

OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

digital edition

SEPTEMBER 2022

No. 24

FROM THE EDITOR

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OHSCA's Autumn Newsletter reaches you at a time of almost unprecedented national change, with a new monarch and a new prime minister appointed in the same week as the death of our remarkable and much loved Queen Elizabeth — and the looming economic challenge that is likely to affect so many this winter. In our voluntary efforts to help Oaten Hill and South Canterbury residents, arguably OHSCA has never been so needed. But, for whatever reason, we face our own survival challenge. Volunteering does not seem so attractive or popular as it was, even ten years ago. Perhaps all is well in our area, and there is little need for community action or spirit? Well, if you read down to see what is happening about the Local Plan, housing, health care and many other issues facing us, I don't think that can be the case. Please read what Acting Chair David Kemsley says about the need to reformulate and rejuvenate the Committee.

If you want to see OHSCA survive and flourish, now is the time to be counted!

Some Local News

Cathedral Access. At the time of writing, concern has been raised by local residents who have Cathedral 'Precinct Passes' that access from all but the main gate now seems barred. This unwelcome development is not reflected on the Cathedral website (<https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/visit/visitor-faqs/>).

Canterbury District Volunteer Centre is struggling to recruit and retain volunteer drivers, and can no longer take on new clients – a situation made worse by the loss of many rural bus services. Volunteer drivers enable people to get to medical and social appointments within the Canterbury district. If you would consider helping, please contact the Centre (Simmonds Rd, CT1 3RA, tel. 743 700), or email jackie@chbvc.org.



Canterbury Climate Action Festival 2022 is taking place now, 24/25 September, at Augustine Hall, Rhodaus Town, Canterbury CT1 2YA. More details at <https://www.ccap.org.uk/events/>; there is also a Facebook page. The awards ceremony will be on Sunday 25, 4–6 pm.

Canterbury 20 mph project. Despite influential support, and ongoing discussion at the *Canterbury Forum*, there seems to be considerable public opposition to this proposal (<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/canterbury/news/make-whole-city-20mph-273096/>). Faversham instituted such a scheme in February, through KCC.

Dick Vane-Wright, Acting Editor

FROM THE CHAIR

OHSCA members will be aware our committee has managed without an elected chair for a couple of years now. In fact for the last twelve months neither have we had a vice chair. To keep the show on the road individual committee members have acted up as chair for four months at a time, on a rotational basis. Members will appreciate that this arrangement is far from ideal (!) and is something that I will return to at the end of this piece. Thus it is my turn in the hot seat!

I am writing this just two days before we will know who our next Prime Minister is to be. The challenges facing the new incumbent are truly daunting, with no doubt many serious and as yet unidentified ramifications. What is certain is that it will be a very difficult winter for many, and community groups such as ours will have a vital part to play in supporting our friends and neighbours.

Volatility and change nationally this autumn will coincide with some exceptionally important dates for all of us here in Canterbury, and South Canterbury in particular. I refer to the planning application for the Mountfield Park development (ca//16/00600 on the CCC website planning portal), and the next consultation stage in the Local Plan development process. It is likely that the Mountfield application will go before the CCC planning committee at the end of September. The Council will be considering detailed approval for phase 1a (140 housing units) and outline approval for 3860 housing units plus commercial units, community and social facilities such as schools, a health centre – and possibly a new hospital.

The environmental pressures in our part of South Canterbury have received scant serious attention, exemplified by claims (comprehensively demolished by the three Railton traffic analyses we commissioned through member donations) by the applicant that our local roads easily could absorb the additional traffic resulting from the development, with just a few minor infrastructure tweaks, such as a mini-roundabout at the junction of Dover St and Upper Chantry Lane!

Much reliance is placed on a highly ambitious programme of modal shift which will require car users to switch to travel by public transport, bicycle and walking on a scale never seen before in this country. Vague statements, unsupported by hard evidence which appear in CCC documents that it “could be achieved”, just won’t do. No account appears to have been taken, in these calculations and projections, of commercial traffic such as delivery and service vehicles, and the additional journeys generated by the business units on site.

The inevitable increase in traffic congestion in our area also raises the ongoing issue of air pollution, especially nitrous oxide and PM2.5 particles. Several air quality management areas have long been designated in and around the city ring road, including Old Dover Road at the city end. Of great concern is that very little has been heard from the City Council of late on this matter. It needs to be remembered that all-electric vehicles are not pollution free. Far from it – particles from tyre wear and brake dust are highly dangerous.

