



The Sevenoaks Society

for the conservation and improvement of the town



ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

For the year ending 31st March 2016

Published June 2016

www.sevenoakssociety.org.uk



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Calendar dates: Meetings in 2016 at STC Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road

Wednesday October 5th

7.15 pm: AGM, followed by a presentation by the Local List Project Management Team

Wednesday November 9th

8.00 pm: A talk on Local Recycling by Charles Nouhan, Recycling and Commercial Manager and Chartered Waste Manager, Sevenoaks District Council

INTRODUCTION

After six years at the helm, David Gamble will be stepping down from the chairmanship of the Sevenoaks Society at the Annual General Meeting in October. He deserves our gratitude and our thanks for the untiring efforts he has made on behalf of the society, to raise awareness of the power and potential for good in a concerted call for action from committed and caring citizens. David is in fact the embodiment of people power, drawing on the talent and strengths of many and then leading them to achieve extraordinary outcomes.

His term of office has seen a remarkable number of achievements for the Society spearheaded by David and leaving a lasting legacy for the residents of Sevenoaks. Principally among these are those that David mentions in his Chairman's Report which follows, the campaign to ban HGVs in the Upper High Street, the Remarkable Trees of Sevenoaks Exhibitions and the Local List project but he has omitted many others, recorded in the pages of the newsletters over the years. Among these are the production of the Sevenoaks Society's Diamond Jubilee Calendar; the Society's reception in the Orangery at Knole to celebrate its own and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee; the commemorative bench in honour of Rowland

Oakeley, placed overlooking the keyhole at Chevening; the updating and further development of the Country Walks books; the information video screens located in the station and the Stag Theatre; the Frank Marshall Award to support good design and town improvement, in memory of Frank who monitored the entire planning portfolio for the society for over 25 years.

David has brought to the Society his own enthusiasm and energy as well as encouragement of others to take forward ideas and projects and bring them to successful fruition. This is seen most effectively in the operation of the Townscape and Planning Group which was formed to take on the work that had previously been done by one person.

It is with sadness that we learned of the death of Sylvia Penzer. She was a great stalwart of the society and was membership secretary for a number of years. Her successor in that role, Phyllis Styles is leaving Sevenoaks and we owe her many thanks for her work on behalf of the society.

Maree Walker

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Over the last six years there have been several major issues which the society has confronted. The first was the campaign to ban Heavy Goods Vehicles from the upper High Street. Whilst this had great popular appeal with over 2000 people signing the petition and wide support from local politicians it failed over the objections of Riverhead residents who felt that the additional traffic that the scheme would put on their major route was unacceptable. It remains an objective of the society.

Three of the most encouraging developments were the Local List project, possibly one of the best organised volunteer listing projects in the country, now well into its second phase with the first presented to Sevenoaks District Council in early March. The SDC has advised us that the public consultation cannot start until after the SDC Cabinet approves it on September 15th. The second was the marvellous tree exhibition, the brainchild of Keith Wade ably aided by Victoria Granville-Baxter, which has delighted all who have seen it. Finally the revision and addition to the walks guides by Nick White and Victoria Granville-Baxter has added to ramblers' enjoyment of the beautiful country around us. There are several thorny issues

which will require careful navigation. Parking remains a bugbear and proposals to add new decked systems at Bradbourne Park Road and Buckhurst 2 will, I suggest, continue to exercise all concerned parties for a while yet. I would, however, like to get the society thinking about what impact the advent of driverless cars might have on how Sevenoaks organises itself. It is likely to reduce car ownership significantly, reduce on-road parking, revolutionise the school run and parking at the station, reduce the demand for taxis and open up opportunities for older people to live further out and for country pubs to thrive.

The apparent inability of local authorities to ensure, if planning permission has been given for a site, that the site will be developed is a source of exasperation. The Farmers' and Edwards' Electrical sites have been undeveloped for several years. At the very least full rates should be charged so the community does not lose income from someone else's inactivity. It would be informative to work out just how much the sites have risen in value since they were first acquired. The ideas of Henry George

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

whereby the community, as the creator of the value of land, should receive a tax on the increase in value – an idea Roy Jenkins toyed with – should perhaps make a comeback.

The High Street, under pressure from the internet, is likely to continue to move towards those activities where people have to be present like coffee shops, restaurants, hair dressers and nailbars. Looking ahead I would guess that in twenty years there will be almost no estate agents in the town centre, they will all be on line with out-of-centre offices – more like most French towns or Faversham. Hotels might struggle as more airBnB premises are offered.

