

# THE CHICHESTER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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*South of Raughmere Drive in Lavant is locally known as the Daffodil Field, the subject of a planning appeal by developer Berkeley Strategic Land* Photo: Rod Funnell

## HURRAH! DAFFODIL FIELD IS SAVED FROM HOUSE BUILDING

The appeal by national developer Berkeley Strategic Land (BSL) for permission to build 140 homes south of Lavant was rejected by Planning Inspector Mr G Rollings on 11 April. Readers wanting to look at the Inspector's report can see it at [www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-inspectorate](http://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-inspectorate), and search for APP/L3815/W/21/3284653. This decision was the happy result of a concerted effort by Lavant Parish Council, local residents and Chichester District Council (CDC), the planning authority, which had been orchestrated by Andrew Parkinson of Landmark Chambers. Our congratulations to all those who took part.

Of crucial importance was that CDC proved their 5-year housing land supply against a vociferous attack from BSL, whose attempt to interpret a higher unmet housing need in the South Downs National Park was lost. So was their argument on the 'windfall' allowance. BSL's offer of a publicly managed country park on the small area of the field left over after 140 homes had been built was considered to have a 'detrimental effect' on landscape, compared with the 'quiet rural nature' of the existing field.

Equally important was the very careful analysis of the effect of noise from Goodwood Aerodrome on living conditions for occupiers of the proposed new houses. Existing businesses and facilities such as Goodwood cannot have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 187) makes clear that new development adversely affected by an existing business needs suitable mitigation. In this situation, mitigation would have meant new residents being expected to endure closed windows at the hottest time of the year, something the inspector would not accept.

### The Chichester Society's SOCIAL PROGRAMME

You are invited to help arrange  
**GROUP EVENTS** like

- A Chichester Harbour cruise
- Fishbourne Roman Palace
- Chichester Planetarium

**TALKS** on varied topics such as

- Planning and conservation
- Archaeology

To find out more about organising  
these enjoyable occasions email  
[secretary@chichestersociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@chichestersociety.org.uk)





# THINK AGAIN! CHICHESTER NEEDS TO KEEP A PROPER TRANSPORT HUB

We need an injection of imagination at the City’s bus station for everyone’s benefit. Bill Sharp explains why

You’d have thought it obvious. To make public transport attractive, not to mention to dig ourselves out of car dependency and the climate crisis, train and bus services should be tightly integrated; well linked in space - and some through-ticketing wouldn’t go amiss either. Happily, the whole ‘direction of travel’ of recent government policy has been towards tighter integration. As a reminder for those who might not find things so obvious, it’s all there in policy documents like *Bus Back Better*. So why is our district council proposing to positively dis-integrate the services here in Chichester? According to reliable sources, the Council is planning to close the bus station and replace it with a line of stops plonked alongside the multi-storey car park on the Avenue de Chartres.

### Mean spirited

Avenue de Chartres is a bleak stretch of road with constant traffic noise, and exposed to whatever the elements may throw. It’s also hidden from the train station down a confusing route which ‘designs-in’ conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, and even one set of pedestrians and another. To cap it all, there would be no facilities other than the sorry public toilets that happen to already exist in the nearby multi-storey. Not ideal at the best of times, but imagine this when you are travelling with luggage let alone a child on a cold and dark, rainy winter’s evening. The only explanation for this mean-spirited proposal that we can come up with is “bean counting” and a complete failure of vision.

Which is ironic because a few years ago the Council surveyed residents and businesses and in 2017 published

*Chichester Tomorrow* which actually had the subtitle *A vision for Chichester* (see: [tinyurl.com/ycksvwd8](https://tinyurl.com/ycksvwd8)). This vision document called for the area around the train and bus stations to become ‘**a key transport hub**’ (p. 30). What the council is now proposing flies in the face of what residents and businesses said they wanted. It also runs directly counter to the principle of seizing opportunities for good town planning when they arise. What happened to the aspiration for Chichester to become a multi-modal hub; a ‘Gateway to the Downs’?

### Rigging the system?

The Chichester Society is concerned not only by the lamentable quality of the proposal but also by how it has come about. The last time we locals had any input was during the run up to the Vision document which is now nearly 5 years old. Ever since, it now seems, as part of the wider Southern Gateway scheme, plans have been quietly

progressed entirely behind closed doors in discussions with developers (and the bus company, which is surely conflicted as they stand to gain if they are bought out of their lease early).

We do understand that discussions of evolving plans will sometimes have to start off limited to a core group. Although excluding people is never good, it does streamline things because unworkable ideas get weeded out in first-round deliberations, so streamlining subsequent wider, second-round consultations. At least that’s the theory. In practice, if done badly, you risk looking like you are trying to rig the system. And that’s not a good look when people know you own the bus-station land and stand to make a pretty penny from its sale if it’s redeveloped.

So, how might things be done particularly badly? The council has blazed that trail to helpfully show us. First, you spend good public money surveying opinion and find out there’s a demand for a ‘key transport hub’, and then you completely ignore it in your master-plans! Second, you then limit first-round discussions to people likely to agree with you.

### Council knows best?

In this neck of the woods, at both District and County levels, we’ve too often seen poor handling of schemes that have started within a small group before going out for wider consultation. Within both councils, thinking has become inflexible and ideas pretty much set in stone well before the public has been brought in to comment. For example, the District Council’s redevelopment of their industrial estate at St James – where the final result is hard to square with comments from the likes of nearby residents, the City Council and ourselves. So much so that the residents resorted to solicitors to get their voices heard.

Drawing lessons from the past and returning to the proposed bus station closure, we’re now concerned that, by the time any public consultations start, all that will be left to discuss will be, so to speak, the colour of the signage along that convoluted link path.

### Many heads

Another group has also sprung up to lobby to keep a transport hub worth the name. In letters to the Chichester Observer (22 February 2022), they mention something our own deliberations overlooked, namely that there would also likely be significant disability issues. That’s an embarrassing oversight on our part, but it does illustrate the need for as many informed voices to be ‘round the table’ as early as possible. Developers should certainly not be excluded, but neither should they have privileged access to seminal early discussions.

## BEST BUS STATION ‘MUST-HAVES’

### For passengers

- Warm, welcoming and safe
- Toilets
- A café (or two)
- Digital timetables with updates
- Local and tourist information
- Comfy seats in a lounge space
- Mobile phone recharging sockets
- Bicycle parking
- On-site staff presence

### For staff and buses

- Rest and games room
- Electric bus-charging ‘pumps’

There’s a wealth of varied expertise hereabouts, which the council is failing to tap into.

### The society’s alternative

The Society has produced a document fleshing out the detail of the problems with the current scheme and suggests an alternative approach (see [tinyurl.com/yckkxwf2](https://tinyurl.com/yckkxwf2)). We argue that current proposals risk sterilising possibilities for exciting incoming technologies, such as electric and autonomous buses.

