

# THE CHICHESTER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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a monthly meeting of the  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE?**

Or contribute to the Society's  
life in another way?

Share your ideas and phone  
Secretary on 01243 776757, or  
Chairman on 01243 773074  
Every little helps!

.....  
Thank you to members who told  
us their preferred format for this  
magazine:  
paper was the favourite.



Seasonal street events make Chichester a special place

Photo: Brian Henham

## SEASON'S GREETINGS!

Your Society expects to be busy in 2022 with issues that affect our city and surrounding areas. First, Southern Water continues to pollute our seas and harbour with discharges of untreated sewage after high rainfall. Surely, it's not beyond this country's water companies to construct a system that resolves these problems. I call on our MP to maintain pressure on the government to drive this forward and get a result.

Second, housing developments are at the top of residents' concerns, for the sheer scale of building is swamping this area. We understand the need for housing our growing population. But we need good quality housing of the right density and in the right place that protects our Harbour, countryside, and natural habitats for wildlife - not only for us but our children and our children's children.

Third, that old chestnut the A27 is back on the agenda. Like all residents, we want a plan that handles existing traffic as well as the increasing number of vehicles caused by the building boom in our area. Frequent name changing is not enough: the Highways Agency became Highways England which is now called National Highways! And we must not forget the Chichester Neighbourhood plan is slowly developing, and we will look forward to a referendum when we residents can vote on the Plan's proposals.

This Christmas we'll all be able to meet with friends and family to celebrate the festive season. Last year Christmas was spoilt for many due to the lockdown, so I do hope this year works out well for you and your families: Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

**Peter Evans, Chairman**







# History in the Making:

## Help to play your part and add your story to the West Sussex Archives

Would you like to record a diary of your experience of the pandemic and how it is affecting you, your family and friends and your local community? You could record your experiences, thoughts and feelings either on paper or on your phone as an individual, as part of a family project within the same household, as a creative outlet or simply as a daily record.

Despite the challenges we are all experiencing, we have a unique opportunity to work together and record the events that we are all living through. We are therefore asking for your help and hoping that you might like to join us and be a part of this project.



If you do not want to keep a diary, we would also like help in collecting other material that you might come across such as

- Leaflets/flyers/posters from councils and other organisations about the pandemic
- Material from local business relating to closures or changes to how they operate
- Advice from local organisations about hygiene, social distancing and self-isolation
- Information about community efforts to help vulnerable and isolated persons
- Information from local schools regarding closures and home-schooling

If you have documents or digital files which you are ready to deposit, please contact WSRO as below

It is important that you do not risk your own or anyone else's health whilst gathering materials. All government guidelines regarding hygiene, social distancing and self-isolation must be followed



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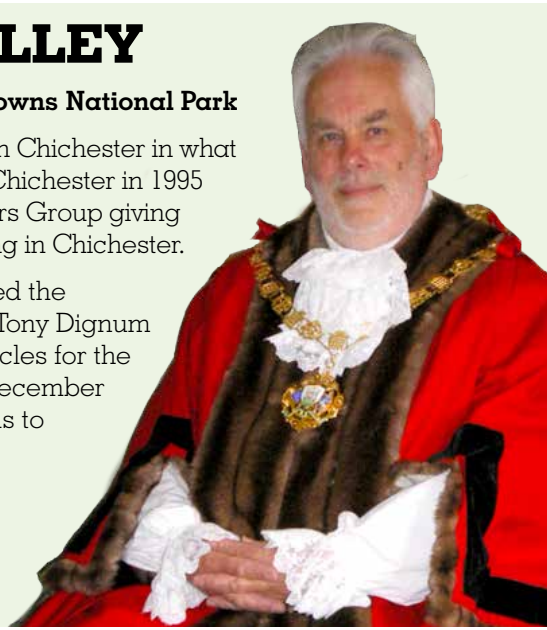
# WE REMEMBER MICHAEL WOOLLEY

John Templeton recalls a ChiSoc member who supported the South Downs National Park

Michael Woolley died on 3 October after a long illness. He was educated in Chichester in what was then Bishop Otter College and later taught in the city. He returned to Chichester in 1995 after 5 years in Mexico and was subsequently Coordinator of Haslar Visitors Group giving advice to asylum seekers. He was an active member of the Quaker Meeting in Chichester.

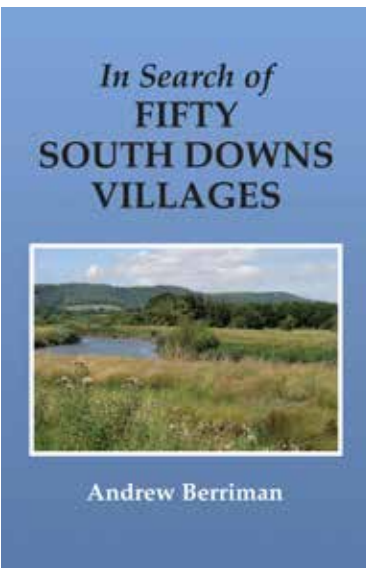
Michael was one of several members of the Chichester Society who joined the Executive Committee in 2002 in response to a call by the new Chairman Tony Dignum to revitalise the Society. He served until 2007 and contributed several articles for the Newsletter which included *A personal view of the Pallant House saga* (December 2002), *Chichester's Old Quaker Meeting House* (June 2005), and proposals to protect *Summersdale* (Sept 2006).

As Mayor in 2009-11 he presided over the closure of the South Downs Campaign in 2010 which had achieved its objective of a South Downs National Park. Michael played a major part in the life of the city and will long be remembered.



## FIFTY SOUTH DOWNS VILLAGES

A book for Christmas!  
Richard Childs explains why



I have lived in Chichester for nearly 30 years and toured the countryside passing through many delightful villages, stopping to admire a parish church or some other attractive feature. Andrew Berriman's new book examines 50 of these villages, all close to Chichester and within the South Downs

National Park. They are covered in six chapters, each on a specific area such as Along the Lavant or Near Stane Street. There's a handy map showing the location of each village so you could readily do a tour of several in one go. The narrative on each village ends with excellent photographs, most taken by Andrew. I particularly enjoyed those of our lost railway stations at Rogate, Elsted, and Cocking. This is a thoroughly well-researched book which I can strongly recommend – an ideal Christmas gift! What I suggest you do is get in your car with a map and a copy of Andrew's book and explore our wonderful and often hidden countryside.

Copies can be obtained from Kim's Bookshop on South St, or by emailing [andrew.berriman@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.berriman@gmail.com). The price is £13.95 + £3.50 when posted.

## NEWS ABOUT WHITEHOUSE FARM

Andrew Bain was present at several consultation meetings during the summer

The West of Chichester (Whitehouse Farm) Community Liaison Group has been meeting during the summer to consult with several interest groups on the Application for phase 2 of Chichester's largest development. Here's a summary.

After these consultation meetings the Chichester Society sent 2 letters covering the following aspects:-

- A new wildflower meadow: we supported the Brandy Hole Copse conservators' plea for a wildflower meadow in the north-west of the city.
- Zero carbon targets should be mandatory rather than just meeting current aspirational standards.
- Neighbourhood diversity can be achieved with affordable housing and flats with private amenity space.
- Less car parking provision and more sustainable transport such as walking, cycling and a frequent bus service and car club.
- Whitehouse Farm surgery: keep the proposed medical practice in the hub which we understand is under threat.

