



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER, 2018

Neighbourhood Plan

The Society's comments in response to the formal consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan were largely positive in that the plan seems well made and in line with relevant legislation, although we would like to see more emphasis given to the conservation areas. The National Park Authority has also raised the latter point in their comments, which are being submitted with all others that have been made to an Inspector for consideration. If this is positive, and providing that not too many amendments are required to the plan, it will then be put to a referendum of the people of Lewes where a majority of those voting will be required for it to proceed.

North Street Quarter

Although it has taken longer than expected the new building for Gosnells on Malling Brooks has almost been completed and they then have 3 months to move into it from their current premises in the North Street Quarter. By that time it is anticipated that the National Park Authority will have been satisfied that all the pre-commencement planning conditions have been met. In the meantime a tender competition will be taking place to appoint a main contractor to deliver Phase 1 of the project, including the relevant demolition, with the possibility that the contract can be extended to cover Phases 2 and 3.

Separately consent has been given to the demolition of 20 -25 North Street so that a temporary car park can be provided there whilst other car parks affected by the development of the Blue Light centre to be built on the Springman House site are closed. This temporary car park will itself close once the new car park underneath Phase I of the development is completed.

Waitrose & Aldi

Both these retail stores have in mind developments to increase the size of their shops on their existing sites. Aldi intend to almost double the number of car parking spaces but the Society has suggested that the entrance to it from Brooks Road needs improving at the same time. Waitrose are still considering options for their site.

Former racecourse developments

Over the years a number of developments have taken place at the former racecourse, including the provision of a new track to the east of the existing bridleway to Spital Road. To regularise the position the National Park Authority considered 5 planning applications in June and, after hearing the Society's objections, refused them all apart from the one related to retention of the existing cross. The reasons for refusal were the effects on the landscape, the intensification of operations and developing beyond the existing buildings there. The applicants may appeal against these planning decisions but it is not possible for them to appeal against the associated decision of the County Council not to agree to the bridleway mentioned previously being diverted to the new track.

Mount Place wall

After research by Graham Mayhew among others, the County Council has accepted that as their predecessors, the Quarter Sessions, ordered the construction of this wall when Mount Pleasant was lowered in the nineteenth century, it is now their responsibility. We await hearing from them whether improvements, including to the appearance of the wall, need to be made.

The Garden of Peace

Revised plans have been drawn up to reduce the overall cost to no more than £85k. The District Council, which owns the land, has agreed to manage the work involved once the Society has secured the relevant consents and finance. The Town Council has increased the amount reserved for the project to over £30k and together with the possibility of a payment from s.106 money made by Quora for the Premier Inn development and £ 20k from the Society it is hoped that the need for significant external funding may be unnecessary.

Trees

Our Trees Committee's plans to add two more trees to the row of three elms on St. Anne's Hill, are becoming more achievable through an award of £2,000 from the Tesco *Bags of Help* grant scheme. Outline surveys suggest that the current street furniture will prevent it from replacing trees to match the original number of seven trees. Once more detailed surveys have been completed it will be able to pinpoint possible planting sites and then consult with the nearby residents. It hopes to be able to plant the trees over next winter.

Following further discussions of the proposal to plant "Gateway" trees, to welcome residents and visitors to Lewes, the Committee is now exploring the areas where the roads meet the Lewes Borough boundary to identify good sites to plant landmark trees such as Lime.



These trees can grow to a lovely shape, as shown in this photograph of the Lime at the junction of De Montfort Road and Bradford Road, which was planted in 1989 to replace a tree which was lost in the 1987 storm.

The Committee have consulted successfully with the residents living near to Mount Harry Stores after their request for tree planting on the grassy area outside the shops at the junction of Highdown and Mount Harry Roads. It is very pleased with the number of people offering to help either by taking delivery of the trees or by watering them during their early years. Taking their suggestions into consideration, it is planning to plant a group of three resilient trees such as Whitebeam, Field Maple and Ginkgo.

Society awards and commendations

Every two or three years the Society makes either awards or commendations to building projects which, in its opinion, have improved the town's environment by the way that they have been designed and built. Members are invited to submit details of either new buildings which have been completed or changes to an

existing building made in the past 2 years which they would like considered by the awards panel. Nominations, which will not guarantee that the building will be selected for an award or commendation, should be made to the Society by 30th September.

Town Maps for visitors



It is now some ten years since the Society's maps which feature in car parks and other places of interest in the town were last revised.

The District Council, which is responsible for promoting tourism, have agreed to finance the provision of an updated map and the Society has prepared a list of the amendments needed to achieve this. It is intended that new maps will be inserted in the existing cases before the end of the year.

Grants to outside bodies

From time to time the Society makes small grants to other organisations to assist projects which align with the Society's own objectives and provide it with some publicity for doing do. During the last quarter a donation of £150 was made to the Eco-Congregation team at the three Trinity churches, to enable them to place weather-proof notice boards in the churchyards at St John-sub-Castro, South Malling and Southover, describing the seasonal changes in wildlife and plants.



The hi-vis jackets for Litter-Free Lewes have now been printed, showing our sponsorship of this active group of volunteers.

In addition the Society is providing £15 in book tokens to pupils of St Pancras Primary School, who designed posters for Litter-Free Lewes, which will provide books about the environment.

Membership subscriptions

After 20 years' service, for which the Society extends many grateful thanks, Marietta van Dyck has retired from the post of Membership Secretary. In her place Paul Mockford has been appointed. He will contact members by e-mail where that is possible and the Executive Committee have agreed with his suggestion that annual membership subscriptions should in future all be due on 1st January. In 2019, to bring members into

line, a reduced pro-rata subscription will apply for renewals from February onwards. This will be set out in the membership renewal notice sent to members. However those paying by standing order will not be affected and there will be no increase in the annual rate of membership subscriptions.

Vacancy

The Society has not yet been successful in recruiting a new Treasurer. However it has made arrangements with 3VA to provide accountancy services, thus leaving the Society needing to find a voluntary bookkeeper who would pay in cheques etc. to the bank and arrange the issuing of cheques. If you believe that you could undertake this task, please contact the Chairman, Robert Cheesman at robert.cheesman@btinternet.com.

Heritage Open Days

The leaflet for this weekend was published in early July, and, if you haven't already obtained a copy, they are available from the tourist office, as well as at other venues around town. You can also pick up details via the Friends of Lewes web-site, as the Society organises the weekend.

About a third of this year's offer requires booking in advance because of restricted numbers to certain buildings and walks: as the booking opened mid-July, so you may be disappointed that some of those events are now full. However, there are still many interesting buildings that you can drop in to on the day, amongst them - Fitzroy House (below), Southover Grange, Lamb House, the Jireh Chapel- and the hidden gem of the Priory Chapel.



The Society would like to thank all of the sponsors and volunteers that make this annual event possible.

Friends of Lewes Talks 2018-19: all at 7.45pm

September 13 Saving Fitzroy House – Eleanor Austin Southover Church

October 24 Women's Suffrage in Lewes – Frances Stenlake Town Hall

January 17, 2019 "Lewes - looking back and looking forward" – Norman Baker Town Hall

LEWES HISTORY GROUP MEETINGS:

Monday 10 September 2018	Marcus Taylor, Judy Mackerras and John Downie	Lewes Heritage talks: Gundrada's Chapel, The Turkish Baths, Lewes Clocks
Monday 8 October 2018	Carlotta Luke	Capturing Lewes History on Camera