All these issues will require a lively Sevenoaks Society to debate. We continue to outspend our income partly because so many of our members are lifetime members and we did not use an actuary to calculate what the lifetime fees should be. Within 10 years we will only be offering the newsletter online and that will relieve us of a major cost, but for the foreseeable future we will need an increase in membership and income from publications to tide us over.

I shall be stepping down from the Chairmanship in October after six years. The committee I leave to my successor is very able and enthusiastic, Sevenoaks is very blessed with remarkable volunteers for its many activities. I shall continue, if elected, to serve on the committee, but it is high time for a new broom.

David Gamble

VISIT BY GUILDFORD SOCIETY

On 19th May, we were very pleased to welcome a small group of members of the Guildford Society to visit Sevenoaks. We assembled first in the Secretary's apartments for coffee and a short talk about the highlights of the Sevenoaks Society's activities. The Tree exhibition panels were then shown to considerable admiration and the possibility of showing them in Guildford was floated.

After a good lunch at the White Hart, the group reassembled at St Nicholas for a walk from the southern end of the Upper High Street to the fountain and then through the Shambles, ending up in Lime Tree Walk. The Secretary drew attention to the merits of the listed buildings in those areas and the history contained in them.

Tim Pearce

VISIT BY GUILDFORD SOCIETY



LOCAL LIST REPORT

Work has been completed on researching, surveying and selecting buildings of local architectural or historical importance, as well as other notable features of the built environment such as old lamp posts and railings, in three wards - Town, Kippington and St John's. This is the first phase of an ongoing project being run by a team of Sevenoaks Society volunteers to compile a list of such locally important 'assets'. The results have now been handed over to Sevenoaks District Council and work is underway on the remaining three wards which we expect to complete by the end of the year.

The District Council is preparing a supplementary planning document which will give effect to the local list, allowing it to be taken into consideration in planning decisions. They are also putting the information into a form which will hopefully allow it to be accessed on their website through an interactive map. They are planning to begin public consultation on these documents in late September with the aim of having them formally approved at the beginning of 2017 when it is hoped that public consultation on the remaining wards would also begin.

John Stambollouian

TOWNSCAPE AND PLANNING GROUP REPORT JUNE 2016

From Christmas until the end of March, the planning applications consisted almost entirely of minor extensions. Although we sometimes look at these, we do not usually respond to them unless they happen to be in a sensitive location in a conservation area. We have written in some cases, especially if the application involves the creation of extensive hard standing in a conservation area where the loss of the front garden would have an impact on the road-scape and also provide a precedent for similar changes.

In January and February we were mainly involved in the hearings of two applications which had been sent to appeal. We were represented, alongside the Sevenoaks Conservation Council, at both appeals and our presence was recognised positively by the Leader of SDC.

The first was the Berkeley Homes application to build

flats and offices on the site of Salmons Printers in London Road. This was a lengthy hearing over two days and the applicant attended with a large team of advisers led by QC. In the event, the Inspector approved the appeal, but insisted on the provision of ten affordable homes, as she did not accept the applicant's figures on sustainability.



J Salmon Printers

The second hearing concerned an application to build flats with ground floor parking in the sensitive location of Lime Tree Walk. This would have involved the demolition of all the buildings in what used to be Hilder's Yard, in-

TOWNSCAPE AND PLANNING GROUP REPORT JUNE 2016

cluding the significant coach-builders' paint rooms block, which was last used as Colin Bird's garage, and the cottages behind. In this case, the Inspector, who made a very thorough viewing of the site and its surroundings from all angles, rejected the appeal. The upper floor of the main building is a very significant and unusual piece of built space, which was originally used for painting the bodywork of coaches and carriages, but has also been used as an art studio among miscellaneous other uses. We hope that one day someone will come forward with a plan to restore the building for a new use.

Hilder's Yard Garage



More recently, new proposals came forward from SDC to build an hotel on the Sennocke car park, adjacent to the Farmers' site, and to move the car parking to a three-decker park at the junction of Bradbourne Park Road and Hitchen Hatch Lane. The Society objected, in common with the Conservation Council, STC and others, the grounds being that the proposal was premature until the hotel had been granted consent; the hotel could include on-site car parking; the design and visual impact of the multi-storey car park was unacceptable; the traffic impact on the road junctions around the station would be substantial; a better solution exists to deck the car park off Morewood Close. This latter proposal has been floated with Network Rail, who would consider it if SDC funded the new deck.

SEVENOAKS NEEDS A DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

As outlined elsewhere in this newsletter, great progress is being made on the Local List of buildings of historic and architectural interest. It is unfortunate that whilst the town is doing so well to safeguard the future of its historic buildings, the quality of our townscape and environment is at the same time being compromised by poor quality new development.