Mid October will see the release of the next version of the draft Local Plan for a three-month public consultation. The principal objective of the Plan will be achievement of the government-set housing-target of 1200 new homes across the whole district, each year, for the next 20 years. At least a quarter of these are to be located in areas SE of the city. Developers will be required to make financial contributions which will part fund the construction of a potentially environmentally damaging eastern bypass.

Members may recall that a key feature of the current Local Plan, rubberstamped seven years ago, was the provision of purpose-built student accommodation blocks. This led to a substantial building programme which is very evident alongside the ring road. Yet more are coming on stream shortly e.g. Kingsmead and at the former St Mary Bredin school site. Some are not at all easy on the eye but we are stuck with them for the immediate future. What will be of interest is whether or not the take-up of this high quality accommodation will be sufficient to achieve the intended aim of releasing terraced houses for social housing and first time buyers.

In my opening remarks I referred to our Committee working without a chair or a vice chair. Whilst many OHSCA activities are organised by willing helpers who are not main committee members, we really must have a viable umbrella Committee to make decisions, determine priorities, and authorise expenditure.

The average attendance at our committee meetings has been eight. Hence the proposal out of necessity being at the AGM to reduce the quorum to four (see page 6). We already know that three current Committee members are standing down this year with, between them, decades of service to OHSCA and its predecessor organisations. There could be yet more departures to follow – although, luckily, the aforementioned three will continue to help behind the scenes.

Thus it is painfully obvious that the very existence of the committee and, by extension, OHSCA itself is in serious peril. On the plus side, fortunately we have been joined in the last year by two very welcome new faces but we really need a continuing process of partial replacement every year to be viable and crisis free.

So I do urge members to give serious thought to joining the committee via nomination at our AGM on 21st October (a nomination paper is on page 7). Apart from taking part in a 90-minute meeting every six weeks or so, any commitment beyond that is entirely voluntary.

David Kemsley, September 2022

MEMBERSHIP

At the start of the new OHSCA financial year we have 227 households locally and 9 more who live on the fringe of our area and have a local connection. We also have 29 households that have not yet paid their £5.00 subscriptions for 2022 – if you represent one of them, please take action now. While we are healthy by comparison with other residents associations, obviously we welcome new members. If you know someone who you think might be interested, please ask them to contact me (details on page 8).

Sophie Scott September 2022

PLANNING

16/00600 Mountfield Park

A new drawing (036) was posted on 4 August from RGP Transport [<https://www.rgp.co.uk/transport-assessments/>] showing minor revisions to the major four junctions at New and Old Dover Roads, with Upper and Lower Chantry, and the Ring Road. We commented that they still do not provide safe cycling routes, although the majority of the pedestrian crossings on both junctions are being properly upgraded.

Otherwise, no change, and the Natural England objection to the nutrient calculations still stands. We hear there is to be a special Planning Committee meeting to re-consider the application in late September.

Of major concern is the new government scheme to be run by DEFRA, for 'Nutrient Offsetting', which was widely publicised in August, but without technical details. It is expected that this will be offered as the solution to the impasse that has arisen where Natural England has indicated it is not content with the nutrient calculations, so processing on the application has paused.

Local Plan

We (OHSCA) have few details. Various community bodies (CAST, ACRA, Canterbury Society) have been in discussion with CCC – having submitted objections to the Draft Plan, and some notes have been circulated. These show CCC were, at the date of the meetings, still reviewing options, but that they have no comments on the 2021 Census figures now released, and remained committed to building substantially more than the statutory number of new dwellings, so as to fund major new road construction.

A CCC Cabinet meeting is to be held 19 October to begin the launch process for the detailed Draft Consultation Plan.

OHSCA Area Planning News

Locally, the scene has been fairly quiet, except (literally) at the CATS premises backing onto Cowdrey Close, where existing evening recreation areas have been driving residents to distraction. After an intense correspondence including submission of monitoring reports, David Kemsley, other OHSCA members and residents met on site, and were very pleased to learn that CATS were genuinely not aware of the extent of the problems, and have set in motion an action plan for increased control of activities, noise barriers, and monitoring, together with future liaison. A good result.

