed that charges will no longer apply on bank holidays and that the hours of operation in the central area will be reduced to 9am to 5pm. However other concerns remain even though the Society accepts the need for a parking scheme. In its response to the consultation it noted that the



proposed extension of the scheme to further residential areas was probably brought about by there being insufficient off street parking at Police HQ, the Prison or County Offices for their employees or visitors who then use surrounding roads to park their cars. The Society reiterated its view that a holistic approach to parking in the town should be taken and more off street parking provided in the town centre. Better publicity of places to park should be available for those unfamiliar with the

town such as those attending the Crown Court, auction houses or Southover Grange. We also regretted that the enforcement policy was not considered in this consultation and again made the point that more flexibility was needed over enforcement whilst at the same time making it more rigid in places where illegal parking causes obstruction. The need for the parking scheme to make allowance for regular street cleaning was a further factor brought up and whilst the possibility of

residents in one zone being able to purchase a permit for an adjacent zone was welcomed we considered that such purchases should enable a resident to park in any of the other zones so that social mobility was not impaired.



ROAD & PAVEMENT SURFACES

Whilst the current programme of road surfacing is welcome the Society remains concerned that pavements are considered the poor relation. It is particularly regrettable that



in the conservation area the County Council are using black tarmac rather than paving stones when repairs are needed. In addition inappropriate materials are being used to fix cobbles in iconic streets like Castlegate and Keere Street. These are issues that the Society is taking up with the County Council but it would be helpful if other examples of either inappropriate materials or poor workmanship was drawn to our attention in order to give further support to our arguments.

OTHER ROAD ISSUES

It is understood that it is likely to be at least 2013 before any repairs be made to the bridge over the railway by the station so that heavy vehicles can use it. Similarly the possibility of there being a change of priority at the Fisher Street/West Street junction has receded in view of the cost despite such a change being of benefit to air quality in Fisher Street.

CANON O'DONNELL CENTRE

In responding to the revisions to the planning applications for this site the Society took the view that the current scheme was unsatisfactory and that pending a better scheme being put forward consent should not be given to the demolition of the existing building. In particular any proposal should recognise the very prominent location, particularly when approached from the east, and be of high quality in landscape terms as well as being in character with the surrounding area.



It was recently announced that the District Council has turned down the planning application on behalf of the National Park Authority

ST ANNE'S SCHOOL SITE

The Society has been in touch with the County Council regarding its intentions for this site as well as the adjacent County Offices site. As far as the latter is concerned the County Council have said that they have no current intention of, or financial provision for, relinquishing this site and moving

elsewhere. However they have no operational need for the St Anne's school site and intend to sell the land when market conditions improve. In the meantime they are conducting a consultation on how the land might be used on a temporary basis and the Society is currently considering its position on this. Among other uses put forward are car parking or a long term idea is for the land to become an extension to the cemetery. However these proposed uses do not represent



Society policy and members with views are invited to put them forward.

FORMER CHANDLER'S SITE, TIMBERYARD LANE

Whilst detailed drawings of what Alfred Homes are proposing for this site are not yet available the Society has taken the provisional view that housing, where the habitable rooms are above the likely flood level, is an acceptable use of the land. In particular development would complete the river wall on the east side and provide a riverside walkway. Providing that the existing electricity sub-station at the end of Bear Lane could be moved any walkway would then provide a through route to Cliffe High Street.

STANLEY TURNER GROUND

The Society responded to the District Council's consultation over the future use of the Stanley Turner ground by recognising that it is appreciated by those who either play or support the sports taking place there.

However in view of its location any new facilities must take account of the landscape impact, be above likely flood level and be drawn up so that light pollution is reduced to the minimum. They should also make provision for the continuation of the cycle path to Kingston so that cyclists do not have to use the C7 road. As for the management of the site the Society took the view that the various clubs should form a non-exclusive partnership to which the District Council could devolve responsibility for both improving and managing the site in the future.