We also argue that even the financial assumptions are challengeable. The council seems dazzled by the prospect of selling the land with vacant possession, which would maximise profit. As local taxpayers, we’re all for that. But *only if* a proper replacement bus station – with a waiting room, refreshments, well-kept loos and more – can be built next to the train station (see box and artist’s impression). Otherwise, we say, the bus station land could be redeveloped quite profitably enough while keeping the station where it is. So we are now urging the council to look up from their spreadsheets, and bring in a wider range of viewpoints – at a time when such viewpoints can make a real difference to outcomes. In short, we are calling for a pause to rethink, and an injection of a lot more vision.

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*Bill Sharp lives in Chichester and is the Society’s Vice Chair*



Artist’s impression of what a proper integrated transport hub could look like

Picture: Andrew Bain



West Croydon Bus Station: winner of the 2017 RIBA London Award. Photo: © Alex Upton



# HOW CHICHESTER PUNCHES ABOVE ITS WEIGHT

## David Elliott on the quality and variety of the arts found in this area

Opening at The Novium Museum on 25 June, *The Art of Chichester* exhibition tells the story of 60 years of creativity, professional and amateur, in and around the city and district, from the opening of the Festival Theatre in 1962 to now. And what an interesting story it has been. Of course, the arts have always played a role in Chichester’s narrative. But in the last six decades they have come very much to the fore, projecting a positive image of the city to the rest of Sussex, the UK and beyond. In short, they have put Chichester on the map.

### Energy and optimism

The 1960s was a time of great change, an era of energy, optimism and cultural renaissance. For Chichester it included the building of a theatre of national importance, brave commissions of modern art and music for the Cathedral, and the building of a stylish county library. Additionally, the discovery of Fishbourne Roman Palace and the establishment of a permanent city museum, saw a new approach to presenting Chichester’s heritage. And for its first two decades especially, the Festival Theatre was a concert hall of note too, with everyone from the London Symphony Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, Jaqueline du Pré and Ella Fitzgerald all performing there.

In the following decades, Chichester has seen the creation of cultural institutions like the Weald & Downland Living Museum, West Dean College and Pallant House Gallery, ‘second only to Tate Britain for modern British art’. The city has had a festival every year since 1975. Its small independent cinema won the national Film Society of the Year in 1990 and its annual Film Festival – 30 years old this year – punches well above its weight, attracting the likes of Alec Guinness, Kathleen Turner and Ralph Fiennes. Cass Sculpture Foundation was an incredible 25-year adventure, worthy of an exhibition in its own right. The exhibition and accompanying book will tell these stories, the former enriched by paintings, sculpture, models, costumes – even a stuffed crow, courtesy of Kate Mosse.



Jayson Haebich’s *Star of Bethlehem* was displayed at Chichester Cathedral in 2018  
Photo: courtesy Chichester Cathedral



Lola Hart at the Ovation Rock Show, Minerva Theatre 2020  
Photo: Adorjan Botond/Ovation Music

This exhibition may surprise some people: the fact that David Bowie, Duran Duran and James Brown have all performed in Chichester; that St Richard’s Hospital has a collection of well over a hundred paintings and sculptures; that the superb Jean Luçat tapestry in the University’s Chapel of the Ascension cost more than the building itself. And it will hopefully provoke debate, like the choice of key examples of modern architecture represented, and the Street Art Festival of 2013 when graffiti artists from various countries were let loose on a number of buildings in Chichester.

### Movers and shakers

How has Chichester, a city with a population of only 20,000 in the 1960s and just over 30,000 now, become a centre for the arts? The Cathedral of course has played a major role, with its daily liturgical music and patronage of the visual arts – its architectural beauty, too, a constant reminder to strive for perfection. It helps that Chichester is the nucleus of an outdoor playground and a centre for higher education. And yes, there is money in the area, with many affluent retirees choosing to move here from London and elsewhere – although there is deprivation too. The city is the seat of local government, with decision-makers who know – or *should* know – that arts and culture can build an area’s reputation, creating a unique sense of place and contribute to a better quality of life and wellbeing. All the above play a part. But nothing happens without the ideas, energy and action of local individuals – for example, Leslie Evershed-Martin, Edward James, Dean Walter Hussey, Betty Murray, Sheila McCririck, Roy

Armstrong, Bernard Price, David Goodman... And that’s just the first decade. The story isn’t perfect. The oft-mantra’d ‘There should be more for the young’ is real and warranted. Annually, there are 12,000 students at the College and 5,000 at the University with very little local night life. The arts have been hit hard by the pandemic, and in recent years going out to be entertained has to compete with a mind-boggling choice of screen-based streamed entertainment at home.

### Continuing expansion

There’s often talk about ‘the good old days’, and how Chichester isn’t like it used to be. Actually, in the last 20 years particularly, Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery have both pushed through major renovation and extension projects which have won critical plaudits and shown their ambition; and both have developed excellent outreach programmes which really engage people with drama and art, people who might not normally have had the chance or thought it wasn’t for them.

The Novium Museum, which opened in 2012, has much more gallery space and engages with more people through a programme of changing exhibitions, community engagement and an ambitious learning programme. The Cathedral’s temporary visual arts installations, curated by Jacqueline Creswell since 2015, are every bit as impressive as the permanent commissions of the earlier years. Chichester Cinema at New Park goes from strength to strength. The *I Am Joy* collective showed, between 2008-2010, that the city does have a highly creative, alternative youth culture. The Festival of Chichester has been an admirable successor to the Chichester Festivities. The Art Trails, introduced at the turn of the millennium, have brought individual artists and the public together. Goodwood and other heritage sites are using their estates in imaginative new ways. Graylingwell is already becoming a model of how to repurpose heritage and integrate the arts into a community-spirited housing development. And this year we have Culture Spark 2022, which celebrates a number of key anniversaries. Do come to *The*



Ian McKellen as King Lear at the Minerva  
Photo: Manuel Harlen

*Art of Chichester* exhibition at The Novium Museum runs from 25 June 2022 to 25 February 2023 and is free to enter.

David Elliott was born and grew up in the city and has enjoyed a long career with the British Council. He lives in Chichester.



An open-air showing of *Bohemian Rhapsody* during Chichester’s International Film Festival in 2019  
Photo: courtesy Chichester Cinema at New Park



# WHY WE NEED OUR TREES IN CHICHESTER

## Paula Chatfield explains trees are far more than heritage and aesthetic assets

Apart from growing trees for timber and landscape and aesthetic amenity, there is an increasing body of research documenting their environmental worth and how they affect our health. Trees are solar powered. Pores in the leaves regulate the absorption of airborne pollutants that include carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter. Poor air quality has serious adverse impacts on health, especially in vulnerable groups of people. As urban areas tend to have higher levels of pollution, urban trees will remove more pollution than their rural cousins; and higher population density means a higher benefit per tree.

### Trees can keep us cool

On a hot day, many of us will seek out shade. Have you noticed how the shade in summer under a tree is different to the shade of a building? That’s because the tree is not just coming between us and the sun, casting a shadow, but is releasing water droplets from its leaves and effectively acting as a natural air conditioner. We feel better for it. Collectively, trees help cool our city, homes and workplaces.