Tim Carlyle, September 2022

GREEN TEAM

Despite the drought and my own lack of mobility we have managed to keep our three gardens going. All were entered for *It's Your Neighbourhood*, part of Britain in Bloom – we will have the results later this month or next. The rebuilt bed by the Fire Station definitely needs better soil and replanting once the drought breaks. If you would like to be involved, you would be very welcome – please contact Sophie.

Trees

We are very conscious of the need to replant trees in Longport but nothing can be done until KCC and CCC agree on whether to install the proposed Longport cycle path. Meanwhile we will replace a ten-year old tree in Ersham Road which was withered by the June heat and exposed to a strong wind by cutting down hedges. We will probably use a pyrus as pears leaf up earlier and have good strong leaves. If you have a suggestion for a site for a tree, please contact me – email is best (details on page 8).

Sophie Scott, September 2022

OHC

With respect to monitoring changes in local healthcare, OHC members have long been active in the local NHS-managed 'patient reference group' (PRG) consultation network. Following recent changes in NHS management, from CCGs to ICBs and ICSs (Integrated Care Boards and Systems), the local PRG network has now ceased to exist. OHC is seeking new ways of sourcing relevant information (see additional commentary in digital edition).

Online services. Many pharmacies now offer online prescription services – go to <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/how-to-order-a-repeat-prescription/>. Remember the smartphone WaitLess app is free to download from iTunes and Google Play. Various providers now offer eye tests 'at home' (e.g. <https://www.specsavers.co.uk/home-eye-tests/request-a-free-home-visit>). If you are eligible for covid and/or 'flu vaccinations, go to <https://www.nhs.uk/get-vaccination> (or 'phone 119, during core hours).

OHC subcommittee (Denis Linfoot, David Kemsley, Alison Culverwell, Dick Vane-Wright), Sept. 2022

SEA

Monthly coffee mornings continue to take place every fourth Wednesday of the month at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, 7 St Margaret's Street, from 11.00–12.00. Attendance has generally been good, but low in August, probably due to vacations. Future dates are: 28 September, 26 October, 23 November, 25 January, 22 February and 22 March. There will be no meeting in December.

Walks. The regular weekly walks continue on Wednesdays and Fridays, starting 9.30 am sharp at the old main gates to the K&C Hospital. Attendance is currently low. **The third attempt** to see the Silver-spotted Skipper took place on 21 August at Lydden/Temple Ewell and was attended by six OHSCA members and ten Butterfly Conservation Kent branch members. The weather was good – but after the heat and drought the wonderful downland wildflowers were relatively poor, and butterfly numbers were well down. However, about half a dozen of the very local skipper were seen. A few Common, Chalkhill and Adonis blues were also among the total of 13 butterfly species found [see also p. 13]. [<http://www.ohsca.org/pdfs/SilverSpottedSkipper.pdf>]

Talks. Further 'local author' talks are planned at the K&C Club, with 'Women writers of East Kent before Jane Austen' by Yvonne Noble on 2nd November, and 'Ancient Egyptian Jewellery: masterpieces of art and design' by Nigel Fletcher-Jones on 6th December. Details, including cost, will be circulated by email; please contact SEA via social@ohsca.org if necessary (or 01227 768 624). Further talks in this series are planned for 2023.

The Summer Little Lunch was held on 6 August by kind invitation of Alison Culverwell and Francis Green at their beautiful garden in Ethelbert Road. About 30 people attended, bringing a variety of delicious dishes, and good use was made of the shade provided by several gazebos and parasols [see also p. 11]. **The Annual Picnic at St Augustine's Abbey** took place on Saturday 20 August. A group of six enjoyed a stimulating discussion while sheltering under a large tree in the grounds. We were informed by English Heritage that in future we need to fill in a form to apply for a Resident's Permit, with two photos. Although rather irritating, this will entitle any CT1 resident who applies to free entry to the grounds, at any time.

The Gardeners' Interest Group (GIG) has been reformed. For further information, please contact Alison Culverwell, Helly Langley, or Sue Hodge (contact details for Helly are on page 8).

At the **AGM on 21 October** SEA will again organise snacks and drinks before and after the main meeting. While all is freely offered, donations to OHSCA of one or two pounds per person help balance the books. So, if you are

coming to the AGM, please remember to bring a few of those old-fashioned disc-like things, called *coins* – some of you will remember them – a goodly few would be greatly appreciated!

You can contact SEA with offers of help, suggestions, or questions, at social@ohsca.org.