Other groups who participated were Chi Cycle, Westgate Residents Association, Parklands Residents Association and the Green Party. All have raised their concerns about the safety and potential congestion of the Southern access road proposal and the future maintenance of the estate amenities, roads and landscaping.

Your Society hopes that Minerva Heights will be a community that works and a source of pride for generations to come. The Society's establishment in 1973 was born out of the threat to the character and liveability of Chichester from a destructive road scheme. Today the City is again under threat from a ring of very ordinary housing estates.



# UNRAVELLING THE SOUTHERN WATER FIASCO

Southern Water’s new owners may reduce future environmental disasters, but it will be many years before raw sewage no longer threatens wildlife in our rivers and harbours. Vincent Porter suggests our MPs could do more to speed this up

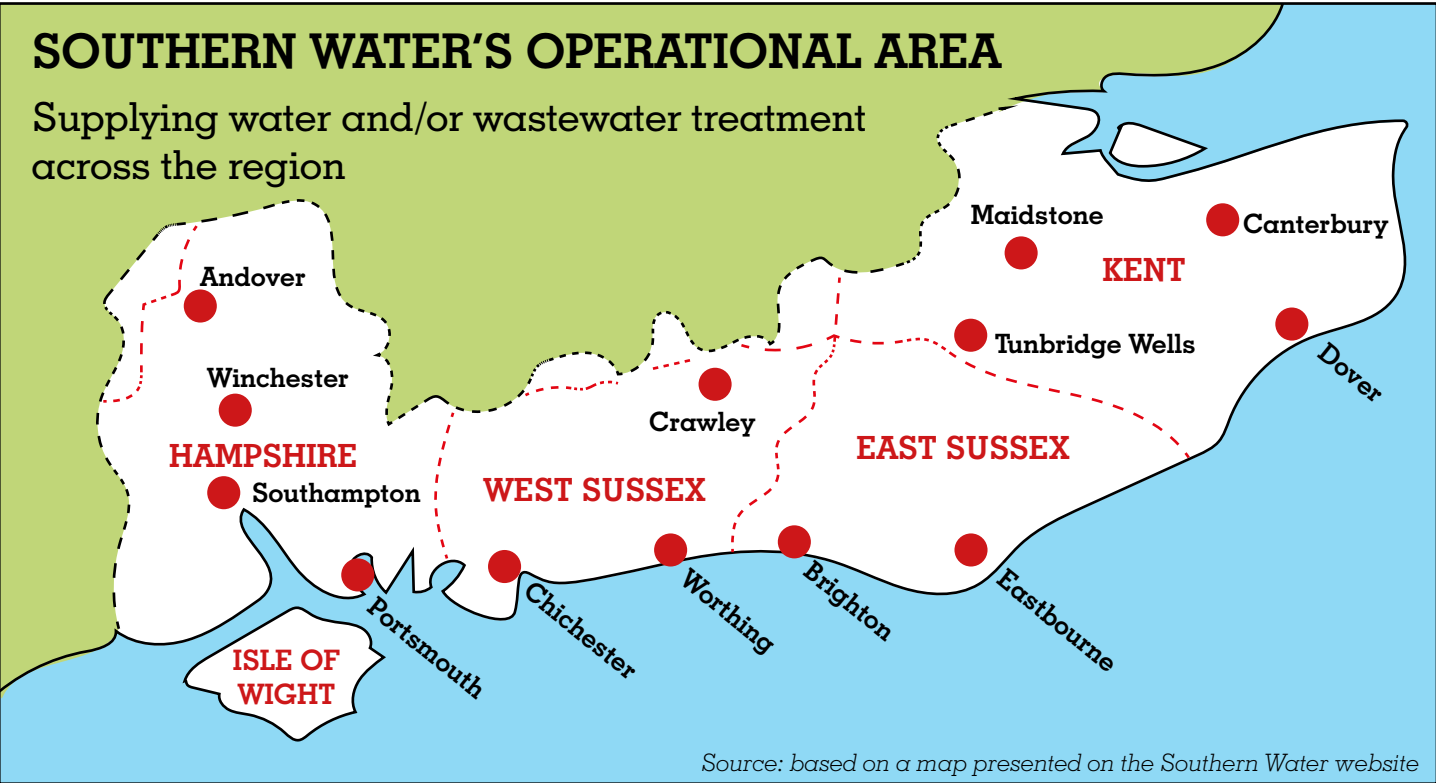
It would be easy to join the chorus of media opprobrium attacking Southern Water for almost 7,000 illegal sewage discharges over five years to 2015. Unfortunately, the imposition of a £90 million fine following a recent prosecution brought by the Environment Agency hasn’t really addressed the problem. The money will only end up being paid to the Government. Water industry regulator Ofwat, which worked closely with the Environment Agency, had adopted a more nuanced approach. Instead of a financial penalty of £37.7 million for significant breaches of licence conditions and statutory duties, it reduced this to £3 million, on condition that £123 million was returned to former and existing customers. Southern Water complied and in 2020-21 their average customer bill for water and wastewater was reduced by about 11 percent. Regrettably, none of this has stopped the discharge of sewage. To explore a long-term solution, we need to unravel Southern Water’s ownership and managerial structure, or ‘helix’. This has changed dramatically in recent years, and even more so during 2021.

### The Macquarie helix

Southern Water has new owners. On 9 August this year, a finance company with global aspirations and Australian origins - Macquarie Asset Management which had previously invested in Thames Water - became the major shareholder in Greensands Holdings Limited, a Jersey-registered company who bought Southern Water in 2009. Greensands is a consortium of long-term investors and pension funds that hasn’t attained its expectations because in the two years 2019 and 2020 there was a deficit of over £1 billion. It therefore paid no dividends to its shareholders. International finance has international connections, and Southern Water’s problems reached corporate ears at Macquarie. According to their press release of 9 August 2021 Macquarie is investing £1 billion ‘to acquire a majority stake in Southern Water’, a sum that will ‘recapitalise the business and implement a more sustainable financing strategy for Southern Water’. The press release continues that this will help Southern Water to ‘invest significantly to

upgrade its network with £2 billion invested over the next four years of the current regulatory period to fix the pipes, pumping stations, and sewers which are underperforming and causing harm to the local environment.’ We’re told this vast sum is ‘equivalent to approximately £1,000 for each property in Southern Water’s catchment area’. As one might expect, Ofwat is closely involved. Their letter to Macquarie, also released on 9 August, ends optimistically: ‘We welcome the investment and business drive to which you have committed and look for swift progress as and when you take control’.

Meanwhile, back to Greensands, who had appointed a new Chairman to Southern Water’s Board, reviewed their five-year Business Plan, accepted Ofwat’s regulatory decisions and the later prosecution by the Environment Agency. It’s understood Macquarie is walking into this situation with their eyes wide open and has informed Ofwat that it intends to accelerate Southern Water’s transformation by 2024.



