

Rye Conservation Society



Annual Report 2023/24

RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

OFFICERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS AND TRUSTEES 2022

President (vacant)

Vice-Presidents

John Spencer
Julian Luckett

Executive Officers

David Bookless, Chairman; *drbookless@gmail.com*
Tim Gorman, Hon Secretary; *gormantimothyj@outlook.com*
Stuart Harland, Hon Treasurer; *stuart@harland.biz*
Andy Stuart, Publicity & Membership Secretary; *nikiandandy@hotmail.co.uk*

Executive Committee Members

Caroline Everett *colkins@btinternet.com*
Trevor Gooding *hainault@btinternet.com*
Jane Skynner *jane@janeskynner.com*
Scott Brotherton *balloonboyone@yahoo.com*

Honorary Consultant

Alan Dickinson Historical & Architectural advisor

Trustees:

David Bookless
Andy Stuart
Tim Gorman
Stuart Harland
Jane Skynner
Scott Brotherton
Caroline Everett
Trevor Gooding

Rye Town Councillors:

David Bookless and Andy Stuart are members of Rye Town Council

RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

**NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
to be held in the Council Chamber, Rye Town Hall Rye, at 11.00am
on Friday 17 May 2024**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 19 May 2023 (see overleaf)
3. Matters arising
4. Reports from the Chairman and Officers
5. Treasurer's Report and approval of Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023
6. Elections: Executive Officers and Committee Members. (See note 1)
7. Guest Speakers
8. Presentation of Award for Development to BBG Commercial Property Ltd.
- 9 Any Other Business (see note 2)

Notes

1. Any member who wishes to nominate another member for the Executive Committee should apply to the Hon Secretary for a nomination form, which must be returned to him at least fourteen days before the meeting.
2. Any member wishing to raise a matter under Any Other Business must notify the Hon Secretary at least fourteen days before the meeting.
3. Please bring your copy of this report with you to the AGM as spare copies may not be available.

*Timothy Gorman Hon Secretary
2 Jeake Drive
Rye
East Sussex TN31 7FH
01797 225772*

email: ryeconervation@gmail.com

Rye Conservation Society

Minutes of the AGM held in the Council Chamber at Rye Town Hall 11.15 on Friday 19th May 2023

Opening Remarks:

David Bookless (Chairman) welcomed everybody, noting that the good turnout made the meeting quorate. He welcomed the special guests, Sally-Ann Hart MP, Cllr Keith Glazier, Leader East Sussex County Council and the Rye Town Mayor Andi Rivett. He thanked the Town Hall staff for setting up the room for us.

It was noted that this is the Society's 50th AGM.

Annual Report This has been circulated. It contains the Agenda, the Minutes of previous AGM, the Chairman's report, and Annual Accounts.

The Minutes of the previous AGM were accepted as an accurate record. There were no amendments.

Chairman's Report The full report can be read in the Annual Report. It covers topical matters such as cobbles, parking, electric cars, second homes and the shortage of affordable housing.

Awards The Committee feels that the former Granary Club in Ferry Road should be nominated, and that the internal restoration of The George is to be commended.

Treasurer's Report Stuart Harland reported a small loss of £400 in 2022. He thanked the Independent Examiner David Andrews for checking the Accounts. The Treasurers Report was Proposed, seconded and carried

Membership Report Andy Stuart reported that we currently have 210 memberships, comprising approximately 300 members. We have recently lost prominent members Paddy Buxton & Rae Festing, they will both be missed.

Elections: Re-election of Officers, Committee Members, Vice Presidents, and Treasurer Stuart Harland

All nominations were accepted un-opposed. John Spencer has stepped down, and we are grateful that he is willing to stand as a Vice President of the society.

Special Guests The three guests spoke briefly. Sally-Ann Hart MP noted that the new plans for Planning Reform should not affect listed buildings.

General discussion including some critical views on parking and the state of road surfaces then took place and the Chairman brought the meeting to a close at 12 noon.

Tim Gorman
Honorary Secretary

Rye Conservation Society Fiftieth Annual Report for 2023/24

Chairman's Report *by David Bookless*

It is with pleasure that I write the Chairman's Report for the Rye Conservation Society. I am glad to say that the Society seems to be in a healthy position as it moves into its second half century. We have a full complement of Committee members listed in this report and I thank them for their efforts on behalf of the Society. We hold monthly meetings enabled by the good hospitality of the Mermaid Hotel to whom I offer my thanks and at these meetings we discuss a very wide range of issues more or less related to Conservation matters and make recommendations to Rother Council on planning applications.