SEA sub-committee (Alison Culverwell, Hazel & Dick Vane-Wright, Helly Langley, Lorna Durrani, Margot Leslie and Susi Brain), September 2022

LHG

Following the very sad loss of Graham Wood in April (OHSCA Newsletter no. 23), our Secretary Michael Brain has kindly agreed to take on the Treasurer's role until we elect a replacement for Graham. In 2022 we agreed to pause our local history of Dover Street until next year, because the first draft did not find favour with our advisor. If you haven't already done so, please contact us with any information on past Dover Street events. In 2023 it will also be time to start something new – suggestions for historic topics with a link to south Canterbury is what we are looking for. Following the pandemic, many people still seem unwilling to meet or talk to others on the doorstep, and have more urgent priorities. We trust conditions will improve in 2023.

Derek Ray, September 2022

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

1 As members will know, the Committee is greatly concerned that (like many voluntary organisations) OHSCA has found it very difficult in the recent past to maintain the number of Committee members required by the Association's Constitution, which was adopted on the OHSCA's formation as recently as 2016. We have been fortunate in recruiting some new Officers, but we are nevertheless faced with the very real possibility that OHSCA will have to close unless its administration can survive the gaps which the passage of time is now bringing.

2 The Committee is grateful to those members who have attended open Committee meetings, with the main purpose of exploring this issue. We believe that besides the pressing need to amend the Constitution so as to make the Committee's quorum more sustainable, a greater devolution of responsibility to Special Interest Groups (which run the Association's activities) is essential, making it possible for the Committee to attend to matters of policy instead of micro-managing the SIGs' work. Devolution of organisation will of course require a devolution of financial organisation and responsibility, so that the Committee, which of course will remain responsible for the overall viability of the Association, can maintain the necessary oversight.

3 To achieve this, the Committee has agreed the following amendments to the Constitution, which are now formally proposed by Marion Bell, Denis Linfoot, David Kemsley, Tim Carlyle & Dick Vane-Wright.

“(a) That in Section 7.2.2 of the Constitution, the words “Not less than four” be replaced by “Any”;

Note: Clause 7 ‘The Officers and Committee’ currently specifies that the Committee must consist of “The Officers” (Section 7.2.1) and “Not less than four members elected at each AGM up to a maximum total of Officers and elected members of 14.” Clause 7 lists the required Officers as Chair, Vice-Chair (of whom there may be more than one), Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary and Membership Secretary, making the normal total at least five; the proposed amendment will enable the Association to continue if no other members are willing to be appointed to the Committee; on the other hand, it would enable the AGM to appoint up to a majority of the Committee, even with a full complement of Officers including two Vice-Chairs.

“(b) That in Section 7.6 of the Constitution, “four” replace “five” as the required quorum of a Committee meeting.

Note: In the (albeit unlikely, it may be hoped) event that an AGM is unable to elect any Committee members, it is thought imprudent to retain a quorum of five – which is the normal minimum number of Officers.

4 As noted above, besides these changes, a scheme of devolution of financial organisation and responsibility is needed, and the present Officers are consulting on this; a specification of how SIGs should

exercise their responsibilities, particularly with a view to minimise the need (or temptation) for the Committee to micro-manage the SIGs' activities, SIGs' modus operandi, a status requiring only Committee approval, rather than AGM ratification, for any modifications which experience may suggest.

5 Finally, a view has been expressed that the Constitution and Standing Orders, which were adopted in substantially their present form at the inaugural OHSCA General Meeting in 2016, need not now be so long and detailed as seemed necessary on the amalgamation of the former Oaten Hill & District Society (OHDS) and the South Canterbury Residents Association (SCRA). The Committee intends to review this situation.

Denis Linfoot, 16.07.2022

OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION

<http://www.ohsca.org/>

AGM 2021/2022

7.00 for 7.30 pm, Friday 21st October

at Kendall Hall, St Mary Bredin, 59 Nunnery Fields, CT1 3JN

7.00–7.30: informal Social Gathering with drinks, snacks and quiz, hosted by OHSCA Social Events & Activities group

*7.35: Lynne Moore of Canterbury City Council will give a talk
Where it all goes – the story of local waste recycling*