### The Southern Water helix

Southern Water’s Board of Directors is now responsible for implementing an ambitious business plan. But this is in the context of rising debt and falling profit. During 2020-21 debt has risen to £5.2 billion while gross profit fell to £140 million, largely because of an agreement with Ofwat to reduce its customer revenues. Macquarie, the new owner, has promised Ofwat that by 2024, Southern Water will be able to invest £2 billion for improving treatment works, pumping stations and sewer networks, which currently cause most of the pollution incidents. Whether this will enable Southern Water to bring forward their target date of 2040 for reducing pollution incidents to zero is unclear.

### The environmental helix

In addition to supplying water and wastewater services to its customers from Hampshire to Kent, Southern Water has many environmental responsibilities. These include looking after ‘some of the rarest chalk streams in the world, some of the best bathing beaches, two National Parks, four Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a world-heritage biosphere, and more than 200 Sites of Special Scientific Interest’. Yet Southern Water estimates pollution incidents are unlikely to reduce to zero until 2040. In contrast Macquarie is more confident because it wrote to Ofwat in August this year that they would ‘strengthen a zero-tolerance mind-set to environmental pollution’. This may not be too difficult to fulfil as Southern Water has been one of the worst in the UK water sector. More valuable to us as customers may be Macquarie’s commitment to Ofwat to pay its own investors less than 4% until 2025, and Ofwat’s intention to review Southern Water’s environmental performance by February next year.

### The political challenge

Regrettably, our elected political representatives will probably achieve very little, as became clear on 20 October, when the House of Commons rejected the Lords’ amendment to the Environment Bill. This would have required the private water companies to improve their sewerage systems and ‘demonstrate progressive reductions in the harm caused by discharges of untreated sewage’. Most Conservative MPs, including Chichester’s Gillian Keegan, voted against the Lords’ amendment. However, 23 Tories, nine of whom represented constituencies in Southern Water’s catchment area, did vote against the Government. A public backlash on social media was more effective, however. Less than a week later, Secretary of State George Eustice announced a partial U-turn requiring the water companies ‘to demonstrate progress’ within five years.

The detailed effects on Southern Water’s behaviour are currently unclear, for the root of the disagreement lies in the financial tension between Macquarie’s desire to maximise its shareholders’ dividends and the cost of improving and modernising Southern’s ageing infrastructure. On 9 August, Macquarie promised Ofwat that until March 2025 it would distribute less than 4 per cent yearly to its shareholders. Chichester will therefore have to wait until Ofwat’s 2024 Price Review to see what influence Ofwat and our elected politicians will have over Macquarie’s behaviour between then and 2040, when Southern has promised us that it will dump no more sewage.

Vincent Porter is Emeritus Professor of Mass Communications at the University of Westminster and a member of the Newsletter Editorial Committee.

Readers can refer to the Court Judgement at: [www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Southern-Water-Sentencing-Remarks.pdf](http://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Southern-Water-Sentencing-Remarks.pdf)

## A SOUTHERN WATER TIMELINE 1989-2040

Changing ownership, frequent sewage disasters and increasing fines. But all may be better by 2040

1989	Southern Water is created
2002	Sold to First Aqua
2007	£20 m fine for overcharging
2009	Greensands Holdings becomes the main owner
2016	£2 m fine for sewage on Kent’s beaches
2019	£37.7 m fine down to £3 m if customers are repaid £123 m
2021	£90 m fine for nearly 7,000 discharges 2010-15
2021	New owner is Macquarie Asset Management (MAM)
2021	MAM promise Ofwat to invest £1 bn to upgrade Southern’s infrastructure
2022	Ofwat will review environmental progress
2025	MAM may increase dividends
2030	Southern Water wants to be carbon neutral
2040	Southern Water hopes there will be no more sewage discharges into this region’s rivers, harbours and seas.

## LEGAL REMARKS

According to Mr Justice Johnson’s sentencing remarks on 9 July this year, Southern Water Services pleaded guilty to 51 counts of discharging untreated sewage into 17 separate sites of controlled coastal waters over a 6-year period, from January 2010 to December 2015. This was the equivalent of the volume held by 7,400 Olympic size swimming pools (para 1)

He reduced the fine by a third to £90 million as the defendant had entered guilty pleas to all counts (para 63)

# HOUSING DELIVERY POLICIES IN THE LOCAL PLAN WENT OUT OF DATE IN JULY 2020

As the Local Plan Review is awaited, housing applications have been made across the District. Christopher Mead-Briggs asks what will be the outcome

Eighteen months have elapsed since the housing provision in the Local Plan became out of date. Why is this important? It’s because without up-to-date housing provision the Local Plan can no longer demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply which is a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework. This Society supports Chichester District Council (CDC) in the progress it has made to review the Plan. It supports the CDC *Interim Housing Policy Statement* which has so far been successful as guidance at the planning application stage, but will it be successful when appeals are determined?