There is nothing wrong with SDC's overall aspirations or policy framework: "all new development should be designed to a high quality", but clearly something is going wrong with how quality is being assessed in the planning process.

Recent schemes in the town do not do justice to our rich heritage. This is not a stylistic point: over many centuries, Sevenoaks has accommodated a wide variety of different architectural styles. It is simply that development is being poorly conceived and executed, and could easily be so much better.

Many other councils have appointed Design Review Panels to provide pre-application advice to applicants and to assist officers in demanding better design solutions. I have been responsible for projects subjected to this process in places like Brighton, Leeds, Cambridge and Kensington. There is no doubt that the end result has been improved through the

scrutiny of going through the process, to the long-term benefit of all.

A Design Review Panel should consist of a mix of professionals: architects, landscape architects, urban designers, access consultants, historic and conservation experts. They should have clear terms of reference. The advice the Panel provides should be independent, expert, objective, constructive, balanced and wide-ranging.

I have heard arguments that having such a Panel would add cost and cause delay. Surely, if so many other councils consider it worth the cost, wealthy Sevenoaks with a beautiful environment to preserve and enhance should think likewise? Members of the panel often offer their time for free. And, frankly, if poor quality development is delayed or never actually happens, so much the better!

I have had the pleasure of being on the assessment panel for the first two Frank Marshall Awards, instigated to recognise high quality design in Sevenoaks. It has been a shock to find so few projects being put forward, a reflection of the paucity of good design in the town. Not only does the town lack exemplars, poor development has been allowed. The appointment of a Design Review Panel would be a positive statement by the Council.

SEVENOAKS NEEDS A DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

that it is committed to its own policy on design quality, and is determined to drive-up standards in the future.

Roger FitzGerald
RIBA

To illustrate this need I'd like to reproduce a letter that was published in the Sevenoaks Chronicle on April 14th, 2016. The letter was written in response to the previous week's article on the consultation on plans for a Premier Inn on the site of the current railway parking site adjacent to the derelict Farmers Pub site. Residents who viewed the proposals commented that the

proposed development was not in keeping with the area. The council spokesman's response referred to the height of the Farmers development which had already been approved (against much opposition and only on appeal). Ed.



DEVELOPMENT

Too late—we're already a suburb

So a Premier Inn Hotel is not in keeping with the area. Not in keeping with what I may ask? The big hole in the ground left by the demolition of the Farmer's Pub? The steel and glass station? The much derided BT building? The 'fence panel' flats that replaced the lovely Railway and Bicycle Pub? The low price supermarket opposite what was once considered Sevenoaks' classiest address? Or is it the ramshackle parade of shops by the crossing?

There seems to be a fantasy in some Sennockians' heads that there is a hidden country charm in the town. I can tell you there was once, now it's a typical dormitory town of which there are many in the circle around London.

I do know a little about the town. I was born in Sevenoaks Hospital, educated in the town, grew up and worked there for 48 years. I would love to still live there, but sadly ridiculous property prices forced us out.

Although I don't reside there now, my family still do and past generations have for 300 years. Luckily I can remember when Sevenoaks was a charming, smaller and more rural town, probably when many of you complainers were living elsewhere.

Adam Dean

SEVENOAKS SOCIETY TALKS

Kentish Footpaths, Nicky Biddall

At the meeting of the Society on November 11th, 2015, a full room of over sixty-five members and visitors, heard Nicky Biddall, Public Rights of Way Officer from the KCC give a thorough and entertaining account of her multi-faceted role, one that demands great diplomacy, firmness and wide-ranging expertise, as well as the need to prioritise a very heavy workload according to operational policy, with public safety at the top of the list. There are over 4,000 miles of footpaths in Kent, nearly all on private land and about 10% are in Sevenoaks District. Surface clearance, removal of obstructions, liaison with landowners, provision and repair of gates and stiles – these are some of the many tasks which demand attention.

Members heard advice about the best response to livestock encountered along a walking route, and ways in which the public can access the interactive maps on Explore Kent's website and report on any problems encountered. Those wishing to take an active role in keeping paths clear and well-signposted, as Countryside Access Wardens, can register their interest in free training for this volunteer role via the KCC website.

Phyllis Styles



Various gates and stiles encountered

SEVENOAKS SOCIETY TALKS

The redevelopments at Knole, a talk by Richard Hill

A full room at Sevenoaks Town Council Offices welcomed Richard Hill, the Senior Project Manager at Knole, to our meeting in March. The meeting began with a short presentation about volunteering at the house, with the perceptive reminders that Knole was “a house which slumbers rather than sparkles” (Robert Sackville West) and more like a town than a house (Virginia Woolf). All volunteers are welcome and there are many services to choose from.