### Happy and healthy

Studies consistently show that stress levels fall in the presence of trees. Children learn better; hospital recovery times improve; work productivity increases. In Japan, time with trees is prescribed, with benefits including improved sleep quality and reduced blood pressure. Particularly in urban settings, investment in trees is increasingly viewed as investment in health. They’ve even been shown to make us drive more safely!



Priory Park in summer: trees like these keep us cool

### Economic assets

Trees are associated with attractive places, enhancing property values and promoting inward investment and job creation. Part of this may be cultural (trees associated with affluence), part due to their vital role in wildlife biodiversity and connectivity. In the 2020 *People and Nature Survey* by Natural England, nearly three quarters of participants were concerned about the consequences of a loss of variety of plant and animal life in England. Yet it is rare to acknowledge these benefits in the round – many are hidden, and all are free at the point of use, whereas costs and risks fall on specific landowners and saved costs feel theoretical rather than real, so ...

### What can we do?

My first suggestion is simply to notice our trees: be aware, be curious, and examine not only the tree, up close or at a distance but how you feel about it. We tend to care about the things we pay attention to, and it’s very easy to

take trees for granted. The trees you see regularly will come to resemble old friends – you’ll spot their habits, feel pleasure when they and the wildlife they support thrive, and get a sense when something’s wrong. You’ll probably find yourself sharing conversation about trees with both friends and strangers (welcome to my world!) and find they make you happy. You’ll find yourself understanding more about why a tree is where it is and what it’s doing – the benefits it brings, and the drawbacks experienced by some. As a volunteer Tree Warden, I haven’t yet found anyone who doesn’t generally like trees but I do hear, and understand, where there are conflicts between individual trees and the people who live beside them.

### Caring for our trees

Once you have this affinity with the trees around you, it’s a small step to learning who looks after them and, if needed, how you can help. For example, if you notice a street tree is struggling, it’s easy to ask West Sussex County Council to take a look. Report via this website [www.love.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.love.westsussex.gov.uk) or phone 01243 642105 in an emergency.

### Planting for the future

You may also notice places that would really benefit from one or more trees being planted. Even small gardens have space for a tree if you choose wisely. Consult the Royal Horticultural Society’s website for advice at [www.rhs.org.uk/plants/types/trees/smaller-gardens](http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/types/trees/smaller-gardens). In the public realm, the County Council offers us the opportunity to *Donate a Tree*, aimed at residents lucky enough to have a highway verge suitable for a tree to be planted outside their home. A £210 donation is required but neighbours can club together to share the cost. In addition, check out Chichester Tree Wardens’ *Mind the Gap* fundraiser on our website at [www.treesinchi.org](http://www.treesinchi.org). This needs both your suggestions of where would benefit from a new street tree and your donations (which we will try to make go further by applying for grants). All newly planted trees need volunteer waterers living nearby – is this a way you could help?



Via Ravenna, the A259 in Chichester is a busy road whose trees help intercept air pollution



These two False Acacia trees have grown into an asset to East Street

Chichester District Council (CDC) is taking part in the Government-funded *Trees Outside Woodland* project, working to develop new ways to increase tree cover. If you would like more information on funding for trees, contact CDC’s Sophie Hamnett at [treescHEME@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:treescHEME@chichester.gov.uk). Free baby trees, called whips, may be available from other sources.

Mind the Gap is Chichester Tree Wardens’ fund-raising scheme for new trees.



# MIND THE GAP

### A tree survey for Chi

Chichester’s Tree Wardens are embarking on a new project this year to record the trees around us and we need volunteers to help. If you’re happy to spend some time out and about this summer collecting information (the location and species of each tree and measuring its trunk circumference), please get in touch at [info@treesinchi.org](mailto:info@treesinchi.org) or phone/text 07788 140698. We plan to hold an Information and Training Day at Chichester University on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June which will include the chance to practise and an opportunity to decide if this survey is for you. Project results will be processed using **i-Tree Eco** software. This will help us quantify the benefits of the trees surveyed in ecological and monetary terms and encourage strategic planning for the future of our ‘urban forest’. Will you join us?!

Paula Chatfield lives in Chichester and is Chair of the Chichester Tree Wardens. All photographs for this article are by Paula



# BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO THE CITY CENTRE

## A personal view from Chichester Society member Andrew Finnamore

It seems such a long time ago. It was 2009 when Chichester District Council approached me to see if I would become Chairman of a new venture for Chichester, called a Business Improvement District. It was a voluntary post and I'd be working with the Economic Development office headed by Kenrick Garraway and Chief Executive John Marsland. Why me? They said they wanted a maverick. The incentive for me was the challenge, and unusually it would be an organisation independent in funding, free thinking in policy, and fully supported by CDC who wanted proper engagement with the private sector. Following a lot of work and an impassioned election, Chichester BID started in 2011.

### The fundamentals

*It is not* the role of Local Authorities (or the private sector commercial collectives) to make unviable businesses viable. *It is* the role of Local Authorities (and others) to do those things that the businesses themselves cannot achieve on their own. This means facilitating, if not creating, the place where business can be done. People who own and run businesses make good and bad decisions all the time, but we are not there to help them run their business, but to create the environment that helps *them*, to make it happen successfully.

Where Chichester is in danger of failing, is not to recognise the need to change with the times. We do not need three tiers of Government, and we certainly don't need three tiers of Government in the heart of the central business district – Chichester City Centre. If a unitary authority is not on the cards, for whatever reason, then we need to recognise, urgently, the need for the three tiers to step back and let each (County, District, and City) be partners to an organisation that makes the ultimate

decision. It really doesn't matter who's the bigger fish, it just matters that you learn to work as a team, each member doing their allotted job, but it needs one driver, one small co-ordinated group to oversee the making, and efficient running of that central area. *It has to be run like a business.* As it stands there is too much protectionism in Chichester – this has to change. It's a bitter pill, but be brave and the patient will recover, like no other.

### The analysis of transition

We don't need other people telling us what to do, we don't need to be looking over our shoulder to see what other centres are doing – we have the capability here. This is not to say that we cannot learn from others, but we should have recognised by now that every place in the country is unique – size, geography, demographic, location etc. etc. You cannot expect to pick up a policy that one city has and drop it into Chichester, expecting the same outcome – that's ludicrous policy making. Focus on us. Be bold and try to turn right when others are turning left. A good business, a successful business uncovers resources it

didn't know it had, ventures 'off piste' and isn't frightened of failing – that's private sector speak, not Local Authority speak. So start thinking like a business, not like an organisation that's frightened of making a wrong decision and always looking to the next election. *Be bold. Lead, don't follow.*

### The understanding

The driver in today's society is convenience. Technology has allowed us to be lazy. It is human nature – don't fight it. Accommodate it. Recognise it, see it coming, and adapt. We have an Internet generation (and more to come), that isn't frightened of using it, and frankly doesn't care what havoc it causes to the 'established way of thinking'. That small hand-held device, be it mobile or tablet, will and is changing the habits of millions. If you don't adapt, you will die – sounds dramatic, but just watch. We need to change quickly, and let our population know, that we know . . . and we are going to do something about it. What is it that the mobile or the tablet cannot do – and go there. Quickly. We can and we should and we must. This doesn't mean that we should not carry out the normal process of Local and Neighbourhood Plans – it may be necessary, but it's long, it's bureaucratic and it doesn't recognise that in today's world you have to be 'on your toes' quick.