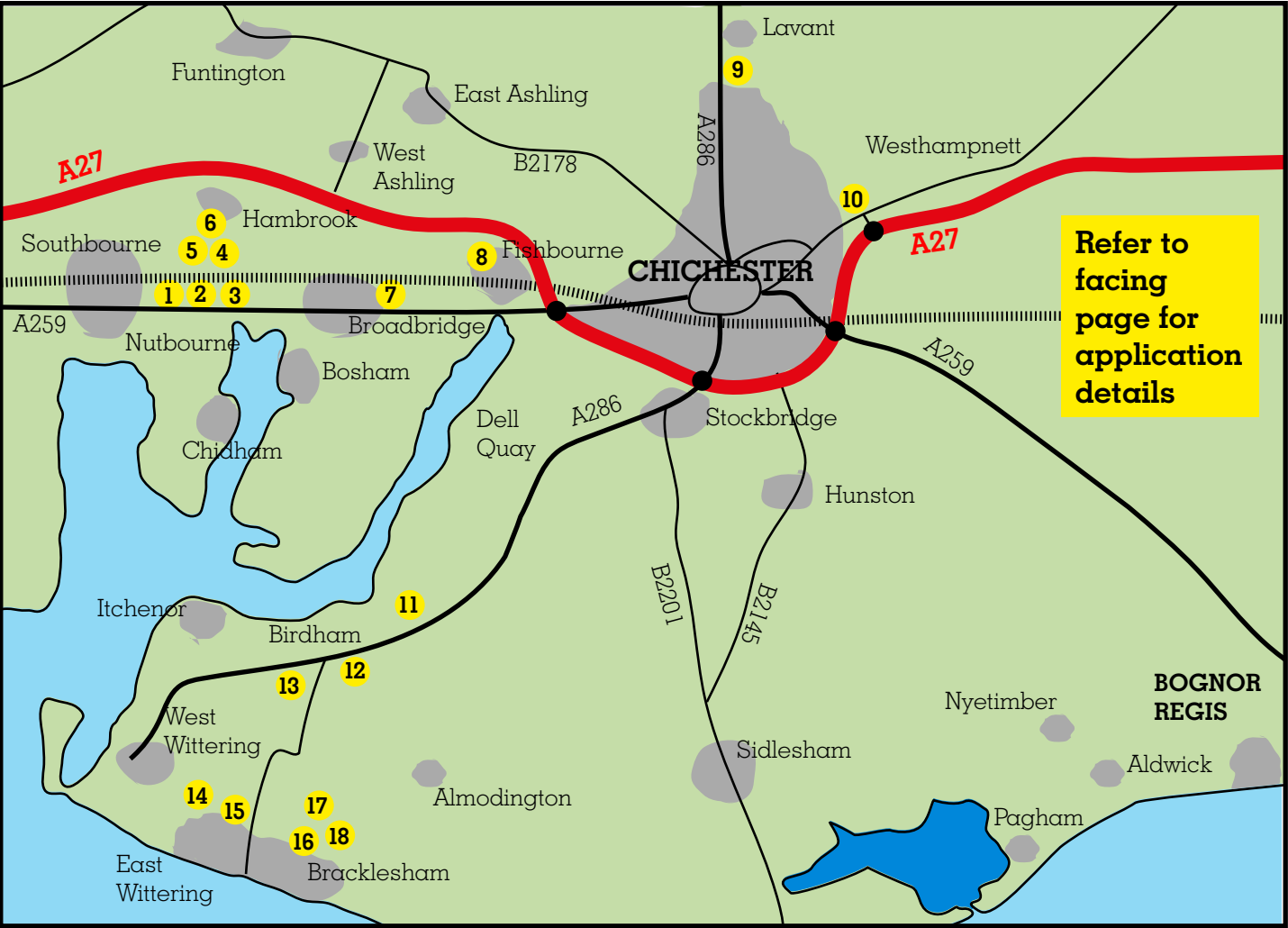
### Planning applications

In the south of Chichester District, and at the time of writing, 18 applications have been submitted to CDC for over 1,700 dwellings. Most are on greenfield sites that are unallocated for development. In addition, and to the north of Bosham, is a further site under consideration for a substantial scheme of 3,000 dwellings called Broadbridge. The pressure is on.

### National planning policies take precedence

All of these applications rely on the expectation that without a 5-year housing land supply, development of one or more of these sites will be permitted on appeal because it is the Government’s aim to build more

houses. National planning policy requires councils to have enough sites ready for development to meet their housing need for the next five years. Where councils can’t demonstrate this 5-year supply, national planning policy, rather than local planning rules, take precedence. National policy states there should be a *presumption in favour of sustainable development* for housing. This means that if a site can be shown to be able to deliver ‘sustainable development’ then planning permission should be granted, even if the site sits outside the Local Plan allocations. In this period while we have no up-to-date policy for housing delivery, CDC has produced an *Interim Housing Policy Statement* (IPS), which helps to guide the process of deciding how to determine planning applications.



### Interim Housing Policy Statement (IPS)

The Council’s IPS has tests these applications need to pass: that they are deliverable (without needing to wait for major new infrastructure); ready to start (not constrained by any delay); and locally sustainable.

More specifically, the IPS explains that these sites need to:

- adjoin existing settlements
- be on an acceptable scale to that location
- not cause a coalescence of settlements
- be at the appropriate density for the location
- not have an impact on the surrounding townscape and landscape character
- not be in wildlife corridors
- describe how infrastructure will be secured to support them
- not compromise environmental standards
- accord with the CDC Climate Change Emergency declaration
- be of high-quality design
- have good accessibility on foot, by cycle and vehicle
- avoid flood risk
- be nitrate neutral.

It is hoped this level of detail will ensure only the most appropriate schemes will be approved in this interim period before Chichester’s Local Plan Review is completed.

### Planning Appeals

So far (as at end October when this is being written) eleven of these applications have been determined and all were refused by CDC. Of these, five have been appealed and there are three further appeals for non-determination. So far two appeals have been heard, both over the Internet, and decisions are now awaited. Will the Planning Inspectors who hear these appeals be influenced by the Local Plan Review?

Completing the Local Plan Review is crucial to proving our area has a 5-year housing land supply. Once all the supporting evidence is completed the Local Plan Review is submitted for public examination. This process then reaches what is called the ‘Regulation 19’ stage. It will contain specific housing policy recommendations for the area. The status of the reviewed plan rises in importance when the ‘Regulation 19’ stage is reached. It is hoped this will happen next Spring. It will then be given weight in appeals. The consultation is followed by an ‘Examination in Public’ before a government-appointed Inspector who determines the revisions to the Local Plan and whether it can be finally adopted.

### Why has it taken so long?

Building 300,000 houses a year in England is a prime objective of the Government’s national planning policy. With all the constraints in our area, CDC must prove that no stone has been left unturned before lower housing numbers will be accepted at an Examination in Public. CDC has undertaken the research needed (47 policy documents so far comprising primary, secondary and other relevant evidence, and various background papers). Supplementary help has come from the Planning Advisory Service, an arm of Central Government whose planners have assisted CDC planning officers to complete this work. This is due to the case made to the Secretary of State by the leader of our Council, the Planning Cabinet member, and our MP.

### CDC’s Local Plan progress compared across all English planning authorities

There are 337 Local Planning Authorities in England of which 155 (45 percent) have adopted local plans. The remaining 182 (55 percent) have plans in progress, which includes Chichester, and so we are among the majority in England. But not only that, we are among the minority that has both a National Park and an AONB, Chichester Harbour. There is also the A27, a Trunk Road owned by National Highways (previously Highways England), in need of an upgrade. Taken together, these have made the task of completing Chichester’s Local Plan so much more challenging – and is why it is taking time to complete this important review.

## THE 18 APPLICATIONS

	Ref No/ Location	Dwlgls
1	20/03319 Nutbourne	94
2	20/03320 Nutbourne	132
3	20/03321 Chidham	68
4	20/00412 Hambrook	35
5	20/03378 Hambrook	30
6	20/01826 Hambrook	118
7	21/00571 Bosham	301
8	20/02303 Fishbourne	35
9	20/02675 North Chichester	140
10	20/02824 Westhampnett	165
11	20/03034 Birdham	25
12	21/01830 Birdham	150
13	20/02066 Birdham	77
14	20/02491 East Wittering	70
15	21/01376 Bracklesham	65
16	20/03125 Earnley	100
17	19/02493 Earnley	32
18	20/02236 Earnley	57
	TOTAL	1,694

To review these applications, consult CDC’s website at [Chichester.gov.uk/viewplanningapplications](http://Chichester.gov.uk/viewplanningapplications)

For the large Broadbridge scheme see [kingandcompany.co.uk/portfolio/broadbridge](http://kingandcompany.co.uk/portfolio/broadbridge)

Christopher Mead-Briggs is a member of the Society’s Executive Committee and the Newsletter Editorial Committee



# CLASSICISM AND C G STILLMAN

## Tim Hudson outlines the career of Chichester’s chief 20th-century architect

Cecil George Stillman (1894–1968) is unknown to many, but as West Sussex County Architect from 1932 to 1945 he had a greater influence on Chichester’s appearance than any other designer. Curiously, the author of 20th-century Chichester’s most important building in Classical style was not by nature a convinced Classicist. In his later work he moved first to a plainer style that owed something to contemporary Dutch and Swedish architecture, and then to a closer alignment with Modernism. Recent consultation of the architect’s First World War service record at the National Archives and his biographical file at the RIBA (both previously embargoed by Covid 19) has enabled a more nuanced account of his career.