Richard Hill began by describing the sort of work involved in the various restorations, with the caveat that they would do as little as possible to

bring the sparkle back to the house, which still stands roughly as it was in 1610, soon after it came into the Sackville family. He described some of the specialist work required on such as the cartoons, the fabrics, the door handles.

The first and one of the largest tasks for the project was to get the house watertight and he showed some of the damage which water has done to walls and window frames. The temperature in the show rooms was often not much above 4 degrees, which did not help the conservation, and many rooms were afflicted by wind and dust, especially the fabrics. The type of cement used by earlier builders was liable to crumble, thus adding to the dust. The roof has now been insulated and lined, though no membranes can be installed because of the bats.

The next challenge was the proposed conservation studio which was to be installed in the barn. This building also had to be re-roofed, with the tresses individually replaced, and the lancet windows replaced. The work on this area also included new arrangements for the brew house café. It

SEVENOAKS SOCIETY TALKS

is hoped that the conservation studio will give visitors a very full idea of all the highly specialised work involved. This project is nearing completion.

The final phase of work will be on the interiors, including controlling the humidity and keeping it at a level 50%. Richard spent some time on presenting the new and exciting ide-

as for lighting the rooms, which he described as transformative and from what we were shown on the slides, this will certainly merit a new visit by all those who first set foot in Knole many years ago. The gatehouse tower will be open this summer and the house will be fully open again in 2019.

Tim Pearce



Courtesy National Trust

The King's Rooms were built at the beginning of the 17th century, in anticipation of a visit by King James I. Restoration of the Upper King's Room (left), revealed the presence of "witchmarks" (right) intended to protect the occupant from sorcery or possession.

Tom Hart Dyke: "Plant Hunter and gardener with a passion."

everything he does was very much to the fore.

On May 11th, Tom Hart Dyke gave us a fascinating talk on Lullingstone, his adventures in Central America and his development of the World Garden. His enthusiasm for

He began with a short account of his background and huge sense of place and sense of history as the 11th generation of his family to live at Lullingstone and he identifies his

SEVENOAKS SOCIETY TALKS

passion for plants from the time when his grandmother gave him a packet of seeds. He was three years old.

He gave a vivid account of the dramatic experience he underwent in Panama, when, on 16th March 2000 he, aged 23, and his companion were kidnapped and held in forest camps and mangrove swamps for ten months. This was a very frightening experience, which changed both their lives, and the worst of it was the deep uncertainty of any hopeful outcome and having to live among teenagers with big guns. They were in due course released and reunited with their families. As he looks back on it now it seems rather surreal, as if the whole thing was part of a film set.

After a brief mention of some of his other plant-hunting expeditions, notably to Tasmania in 1999, from where he brought back 119 specimens to plant at Lullingstone, he then turned to his concept of the World garden and showed slides of its development from the very earliest stages of almost bare beds loosely designed to represent the continents. These are phyto-geographically planted, that is planted with species indigenous to each continent. He recognises that,

inevitably, some species will not adapt to the vagaries of English weather, but, despite some losses, the slides of more recent date showed just how well the beds had developed. All the work at Lullingstone is carried out by volunteers. More recent developments include a cactus house and an orchid house.



A view of The World Garden at Lullingstone

Anyone with even a small interest in plants and gardening should undoubtedly visit Lullingstone. Tom's passion for his subject shone though every word. Tim Pearce



The Miniature Alpine garden

MEETING OF RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS

Residents Associations annual meeting with Sevenoaks Society Committee

Friday 15th January, 2015, at Little Brittains

This year's meeting was well attended by representatives from twelve RAs and we have since made contact with several more. After David Gamble had welcomed all the guests, John Edge outlined recent activity of the Townscape and Planning Group, emphasising our attendance at Appeal Hearings. Sir Michael Harrison reported on the continuing progress of the Local List (see p.00) and David Gamble drew attention to the revision of the walks booklets by Nick White, which will be completed this year, and the further showings of the Tree

Exhibition at Riverhill House, Lullingstone and the New School at West Heath.

Each RA then reported on recent issues in their area, which raised several matters of common interest: the preservation of open spaces for public use; threats to the Green Belt; problems arising from commuter parking; better and slower speed controls in residential roads; the consequences of reduced street lighting; road conditions after heavy winter weather; the limited resources of Kent Highways Division; the effects on infrastructure of recent large developments such as the conversion of Tubs Hill House into flats.