Rye has a world famous conservation area centred around the Church and neighbouring streets within the town walls and maybe our prime task is to try and maintain its uniqueness for future generations.

The fact of our fiftieth anniversary causes me to reflect on how different things must have been in 1974, but at the same time in the older parts of Rye much looks the same and owners of buildings in the Conservation Area have by and large ensured that the citadel remains a wonderful place to visit attracting visitors from all over the world. In the early days the Society was called the Rye Preservation Society, but quite rightly that was changed as change has to occur even in a town like Rye. The aim must be to welcome the best of the new while retaining the things that make the town special, we will no doubt continue to discuss and argue about the impact of change. In this report we cover the rules governing conservation areas in a bit more detail.

Amongst the challenges facing Rye maybe the provision of housing is the most complex. We have not seen any large scale housing projects completed since Valley Park despite there being planning proposals for various sites around town. One recent application has been for a development on the old school site off Ferry Road which was presented to us by Plutus Developments, unfortunately we had several objections to the proposals and most importantly noted the lack of affordable housing provision for local people. A block of flats for older residents was proposed, I would much prefer that to be made available for younger people as it concerns me that Rye could become a retirement town.

Similarly there is mooted development on a site off Winchelsea Road to comprise various housing units, an older persons block and an Aldi Supermarket, the developers have engaged with the Council and others; at the time of writing discussions continue, but again I would urge that some sort of housing provision is made for younger members of our community. (See more information below).

One development which the Society has commended is the conversion of the old Granary Club at 48 Ferry Road into a block of apartments, we particularly like the exposure of the original brickwork and retention of original features of the building. I have invited the developers to collect an Award from the Society at the AGM.

One slightly unexpected problem is that we have a number of buildings in the centre in a bad state of repair; despite the cost of housing, these buildings seem to be empty and deteriorating. We liaise with Rother planners and urge them to take enforcement action if the owners are uncooperative, but there are sometimes personal issues to take into account. One factor may be the cost of repairing listed buildings, but it must make economic sense to keep old houses safe, secure and occupied.

During the year we held an excellent Garden Party albeit mostly indoors, given the weather we had and then before Christmas a very much appreciated Christmas Party at the Rye Town Hall.

I thank the members for their support and offer my hope that we can continue to build on the excellent work of the Society in the coming years. Finally I congratulate Andy Stuart, our long serving committee member and membership secretary on taking over this year as Rye Town Mayor and we all wish him well in that post.

Housing - Two New Proposed Developments

Queen Adelaide/ Ferry Road Site

During the past few months proposals for two new housing developments have come to light. The land behind the Queen Adelaide Pub has been designated for housing for at least ten years since proposals for a supermarket lapsed. Planning permission for a mixed development of flats and houses was granted by Rother but that too lapsed before any works began. In 2023 the land was partially cleared and new proposals for housing and a block of older persons flats were made by the developers, Plutus.

As with the previous proposal a constraint is that the land is on a flood plain and we are concerned about the proposals to raise the level of the site by importing aggregate. Due to the expensive nature of the project there is no social housing proposed and as things stand the Society cannot support the application. Our comments to Rother planners were as follows:

This revised scheme for the Thomas Peacocke site off Ferry Road differs from the previous application mainly by the provision of a block of 42 retirement flats in addition to the proposed 46 houses.

Previously there were 38 houses and 27 flats (not age restricted) proposed. To us this seems to be over development with a consequent impact on local medical and other services. Despite the increased number of properties there is still no provision for social/affordable housing. We feel that the most important housing need for young local people is not met by these proposals especially given the high likely sale price of both the houses and the retirement flats which will be restricted to over 55s.

We observe that there are few parking spaces for the flats, presumably its assumed that the retirees do not drive.

We remain concerned by the proposals to bring in land fill to raise the levels of the site which will require considerable disruption to neighbours. If built the height of the raised buildings may seriously impinge on neighbours in Tillingham Avenue and Ferry Road. The raising of the ground level is designed to lift housing off the flood plain, but there is some worry about emergency evacuation and a concern that some of the flats for older people are on the ground floor.

We are concerned that the local drainage and sewage infrastructure from the site may be inadequate, given the known local problems. Presumably the Environment Agency and Southern Water will be advised. We regret the loss of trees, particularly the green area near the railway line.

