

**Rye Conservation Society's  
ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY  
SUNDAY 30 JUNE 2019  
2.30 - 5.00 pm**

Little Orchard House, 3 West Street, Rye TN31 7ES  
with its 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 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 enjoy cream tea! 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.*

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## **Conservation Society AGM**

The Society AGM took place in the Mermaid Inn, Tudor Room on 17 May. We had a good attendance of around 50 members, most of who stayed on for the Annual Luncheon afterwards. There were no contested elections this year and all the proposed nominees for officers and committee were accepted by the meeting (*see list below*).

The Chairman thanked committee members for their hard work during the year and wished Andrew Bamji well following his decision to stand down this year. He invited Julian Lockett to talk about the planning applications that the Society had considered during the year. (*see below*)

During a question and answer session the timing of the AGM was discussed and on a show of hands members seemed evenly divided on whether the meeting should be moved from Friday morning to an evening or weekend. Having taken views from members and the Committee, I propose to split the next AGM so that the formal AGM will be held on a Sunday afternoon, perhaps with a guest speaker as an added attraction. This would enable working people to attend and participate, which can be tricky for them at the moment. Our Annual Lunch will remain as now on a Friday as it seems to attract a very healthy turnout of members and moving it to a weekend might be difficult, given competing weekend attractions in Rye.

I would like to thank the management and staff at the Mermaid for the success of the AGM and tasty lunch. Also I thank them for providing an excellent room for our monthly committee meetings.

*David Bookless*

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At the AGM the following people were nominated to serve on the committee for the coming year:

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Chairman:              | David Bookless   |
| Vice Chair & Chairman  |  |
| Planning Committee:    | Julian Lockett*  |
| Hon. Secretary:        | Timothy Gorman   |
| Hon. Treasurer:        | Diana Hajikakou  |
| Publicity & Membership |  |
| Secretary:             | Andy Stuart  |
| Planning Liaison:      | Wayne Jones*   |
| Committee Members:     | Rae Festing*; John<br>Spencer; Michael<br>Stott*; Allan Thomson* |

\*also on Planning Committee

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**PLANNING MATTERS (An edited version of Julian's talk to the AGM).**

Following a successful campaign and appeal refusal there will not be a BP filling station and mini supermarket at the top of Udimore Road. The Conservation Society was opposed to this proposal which would have been on the edge of outstanding countryside right at the entrance to the town on a road which

already sees too much traffic for its width. BP brought in very expensive consultants to put their case but eventually lost on Appeal. The Society would not necessarily oppose such a development in another part of town preferably on the main A259 road.

We also opposed the new indoor tennis courts proposal on the Military Road on grounds of size, light pollution and parking, but in this instance Rother Council are likely to give outline approval having considered these concerns. There will then need to be a detailed application covering the design etc within the parameters such as size set by the outline consent.

The former Thomas Peacocke lower school site is now the subject of a revised application for 65 dwellings. We have objected to the scheme on a number of grounds including the total loss of the tree belt along the railway line, the density of the development and the lack of any consideration of biodiversity on the site. There is also going to be the need for a revised design as some of the flats have bedrooms at ground floor level which the Environment Agency require to be raised up at least 600mm.

The completion of this development will have to wait for the upgrade of the main sewer which Southern Water have indicated will take up to two years from start of the project. It is to be hoped that when Southern Water reinforce the sewer system they take into account the other projected housing schemes envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Between the above site and Rye College lie the playing fields which are the site of an application by the College for a full sized fully illuminated artificial football pitch surrounded by an 8m high screen fence. It is intended that it will serve both the school and the community although the case for the latter, has in our view, not been adequately made or the community consulted. We have objected to this application as it will impact on the amenity of the houses in Tillingham Avenue, on the setting of Rye when seen both from

the countryside and from the town itself, the likely effect on the local wildlife and because we feel no adequate case has yet been made for the facility or the hours of use. (8am-10pm M-F & 8am- 6pm S&S). These hours are in excess of the hours for the smaller artificial pitch the College already has. The Rye Town Council also opposed the development which has had many objections from neighbours who were in our view inadequately consulted.

Also adjacent to the Thomas Peacocke site is the warehouse at 48 Ferry Road, recently a nightclub, which has been granted consent for conversion into flats with two shops on the ground floor. Initially we objected to this proposal on grounds of design, access and limited parking provision but the applicant has now revised the scheme so as to retain the appearance of the original warehouse. Whilst we still have concerns as to the access and parking to be provided we withdrew our objection.