A particular issue of concern is the A25, with the growth of Knole



MEETING OF RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS

Academy and the pending development on the south side of the STC and Red Cross buildings and the adjacent villa at No 51. There had been a large number of accidents in the past five years, setting aside unrecorded 'near misses'. Better signage about the schools and better parking arrangements were urgently needed.

The problems of parking in Sevenoaks are common to all and it was felt that the RAs could benefit from a common and holistic approach to this issue. Several RAs felt that the Council case officers in charge of development applications were not always sympathetic to local issues. At present the Society has a good working relationship with SDC and it was felt that this was an issue which individual RAs should take up directly.



It was suggested that a map might be created to show the extent of the RAs areas and the Society will discuss that with the Town Clerk.

We intend to hold the meeting in 2017 at a weekend, as several RAs could not be represented on a working weekday.

Tim Pearce

FOOTPATHS AND WALKS

After three years of tramping the footpaths around Sevenoaks, and some wonderful artwork by Victoria Baxter, all five volumes of our new walking guides are now in print.

Volume 1 (orange) Walks 1 to 11

Volume 2 (blue) Walks 12 to 22

Volume 3 (green) Walks 23 to 33

Volume 4 (lilac) Walks 34 to 44

Volume 5 (yellow) Walks 45 to 55

They are on sale at Sevenoaks Bookshop, Up-and Running, Ide Hill Community Shop and Lullingstone Visitor Centre as well as at Sevenoaks Society events. A box cover to fit all five volumes is in the process of being prepared. I have been asked why each volume contains eleven walks and not ten or twelve. I'm afraid that I don't know the answer as the precedent was set before my time. The walks pass through more than 250 miles of glorious countryside within easy reach of Sevenoaks. I have walked them all, most of them several times, and have two pairs of worn out boots to prove it! I am though pleased to say that my border terrier, Snuff, who normally walks twice as far as me, is none the worse for wear.

Our monthly walks, which start at 2.00pm on Sundays, at the end of every month except December, are open to all. The programme up till the end of the year is as follows:

Sunday 29 May 2016

Chartwell to Mariners Hill, Obriss Farm, Toy's Hill and French Street. 5½ miles hilly. Start at 2.00pm from the entrance to the National Trust car park at Chartwell, NGR 455519. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.27.

Sunday 26 June 2016

Around Bough Beech Reservoir. 5½ miles easy. Start at 2.00pm from the road outside the Bough Beech Visitor Centre. TN14 6LD, NGR 496494. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.28.

Sunday 31 July 2016

Otford to Shoreham Terrace and Otford Hills. 5½ miles hilly. Start at 2.00pm from the car park at Otford Memorial Hall, next to the playing fields, TN14 5PQ. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.29.

Sunday 28 August 2016

Hever to Markbeece, Horseshoe Green and Hill Hoath. 6½ miles easy. Start at 2.00pm from King Henry VIII Inn, Hever, TN8 7NG. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.30

FOOTPATHS AND WALKS

Sunday 25 September 2016

Along the Greensand Ridge. A five mile walk with some hills starting at 2.00pm from the National Trust car park half a mile north of Toy's Hill, NGR 470517. Similar to Sevenoaks Society Walk No.46

Sunday 30 October 2016

Fordcombe to Hamsell Farm, River Medway, Chafford Bridge and Stone Cross. 4½ miles with some hills. Start at 2.00pm from Fordcombe Village, TN3 0SA, NGR 527403. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.35.

Sunday 27 November 2016

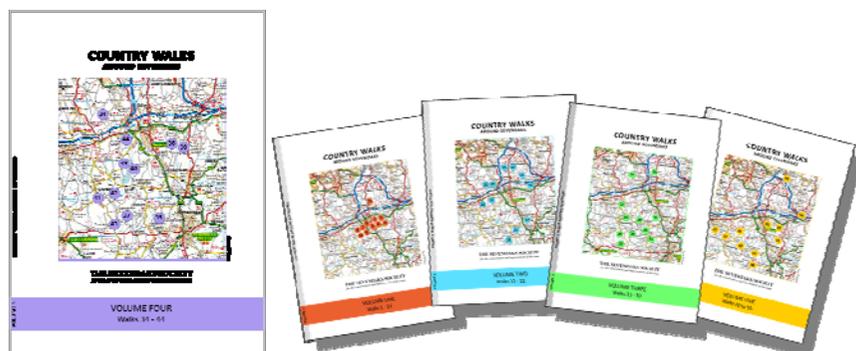
One Tree Hill to Rooks Hill and Wilmot Hill. 3 miles hilly. Start at 2.00pm from the One Tree Hill car park on the Godden Green to Underriver road, ¾ mile north of Underriver, NGR 559532. Sevenoaks Society Walk No.36.