Despite the above we recognise the need for more housing provision in Rye, but feel that this scheme does little to meet local need.

Winchelsea Road

The second major development proposal is from Decimus for mixture of houses and a McCarthy Stone sheltered housing unit together with an Aldi supermarket and parking spaces off Winchelsea Road. There is likely to be a planning application early in the Summer and we will give it close consideration. There seems to us to be a greater need for housing younger people. We are once again concerned that there is so far no planned affordable housing. It seems that there is an identified demand for units for older people hence the involvement of McCarthy Stone, but there ought to be, in my view, provision for younger people enabling them to stay and work in Rye.

What is clear is that all the designs on this scheme are still pretty fluid as the developers say that comments from local people and organisations will be considered carefully. This will become clearer to us all when the formal planning application is submitted probably in May and then be considered by Rother.

In terms of the overall project we understand that it is likely to start with an access road through the site, followed by the construction of the Aldi supermarket, then McCarthy and Stone and Decimus Property will build in parallel. Whether parts of the development e.g. the supermarket can be approved separately is not clear at this stage,

Development in the Rye Conservation Area

Within Conservation Areas, Rother Council has specific planning policies that relate to development, to ensure that the special character is not spoiled, and that important features are conserved.

The intention is not that these areas can never change, but to ensure that the main features of the area are conserved and that new development contributes positively to the special character of the area.

Conservation Area Designation has four main practical implications for residents and developers:

- **Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of certain unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area.**

In assessing such applications, the Council will seek to maintain those special features which cumulatively make a conservation area special. There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings or structures that are within the Conservation Area and contribute to its character and appearance.

- **Planning Permission is required for certain works to a building within a Conservation Area which might otherwise have been classed as Permitted Development outside a Conservation Area.**

This applies to most external alterations including extensions, cladding, dormer windows, certain outbuildings, and satellite dishes in certain locations.

- **The Council must be given at least 6 weeks notice in writing of the intention to carry out works to any tree in a Conservation Area.**

Trees form an important element of many Conservation Areas. Anyone wishing to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area which is not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order must give notice of their intentions to the Council who then have six weeks in which to decide whether or not to serve a TPO on that tree. The decision will be based on the contribution the tree makes to the character or appearance of the conservation area, the type of species, the health of the tree, and the nature of the works proposed. If a TPO is served, a formal application will then be required for proposed works. Dead, dying or dangerous trees, or those below a certain size diameter, are exempt. It is always advisable to check with the Council's Tree Officer before starting work.

- **New development in Conservation Areas is subject to consideration under specific Development Plan policies which aim to preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.**

Usually, only detailed plans and not outline applications will be considered for new development in Conservation Areas. The character of any Conservation Area is composed of many elements; the mixture of historical periods, the composition of the streetscape; broken sight lines and glimpsed views through buildings, and interesting skylines. Careful site and context analysis must be undertaken, and the Local Planning Authority will require new development in Conservation Areas to have close regard to the scale and massing, plot width, traditional building forms, roofscapes, materials and techniques

characteristic of the areas. This not to say that contemporary design themes will not be allowed but a recognition that they present the designer with a considerable challenge if they are to be successful.

Origin of Rye Conservation Area

Rye Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and subsequently expanded in 1974 to include additional areas of the town at Bridge Place and Military Road.

The first Rye Preservation Society Executive Committee was on 12th February 1973. An early 'invitation to join' leaflet stated:

"The Society does not wish Rye to become a lifeless collection of old buildings. We are convinced that numerous trades and industries, both large and small, should flourish here – as they have always done. Nor should Rye be kept quiet and unspoilt just for the residents and those who work here. It must continue to attract and welcome friends and admirers from all over the world"

Broadband Cabling in a Conservation Area

An issue which arose during the year was the impact on installing new cables by Openreach for broadband. We were approached by residents in Mermaid Street who discovered cables and associated boxes were being fixed to the outside of listed buildings affecting the vista and potentially damaging the structure. There is national guidance which telecommunications operators should consider as outlined below and house owners should request that they do so.

When new cables are installed by cable companies every effort should be taken to ensure that they are hidden from view. This can sometimes be difficult as cable companies can often be obstructive and focus simply on the quickest and easiest route for their cabling, but quoting the fact that you are in a conservation area should be enough. Cables should enter the building at ground floor and then distribute throughout the building on the interior, rather than scaling the exterior and entering at different points. This is to ensure that the appearance of the conservation areas is preserved. Cables which dangle in front of a façade detract from the appearance of any area, and so should especially be avoided in a conservation area whose appearance it is desirable to preserve.