### The 'what to do'

What this Covid Lockdown has taught us, is that we need social interaction. Each and every one of us is a professional in our 'worklife' and a consumer in our 'homelife'. It doesn't matter what 'we do' or how valuable we think 'we are', we are fundamentally creatures of habit. What you do, or what you like to do, in your 'down time'. What gets you away from your 'everyday'? It's the things that the mobile or tablet cannot do. It puts you in a place that's easy to get to, it's a place you feel comfortable and safe in, and it provides you with pleasant surprises – be it music, food, colour, vibrancy and surprise.

We in Chichester are blessed with opportunity, but we are not good at enabling that opportunity. We have rigid structures, which for decades we convince ourselves has kept us safe. We've created these rigid structures so that there is order. We've convinced ourselves that the best way to provide for the inhabitants is to stick to the old ways and the strictures of the three authorities – one has the roads, one has the rights and one has the rituals! It's utter madness. The bureaucracy of organising an event in the city is monumental.

We need to start by quickly pulling together a handful of individuals, private and public for a shouting match. Old and young, male and female who are pragmatic, open minded and progressive. Tell the world 'Chichester has the answer'. Make a splash. Get the people enthused. Park yesterday's dogma and put together a simple five-point plan. Why five? Why not! Here's five to start:

- Green the streets
- Ban the cars
- Create the piazza
- Recreate the market city
- Bring music and colour to the fore.

Your Call.

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Andrew Finnamore lives in Chichester and chaired the city's Business Improvement District when it was first set up in 2011

Photographs on this page are by Katie Belbin

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



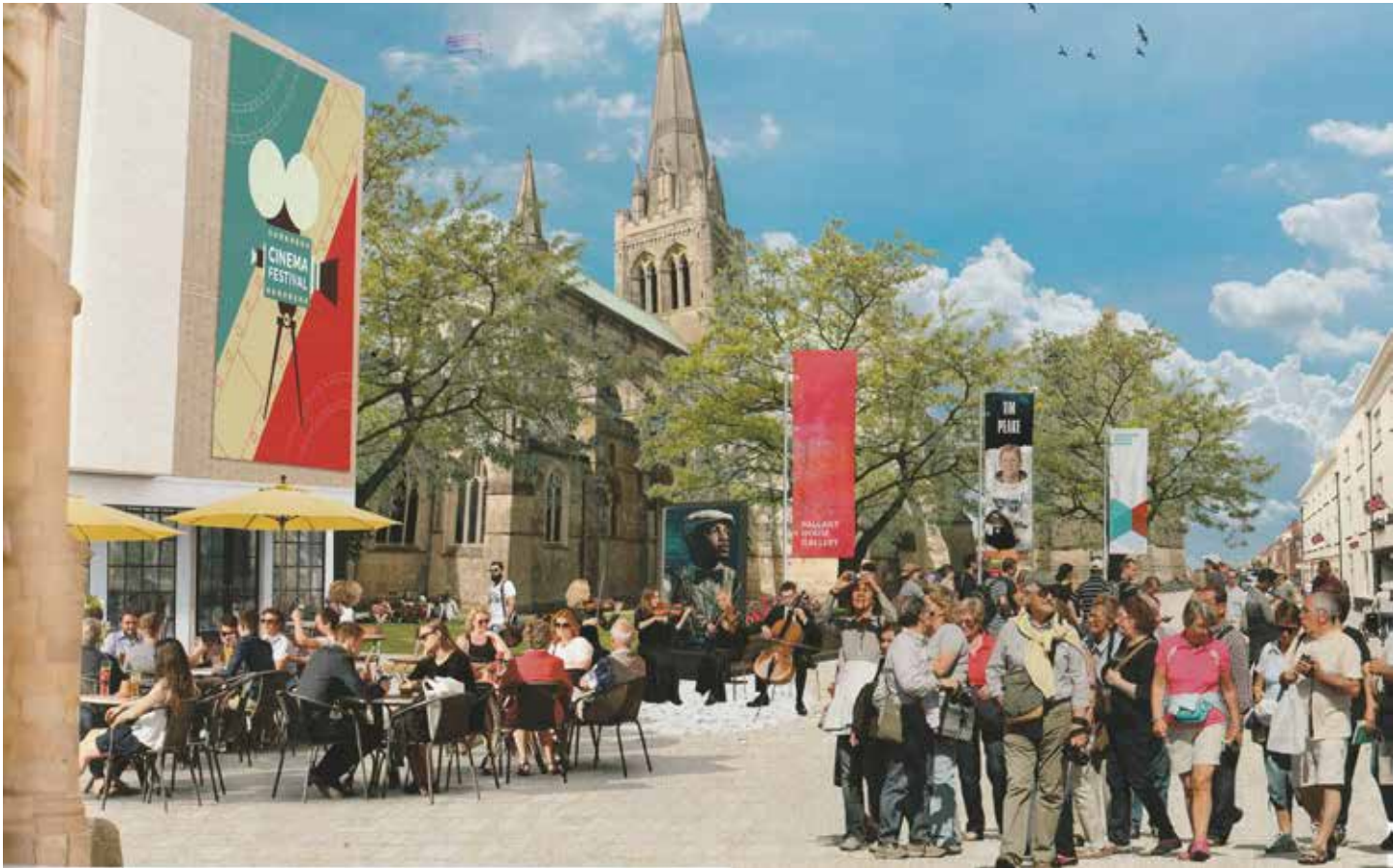
East Street at the junction with St Martin Street



East Street bin and bench



A plastic planter in East Street



West Street can become a piazza, or pedestrian precinct, full of life and character

Image from 'Chichester Tomorrow: a vision for Chichester city centre', published 2017 by Chichester Vision







# H. E. BATES AND CHICHESTER 1942-1944

In December’s Newsletter David Coxon described HE Bates’ mission at RAF Tangmere 1942 to 1944. Vincent Porter continues the story with a focus on Chichester.

Eighty years ago in the spring of 1942, the novelist and short story writer, Flight Lieutenant H. E. Bates, (1905-1974) was posted to Tangmere by the RAF Public Relations unit, PR11. In essence, the aim of the public relations team was to illuminate the troubled business of war in a way that would bring war and its participants vividly, excitedly, even painfully alive.. Bates was more than a hack writer for he brought with him a sustained passion for the English countryside combined with a journalist’s eye for detail.

The weather was bitterly cold when Bates arrived at Tangmere, ‘midway between the luscious Sussex Downs above Cowdray Park and the sea’. ‘The atmosphere in the Mess, alas, scarcely less so’ Bates recalled. He was uneasy in the company of the station commander, who viewed Bates’ ‘invasion of his hitherto jealously guarded kingdom with a certain high suspicion.’ Bates went straight back to the Air Ministry, where a vexed but firm Hilary St George Saunders, the Head of PR11, told Bates ‘You are beholden to no-one but the Air Ministry, and if your precious station commander fails to co-operate we shall deal with him appropriately.’ Bates had his creative freedom at last. He could now explore freely Chichester and the Sussex Downs during wartime.