Nick White

Footpaths Committee Chairman

01959 564145

nwhite2012@btinternet.com



COUNTRY WALKS ROUND SEVENOAKS

Nick White has completed the fifth and final local walking volume.

Four of these volumes, including this latest, are substantial revisions to the late Roland Oakeley's walking books. Volume 5, which was published first, are walks devised by Nick himself.

All five books are available at the Sevenoaks Bookshop, at Up and Running, the Ide Hill community shop and from the Sevenoaks Society which sponsored the publication. They will also be available at the Sevenoaks Society stall on the opening day of the Sevenoaks Summer Festival - Saturday 18th June. Do come and have a browse while supporting your committee members!

SEVENOAKS CONSERVATION COUNCIL

The Conservation Council comprises representatives of the District and Town Councils, the Chamber of Commerce and the Sevenoaks Society.

Since the last newsletter report concerning the Conservation Council, it has met on two occasions (in December 2015 and March 2016), both meetings attended by representatives of the Sevenoaks Society (currently Tim Pearce, David Gamble, Roger Walshe and Richard Baxter). It has monitored progress on the Neighbourhood Plan (a Town Council project) and Local Listing (a Sevenoaks Society project).

Two of the agreed priorities for 2015-6 are the problems posed by traffic congestion in the High Street and London Road, and by the loss of visible tree cover in the town centre as a result of development pressures. These have both been discussed, with the benefit of a presentation in March from Mr Les Jones, the District Council's arboricultural and landscape officer.

Members have remained concerned at the lack of progress on the Farmers' and Edwards' sites, and there has been repeated correspondence with the District Council's Chief Executive on the

latter matter.

The Conservation Council was represented at the local hearings into the Salmon site (98-116 London Road) and 5-13 Lime Tree Walk, in both cases supporting the position of the local planning authority. The Conservation Council has objected (primarily on grounds of prematurity) to the District Council's application concerning the Bradbourne Car Park.

The next meeting of the Conservation Council will be its AGM at the Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber at 7.15p.m. on Wednesday, 6 July 2016, and a further meeting at the same time on Tuesday 11th October. Any member of the public may attend.

Charles George QC– Chairman of the
"Sevenoaks Conservation Council"

SEVENOAKS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

These are the subscription rates for the Society, if your membership has not been renewed for 2016, it would be appreciated if you could forward payment to the Treasurer, as described below. When the Society makes representation to public bodies this carries more weight if it is backed by a significant number of members.

Subscription Rates

Annual (single) **£10**
 Annual (joint) **£14**
 20 year Oak Membership (single)
£85
 20 year Oak Membership (joint)
£120

There are over 40 Standing Orders that have for years been going through at amounts significantly below the current rates, representing a substantial loss to the Society. Please let your bank know the latest figures.

Please make cheques payable to Sevenoaks Society and enclose an SAE if a membership card is required.

Application forms are now available by post and on the Society website, reflecting the changes in subscriptions from 1st April 2015.

We want to remain a vibrant and relevant organisation and need to keep spreading the word. Here are the details if you wish to send your subs or tell others about the Society.

Payments should be sent to the Treasurer: Mr Richard Baxter, 7 The Drive, Sevenoaks, TN13 3AB

COPY DATE

The copy date for the next Newsletter will be Friday, 21st October 2016. Please send copy to Maree Walker at Ormiston East, Brittain Lane, Sevenoaks TN13 2NF or by email to mareewalker1@gmail.com

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

Treasurer's Report

1. Attached are accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 which will be laid before the members for approval at the AGM in September.
2. Subscriptions in 2014-15 benefitted from a surge in Oak memberships and new members generally, not repeated in 2015-16.
3. A further grant towards the costs of the Local List project will be sought from STC.
4. Cash funds are diminishing annually and subject to disposal of our investments, will be exhausted soon.
5. The committee is therefore considering fund raising methods :
- sponsorship: this was very successful 4 years ago and we shall try to repeat it this year
 - advertising in newsletter/on website: members' views will be sought at the AGM.
 - variable subscriptions: again members' views will be sought on - asking for additional contributions from those attending meetings (marginal cost per participant per event at present £4+)
 - supplement for mail copy of newsletter (marginal cost per member per edition at present £2+)
 - suggested "top up" charge to Life Members with over 15 years' membership.
 - new membership/sales drive.
- Richard Baxter

The Sevenoaks Society for the conservation and improvement of the town (Registered Charity No. 1094951)