### Stillman before Chichester

Stillman did not go to University, nor did he train in the office of a major architectural practice as was common at the time. His only formal education was to ‘Higher Grade’ level; and early experience was with the architect and surveyor Walter H Bell of Newbury (Berks), his home town. From circa 1912 he was in London, working as a junior architectural assistant with a commercial firm. Meanwhile he studied building construction with the International Correspondence Schools, an early example of distance learning. He succeeded in passing his final architectural exams in 1922, when he became an ARIBA. He had evidently acquired much relevant experience during war service with the Royal Engineers, ending with the rank of Lieutenant.

After a short period post-war in the Office of Works he became chief architectural assistant to the County Architect of Hampshire in Winchester and subsequently Deputy County Architect there. He then moved to be Deputy County Architect of Cheshire in 1926 and County Architect in East Suffolk in 1928, before taking up his post at Chichester. From his architectural studies he clearly absorbed the principles of Classical design. The Neo-

Georgian mode, used later at County Hall, Chichester, was employed by Stillman in, for instance, two police stations in Suffolk, at Beccles and Felixstowe.

### Neo-Georgian in Sussex

Stillman was appointed as County Architect in Chichester at the early age of 38. Almost his first task was to provide a new headquarters building for the County Council, to include all the administrative, clerical and technical staff who were then based at different sites. The Neo-Georgian style was then normative for such buildings, which were also expected to complement local building traditions and materials. County Hall, built between 1933 and 1936, is thus closely related to the nearby Edes House in West Street, the previous County Hall.

Also Neo-Georgian were the two police stations Stillman designed at Bognor Regis (before 1938) and Worthing (1939–41), both rather dull. They have since been demolished. His only other Neo-Georgian work in Chichester is the pair of pavilions he built circa 1938 flanking Cawley’s Almshouses on Broyle Road. The almshouses, the former city workhouse, had been taken over by St Richard’s Hospital after 1930.



County Hall in Chichester, Stillman’s masterpiece, completed 1936

Photo: Tim Hudson

### Towards Modernism

During each of his previous local government posts Stillman had been interested in school design, in which his expertise is said to have prompted his appointment in Chichester. A major influx of population locally under the Land Settlement scheme (from 1936) required extra classrooms to be built at Sidlesham. Stillman’s solution, a pioneering one, was prefabrication in light steel. By this date he had realized that the Modern Movement in architecture had superseded the Neo-Georgian for school design. An article in the *Daily Express* much later indicates Stillman’s great enthusiasm by then for flexible planning in schools, and what he described as his ‘hatred’ for the impressive façade, the quadrangle, and reverence for outside appearance – all characteristics of the Neo-Georgian school. The result at Sidlesham is very much in Modernist mode; and other West Sussex schools, for instance at Bognor Regis, Shoreham and Littlehampton, followed the same pattern, emphasizing horizontality and asymmetry.

In Stillman’s two later major buildings in Chichester the Neo-Georgian of County Hall is transmuted into a kind of ‘stripped’ Classicism related to contemporary work in the Netherlands and Sweden. Stillman certainly knew of the Dutch architect Willem Dudok; and Swedish buildings were also well illustrated in contemporary publications. The first buildings of St Richard’s Hospital of 1937–9, designed by Stillman, were intended as part of a much larger scheme. They are the two red brick blocks west of the present main buildings of the hospital. The original entrance building still has Classical massing and the red brick favoured for the Neo-Georgian style. But Classical detail is missing here. Even less Neo-Georgian, though still symmetrical, is the four-storeyed ward block to the east, with its flat roof and wrap-around multi-paned windows at the corners. The small lodge near the entrance building goes one step further; it is asymmetrical as well as flat-roofed. Equally prominent in Chichester’s townscape is the Court House at Southgate of 1940. This remains Classical in its materials (red brick and stone) and general proportions, but its ‘freedom from pilasters and pediments’ was noted (and commended) by Ian Nairn in his contribution to the Sussex volume of Pevsner’s *Buildings of England* series in 1965. The building falls within the area of Chichester’s ‘Southern Gateway’, soon to be redeveloped, and may therefore be at risk of demolition or damaging alteration. Hopefully the Chichester Society will be strenuous in efforts to protect it, and particularly to agitate for the restoration of its grand entrance hall, latterly subdivided. Stillman’s change of architectural approach may seem surprising; but it was shared contemporaneously by, for instance, Maxwell Fry in England, and Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz in Sweden.

### The national stage

Already a Fellow from 1928, Stillman became a council member of the RIBA in 1939. He was later Vice-President from 1946 to 1948. His involvement with school design continued at national level during the Second World War with membership of committees on, for instance, standardization and prefabrication. Stillman was appointed in 1945 County Architect of Middlesex with a staff of up to 400, serving there until retirement in 1959. Here he was responsible for no less than 138 schools throughout the northern and western suburbs of London. None of his Middlesex work, however, had the prominence – or perhaps the quality – of his major Chichester buildings.

### Final years

In retirement in Bognor Regis Stillman went into private practice with his daughter Pamela and her husband. His son John also became an architect and died a few months ago, aged 101.

Tim Hudson is a former editor of the *Sussex Victoria County History* and contributor to the revised *West Sussex Pevsner guide*. Much information on Stillman was received from the architect’s grandson Fr Philip Warner. There is more on the architect’s career at Tim’s blog <https://classicismonthesouthcoast.wordpress.com/>.



One of two pavilions flanking Cawley Almshouses on Broyle Road

Photo: Ann Hudson



CG Stillman, a member of the Home Guard during WW2

Photo © Fr Philip Warner



County Hall frontispiece, inspired by Edes House on West St

Photo Ann Hudson





**A well-known view of the Cathedral seen from  
Chichester's canal on a very chilly day.**

**Photo: Andy Bayes**



# RAVENNA AND CHICHESTER TWINNED FOR 25 YEARS

## Liz Turner on reasons to celebrate this anniversary

Chichester has now been twinned with Ravenna for 25 years since the initial signing in Italy in December 1996, with formalities completed here in February 1997. Some may consider town twinning to be old fashioned, but it remains very much alive in our city. Friends of Chartres celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary recently, Friends of Valletta signed their Friendship agreement in 2010 and Chichester is now preparing a similar arrangement with Speyer in Germany. Few British towns and cities maintain such strong European links as Chichester.

### Why Ravenna?

Ravenna had already been twinned with Chartres when Ravenna’s Mayor, Dr. Paolo D’Attorre, paid a visit in 1994, participating in Chichester’s celebration of receiving the European Flag of Honour. The beauty of Chichester, its historical background and heritage easily convinced him that he had found the right town for twinning that he had long been looking for. Many different groups and individuals became interested, visits were made, and it was local people who drove the desire for the twinning. That interest, commitment and energy remains as strong today within the Friends of Ravenna.

### The early years

Who were these enthusiastic founders and early members? I was delighted to discover that many of them are still involved today. Anne Scicluna, a Councillor and former Mayor of Chichester, became our first Chairman and still serves on the committee. Clare Apel was the Mayor who signed the original twinning documents. Others who also played an important part in setting up the Friends are Lesley and Charles Brownlee, Ray and Margaret Brown, David Huxtable, Bryn Davies and Lois Cope.