After all if Rye is to be used as a film set for Regency novels we do not want modern cables and plastic boxes on our historic buildings.

The George Hotel Appeal

The George Hotel which suffered a devastating fire in 2019, was happily reopened in 2022 and undoubtedly the owners are to be congratulated on the rebuilding that was made much more difficult by all the problems caused by the COVID epidemic and associated lockdown.

The Society believes that the internal restoration work has been top class and that the building is more than restored to its former glory. Of course some of this praise has been offset by our criticisms of the chosen colour scheme which undoubtedly split opinion both in the town and within the Conservation Society.

The external colour application was rejected by Rother but went to Appeal where the Inspector ruled in favour of the George. She appeared to favour contrasting colours in the High Street, so we may need to bear these points in mind in future. A copy of the Appeal document may be found on our web site.

We hope that this is the end of this chapter and that we can restore good relations with Alex Clarke and his staff who are such an important part of the High Street and the Town.

We have been consulted on the plans for the Rye Lodge Hotel to be extended which we broadly support and we feel cooperation and discussion is the best way forward.

Landslip in Military Road In February

February 2024 saw some serious land slips along Military Road to the east of Rye. These were probably caused by the extremely wet weather that Rye had been suffering, but the problems have been known about for a long while and the dangers were outlined in the Rye Neighbourhood Plan. It seems likely that the clearing of trees and excavation works along the cliff base made matters worse.

The following article was written by **Colonel Anthony Kimber, Rye Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator**, in May 2021 and remains relevant today.



The Rye Neighbourhood Plan is a “living document”, which requires periodic review to ensure that its policies are being regularly considered by Rye Town Council.

Of three recent pieces of work for the Rye Planning and Townscape Committee – affordable housing, the strategic gap with Rye Harbour, and land instability – the last has just been seen as particularly relevant by Council as there is a certain amount of vegetation removal in parts of Rye that has exposed the underlying soil and rock.

Rye stands at the point where the (mostly) sandstone high land of the Weald reaches the coast and the part of the town, known to many as the Citadel, sits on rock which has resisted coastal erosion – and it is a separated part of the high ground to the north and west of Rye that is the eastern part of the High Weald.

This is made up of faulted strata of sedimentary rock known as the “Hastings Beds“, the underlying structure of which is porous, relatively soft rock susceptible to water permeability and erosion – and the many springs which egress from the base of the high ground to the north of Rye result from rainwater filtered through the porous “beds” and flowing to lower points.

Landfalls and slips do happen after extreme rainfall events – and these are becoming more frequent – or after frost and ice has acted on crevices. Occasionally there are landfalls and slips at weak points on all of Rye’s south facing rock edges.

Historically, there have been large falls at places such as the western edge of Ockman Lane off East Street in the Citadel and at Point Hill, off Rye Hill, where large quantities of rock have been displaced in the past.

More recently, small falls have been seen from the Cadborough Cliff face in 2019; from above Military Road (behind the Globe and Cliff Court) in 2014, and in places below the west end of Watchbell Street and Church Square below the Gun Garden.

Ground development work and the over zealous removal of vegetation risks an adverse impact on the relatively soft rock and its top soil covering – and the final result can be a higher risk of land slip. Experts in this field recommend that as much vegetation as possible should be retained to stabilise the

top soil, and that storm water runoff should be carefully directed away to prevent the liquefying of top soil and the weakening of the rock under layers.

Remedial work has to be carried out by experts who do not aggravate the problem as those adding concrete might create points of new weakness into which water and ice can act.

To prevent land owners increasing the risk of instability is a planning matter and national policies and local ones in the Rother Core Strategy, the Rother Development and Site Allocation document and in the Rye Neighbourhood Plan all recognise this risk, identify high risk area locations – parts of Rye are included – and set policy to monitor and mitigate.

Planners should recognise any site specific risk and ensure that their decisions do not aggravate the situation. Where land owners take unilateral action, perhaps prior to development proposals, as seen in places now such as the Undercliff, beneath Rye Hill particularly on the north side of Military Road, and land under New England Lane (also above Military Road), their actions should be subject to enforcement action to ensure appropriate mitigation.

Rye is certainly built on rock, but it is relatively soft and permeable rock, and needs to be treated with great respect. As our forebears have seen, careless works can cause damage which could result in those on high ground ending up at sea level.