Receipts and Payments Account of the year ended March 2016

	2015-16	2014-15	
	£	£	
Receipts			
Subscriptions	2012	2728	
Donations and legacies	187	83	
Gift Aid	472	367	
Sales of publications	1429	3308	
Receipts from events	42	25	
Sponsorship	0	0	Chairman
Investment income	159	209	Treasurer
Grants	<u>750</u>	<u>550</u>	
Total receipts	<u>5051</u>	<u>7270</u>	

ACCOUNTS**Payments**

Newsletters	2439	2337
Speaker fees and expenses	180	241
Prizes and gifts	383	691
Cost of publications	1339	1829
Cost of events	555	436
Administration	129	135
Meetings and room hire	827	589
Affiliations	221	191
Insurance	337	302
Publicity and web-site	1070	1382
Local list expenses	<u>292</u>	<u>788</u>
Total payments	<u>7772</u>	<u>8921</u>
Deficit	-2721	-1651
Cash funds last year end	7039	9190
Transfer to investments	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Cash funds this year end	3468	7039
Stock of Walks books	<u>1350</u>	<u>500</u>
Current Assets	<u>4818</u>	<u>7539</u>

Statement of Assets at year end

Stock of Walks Books	1350	500
Cash at HSBC	3468	3881
CAF Bank	<u>0</u>	<u>3158</u>
	4818	7539
Investment assets	<u>10948</u>	<u>11148</u>
Total assets	<u>15766</u>	<u>18687</u>

Signed on behalf of all trustees

6-May-16

David Gamble

Richard Baxter

MINUTES OF 63RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting of the Sevenoaks Society, held at the Sevenoaks Town Council Offices at 7.15pm on Wednesday 7th October, 2015.

1. Notice convening the meeting was circulated as part of the Annual Report and Accounts in the June newsletter.
2. Apologies for absence were received from David Gamble, Richard and Victoria Baxter, Charles George, Peter Moss, Roger Fitzgerald, David Green, John Stambollouian, Maggie Miles, Peter Ashwell, Matthew Dickins, Tony Clayton, Barbara Walker and Sarah & Harry Rodgers.
3. Minutes of the previous meeting: these had been circulated with the June newsletter and were approved and signed. (Proposed by Keith Wade, seconded by Tim Pearce.)
4. The Chairman's Report was published in the June newsletter and was adopted. (Proposed by Roger Walshe, seconded by Peter Rogers.)
5. Treasurer's Report: the statement of accounts had been circulated with the June newsletter. Adoption of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Michael Harwood and seconded by Keith Wade.
6. Elections: in accordance with the rules of the Society, the following having been nominated and se-

conded, were elected:-

President: Sir Michael Harrison (nominated by David Gamble, seconded by Tim Pearce);

Vice Presidents: Mrs. A. Rogers, Messrs. A.S. Ford, R.Harcourt, E.Keys, M.Nairne, P Rogers and B.A. Walker (nominated by Tim Pearce, seconded by Maree Walker);

Chairman: Mr. David Gamble (nominated by Peter Rogers, seconded by Urszula Beckford);

Vice Chairman: Mr. John Edge (nominated by Margaret Barnard, seconded by Keith Wade);

Treasurer: Mr. Richard Baxter (nominated by Marilyn Canet, seconded by Elizabeth Purves);

Secretary/Membership Secretary: Mr Tim Pearce (nominated by Peter Rogers, seconded by Marilyn Canet);

Publicity Officer: Mr. Keith Wade (nominated by Graham Usher, seconded by Urszula Beckford);

Editor: Mrs Maree Walker (nominated by Graham Usher, seconded by Urszula Beckford);

Executive Committee: Messrs. Roger Fitz Gerald, Charles George, David Green, Nicholas White, (nominated by Adrienne Rogers, seconded by Peter Rogers).

7. There being no other business and no questions the meeting was declared closed.

MINUTES OF 63RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On behalf of the Chairman, Tim Pearce delivered his presentation detailing the Society's activities for the year, the main points of which are summarised below.

* The Local List project is proceeding with the first phase almost completed. Sir Michael Harrison gave a brief update and emphasised that Sevenoaks is leading the way in Kent in establishing the methodology and especially in compiling the list through the means of volunteers.

The Sevenoaks Society is represented on a number of other bodies. "The Remarkable Trees of Sevenoaks" exhibitions have been successful by any measures chosen. Keith Wade gave an update on the additional displays that have been mounted following the initial exhibition in the Orangery at Knole in September 2014. Riverhill House, Lullingstone Castle and the New School at West Heath School have been the venues and this has had the effect of raising the profile of the society; raising the awareness of the importance of trees; and perhaps, more importantly, creating a lasting resource and legacy for the youth of our town.