AGM AGENDA

8.00 pm:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of AGM held 15th October 2021 (see pages 4–6, New Year Newsletter: <http://www.ohsca.org/pdfs/OHSCA-Newsletter-21-2022-New%20Year.pdf> – circulated to all households in paper form January 2022)
3. Matters arising
4. Annual Report from the Acting Chair (to include work of subcommittees)
5. Annual report from Hon Treasurer
6. Approval of certified accounts for the financial year ending 31st August 2022
7. Annual report from Membership Secretary
8. Receive annual reports from SIGs and subcommittees (History, Green, SEA, OHC)
9. Subscription rate (the Committee is not recommending any change for coming year)
10. Proposal for revisions to the Constitution (see pages 5-6, this Newsletter)
11. Nominations for Officers and Committee for 2021–2022 (see page 7, this Newsletter)
12. Elections for:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair(s)
 - Hon Treasurer
 - Hon Secretary
 - Membership Secretary
 - Committee Members
 - Appointment of suitably qualified person to certify the accounts at the end of the ensuing year (this person shall not be a member of the outgoing and/or incoming Committee)
13. Other business (which must be notified in writing in advance – see page 4 note)
14. Vote of thanks and end of formal meeting (approx. 8.45 pm)

8.45–9.15: informal Social Gathering to continue

OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee Nomination Form for 2022–2023

For the committee, Nominees, Proposers and Seconders must be paid-up Members of OHSCA. Signed nomination forms need to be posted, or delivered by hand, to the OHSCA Honorary Secretary, 13 Wells Avenue, Canterbury CT13YB. Nomination forms should reach the Hon. Sec., no later than Friday 14th October. One copy of the form is required for each nomination. Please use this page or, if you need copies, scan or photocopy this page, write the essential information longhand, or contact the Hon. Sec. by telephone or email (07713 025245; secretary@ohsca.org). If you are unable to deliver your nomination before 14th October, please let the Hon Sec. know of your intention as soon as possible. If you have difficulty in finding a seconder for a Nomination please contact any member of the Committee via the Secretary, or direct if you know them personally.

A call is also made here for Items to be included on the Agenda under 11: *Other Business*. Such items must be duly proposed and seconded (with addresses), and signed. This can include Resolutions. Proposals for items to be included on the Agenda should be sent on paper to the Honorary Secretary (as above), and must also be received by 14th October, at the latest.

OHSCA: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2022–2023 NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE (caps)

.....

Nominated for (please circle one):

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Hon. Treasurer
- Hon. Secretary
- Membership Secretary
- Committee Member

PROPOSED by (caps)

.....

Signature

.....

SECONDED by (caps)

.....

Signature

.....

OHSCA COMMITTEE 2021–2022 and contacts list

Chair:	vacant (currently the Committee operates a rotating Chair)
Marion Bell	Hon. Secretary/Main OHSCA Contact: 13 Wells Avenue, CT1 3YB Tel: 07713 025245: secretary@ohsca.org
Jane Pollok	Honorary Treasurer: treasurer@ohsca.org
Sophie Scott	Membership Secretary/Green Team/Planning subcommittee: 27 Ersham Road CT1 3AR Tel: 01227 456285 sophie01@btinternet.com
Tim Carlyle	Committee member/Planning subcommittee
David Kemsley	ACRA /SCA rep./OHC subcommittee/Press Liaison: press@ohsca.org
Helly Langley	Committee member/Planning subcommittee
Denis Linfoot	Committee member/OHC subcommittee
Dick Vane-Wright	Committee member/SEA rep./OHC subcommittee
Lucy Fletcher-Jones	Website Coordinator/events bulletin alerts: website@ohsca.org
Weekly CCC planning bulletin	vicechairtc@ohsca.org
Local History Group	Chair LHG: <i>Derek Ray</i> forstal22@yahoo.co.uk 01227 464845 For information about Local History Publications, history@ohsca.org , or see publications on OHSCA website Secretary LHG: Michael Brain history@ohsca.org 01227 767343 <i>Dick Vane-Wright</i> : social@ohsca.org
SEA convenor	<i>Dick Vane-Wright</i> : social@ohsca.org
Newsletter distribution	<i>Deirdre Hawkes</i>
Tree champion	<i>Helly Langley</i>
Newsletter editors	<i>Greta Cotterrell</i> : gretaohsca@gmail.com ; <i>Dick Vane-Wright</i> : social@ohsca.org