### Memories.

Bryn and Astrid Davies were in Ravenna in 1996 and they describe being ‘in awe at seeing the mosaics at the Basilica di San Apollinare. It gave us the initiative to learn Italian and staying with an Italian family has been a wonderful experience’. Lois Cope was on the steering committee as secretary. She recalls being in Ravenna for the formal twinning: ‘It was a memorable occasion held in the most beautiful building’. She rejoices that the Society has continued with a high standard and kept up exchanges with our friends in Ravenna. Lesley and Charles Brownlee, former committee members both, describe the signing of the twinning documents in Ravenna as ‘a jolly and splendid affair. We were entertained, well fed and saw Ravenna in all its glory’. Lesley comments on Clare Apel’s excellent Italian which impressed their hosts. Howard and Jennifer Bottomley, who have been involved for many years, provided me with examples of some of the activities that Chichester and Ravenna have enjoyed. There have been many links involving children and young people and two schools formed twinning links with equivalent schools in Ravenna. Students came to Chichester College for a week in

2009 and 2011. Teachers and parents made visits, as did some young musicians giving several concerts in Ravenna. We also gave bursaries to two young students, Rosie Smith and Matthew Callen, enabling them to spend time continuing their studies over there. Plans were being made to do the same for a music student from Chichester University until the pandemic arrived.

Many twinning visits have been arranged over the years with tours to places of interest in and around Chichester including the Flower Festival in the Cathedral and further afield to Windsor, Bath and the New Forest. We have had the Italians taking part in Scottish dancing, making their own cream tea and watching in amazement at Morris dancing. Of great interest were two visits by the Canterini Romagnoli, Italian folk singers. They

performed at the Market Cross here in Chichester, at Arundel and memorably at the Weald and Downland Museum where they dedicated a song to a bride and groom!

The friendship and hospitality of the *Ravennati* is ‘always wonderful’. Seeing the many splendid churches and outstanding mosaics in Ravenna is the highlight. There have been visits to Ferrara and Bologna and an evening in the beautiful Teatro Alighieri for a talk by the renowned conductor Riccardo Muti. On a different note entirely, we visited a hut in the Marches near Ravenna in which Garibaldi hid when fleeing from French soldiers. Anne Scicluna also recalls a display of ‘whip dancing’ performed by children! We have had some distinguished members and none more so than the three soldiers who fought in and around Ravenna at the time of its liberation in 1944: John Saunders, Graham Bell and Harvey Starte.

Other events have included a poetry competition, a painting competition and in recent years Friends of Ravenna have offered Italian lessons. Worth mentioning at this point for those interested in discovering more about Ravenna’s extraordinary history and its world heritage mosaics is that there is a wonderfully illustrated book *Ravenna Capital of Empire, Crucible of Europe* by Judith Herrin, a Byzantine authority.

### Celebrations

We are planning a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary event early next year, but since travel is uncertain in these pandemic times this is likely to involve an online celebration by Zoom. A musical evening during December has also been arranged with performers from Chichester University. The future of the Friends of Ravenna is looking bright because many new members have joined us and attendance at our monthly meetings is excellent. Here’s to the next 25 years!



Wall-to-wall mosaics at Ravenna’s San Vitale. They are considered to be the largest and best-preserved Byzantine mosaics outside modern-day Istanbul, illustrating Old Testament figures and events  
Photo: Liz Turner

Liz Turner chairs the Friends of Ravenna. Readers interested in finding out more about the Friends may like to look at their website: [www.chi-ravenna.org.uk](http://www.chi-ravenna.org.uk)



Mayor Clare Apel together with Town Clerk Eddie Saunders and Ravenna’s Deputy Mayor Luigi Bianchi confirm Chichester’s twinning with Ravenna before the Council House in 1997



The Canterini Romagnoli singers from Ravenna made an impression at the Weald and Downland Museum and dedicated a song to the bride and groom  
Photo: Anne Scicluna



# A BOUNDARY WALK AROUND CHICHESTER

This walk encompasses urban and rural features. David Wilson is our guide

This is the first of two walks that ‘beat the bounds’ of Chichester and hopefully will add to your sense of place. Our next walk will appear in a later edition and follow Chichester’s western boundary and neighbourhoods. The southern boundary needs no description, for it’s simply a walk along the A27 from the Fishbourne roundabout to Portfield: but who would want to do that? To assist navigation, readers should take a street map to complement the diagram below. Our walk begins at the city centre and takes us eastward to the boundary near *Bognor Road*, then close to the boundary and northwards ending at *Lavant Road* in Summersdale. Here you can take the N°. 60 bus back to the city centre. Walking distance is about 4 miles and takes a couple of hours.

From Eastgate Square (1), walk along the twitten next to the Eastgate Inn which becomes *Whyke Lane*. From here take first left into *Cambrai Avenue*, cross *Whyke Road*, and along *York Road* as far as *Bognor Road*. Turn right and cross over as far as *Florence Road*. Continue a few yards on *Florence Road* and look for a gap in the wall leading to a car park which you cross and turn left into *Chatsworth Road*, then second left into *Caernarvon Road*, just short of *Cyril Road* (2). Here the route is close to the boundary which at this point runs along the A27. Bear left into *Osborne Crescent* and look for a footpath on the right opposite N°. 129. This leads to *William Road*. Turn left, then take a footpath on the right by a small play area. Continue to *Charles Avenue* (3) and Oving Road.

## Graylingwell Chapel

Turn right and just short of the traffic lights turn left into *Church Road* (4). Continue to the end at *Westhampnett Road*, which we cross and look for a footpath to the front and left of Lidl supermarket. This footpath winds some distance north as far as *Kingsmead Drive* where we turn left to the former Graylingwell Hospital. Chichester’s

parish boundary here follows the River Lavant which can be seen across the fields on the right. On reaching *Graylingwell Drive* bear right and once round the corner we are close to an impressive brick former Water Tower, now a community heating plant for the estate. Turn right into *North Mead* and left after the Graylingwell Chapel (5); and immediately right in front of the white-rendered houses. Go straight on along a footpath to join *Winterbourne Road*, continuing as it becomes *Maplehurst Road*, and along to the end to find a gap in the hedge by no.1 leading to *Fordwater Road*. Alternatively, after the dip use the parallel footpath connecting ends of the cul-de-sacs on the right, offering glimpses of the Lavant valley.

## A winterbourne

Turn right and look out for a footpath sign on the left (6). We turn left here and along a country footpath for a short distance before turning left again into a field. Our route goes west from here across fields to Summersdale, by a hedge as far as *The Drive*. We turn right and continue to *Lavant Road* where there is a bus stop with services back to the city centre.



