



# NEWSLETTER

## AUTUMN 2015

### Planning Policy

Given the number of different consultations taking place on planning policy at the present time it is understandable that members may be confused as to how they all relate to each other.

1. The South Downs Local Plan preferred options document will, once adopted, replace the local plans previously in force in each of the National Park's local authority areas, in the case of Lewes this being the District Council. This park-wide Local Plan has a number of stages to go through and the estimated date for its adoption is June 2017. The comments the Society made on the consultation which closed in October are available on our website.

2. In the meantime the National Park Authority and the District Council have been working on a Joint Core Strategy which will replace the District Council's Local Plan and apply, when adopted, across the whole of Lewes District. But

whilst this Strategy will itself be replaced by the National Park's Local Plan in those parts of Lewes District in the National Park when that is adopted, it is important that the policies in it are ones we accept, even if it is only in force for a short time. The present position on this Strategy, which is at a more advanced stage than the National Park's Local Plan, is that the Inspector conducting an Examination in Public will be reopening the hearing in December to consider comments made about the possibility he put forward after the earlier hearing that farmland at Old Malling Farm should be zoned for the building of 200 houses. The Society has objected to this, details being on our website, and plans to put its point of view forward in the discussion at the reopened examination in public in December.

3. The third aspect of planning policy under current consideration is the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the town. Such a plan enables local communities to put forward their ideas on such issues as new housing sites but it

### FRIENDS OF LEWES

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PRESIDENT: Baroness Kay Andrews of Southover OBE Registered Charity No. 258756

must be consistent with the policies contained in the National Park's draft Local Plan. The Society is playing a part in the discussions and public consultations about the Neighbourhood Plan which when drafted has to gain acceptance by at least 50% of those who vote in a referendum to be held in the town, and be approved by the National Park Authority and a Planning Inspector. It is really important that Lewes residents familiarise themselves with this process and on-going proposals and do not leave decisions to a handful of activists: check out [www.lewes4all.uk](http://www.lewes4all.uk) As this issue moves forward the Society will endeavour to publicise the views it expresses on our website.

### **North Street Quarter**

Amendments to the planning application that Santon and the District Council had made earlier in the year were submitted in October and have been available for the public to comment on. The Society considered these amendments met many of its earlier concerns and have suggested that these amended plans should be approved. The National Park Authority has announced that the application is to be determined by their Planning Committee on Thursday 10 December, with the meeting taking place at County Hall, Lewes starting at 10am. Whilst members of the public can attend they need to apply to the National Park Authority for tickets if they wish to do so. The Society is aware that a possible

alternative scheme is being promoted by Lewes Phoenix Rising and if a planning application is made for this it will also be considered on its merits. However the fact that the land between Phoenix Causeway and North Street, which is the subject of the detailed application, is owned by Santon means that their agreement would be necessary before any alternative scheme could be progressed, assuming that it received planning permission.

### **South Downs Road**

The Society was disappointed that the planning application for this site was approved by a majority at the National Park Authority's Planning Committee, as not all the Society's concerns had been met. Whilst we were not opposed to the concept of building houses on this site our concerns related to some design aspects and the felling of the poplar avenue along Blake's Walk.



Following the intervention of local councillors and other bodies it seems likely that the developer is prepared to make changes to the plans and construction techniques to ensure their survival.

## **District Council sites**

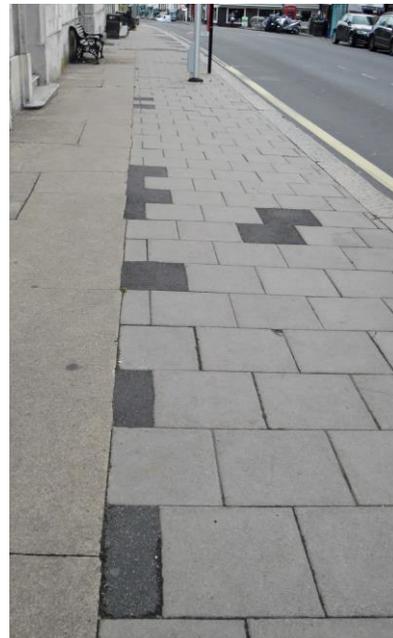
Within Lewes the sites where the District Council want to provide housing for purchase have been reduced to St Mary's Social Centre, Western Road toilets, Saxonbury, Ham Lane and ex-LDC offices at 4 Fisher Street . Plans are at an early stage and the District Council will be proceeding with sites along the coast first. Prior to making any further moves on the Lewes sites they intend giving the public opportunities to comment in the New Year. They will then proceed with making a planning application to the National Park Authority. In the meantime they have said that there will be discussions with St Mary's Social Centre about the plans for that site, which would involve an enhanced community facility being included. They have yet to discuss with the County Council locations to which the household amenity facility in Ham Lane could be relocated.

