



Greetings from the Chairman

I hope that members of the Rye Conservation Society have enjoyed a good Christmas whether in our town or elsewhere. Here in Rye there were excellent lights put up by the Rye Christmas volunteers and Christmas in Rye on 8 December attracted good crowds despite the wet weather.

The Conservation Society held a successful members party on 7th December in the Town Hall which started off the Christmas season. Thanks are due to Fletchers who provided splendid catering and Kyriacos who selected excellent wines for the occasion.

We were delighted to present the Hush Heath Estates management of the Ship Inn with our Annual Award for their refurbishment of the hotel and working with us (and paying for) the new Ship sign. We had also invited the sign maker to the party. We already have some thoughts of deserving properties for a 2019 Award.

We learned of a worthy project to commemorate the Rye Airfield which was used by the RAF (and the RFC) during World War One. The British Legion headed by Colonel Anthony Kimber organised the provision of a large memorial stone to be sited on a stone plinth near the Rugby Club at the site of the airfield. We were pleased to offer £100 towards the cost of the installation.

Looking forward there will be a Special Meeting on 28 February at 7pm in St Mary's Church Hall to amend the Society Constitution which I trust will avoid the difficulties that arose at the 2018 AGM. (See page 2)

We also plan a discussion on the new parking scheme for Rye at the same meeting.

The Society has produced a detailed paper on the proposals which may be read on our web site.

The Society AGM is to be held at 11.00 a.m. on May 17th in the Tudor Room at the Mermaid Inn followed by the Annual luncheon at 12.30. A change this year is to hold both events at the same venue.

We were very pleased to obtain at auction over 300 postcards and pictures of old Rye. We intend to put them up on our web site as soon as we can, probably in batches of twenty or so at a time. A sample were on display at the Christmas Party.

With a date fixed for the AGM I would ask anyone interested in standing for a committee or officer post in the Society to contact us. In particular the Society is still seeking someone to help organise social events and or members trips.

I would like to congratulate a couple of members for special achievements in 2018.

Bloomberg headquarters by Foster and Partners was named the UK's best new building, winning the prestigious 2018 [RIBA Stirling Prize](#). The lead architect was *Michael Jones*, a senior partner and Head of Studio with Fosters. Michael has a house in Rye and is a member of the RCS.

The 2018 RIBA Stirling Prize judges were unanimous in their decision to award Bloomberg the prestigious prize describing it as a "once-in-a-generation project". RIBA President, Ben Derbyshire added that it is a "monumental achievement".

My neighbour *Pam Buxton*, writing as Pamela Holloway, has had published her new novel 'Blood in the Snow', and held a well attended signing in the Rye Book Shop on 19th January. This is her third published novel and all of them are an excellent read.

Special General Meeting on 28 February 2019 at 7pm in the St Mary's Centre

At the 2018 AGM there took place for the first time a contested election for the key position of Chairman. Although the Society has had a detailed written constitution since its formation forty six years ago this first election highlighted issues and led to a fractious AGM.

A working group of the Committee has taken some soundings but at this stage does not suggest making wholesale amendments to the Constitution.

A study of other organisations has shown a variety of rules for elections including the option of electing a Committee and then leaving that elected committee to select its officers and Chairman. This option would likely ensure that the chairman and officers selected had the experience necessary and the support of the committee but does leave the membership rather excluded from the process. We do not therefore propose to go down this route.

The criticism of the current ballot process seems justified and it seems incontrovertible that there should be a secret ballot with printed ballot papers to avoid embarrassment or pressure on members at the meeting. The constitutional amendment enables this.

There were accusations that last year some people joined the Society just before the AGM and thus to avoid any confusion the amendment lays down that new members must join before the AGM is called, i.e. at least 21 days before the meeting.

Although the meeting is only open to members the Committee recognises that some members may not be fully paid up. Thus provided they are no more than SIX months in arrears they can pay at the door

We hope that the new paragraph 7 meets most if not all objections made last year which seemed to centre on voting procedures.

Amendments to the Constitution need two thirds support of those present at the meeting.

Other points such as the timing of the AGM we feel are not matters for the Constitution but should be dealt with by the Committee at the time. For example as to whether the AGM should be held in the evening or during the day as at present. Similarly the question of postal ballots needs more careful consideration

there are well known arguments for or against, but no change is currently proposed.