* The Society had responded to the planning consultation on the Buckhurst 2 parking proposal, which was turned down and as we are now waiting for a new proposal, there is

not really much to say.

* The Townscape and Planning Group monitored planning applications for the year and has responded to and reports on the status of the following applications presented to council:

- Ragstones, 1 the Vine, appeal pending
- 98/116 London Road (Salmons site - Berkeley Homes) appeal pending
- 20 London Road (Williamsons) pending
- 51 Bradbourne Vale Road (demolition approved)
- Tubs Hill House (re penthouses-refused)
- Jade Cottage, Wildernesse Mount (demolition, 2 new houses) pending.

* The Walks committee is led by Nick White. A new walking guide (volume 5) has been produced, volumes 1 and 2 have been revised and updated and volumes 3 and 4 are currently in revision. For information – the series "Country Walks around Sevenoaks" are available in Sevenoaks Bookshop.

* There was a comprehensive programme of events in 2015; the regular bi-monthly talks, Henry Oakeley told us "Why poisonous plants make good medicine"; Jonathon Fenner described "The Kentish North Shore"; the Society, through its committee, participated in the Seven-

MINUTES OF 63RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

oaks Festival in June.

* The new website is nearing completion and is due to go live in October.

* The newsletter continues to be well received by the members. We would welcome more enquiries about Sevenoaks that fit into the category of curious questions.

* Thanks were expressed to retiring committee members, Phyllis Styles for her service as membership secretary, Peter Moss for his work on the Townscape and Planning Group, Pauline Burrow for her representation on the Town Centre Partnership, Grant Walker for his work on the existing website for the past five years. Tim Pearce was commended for his unstinting efforts on behalf of the Society.

John Edge presented the 2015 Frank Marshall Award.

The members of the judging panel were Rebecca Lamb – Conservation Officer at Sevenoaks District Council, Roger Fitz Gerald – architect and John Edge – chartered surveyor.

Nominations for this biennial award given by the Society to recognise the best improvement or contribution to the townscape of Sevenoaks were as follows:

- The Edge, a block of 11 flats on the corner of Mount Harry road and Bradbourne Park Road;

- Redwood Place, 55 flats in four blocks in Morewood Close;

- 28 South Park, comprising four town houses;

- Tricon House, a commercial site and penthouse dwelling in Old Coffee House Yard;

- Building extension incorporating four flats in 46 South Park;

- Marks and Spencers living wall in London Road;

- Southgate Place, a block of eleven flats located behind the medical centre in South Park.

The winner was Tricon House and the award was presented to James Overton representing the developers, Hambridge Homes, and on behalf of the architects CDMS Partners Limited based in Brighton.

An address was then given by Anthony Lancaster, Strategic Planning Manager for Sevenoaks District Council. Tony spoke about changes to the planning environment by successive governments that govern decisions taken by local authorities, the importance of local plans and the constraints that are imposed on planning. Of major interest to the audience was the designation of green belt and the criteria for preservation of particular areas. Sevenoaks, in particular, is constrained by a number of salient factors – it is bounded by areas of outstanding

MINUTES OF 63RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

natural beauty, ancient woodland and land at risk of flooding, all of which ensure that opportunities for extensive development are limited.

A request was made for support in the development of conservation guides for reference: two of these are *Shopfront Design Guide* to help with integrating new businesses into an existing townscape and *Living in a Listed Building* offering guidance on materials and design and on what needs permission where alterations to the fabric and internal configuration of a building may be proposed

THE SEVENOAKS SOCIETY
For the Conservation and Improvement of the Town

**SIXTY FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**
to be held at

THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
BRADBOURNE VALE ROAD,
SEVENOAKS,
TN13 3QG
ON 5TH OCTOBER 2016 AT 7.15 PM

AGENDA

1. Notice convening the Meeting
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting
4. To receive the Executive Committee's Report
5. To receive the Statement of Accounts
6. To elect: President and Vice Presidents
 Officers and other members of the Committee

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the rules, the Officers and Committee Members relinquish office each year and are eligible for election. Proposals for the election of Officers and/or Committee must be in the hands of the Chairman at least fourteen days before the A.G.M., and the consent of such nominees first having been obtained.

The Officers of the Society shall consist of President and seven Honorary Officers comprising the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Publicity Officer and Membership Secretary. The Executive Committee shall consist of these Officers and not more than eight further members.

7. Any other business of which due notice has been given