Bates’ arrival in Sussex introduced him to an entirely different kind of hedgerow. As he explained in O More than Happy Countryman (1943), whereas in the Midlands where he had grown up, the commonest hedge was

undoubtedly the quick, or rowan, hedges in the south were far more varied. Here there was no longer a single colour in the pattern. ‘If I walk out of my house’ he recalled, ‘I come straightway on a hedge which reads like a catalogue of shrubs: holly , dwarf oak, elder, maple, willow, wild cherry, spindle, hazel, wild rose, sallow, honeysuckle, blackberry, wild clematis, blackthorn and, always binding it together, hawthorn. Along other lanes, I see other variations: ash, sweet chestnut, viburnum, dog-wood, crab apple, and alder.’

## A conflict of ideals

In July 1942, when Bates went for a stroll down a quiet woodland lane, one of the first things that caught his eye was the faded incomplete inscription, which someone, possibly a sailor or an airman, had scratched with a nail into a woodland gate: *Et decorum est, pro patria mori* (It is honourable to die for one’s country). Ten yards further on, there was another notice, printed securely on a piece of board so that it would not blow away: THE PUBLIC IS REMINDED THAT THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY. TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED. A few hours after he returned to the Georgian mansion, which was the Mess for a number of young officers, Bates went to bed in the oak-panelled room with its white plaster frieze, which he shared with three other junior officers. He realised that the expensively panelled and charmingly decorated room in which he slept, looking out on vistas of acacia and rhododendron and avenues of giant limes, seemed to belong to the world of one inscription, where trespassers would be prosecuted, whereas the men who shared the house with him belonged to that where it was right to die for one’s country. Was it right to die for one’s country? Was it right that there should be private property? Was it necessary to answer? But now a Heinkel had fallen by the magnolia tree. The privilege that kept the horses fed had gone. Whether Bates liked it or not, there was a conflict of ideals.

## Modernisation

Bates, who had been born in Rushden, Northamptonshire, grew up with a deep love of the countryside. But every principle he held ‘was against a rural life governed by privilege’. He hoped never to see in England again a social system of two classes. Although the air was full of reforms for the countryside, only a fraction of them, it seemed to Bates, went to the common root of all the problems. For above all, of course, it meant education. But already, the countryside, opened up by new means of communication, had ceased to be a separate unit. It had inevitably become linked with and dependent on the

town. The most unmistakeable change in the countryside that had taken place during the last quarter of a century was that it had become the dormitory, the living space of the town. And within the last year it had become something more, the refuge.

## Chichester

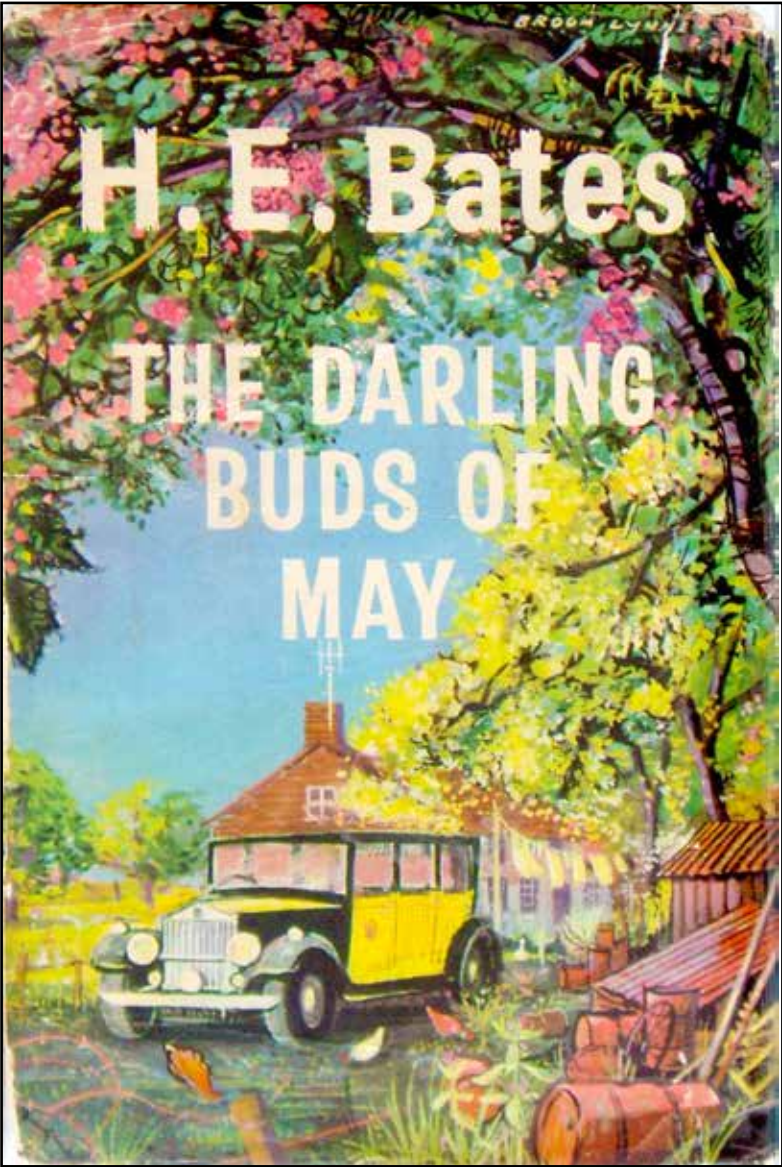
In June 1942, Bates drove into ‘the small, Roman-patterned cathedral town’ of Chichester, ‘with its pleasant eighteenth-century by-ways and its sunlit garden walls creamed over in high summer with its Alberic Barbier roses in the walks behind the cathedral’. Although the people of Chichester ‘had seen the greatest of sky battles in history’, they were ‘all that people should be in their conduct to a stranger.’ He had ‘never been in a town where the inhabitants gave more charm and courtesy or plain decent friendliness of heart. ‘Whether he drank in the Punch Bowl or ate an excellent dinner in the rather austere and beautiful Dolphin, whether he ‘bought a pair of pyjamas or a necklace or a dozen frames for the beehive or a postage stamp, you got more courtesy and humanity than you would ever get in London.’ He felt the real gentleness of the south there.

Two years later the war had moved on. The Air Ministry had absorbed PR11 into PR3, and Bates had secured an agent, Laurence Pollinger, who ensured that he retained the copyright in his new best-selling novel, *Fair Stood the Wind for France* (Michael Joseph, 1944) in which a French surgeon secretly amputates the hand of a British airman. With the rest of his colleagues in PR3, Bates was assigned to go back to Tangmere to cover the Allied assault across the Channel, in a series of despatches for American eyes. As Bates was unable to find a bed because every inch of space was occupied by fighter squadrons, many of whom were aggressive, seething Canadians raring for battle, he had to book himself into the Dolphin but resolved to sleep late the following day. Waiting for his breakfast, he was horrified to hear two ladies loudly discussing the fact that the D-Day invasion had begun. He immediately swallowed his tea, jumped into his car and drove back to Tangmere.