## Conversation pieces (as numbered)

1. Just to the right of the twitten is a house where John Keats was staying with the parents of his friend Charles Dilke in 1819 where he wrote his famous poem *The Eve of St Agnes*. Look for a plaque high up under the eaves. There’s also a statue of Keats across Eastgate Square.
2. Some road names in this area have connections to local history. *Cambrai Avenue* remembers Arthur Keates, the elder brother of Frederick Keates who built these houses. They last met in Cambrai shortly before Arthur was killed in battle near Cambrai in 1918. York Road was re-named for King George V, created Duke of York in 1892. Previously it was Wickham Road, after Whykeham Place; hence the name of the pub. The Peacheries, opposite Florence Road, was the site of a market garden which grew and sold peaches for many years. Cyril Road is named for John Cyril Bartholomew; the new houses are built on the site of the Bartholomew depot, a corn business founded by John Woods Bartholomew in 1883. The name of the firm can still be seen painted on their former seed mill in Northgate.
3. The area around Charles Avenue was a former gravel pit dug by the Pound Farm Gravel Co. It has been filled with ballast from Southampton shipping and fly-ash from Portsmouth Power Station while houses here have been built on piles because of the unconsolidated ground. For a while it served local children as an early BMX track and a place to go swimming in. They called it the ‘Bally Hole’ (as in ballast hole).
4. There was a room licensed for worship here in 1851 as part of Oving parish before All Saints Church was built in 1871 to serve the newly formed Portfield parish (now merged with Whyke). It was declared redundant in 1981 and taken over as the Doll and Mechanical Music Museum (the Clive Jones collection). The Museum has now closed.

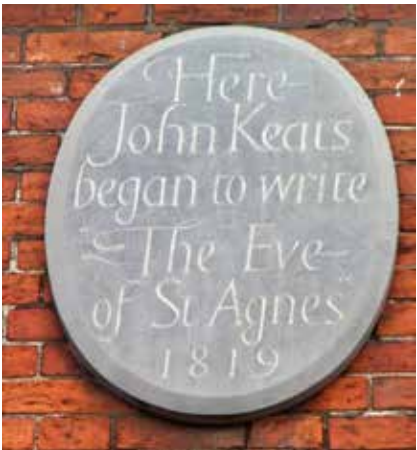


The River Lavant is a winterbourne, dry in the summer months and often full in the winter.  
Photo: David Wilson



Graylingwell Chapel, once used by staff and patients at the hospital, is being managed and renovated by the Chichester Community Development Trust. Their conversion includes a café, workshops and a heritage centre.  
Photo: David Wilson, taken 2014

5. Graylingwell Chapel was used regularly for worship by both staff and patients at the hospital. Its interior design was unusual, with separate pews for men and women patients, and quiet spaces at the west end for agitated patients. A fine set of Memorial windows commemorate the three sons of Dr Arthur Stuart, Senior M.O. at Graylingwell, eight staff members of the hospital who were killed in WWI and Dr Harold Kidd, the first medical Superintendent
6. On reaching Fordwater Road, a short diversion to the right takes you to a bridge over the River Lavant. The riverbed towards Lavant was once the coach road to London, joining up with Chalkpit Lane over the Trundle. There is usually a small amount of water here but the main flow of the river, a winterbourne, typically occurs from November to June. This is when both the chalk downland and the gravel beds around Lavant village become saturated and water surfaces to flow towards Chichester.



This plaque will be found at 11 Eastgate Square  
Photo: David Wilson

David Wilson was a member of the Executive Committee from 2003 to 2016 and continues to contribute articles to the Newsletter



# OUR AGM RETURNS TO THE ASSEMBLY ROOM

Last year’s AGM was online by Zoom but this year we were glad to return to our usual venue at the Council House. Mayor John Hughes presided

On completion of AGM business and after refreshments, Chairman Peter Evans introduced our guest speaker, Margaret Paren OBE, who spoke about her time as Chair of the South Downs National Park: her talk is summarised on the facing page. Below we publish summaries of reports presented by the Chairman and Treasurer.

The following candidates were elected:

Chairman Peter Evans

Vice chairman Bill Sharp

Secretary Anthony Quail

Treasurer Mark Hoult

Executive Committee members: Andrew Bain, Rodney Chambers, Richard Childs, Margaret Evans, John Halliday, Christopher Mead-Briggs, Cedric Mitchell, Grace Taylor, John Templeton

## CHAIRMAN’S REPORT BY PETER EVANS

The Chichester Society has remained steadfast with a strong and loyal membership, although Covid19 has truly tested the Society as well as other groups in our city. The past year has been challenging for us to maintain the work of the Society. We have regularly conducted our meetings via Zoom and maintained a watching brief on planning applications affecting the city and surrounding area. Although pandemic restrictions have prevented us from holding social events for our members, we are looking forward to restarting next year.

**Newsletter:** thanks to our Editorial Group we have maintained production of an informative and well produced quarterly newsletter, which from feedback received is the envy of many other local civic societies. A special mention is due for the members who are part of the hand-delivery team, out there in all weathers ensuring that you receive your newsletters on time.

**Planning and development:** the Society continues to champion the protection of our historic heritage as well as looking at the appropriateness of applications for changes to existing properties and promoting well-designed developments. We cannot stop the flow of planning applications by developers, but we actively lobby Government to produce a planning system that is fit for purpose. We challenge our District Council to ensure they only approve planning applications that meet the requirements of quality, design and construction; and we want new dwellings that meet the community’s expectations. We are pleased that the District Council has now brought the Conservation team back to full strength, which will help with many of the issues arising on planning. However not such good news with Southern Water still being able to discharge raw sewage into our harbour, we need legislation to stop this practice.

**Civic Voice:** Last year we joined Civic Voice the national association of civic societies for England and are now actively engaged with them to bring the voice of Chichester to national campaigns. Over the past year we have received acknowledgement of our work with national bodies seeking our views on Chichester and wider issues.

**The Executive Committee:** we welcomed Mark Hoult to the Executive Committee as our new treasurer and since joining he has worked hard to maintain the Society’s accounts in good condition. I would also like to thank our officers and executive committee for their work over the past year. I won’t mention them individually but suffice to say together they all bring individual strengths which makes for a strong team. At this AGM we will lose Trevor Redman who is not seeking re-election to the Executive after many years of service. However, Trevor has agreed to continue representing the Society on the Goodwood Motor Circuit Consultative Committee. Also, Bob Wiggins, who stood down at the last AGM, but continued to support the Society’s website and twitter feed: he has now handed this role over to John Halliday.

Finally, special thanks to you our loyal members for continuing to support the Chichester Society during a difficult year.

## TREASURER’S REPORT BY MARK HOULT

The Society had a net surplus for the year of £185 (compared with a deficit of £1,100 in 2020), even though COVID related restrictions were in place for much of this period. Although we were unable to run events safely during the year, we were able to achieve a small surplus by increasing our newsletter advertising income and restricting certain expenses relating to public meetings and events.

**Income:** Subscriptions and Donations totalled £3,478 (compared to £3,436 in 2020). Gift Aid tax refunds on qualifying subscriptions amounted to £629 compared with £740 in 2020. Income from newsletter advertising increased from almost nothing in 2020 to £920 this year. The Society is very grateful for the support we have received from local businesses who wish to advertise in our Newsletter, and we are keen to sign up more advertisers.

**Expenditure:** The Society’s main expenditure related to the production and postage of its quarterly newsletter, which totalled £3,346 (2020: £3,108). Expenditure on events and public meetings was £nil (2020: £1,840) as no such events took place during the year. Last financial year the Society joined Civic Voice, a national charity for the civic movement in England, and our membership was continued this year at a cost of £500.

**Balance sheet:** The Society continues to have a strong balance sheet, with over £17,000 of net assets, primarily held as cash at bank. Although the future is uncertain, these reserves should allow the Society to continue with its work for the foreseeable future.

# THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK - ENGLANDS THIRD LARGEST

## Sarah Quail reports on Margaret Paren’s talk to this year’s AGM

When Margaret Paren retired from the Civil Service, she became involved in a campaign to establish a South Downs National Park, and on its creation in 2010 was elected its first chair, holding this post for ten years before retiring in 2020. As Margaret also chaired National Parks England for three years to 2018, she is well-qualified to speak on this subject!

### The early days

Concern about the despoilment of the Downs and the state of the countryside began in the 1920s. The Society of Sussex Downsmen was born then, as was the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE). CPRE pressed for the creation of national parks but with the outbreak of war in 1939, these efforts ceased. After the War the campaign began again but the South Downs were ‘too ploughed to meet recreational criteria’ to be included in the first tranche of national parks. Efforts to designate the South Downs did not begin again until 1998.

### How the South Downs National Park operates

The South Downs National Park is the tenth park to be designated and the third largest. It has a budget of around £13 million which comes mainly from Her Majesty’s Government. Its purposes are to

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the area
- Promote the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area

At the same time, there is a duty imposed on the South Downs National Park Authority to foster social and economic well-being among communities in the Park’s area. The Board is non-political and made up of individuals, the majority being from our County, District and Parish councils with others appointed by the Secretary of State. It operates a committee rather than cabinet system. They have two statutory responsibilities: planning and open access.

### Planning powers

With a population of 120,000 the Park is about the same size as an average district council. Planning is therefore a major issue. There is a Local Plan, adopted in 2019, which incorporates a *Strategic Plan* and a *2050 Vision*. This must conform not only to the National Planning Policy Framework but also to the UK Government’s priorities and National Parks Circular 2010. It has to be radically different from other Local Plans but sufficiently recognisable to get through public examination. Margaret is particularly proud that their Local Plan was approved with only six word-changes! It is regarded as a model – a beacon - for other Local Plans and includes innovative policies dictated entirely by the South Downs own eco-systems. Neighbourhood Plans are also important and there are over 50 in place across the South Downs National Park.

### The future

There are two issues. The first relates to governance and whether or not a quango is likely to be established

to manage national parks in the future; and the second relates to the post-Brexit farm-support system. We are five years on from the Brexit vote in 2016 and there has been no announcement thus far. However, DEFRA is running a trial in the South Downs National Park which seems to be meeting farmers’ needs. Margaret hopes that if this is the case, the government will confirm scheme details very soon because farmers need to know where they stand.

### Questions

There were several questions from the floor at the end of Margaret’s talk. These included green issues, and whether the creation of the South Downs National Park has helped or hindered the lives of those of us who live to the south of this area. We are caught between the sea and the National Park with its protected status in terms of development other than in very exceptional circumstances. Margaret was quick to assert that in her view, the government’s statistical method for calculating housing need is seriously flawed, and she sympathized with local authorities beset by developers.



Margaret Paren OBE chaired the South Downs National Park Authority from its inception in 2010 to 2020  
Photo: courtesy SDNPA



# CIVIC PRIDE? WHY ALARM BELLS SHOULD RING

John Templeton and Brian Henham are concerned about the lack of ‘housekeeping’ in the city centre and believe our readers may be worried too

From time to time we illustrate, through *Chilights* and *Chisores* in this magazine, visual aspects of Chichester life that please or displease us. It gives no pleasure to devote a double page feature to several current *Chisores* which cumulatively must be doing reputational harm to our city. We imagine a family from, say, London who decide to visit Chichester for the first time, having been unable to travel abroad this year.

## Strolling along North Street

Arriving at Northgate car park and guided by the distant view of the Cathedral spire they walk down North Street and enter the precinct where they start to relax. Assuming they are lucky enough to reach the Cross without mishap, they pause to admire it.

## West Street and the Cathedral

Drawn by the dramatic view of the cathedral, our visitors turn into West Street for a closer look and take photos. At first, they are confronted by unkempt flower beds and overgrown vegetation around tree stumps. Further along the street they notice bus shelters whose roofs may not have been cleaned for several years, because they appear to be covered in black felt!



West Street’s bus shelters require cleaning



Tree stumps this autumn need pruning



Whole bricks are missing



Broken bricks cause potential trip hazards



Repairs with tarmac are not appropriate



Paving is badly damaged



The Novium Museum’s exterior needs a spring-clean!

## Next stop, the TIC

Directed by a signpost to the tourist information centre they are dismayed by an award-winning museum whose supposedly self-cleaning walls are smeared with grime and not-so-green algae. The information centre is open, and our family obtain leaflets about tourist attractions around the coast and harbour. Spirits rising, they make their careful way back along North Street to the Northgate car park. Then they drive away to Bosham or West Wittering before heading home across the South Downs, stopping for a meal at a country pub. Unfortunately, they completely miss most of what the city has to offer.

## Postscript.

One of these photos was taken in 2008 and the others during September and October. We published similar photos in this magazine 10 years ago. Complimentary copies of our Newsletters are distributed to Chichester councillors at the City Council, District Council and County Council. But we wonder whether its messages are understood – because the untidy character of Chichester city centre has continued to decline in the last decade. What do readers think? What do our elected representatives at Chichester’s three councils think? What do members of the city’s Business Improvement District think? Is there a legitimate reason for this decline? Are we being unreasonable? We’ll publish your letters in the next edition.

Ending on a more optimistic note, we give praise when praise is due and plan to show visual *Chilights* during 2022.

All photos are by Brian Henham unless otherwise stated

Read earlier editions at [www.chichestersociety.org.uk/past-newsletters/](http://www.chichestersociety.org.uk/past-newsletters/)



The Novium Museum, home to the tourist information centre, was once an architectural award winner



This photo was taken in 2008. Have West Street’s bus shelters been cleaned since then?

Photo: John Templeton





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## HELP THE SOCIETY'S FUTURE!

Remembering the Chichester Society when arranging future bequests will help continue this City's civic traditions. See below for contact information or access the Society's website

**[www.chichestersociety.org.uk](http://www.chichestersociety.org.uk)**

### THE CHICHESTER SOCIETY

**Founder:** David Goodman

**Patron:** The Mayor of Chichester

**Chairman:** Peter Evans

**Vice Chairman:** Bill Sharp

**Secretary:** Anthony Quail\*

**Treasurer:** Mark Hoult

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Andrew Bain, Rodney Chambers,  
Richard Childs\*, Margaret Evans,  
John Halliday, Christopher Mead-Briggs\*,  
Cedric Mitchell, Grace Taylor  
and John Templeton\*

\*Member, Newsletter Editorial Committee  
which also includes Brian Henham  
& Vincent Porter.

#### MEMBERSHIP

##### Single membership:

£8 by standing order or £11 by cheque  
payable to the Chichester Society.

##### Joint membership:

£12 by standing order or £15 by cheque.

##### Life membership

(60 years and over):  
£120 single and £160 joint.

##### Under 18 years: £4.

**Corporate membership:** £100 (one-off).

**Applications and/or queries about  
membership** and annual subscriptions  
to the Vice Chairman, Bill Sharp at 13  
Whyke Lane, Chichester PO19 7UR.

Email: membership  
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