We believe that the Society helped to push Rother into carrying out the initial repair works to the Landgate although the direction of any additional works has yet to be considered in detail. It could be left as is, or considered as a consolidated ruin with a protective lightweight roof to keep out the rain and pigeons or somehow reclaim the building for an, as yet unspecified, commercial use. One project we hope to be engaged on, with the Town Council, would be the repair of the clock for which we would be happy to help raise funds.

Our comments on planning applications may be accessed on our web site [www.ryeconservation.org](http://www.ryeconservation.org) for members to read in full.

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### **RCS Christmas Party**

A note for your diaries and it's a while off, but the Conservation Society has booked the Rye Town Hall for its annual Christmas Party on Friday December 6, 6-8pm.

At the Christmas Party we present RCS Awards(s) to people who we think have improved the built environment in Rye. Members are encouraged to submit suggestions to the Society which have in the past ranged from pubs to houses to cobbles!

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### **Proposed Wild Life Meadow on the Salts**

The Rye Conservation Society have objected to the proposed let by Rother of the old bowling green on the Salts on a 25 year lease to the Rye Amenity CIC which proposes to create a wild life meadow on the Site.

"Whilst the initial concept may be superficially attractive we have grave concerns as to the practicality and suitability of the proposal for the following reasons.

1. Neither the Town Council nor interested bodies such as the Bowls Club, have been consulted about this project which will be a prominent feature in a highly visible part of the setting of the historic core of Rye.
2. Details of the proposed leasehold arrangements have not been made public together with any conditions relating to future use of the property and its upkeep.
3. How will there be control of weeds and seeds contaminating adjacent green open spaces?
4. How will access to the area by locals and visitors be controlled/affected?
5. An area of unmown grass meadow in the middle of a flat grass playing field will look inappropriate and unkempt.
6. Does the Rye Amenity CIC have the expertise and the day-to-day and long-term personnel with commitment to maintain such a project?

We are concerned that this disposal, albeit on a lease to a third party, sets a precedent for future sale and carving up of the Salts into separately owned plots for all sorts of activities. We believe that any change to the Salts is a matter for the whole community which in this instance has not been adequately consulted.

## Rock Channel Studios at Bridge Point

The Society has considered in some detail the application for a new multipurpose arts centre on the site of the old Bourne's Yard. The Society has recently sent a letter of support to Rother DC as follows,

"The Rye Conservation Society wish to support the application to convert the redundant warehouse into a multi-purpose arts centre. We support also the creation of new public space and a riverside walkway.

The draft Rye neighbourhood Plan supports the attractiveness of Rye as a place to visit with arts, culture and entertainment. The project will also enhance the existing attractions of Rye and help regenerate a neglected area.

We have some concerns regarding access from the A259 and note that a new road junction will be provided plus a new much needed pedestrian crossing. The existing entrance road will we understand become a fully tarmac access road through the site to Rock Channel serving housing at Rock Channel Quay. We are also concerned about parking for events and have some doubts about the use of the Gibbets marsh car park sited some way from this site. Until the parking system proposed is seen to be working a condition should be to limit performances to once a month. If performance commence at 19.00 or later there is more space at Rother off site car parks in the area.

Our support for the proposal assumes that Southern Water and the Environment Agency agree a drainage plan for both foul and surface water and this should be a condition for consent.

In conclusion we find the current application to be well-considered and imaginative that meets the aspirations of the Rye Neighbourhood Plan and of the policies contained in the Rother Core Strategy. It will be subject to conditions set by both Rother and Statuary Authorities indicated above. This seems a good investment in Rye's artistic and cultural future."

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## Parking Matters

We are concerned about Pay & Display machines to be installed as part of the introduction of Civil Parking. We currently

understand there will be 16 machines similar to those found in Eastbourne, Lewes and Hastings. To be fitted with a fetching solar power hat and located against various mainly listed buildings around the centre of Rye.

As East Sussex have permitted development rights, planning consent will not be required but the Society, with Allan Thomson as lead, hopes to liaise with East Sussex and Rother's conservation officer to reduce the practical and visual impact of their installation..

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## Conservation Society to Sponsor 2019 Rye Arts Festival

The Society is once again supporting the Rye Arts Festival by sponsoring a talk.

### Kate Bradbury - Wildlife Gardening for Everyone.

*Saturday 28 September 3-4pm Rye Methodist Church*

Kate Bradbury is passionate about organic, wildlife-friendly gardening and gardens on a small patch of land in Brighton. She is the author of *The Wildlife Gardener*, and writes for a number of publications including the Guardian. She can occasionally be heard talking about garden wildlife on Gardeners' Question Time.

The Arts Festival starts on Friday 13 September and runs to September 29 with several events to choose from on most days.

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**The Society supports and urges members to vote for the Rye Neighbourhood Plan in the local referendum on Thursday 27 June.**

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