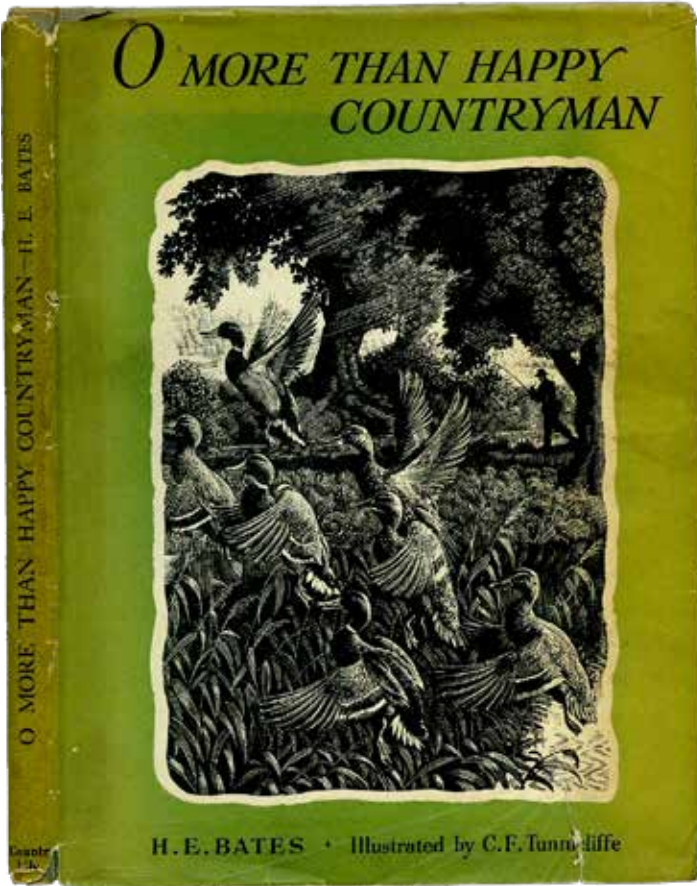
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This text draws substantially on HE Bates’ *O More than Happy Countryman*, with illustrations by C F Tunnickliffe, Country Life 1943, republished by Unicorn Press, 2014; and the third volume of Bates’ autobiography, *The World in Ripeness*, Methuen, 1972, republished as a single volume by Methuen in 2006.

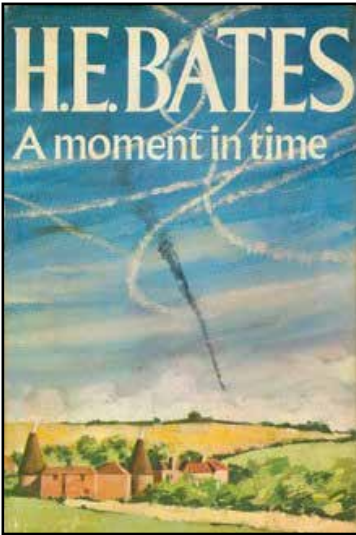
Vincent Porter is Emeritus Professor of Mass Communications at the University of Westminster and a member of the Newsletter Editorial Committee



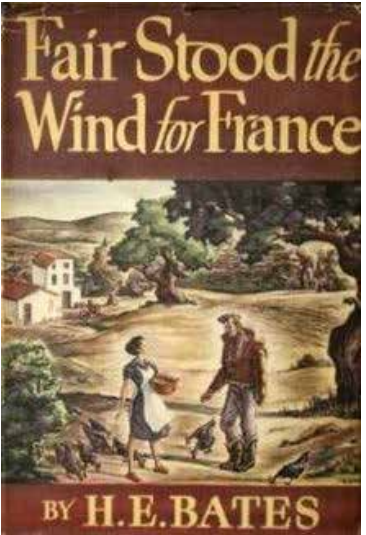
Published 1958 and an ITV mini-series 1991-93. Bates’ first book of the amusing Pop Larkin Chronicles, in which the Larkin family from Kent enjoy nature, each other’s company, food and drink



Published 1943. A wistful book which reminded its readers of what they were trying to protect while everyday life went on



Published 1964 and a BBC mini-series in 1979. Bates’ novel offers a woman’s view of the effects of the Second World War on English country life, and those of the pilots from a nearby RAF station.



Published 1944 this was also a BBC mini-series in 1980



# WOMENS' SUFFRAGE IN CHICHESTER

Madge Turner was a notable contributor in this city to 'the cause'. Nichola Court explains

Ethel Margaret Turner – always known as Madge - occupies a unique place in Chichester's history, in that she was the only Chichester-born suffragist imprisoned for her involvement with 'the cause'. Madge was born on 24 July 1884, the eldest child of Edwin and Minnie Turner, who ran a successful grocer's business at 27 South Street, Turner & Son (now Pizza Express). Her mother's family, the Lights, were also successful retailers, running a hardware shop at 9 Eastgate Square. Turner & Son had been established by Madge's grandparents, Albert and Jane, and the business remained at 27 South Street until the 1920s. By 1891, Edwin and Minnie were living next door at 26 South Street (now Wagamama) with their young family, before moving to 6 Cawley Road in 1896; they moved to 27 South Street in 1906. We know very little of Madge's childhood, but the death of her mother in 1901, when Madge was 17, left her responsible for the care of her four siblings and a busy father.

## School of Art

Madge was a talented artist and, shortly before her mother's death, enrolled at the new Chichester School of Art, located at the Butter Market in North Street. The *Chichester Observer* of 3 October 1900 carries a detailed report of an exhibition held to mark the opening of the school's new premises, which highlights Madge's sgraffito and design skills, and notes that she has been awarded a certificate for drawing.

## Suffrage caravan

Both the Light and Turner families were Liberals, but it's not known when Madge first became involved in politics. A short report in the *Chichester Observer* of 7 June 1905

on 'the awakening of liberalism in Chichester' notes Madge has been elected Assistant Honorary Treasurer to a new 'organisation of ladies to assist the cause'. On 17 January 1906, reporting on a meeting at Fishbourne, the *Bognor Observer* labelled Madge 'the lively young Liberal orator of Chichester' and quotes her as saying, 'only a woman knows how nice it is to be a man'. In June 1908, the Women's Freedom League (WFL)'s suffrage caravan arrived in Chichester as part of its tour of the southeast. The lead campaigner was Muriel Matters, a charismatic and confident Australian actress, who was assisted by Madge throughout her stay in Chichester. Muriel gave two speeches at Eastgate Square, heckled by the local 'hostile roughs', and one at the Corn Exchange, the only venue in the city prepared to rent their hall to the

suffragists. Following the WFL's visit, Madge organised a conference of the Home Counties Women's Liberal Association at Chichester's Assembly Rooms. She also started a subscription for the *Women's Franchise* magazine sent to the Liberal Association's Reading Room in Chichester. A local branch of the WFL was formed in July.