Any landowner with concerns should consult an engineer qualified in cliff and embankment stability.

Rye Arts Festival 2023

The Society was pleased to again sponsor the Rye Arts Festival which took place in September 2023. The Committee agreed a while ago that an appropriate form of support would be to sponsor one of the events. In 2023 Isobel Ryan, a life member of the Society and daughter of John Ryan, gave a fascinating talk about Sir Reginald Blomfield. She may well return this year for another talk about her amazingly talented family who lived here in Rye for many years.



A whistle-stop tour through the life and work of this extraordinary Rye resident by his great granddaughter, Isabel Ryan. Landlord of Henry James and a gentleman sportsman, this founder member of the Arts & Crafts movement denounced Modernism and designed the Menin Gate war memorial in Ypres, as well as Rye's iconic Cross of Sacrifice memorial. A controversial President of the RIBA, Blomfield designed formal gardens and country houses for the rich and famous.

Treasurer's Report for 2023 by Stuart Harland

It was good to see Events and Outings income continue its recovery over the last few years: the Garden Party in July and the Christmas Party again generated small profits but, most importantly, enabled members to get together to discuss the Society's activities (and, no doubt, Rye-life in general). Meanwhile, Subscriptions were slightly down on 2022. Altogether, financially, there was a small but bearable loss over the year.

The Society thanks the Independent Examiner, David Andrews, for examining the accounts and records supplied.

The accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 are reproduced overleaf

RYE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	(£)	(£)
Income		
Events and Outings	2,134	1,883
Subscriptions	925	1,022
Interest received	116	4
Gift Aid	-	-
	<u>3,175</u>	<u>2,909</u>
Expenditure		
Events and Outings	1,950	1,486
Affiliation Fees	-	278
Insurance	288	266
Printing/ Stationery	553	602
Post/ Telephone	135	48
Admin/ Website	300	375
AGM/ Awards	-	-
Sundries	288	260
Total Expenditure	<u>3,514</u>	<u>3,315</u>
Net Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(339)	(406)
Balance Sheet at 31st December	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	(£)	(£)
Funds at Bank		
Treasurers Account	19,095	19,434
	<u>19,095</u>	<u>19,434</u>
Represented by		
Reserves Brought Forward	19,434	19,840
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(339)	(406)
	<u>19,095</u>	<u>19,434</u>

The Committee of the Rye Conservation Society approve the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023.

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account of the Rye Conservation Society for the year the ended 31st December 2023 and have compared them with the records supplied. In my opinion they are in accordance with those records.

David Andrews

David Andrews ACIB, MCICM, FCT

Partner - Chatswood Associates (Accountants)

Abingworth, New England Lane, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7NT

07-Feb-24

Society Award for Night Club Conversion



48 Ferry Road following Conversion of Night Club

Most people will remember the night club which occupied the premises at 48 Ferry Road. For some years the club struggled to be profitable and the Covid epidemic proved to be the final straw.

The failure of the club led to the building being sold for development and various plans for the building were proposed and debated.

The Society critically commented on early plans and they were significantly amended to incorporate original features of the building. Notably the original brick work was revealed under a paint and slurry mix and restored by stone masons, **Restoration Sussex Ltd.**

We hope that you would agree with the Committee that we now have a splendid restored apartment block fitted out to a high standard worthy of our 2024 Award which will be presented at the AGM to **BBG Commercial Property Ltd** which was the development company for 48 Ferry Road. We liked the fact that three of the original cast iron columns were retained although they are no longer structural and that original wooden floor joists and cobble stone paving was reused within the building..



Horizon Night Club before Conversion

Membership Subscriptions

We are extremely grateful to the ongoing loyalty and support of our Members, whose subscriptions pay for the Society's administration costs, printing and stationery, items such as upgrading signage around the town and to maintain a healthy reserve. Thank you!

Membership forms for new members are on our web site, www.ryeconservationsociety.org

Subs remain at £6 for a single person or £10 for joint membership. Could you please drop the cash or cheque (payable to Rye Conservation Society) to Andy Stuart, the Society's membership secretary at: Little Orchard House, 3 West St, Rye TN31 7ES.

Alternatively you can pay by bank transfer, Rye Conservation Society, Sort Code 30-90-28, Account Number 00710394.

Life membership is also available, please contact Andy Stuart.