## **Chandler's Wharf**

The terrace of houses on this site is nearly complete and the Society is anxious to ensure that a riverside walkway open to the public will be provided once the builders have finished, since that was a planning condition for the development. The possibility of this walkway extending through land current fenced off by an electricity sub-station will be pursued, so that a riverside walkway extends all the way from Timberyard Lane to Cliffe Bridge.

## **Pavements**

Please do report pavement problems such as raised pavers or the use of black top in the conservation area to the County Council with a copy to Marcus Taylor. It is only through such complaints being made that action is taken, although as far as the black top used outside the Crown Court is concerned the County Council will not currently replace pavers there since they will soon be cracked by heavy delivery lorries parking on them.



## **Trees**

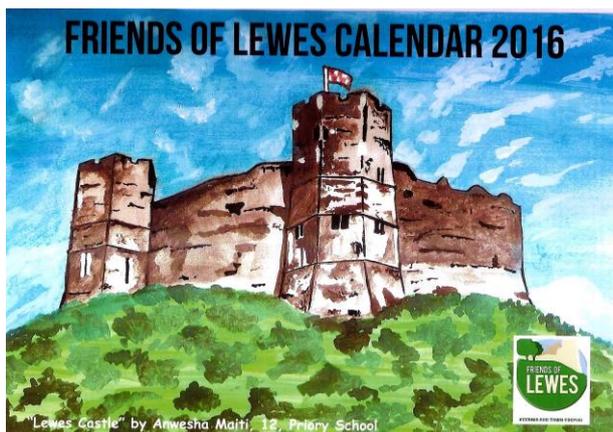
Following a request by local residents it is intended to plant three trees in the small green in the Nevill Estate, where North, South and Middle Ways meet. Now that the burger van has left the verge of the Malling Industrial estate a fifth tree will be planted there to complete the row. Other planting is in the planning stages.

## Awards

The Society has in mind making awards to new, extended or refurbished buildings that it considers enhance the built environment in the town in the autumn of 2016. To start the process members are invited to submit details of any such scheme which they would like considered to Marcus Taylor: [enquiries@friends-of-lewes.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@friends-of-lewes.org.uk) or 01273 473098.

## Children's competition

There were almost 50 entries for the children's art competition "My Special Place in Lewes" held in the summer. The winners were presented with prizes and certificates by a Deputy Lieutenant for the county at the FoL Autumn Meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Thirteen of these designs feature in a 2015 calendar, available now from the Tourist Information Centre or via the Society's website for only £7.



Friends of Lewes Christmas cards are available, as last year: £3 for a pack of 5 or 75p each, at any FoL event and via our website.

## Lewes in Storm and Flood:

The talk on January 20<sup>th</sup> will have a different format and be in a different location. In anticipation of a larger audience, this will be held in Southover Church at the usual time of 7.45pm. It will feature a large number of speakers sharing their untold stories about the impact of the elements on our town in living memory. If you would like to be a contributor to this more interactive evening, do contact Marcus Taylor.

The last of the winter talks is on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, in the Lecture Room of the Town Hall, when Kevin Gordon will give us a Quirky History of Lewes.

The AGM is on Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> March.

**War Memorials in Lewes:** Two members of the Society attended a training day, run by Civic Voice, on the assessment of the condition of War Memorials. This is part of centenary projects at both national and county level. A list is being prepared of the war memorials of all types in the town. Anyone who would like to play an active part in this exercise and receive the training, please contact Marcus Taylor.

## LEWES HISTORY GROUP MEETINGS

Monday 11 January	John Bleach	Lewes in Art
Monday 8 February	Ian Everest	Life on a Sussex Farm in the 1950s
Monday 14 March	Greg Chuter	Death, Burial & Farming on a South Downs Hillside