More drastic amendments including changes to the objectives of the Society would probably need approval from the Charity Commission if we were not to risk losing our charitable status.

We put forward the following resolution for approval.
New Paragraph 7

7. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

"Nominations for the election of officers shall be made in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations to be supported by a proposer and seconder who must be paid up members of the Society and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. The nominee may produce a written manifesto at the time of nomination which will be circulated to members by the Society.

If there is more than one nominee for an officer post, an election will be held at the AGM, and if there is a contest for Chairman then this will take precedence. During any election for Chairman, the President or other agreed member shall chair the meeting. There will be provision for candidates to address the meeting and for questions to the candidates. The form of any election will be by secret ballot with printed voting slips on a "first past the post basis".

The elections of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of further Committee members. Nominees for election as Officers or Committee members shall declare at the Annual General Meeting at which their election is to be considered any financial or professional interest known or likely to be of concern to the Society.

Following election of officers, if there are more than four nominees, an election for committee members shall be held by secret ballot (first past the post) at the AGM.

In order to be eligible to vote and participate, members should be paid up at the time of the calling of the AGM, and thus are not eligible to participate if joining within 21 days of the AGM. However existing members may pay overdue subscriptions at the door and participate at the AGM, provided such subscriptions are no more than six months overdue."

Rother District Civil Parking Enforcement proposals – Informal consultation

This piece is taken from the consultation document provided by East Sussex CC.

The effective control of parking is a crucial element of our transport strategy. Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) means that local authorities are responsible for enforcing on-street parking controls instead of the police. There have been a number of concerns raised about the lack of parking enforcement in Rother district. The enforcement of on-street parking restrictions across Rother is currently the responsibility of Sussex Police as a criminal matter under the Road Traffic Act.

The top priority for Sussex Police is the prevention and detection of crime. They cannot give parking enforcement the level of attention that the public might expect and state they will only take action on parking issues where there is a safety concern.

We have worked with Rother District Council (RDC) to look at how parking enforcement can be improved. As a result of this we will be applying for permission to the Department for Transport to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) across Rother district. This is a lengthy process and we do not anticipate CPE being introduced until 2020.

CPE was introduced in Hastings borough in 1999, Lewes District in 2004 and Eastbourne borough in 2008. CPE is already in operation across 90% of the country.

Our summary response was as follows:

From the above and a consideration of the documents, it is obvious that the proposals apply to on-street parking only. They are not the solution to the long-term parking problems of Rye. Such issues are land use issues and are the concern of the Rother Local Plan and the Rye Neighbourhood Plan.

In essence what is being proposed is a more rigorous enforcement of the current on-street parking provision, with minor amendments to location and hours of usage, but with the introduction of a pay-and-display scheme for the majority of residents and visitors.

The question of on-street parking enforcement has been an issue in the town for a number of years.

There is no doubt that civil control, by means of wardens, will ensure that the parking requirements and regulations will be better enforced. This has to be paid for and the proposals are for a pay-and-display scheme to be introduced.

There will be a residents' parking scheme for most of the Citadel and for Bridge Place. The current proposals cover what may be termed central Rye i.e. between the railway and South Undercliff and between the Salts and the Strand. They do not cover the A259, which is a trunk road under the control of Highways England. They do not include Ferry Road or Udimore Road or the roads off and there are concerns that parking will move from the centre to these areas. If this proves to be the case, then the parking arrangements can be varied far more easily under a civil parking arrangement, with the introduction of further residents' parking areas being approved at a later date, as has been the case in many towns and cities.

We suspect that the reason the scheme has now been proposed is because it is seen as a moneymaking enterprise for the Council as a whole. However this is not a reason to reject it; it could have benefits for the strained finances of Rother as a whole and for Rye as a town.

Setting this aside we believe that we need to consider the proposals as they relate to:

- Residents
- Businesses
- Visitors

and then how the physical infrastructure, principally the pay-and-display machines, will affect the setting of the town and its historic buildings.

Our full response can be found on the web site together with pictures of the parking meter sites and a full discussion of the impacts of the proposals.

We hope that members will attend the meeting on 28 February to discuss the proposals.

RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSULTATION

The consultation stages of the Rye Neighbourhood Plan are complete and the Plan is with Rother Council. The revised RNP will be considered by an independent Examiner to determine whether the RNP meets the legal 'basic conditions' required. Assuming there are no hiccups the published Plan will then go forward to a local Rye referendum.