## Chichester Martyr

Due to representing the WFL at a march on Downing Street on 18 February 1909, Madge was arrested and sentenced to 14 days imprisonment at Holloway for obstructing the police. Following her release and return to Chichester, Madge - or 'The Chichester Martyr' as she was labelled by the *Chichester Observer* - spoke at Midhurst of her experiences, an extremely lively affair, by all accounts. Madge later spoke at St Martin's Hall in Chichester, in front of around 30 people, a decidedly quieter and more decorous occasion. A reporter from the *Observer* was able to speak to Madge at length about her time in Holloway. This is described in a detailed report published in the 7 April edition.

## Moving to London

Madge became more involved with the campaign for women's suffrage, presiding over meetings at Chichester and speaking at open air gatherings in Sussex. Within a year of her arrest, Madge was a paid organiser for the WFL and left Chichester, working around the country. The 1911 Census records Madge living in London at 65 Gloucester Crescent, Regent's Park with Alison Neilans, a prominent suffragist. They worked alongside each other at the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene from 1919 onwards and lived together until Alison's death in 1943; Madge herself died on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1948.

It is not known if Madge returned to Chichester on a regular or even infrequent basis. Her father died suddenly in August 1915 and she returned to Chichester for his funeral, and later that same year for her sister's wedding in December, both at St Peter the Great in West Street (now the Duke of Rye). No surviving records show whether Madge ever returned to the city of her birth. Although Madge appears to have distanced herself from the WFL by 1918, she spent the rest of her life fighting to improve the lives of women around the world through her work for the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

Nichola Court grew up in Chichester and is an archivist at West Sussex Record Office. Her interests include Shippam's and women's suffrage in West Sussex.

# MORE ABOUT MADGE TURNER

- *The Chichester Martyr*, published in *Chichester History* No 35, Summer 2019
- Madge's involvement with the campaign for women's suffrage is on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9aA\\_MsNug8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9aA_MsNug8)
- The Women's Freedom League caravan tour in West Sussex is on a Record Office blog at [westsussexrecordofficeblog.com](http://westsussexrecordofficeblog.com)
- Madge's presence on the 1911 census is at [www.mappingwomenssuffrage.org.uk](http://www.mappingwomenssuffrage.org.uk)



The Women's Freedom League campaign caravan at Chichester on 5 June 1908 with Muriel Matters, left, and Madge Turner (probably)  
Photo: London School of Economics, Women's Library, ref TWL.2009.02.244



Chichester School of Art on North Street where Madge Turner enrolled as one of the first students  
Photo: West Sussex Record Office, ref Lib 16550



Eastgate Square, where Muriel Matters gave two speeches. Madge Turner's mother's family, the Lights, ran a hardware shop at 9 Eastgate Square as seen to the right (demolished 1937)  
Photo: West Sussex Record Office, ref PH 20348



# TWELVE CIRCULAR WALKS FROM CHICHESTER IN 2020

## John Templeton reminisces on his exploration of local lanes and countryside

During the strange days of March 2020 I decided to tick off the weeks of Lockdown by taking 12 circular walks from my front door into the surrounding countryside, each of about 12 miles. This would help to maintain my physical and mental health and enable me to find out how easy, or not so easy, it is to reach the countryside on foot without using a car or a bus. I intended to walk every Saturday of Lockdown but for various reasons I spaced out the walks and didn't complete the series until November. This enabled me to enjoy the amazing weather of Spring, Summer and Autumn with bright skies and low levels of pollution. All distances are approximate.

**1 West Dean (10 miles) Saturday 21 March** This was just 2 days before Lockdown. I walked up Centurion Way as far as West Dean tunnel and round the village. The cafe at West Dean stores was closed but takeaway coffee was available. I returned along the bridleway down the east side of the Lavant valley (the West Sussex Literary Trail) which was flooded knee deep in places and entered the city via Fordwater.

**2 The Trundle (10 miles) Saturday 28 March** On the first Saturday of Lockdown I set off in brilliant sunshine up Chalkpit Lane to Seven Points and up onto the Trundle. I had the hill fort to myself as the two car parks were locked. After my usual walk round the embankment I discovered footpaths further down the hill I had never noticed before and descended into the Lavant valley to Binderton, returning down Centurion Way. The fish & chip takeaway at Summersdale was open so I enjoyed an al fresco meal by torchlight in Brandy Hole Copse!

**3 West Stoke and the Ashlings (9 miles) Saturday 25 April** Two weeks after the Easter weekend I walked along country lanes northwest of the city, greeting groups of walkers, cyclists and joggers enjoying the lanes as quiet as I remembered them in the 1950's. The bluebells were in full bloom and I returned across fields around East Ashling.



Seen during walk 4: the bridleway from Woodend to Kingley Vale across the lower slopes of Stoke Down



Seen during walk 3: the grassy lane north of Hunters' race where tanks were lined up in 1944 for the Normandy invasion

**4 Kingley Vale and Funtington (12 miles) Saturday 2 May** The first stage of this walk along the usually busy B2178 from West Broyle to East Ashling isn't possible now that traffic has returned to pre-Covid levels. I enjoyed the bluebell woods again before climbing Stoke Down from Woodend to Kingley Vale, then over Adsdean and Funtington Downs' to Funtington. My return home was through West Ashling and along Clay Lane to Salthill and Newlands Lane.

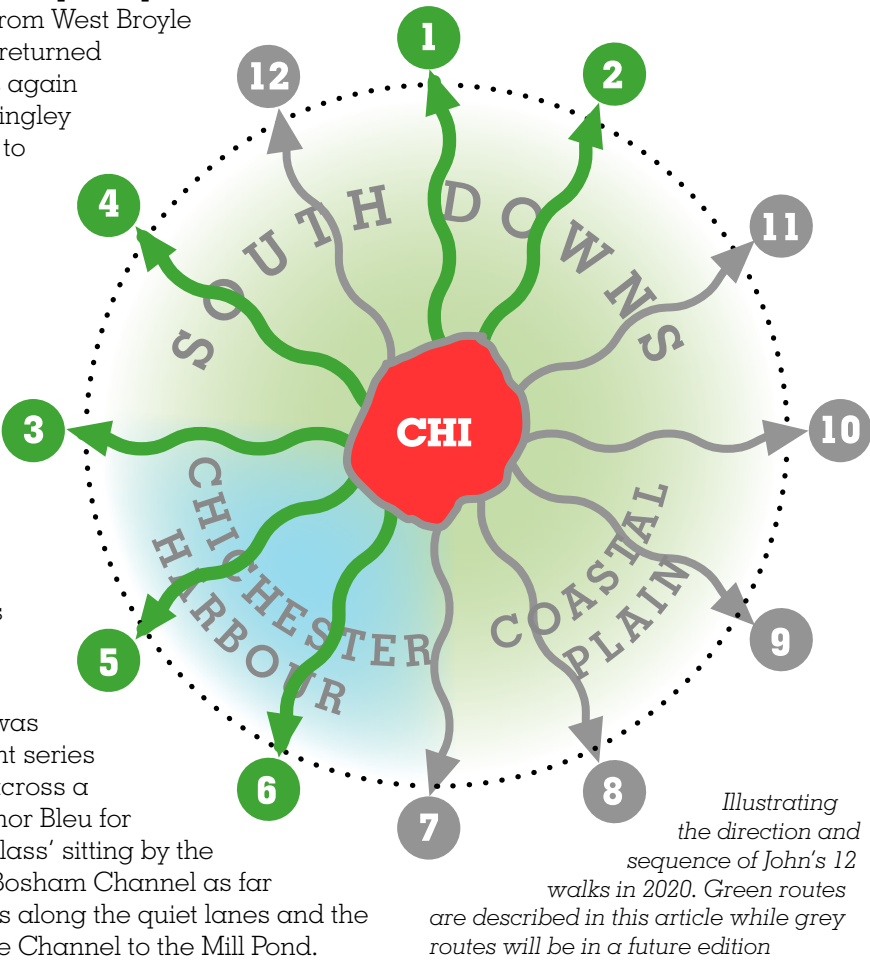
**5 Old Bosham (11 miles) Saturday 9 May** I was making good progress 'round the clock' and now headed due west through woodland and farmland between Fishbourne and West Ashling, then south to Broadbridge and along the A259 to Cobnor Creek and so to Old Bosham, my first-ever visit on foot! Although only just over halfway through Lockdown, the Anchor Bleu pub was serving soft drinks and nibbles from the front window, to be consumed strictly off the premises! I then set off east across the fields to Fishbourne discovering peaceful countryside.