Summer Garden Party

Once again the annual Garden Party was held in Andy and Nikki's garden at Little Orchard House in West Street. As with much of the Summer unfortunately it was a rather damp day, but a good number of people still turned out and enjoyed a cream tea in the kitchen, with scones provided by Keith at Cobble Team Room. Some brave souls also ventured out into the deluge to explore the garden. However, all enjoyed cheerful chatter, clotted cream, conserves and cake! The Charman auctioned a bottle of House of Commons English sparkling wine kindly donated by Sally Ann-Hart MP, which raised almost £70. We thank Clr Vagn Hansen who was the winning bidder.

A couple of new Members were signed up on the door and a number of grateful tourists came in to shelter from the rain and ended up discussing conservation matters with us.

The Society's Annual Christmas Party



Clr Simon McCurk, Sally Ann Hart MP, David Bookless and Clr Chery Creaser

The Christmas Party in the Rye Town Hall chamber was enjoyed by around 50 Members and friends.

We were delighted to welcome our MP, Sally-Ann Hart, and the mayor of Rye, the Right Worshipful councillor Andi Rivett, and the mayoress councillor Rebekah Gilbert to our happy throng.

Thanks are due to committee members who worked on the door and in particular to Tim Gorman who organised the bar with Scott Brotherton and supplied a supply of festive mince pies.

The Chairman and other members donated worthwhile prizes including a bottle of malt whiskey and some Rye pictures for a raffle that raised a useful sum ensuring a profitable event. We thank our MP for

donating a delicious House of Commons cake as a prize.

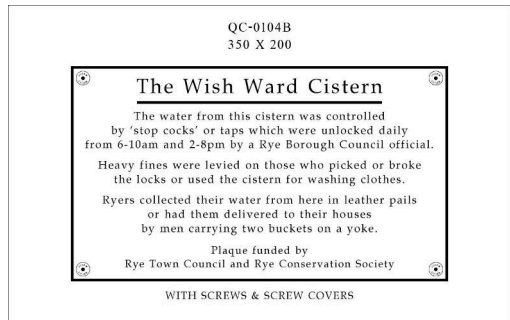
Society Contribution to Townscape

In conjunction with Rye Town Council the Society has agreed to fund a new plaque on the site of the Wish Ward pump. The little garden has already been tidied up and the plaque as illustrated will replace the previous wooden board which unfortunately weathered away.

The wording has been checked with local historians so hopefully is correct although a lot of this early history can be disputed.



We also hope to fund the restoration of the stone wording on Hiders Cliff and subject to getting agreement from Historic England we would like to fund the restoration of the plaque on the Landgate which as you can see is badly weathered. However as its fixed to an ancient monument alterations need to be approved and the process is very time consuming.



Some Appreciation

The Society thanks Judith Blincow and her staff at the Mermaid Inn for enabling us to hold our monthly Executive Committee meetings in the hotel, their assistance is much appreciated. The Mermaid also hosts our Annual Luncheon which is both tasty and convivial in traditional surroundings. Interestingly although being situated in a wonderful ancient building the Mermaid Hotel is one of the very few places in Rother where one can charge an electric car, proof that the old and new can coexist!

We have also built up good relations with the local councils, at Town, District and County level. I think its important that we work with our elected representatives constructively on issues that affect us all such as housing and parking problems. However we do reserve the right to disagree on occasion if we think Rye is being overlooked or short changed, particularly where we disagree on planning applications.

Although we do make use of emails to circulate information within the committee, much of our information for members is still despatched by hand or using the Royal Mail, the latter is becoming increasingly costly. However the Committee feels that members prefer receiving hard copy Newsletters and it helps us to keep in contact with the membership. The Committee is very grateful to those members including Ann Wood, Helen Griffiths and Heather Stevenson who do much of the local distribution.

Finally we also thank our local printers Adams in the High Street for meeting all our printing needs, including the Garden Party poster, this Annual Report and Newsletters, often at short notice and incorporating late amendments. I commend Ian and his staff for their helpful service.

NOTES

The Purposes of the Society

The Society was founded in 1973 and under the Constitution, which it later adopted, is concerned with the area comprising Rye Town, Playden, Rye Foreign, East Guldeford and the Rye Harbour area of the Civil Parishes of Icklesham and Camber.

The principal objects of the Society within that area are: to stimulate public interest in the area, to promote high standards of planning and architecture, and to secure the preservation, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest.

In the course of promoting its work the Society has secured registration as a charity. It is a member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Campaign to Protect Rural England.