LANDPORT BOTTOM

In responding to this District Council consultation the Society considered that the impact of legitimate recreation on flora and fauna is marginal. As for any health and safety issues that arise from conflicts of use it felt that these are minimal because of the lack of recorded incidents in the past. However the opportunity was taken to remind the District Council that a small car park should be constructed close to the Nevill Road entrance so as to provide better access and avoid cars being parked in the adjoining estate. In addition better information boards should be provided which encapsulated the part that the site played in the Battle of Lewes.

RAILWAY TREES

Following the felling of some trees in the railway property alongside Southover Road the Society contacted Network Rail. Their policy is only to remove trees that are dead, diseased or dangerous although they do prune trees which might cause a public nuisance.

HISTORICAL PLAQUES

The Society has recently submitted a further list of sites to the Town Council where plaques might be erected to inform passers by of the historical significance of the site. The Town Council have agreed the Society's recommendations and will be arranging to order and then fix the plaques on the relevant buildings.

PEOPLE

The Society has been pleased to welcome Mike Stepney as its Treasurer. He has lived in or near Lewes all his life and occupied a senior financial position in a Health Trust prior to retirement. It also welcomes Mike Turner, the previous Mayor of Lewes, and Neil Merchant as co-opted members to its Executive Committee, and Barbara Merchant as its web master.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN LEWES, SEPTEMBER 8-11

This year, volunteers from Friends of Lewes, and staff from Lewes District Council have been working together to plan a programme in the town to celebrate Heritage Open Days 2011, from Thursday 8th September, to Sunday 11th September : the annual event is sponsored nationally by English Heritage, and , locally, for this year, by the Rotary Club of Lewes Barbican.

The fourteen buildings and sites to be open vary from churches and shops, to public institutions and private accommodation, and include the Westgate Chapel, Lewes House and the new Linklater Pavilion. Entry to all venues is free, and many have special tours and talks, to reflect the richness of the town's culture over the centuries.

Most of the events will be on the Saturday and Sunday, so check dates and times by accessing www.heritageopendays.org.uk , or by picking up a leaflet from the Tourist Information Centre: both will be available from the third week in August. You will also be able to view the buildings on Lewes District Council's *What's On* website (www.lewes.gov.uk/events) where you will be able to download a pdf of the leaflet.

If you have any ideas for properties that we can add in the future , or would like to help in the organisation, or provide sponsorship for next year , then please contact either Judith Davies (01273 477447 jdavies@gables2.fsnet.co.uk) or David Hutchinson (01273 475527 davidhutchinson@urban-research.org.uk)

APPEAL FOR HELP

The Society has been offered a free supplement in the September issue of Lewes News. This is a perfect way to advertise our aims and successes. In 2008 we gained several new members in this way and hope to do so again. Part of the deal with Lewes News is that we must provide at least 6 people to help with collating and folding on Saturday 10th September from 9am at Christ

Church Hall, Fitzjohns Road. If you are able to help us meet this commitment please let Marietta van Dyck know on 474521 for what period you could help.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail, and also be informed of meetings and local events, please e-mail mscotgrove@aol.com with your details.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Lecture Room, Town Hall, Lewes at 7.45pm.

The Society's Autumn General Meeting will be held on Thursday 29 September 2011 (Members only)

Friday October 7th, Millions like us, Women's lives in war and peace 1939-1945

Thursday 10 November – Lewes Priory: Past, Present & Future. A presentation by the Lewes Priory Trust about the creation of the Priory Park and their plans for its future.

Full details of all of these events are at the end of this newsletter.

CONTACTING THE SOCIETY

Please address mail to the Town Hall, High Street, Lewes BN7 2QS; e-mails to enquiries@friends-of-lewes.org.uk or telephone the Secretary (Marcus Taylor) on 473098. Thanks are extended to those members who have sent views to the Society on recent consultations.