**6 Old Bosham (11 miles) Saturday 16 May** I was again attracted to Old Bosham, across a different series of footpaths from Fishbourne. This time I came across a group of hardy cyclists queuing outside the Anchor Bleu for pints of real ale! I enjoyed my pint in a plastic 'glass' sitting by the waterside before continuing along the shore of Bosham Channel as far as the ferry pier opposite Itchenor. My return was along the quiet lanes and the waterside path along the west side of Fishbourne Channel to the Mill Pond.

I had now completed 6 of my 12 walks, exploring the countryside to the north, northwest and west of the city, all immensely enjoyable. But I decided to pause for a few weeks and explore the countryside south of the city during the long days of summer. I was already feeling fitter and healthier than I had felt for many years and will describe my adventures in a future edition of the Newsletter.



Seen during walk 6: Bosham Channel on the ebb tide when the footpath alongside the water from Bosham to the Itchenor ferry is passable



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John Templeton lives in Chichester and is a member of the Society's Executive Committee.  
All photographs are by John.



## THEN & NOW

### Richard Childs looks at 44 East Street, formerly Whitehall and now TK Maxx

Whitehall was a fine mid-nineteenth century townhouse. In 1871 it was occupied by Margaret Johnston, a gentlewoman, aged 64, her sister, Frances Capern, and three servants. Ten years later it was occupied by Edward Arnold, a solicitor, his wife, Anna, a nephew and three servants. It was also the Registrar's Office. Edward Arnold died in 1899, but his widow continued to live there.

By 1939 the premises were occupied by James William S Loader Cooper, solicitor, H M Coroner for West Sussex, (aged 81), his wife, Blanche and two servants. Loader Cooper, who was also Town Clerk of Chichester from 1899-1936, died in 1943 and Whitehall, which at that time was occupied by the Ministry of Food, was put up for auction in 1945.

The premises were acquired by Sadlers, grain merchants and garden equipment suppliers. By 1981 Whitehall had been demolished and replaced by a shopping arcade named Sadlers Walk. Latterly it became known as Little London Walk. More recently the arcade was stripped out and it became T K Maxx.



Whitehall

Source: Richard Childs



Photo: Brian Henham



## CHICHESTER CANAL 200<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY

Join us in celebrating Chichester Canal's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. We began with a memorable day on Saturday 9 April.

Other occasions for your diary are:

- Friday 10 June – lantern procession
- Mon 20 June Oxmarket exhibition
- Wed 29 June - Talk by Alan Green
- Sun 3 July – Dragon Boat Races
- Thu 7 July – Chichester Fringe Comedy
- Sat 16 July –Fringe Poetry and Music
- September – Musical performances by University of Chichester
- Sat 10 September – Heritage Open Day
- Mon 19 September – the Canal's 2<sup>nd</sup> Formal Opening

FOR DETAILS phone 771363 or  
online at [Chichestercanal.org.uk](http://Chichestercanal.org.uk)

## BLUE PLAQUE FOR SIR ROBERT GEORGE RAPER

### Richard Childs explains why it's fitting to honour Chichester's pre-eminent Victorian



Last year the Chichester Society applied to the City Council for a blue plaque to commemorate the life and work of Sir Robert George Raper (1827-1901). He was born in Chichester, baptised in the Cathedral Close on 26 May 1827 and educated at the Prebendal School. Later, Robert trained as a solicitor and on the death of his father, (also Robert), became senior partner at solicitors Raper, Freeland and Tyacke.

Robert Raper made a unique and wide-ranging contribution to the city's life as may be judged from this record: Mayor of Chichester (10 times), Clerk to Westhampnett Union, Clerk to the Justices of the Court of Petty Sessions, Clerk to the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral, Steward of St Mary's Hospital, Secretary to the Bishop of Chichester, Registrar of Chichester Probate Court, solicitor to the Duke of Richmond, Mayor (four times) of the Corporation of St Pancras. He set up the Cathedral's Guild of Bellringers of which he was President; and helped raise funds for rebuilding the Cathedral's spire when it collapsed in 1861.

#### Sir Robert

He was knighted on 8 March 1886, one of only two Chichester Mayors to be honoured in this manner; the other being Sharp Archibald Garland (Mayor 1912-19), knighted in 1918. On Sir Robert's return from Windsor Castle, he was greeted at the railway station by a crowd of Prebendal School pupils – while nearby the Cathedral's Bellringers rang out a peal from the bell tower.

#### Returning the mace

A strange civic story, but true. In 1836 the City Council auctioned the Corporation's mace and plate for use by a dining club. But the Mace Club stopped meeting in 1853 and nearly 50 years later the City Council wanted their silverware returned! Sir Robert disentangled this 'civic knot' in 1895 by reconvening the Mace Club, who resolved to return the mace and plate to the City Council – on condition that it was put permanently on display.

#### Epilogue

Sir Robert died heirless on 12 July 1901 and was buried with his wife in North Mundham, the location of their out-of-town house. The will was proved on 11 October 1901 and his estate (valued at £22,678 0s 6d) was bequeathed to Charles Sansome Preston, solicitor of London, William Holland Ballett Fletcher Esq and the Revd. John Charles Ballett Fletcher. William Holland Ballett Fletcher looms large in the history of Bognor Regis as he donated what was then Bersted Lodge but is now Hotham Park to the people of Bognor. William was also Mayor of Worthing and a county councillor. His brother John was Vicar of North Mundham (hence the link with Raper).

Sir Robert Raper was Chichester's most eminent resident during the Victorian era and is why the Chichester Society has, with the City Council's support, sponsored a plaque at 27 West Street, his home for 60 years.



SIR R. G. RAPER



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