If you are uncertain who to contact, please direct your enquiry to the Honorary Secretary (contact details above).
ACRA = Alliance of pan-Canterbury Residents' Associations; SCA = Southern Canterbury Alliance; OHC = OHSCA HealthCare subcommittee; SEA = Social Events and Activities subcommittee



Clive Church

A celebration of the life of Clive Church (Emeritus Professor of European Studies, University of Kent) was held on Saturday 10th September. Tributes were paid by his daughters Hilary and Joanne, Prof. David Phinnemore (Queens University Belfast), Prof. Anne Stevens (Aston University) and his close friend Claire Whitehouse. Clive was an internationally acknowledged expert on European politics, with a specialist interest in the history and governance of Switzerland. He led the formation of ACRA (Alliance of pan-Canterbury Residents' Associations) in 2013, and was its chair for the following six years.

David Kemsley

some OHSCA dates for your diary:

every Wednesday and Friday: 1 hr local walk (p.4)	21 October: OHSCA AGM (p.6)
every Friday: digital inclusion – see Newsletter no. 23	26 October: Coffee morning (p.4)
24/25 Sept: Climate Action Festival (p.1)	2 November: Local author talk (p.4)
28 September: Coffee morning (p.4)	23 November: Coffee morning (p.4)
14 October: Nominations/Resolutions (p.7)	6 December: Local author talk (p.4)
19 October: CCC Local Plan (p.3)	25 January: Coffee morning (p.4)

DIGITAL EDITION EXTRAS

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Summer garden party (p. 4)	p. 11
<i>Anthrax</i> found in Cromwell Rd!	p. 12
Lydden (from page 4) – butterfly walk	p. 13



Doris Hughes's *Koelreuteria* tree grows despite the drought! (18 August 2022)

OHSCA HealthCare: Review of Patients' Participation as at 12 September 2022

This note reports on the final stages of the dismantling of the Kent & Medway NHS Patients' Representative organisation (PRG), brought about by the nationwide replacement of Clinical Commissioning Groups, and the system related to them, with Integrated Care Boards. There was a farewell Kent-wide PRG Zoom meeting (about 70 'attended') on 28 April, and an East Kent Patient Participation Group (PPG) Chairs' Zoom meeting on 23 May, with about 21 'present'; and there was a final Zoom 'meeting' on 29 June of the local (Canterbury) PRG, with 9 participating including the NHS-appointed Chair and secretary (who both said that their role in the NHS would be changing.) The low attendance was a little disappointing – it had usually been more than twice that – in view of the anxiety among patients' representatives about the removal of the existing system with no replacement in sight. It should be mentioned that each General Practice (GPs are contracted directly to NHS England, and their legal situation is not directly affected by the CCG/ICB change) is required to have a Patients' Participation Group – but see below.

The patients' representatives at the meeting had two main worries (bearing in mind that they all represent GP Practice PPGs): (a) that they don't know where the point of contact will now be, when they need to help a patient to get some service or treatment or information that they need from outside the Practice (or perhaps inside it); and (b) that they need continuing contact with people performing similar functions outside their own PPG (e.g. other PPG Chairs), so that they can find out how others have had similar problems, and have found ways to deal with them.

Arguably, both of these functions ought to be carried out by the staff of the General Practice itself, but it is implicit in what the patients' representatives say that this doesn't happen, or at least it can't be relied on. The Health & Care Act may now, in effect, be saying that the PRG structure is redundant, all that's needed is a PPG in each General Practice, which can take any matter up with the Practice heads and get things dealt with through the Practice; but the evidence seems to be that every PPG depends for its effectiveness, not only on getting active volunteers for the PPG, but also on the support given by the Practice to its PPG and the seriousness with which they take it. And it's generally said that a lot of Practices (50%?) are happy to let their PPG be comatose, or not to exist at all.

As mentioned above, it remains a contractual requirement between Practices and NHS England that they do each maintain a functional PPG, but with the time-pressures on GPs that we all know about, and the forecast increasing shortage of GPs and support staff, the low-implementation situation hardly seems likely to improve. Someone at this meeting asked how defaulting Practices can be made to implement the PPG requirement, but no answer emerged. And since GPs' contractual relationship is with NHS England, not with the ICBs, it's difficult to see who could be appealed to (short of MPs – to involve whom it would generally have to be a big and exceptional issue.)

I asked if HealthWatch (the statutory 'watchdog' – a very reduced successor to the old Community Health Councils, which were abolished some 20 years ago) might be able to help, either in getting functional PPGs where they don't exist, or in setting up and supporting continuing contact arrangements (such as a continuing network of PPG Chairs), but no-one thought this a serious possibility; apparently HealthWatch is run mainly with volunteers (some of those present on 29 June were HW volunteers), and on minimal budgets.

An organisation chart ('architecture', they are calling it) of the Kent & Medway ICS exists, useful up to a point, but it does reveal how little is known – or indeed decided – about how the new regime will work. And although the new Board has expressed a wish to maintain – or restore – communications, nothing tangible has yet been announced, and none of us knows who if anyone is going to keep the ex-CPRG members in touch with each other.

Regarding OHSCA's position in all this: as we know, the one thing that is really supposed to continue is the General Practice PPG system (patchy as it is, by all accounts); OHSCA isn't a PPG, so unless a look-alike CPRG replacement is set up, it's difficult to see how (or with what) OHSCA can keep in touch with all this – unless one or more of us get involved in a PPG at our own General Practice. I have begun viewing/listening, via 'Teams', at the bi-monthly ICB Board meetings, and we will I hope keep getting email bulletins, from the ICB now instead of the CCG, but to judge from what they've sent so far, it will be aspiration and exhortation, rather than concrete plans and factual information. *Denis Linfoot, 12.viii.2022*



In the shade! – pictures from the OHSCA Little Lunch, 6 August 2022, chez Alison & Francis

Anthrax found in Cromwell Road!

'Panic ye not', as Frankie Howerd used to say – not the terrible disease of sheep and cattle caused by the bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*, also communicable to humans – but a notable fly –



Left: *Anthrax anthrax* from Cromwell Rd, Canterbury, 12 September 2022, TR 152566 (R. I. Vane-Wright).
Right: *Bombylius major* (© B. Schoenmakers, ex Wikimedia Commons).

Anthrax anthrax (the word anthrax comes from the Greek for charcoal, *άνθρακας*) is a member of the bee-fly family Bombyliidae – which includes the beautiful bee-mimic *Bombylius major*, common in our gardens every spring. With its long proboscis and hovering flight (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombylius_major), often taking nectar from flowers, most people assume *B. major* is a type of bee.



To reproduce, *B. major* females lay their eggs at the entrances to the nests of various mining bees. After a bee-fly larvae hatches it moves into the nest, remaining inactive until the bee larvae are ready to pupate. Then the bee-fly larva becomes a maggot-like ectoparasite that feeds on the host larva, eventually killing it. This host/predator relationship is entirely normal – bees and bee-flies have undoubtedly coexisted for millions of years. The reproductive biology of *Anthrax anthrax* is very similar – but, instead of mining bees, they prey on mason bees. Females are often seen hovering in front of 'bee hotels', in the process of laying their eggs. Our little bee hotel was exactly where the Cromwell Rd *Anthrax* was found. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthrax_anthrax#/media/File:Anthrax_oscil_anim.gif]

Anthrax anthrax is notable because of its very limited and recent range in the UK. Although there are old records for Leicestershire, these have been discounted. The first reliable record for the UK was made only in 2016, from Cambridgeshire. Since then records have mostly been from around Canterbury, including Harbledown, where it was demonstrated to be breeding in a garden during 2018/2019. Last year it was again seen in Harbledown (twice), and also Rough Common.

The Cromwell Rd *Anthrax* is now at the Natural History Museum in London – where its DNA will be extracted as a contribution to the Wellcome Sanger Institute *Darwin Tree of Life Project* – which has the ambition to barcode and sequence the entire genomes of an estimated 66,000 species of organisms known to occur in the UK. <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/our-work/biodiversity/Darwin-tree-of-life-project.html>

Dick Vane-Wright, 18 September 2022 – with grateful thanks to Duncan Sivell and Erica McAlister at the NHM, and Laurence Clemons (Sittingbourne)



LYDDEN

As reported on page 4, on 21st August a few OHSCA members met with Nathan Moss and others from Butterfly Conservation Kent Branch, at Lydden Temple Ewell National Nature Reserve. A few Silver-spotted Skippers (upper right and centre right) were found on a south-facing slope with very short grass. A total of 13 butterfly species were encountered, including the Small Heath and Wall, and four species of 'blues' – the Common Blue, Chalkhill Blue, Brown Argus – and the spectacular Adonis Blue (lower right).

