OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION



SPRING NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2023

No. 26

Welcome to your Spring newsletter

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We all wish to reduce our energy costs for heating our homes, but please avoid woodburners! The British Medical Journal finds that "domestic woodburners (including 'eco' ones) and open fires are responsible for 25% of the UK's fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) emissions", almost double that of traffic. *Cotoneaster franchetii*, a "super shrub" because of its efficient hairy leaves, can soak up $PM_{2.5}$ from traffic pollution. Also effective are *Elaeagnus*, yew, laurel and hawthorn.

Scam: Kent County Council is urging local residents to be on the lookout for cold callers and rogue traders this Spring. Doorstep criminals often offer to do guttering and roofing repairs, or work on driveways and gardens. Bogus workmen have targeted households in New Dover Rd to tarmac private driveways for a large fee. If you are approached, contact the police and you may

also wish to advise Kent County Council Public Protection service on ppalert@kent.gov.uk

Volunteers needed!

We are setting up a database of people from our OHSCA members who would be willing to help with gardening, general administration, delivering, IT, website, social activities, those with town planning experience, lifters and carriers for our summer activities, litter and any other skill or assistance you might like to offer. We would love to hear from you and find out what areas you are interested in, how much time you would like to give us and how often. It can be very *ad hoc* if you prefer. An email address would be much appreciated so we can be in touch when needed. Contact Lorraine Woodleigh at volunteers@ohsca.org



Snowdrops seen during the GIG walk at Doddington Place. Photo Dick Vane-Wright

New Cathedral Precincts Pass: £6 for 5 years

The online *Church Times* for 4th March 2023 states that for the past 20 years people who work in the old city of Canterbury, or who live within four miles of Bell Harry tower, congregation members, cathedral volunteers, or on the electoral roll of the diocese parish church, have all been able to have a free annual precincts pass. From January 2023, a new 5-year Cathedral pass will be required of all residents. See https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2022/11-november/news/uk/canterbury-cathedral-to-charge-locals-6-entry-fee-for-five-years. To get the new £6 pass go to: https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/visit/the-cathedral-pass/. If you need assistance, email passes@canterbury-cathedral.org, or telephone 01227 762 862. Meanwhile, opposition to the new restrictions on access via Queningate and other entry points continues, spearheaded by the Canterbury Cathedral Precincts Access Group (email: precincts-action-group@outlook.com) or via Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/ccpag/.

Planning

Local Plan updates

The formal public consultation on the latest stage of the Local Plan preparation is concluded. At the time of writing the formal response of the City Council is awaited. It is not known how many comments were submitted in total either by community groups or individual members of the public. Accordingly the main thrust of those submissions remains unknown. However, without exception, all of the numerous submissions which have either been shared with OHSCA or published in the press have raised major objections, particularly in relation to the calculation of the housing targets, the proposed traffic zones in the city area and the construction of eastern and possibly northern bypasses. Sadly, some of the overall environmental improvements proposed do not impact our area. All submissions have referred to the announcement by Mr Gove (that housing targets figures need to take account of specific area characteristics) and urged the council to pause the process and take time for reflection.

Comments from the council leader have been that CCC believes "process too far advanced to start again", and "planning inspector confirms the plan is on right lines". In that light one has to question the purpose of the most recent public consultation.

Mountfield Park update

A relatively quiet period in terms of community engagement whilst the developer negotiates the S106 agreement and the schedule of conditions relating to the planning approvals given in December last (detailed 140 houses phase 1a /outline the remaining 99% of the whole development, including schools, community facilities, business units and not least 3860 homes). It is worth noting that some 80% of the S106 money contributed by the developer is directed to KCC and the Highways Authority. Major concerns remain about fresh water provision, foul water discharge and additional traffic.

In granting planning approval the city council has stipulated that the developer must formally engage with local residents for the duration of the development (note the houses will not be built by the landowner with separate contracts let for this purpose). The council will establish a Project Delivery Board to monitor progress. Informal links have been established with Corinthian on thoughts about community engagement regarding residents' empowerment.

David Kemsley

OHSCA Committee needs a planning coordinator

I have been the local authority planning coordinator for OHSCA for the best part of 10 years, but have now stepped down from the committee, and a reduced version role is being fulfilled on an ad hoc basis by David Orr and myself for the time being – we are looking for someone to take on this work, possibly phasing into it gradually with our guidance. Could this be you? Ideally, you will be an architect or planner, but this is not essential. If we cannot find a replacement, the service is likely to be reduced or stop altogether.

What is the task?

There are three levels of work:

1. A weekly planning bulletin – you have all seen it – it's prepared using straightforward lists available from the council in the form of a direct circular email with weekly new applications and decisions, or by searching the planning portal. In both cases the applications for the OHSCA area need to be extracted. Simple internet and typing skills needed.

The bulletin is uploaded using **Mailchimp.** This is fairly easy to learn to operate, and Lucy Fletcher-Jones can assist.

2. Application review follows – not usually done every week, but needs to observe the CCC time limits for comments. There is a very useful CCC guideline on what points about an application **they** think are eligible for comment. Fundamentally, the question is 'does the application fail to comply with the Local Plan' in some way, but common sense plays a large part: is the application going to cause problems for the area/road it is in – traffic, noise, poor design etc. It is not essential to comment in detail on all aspects, and the planning coordinator

can learn the ropes bit by bit, but some reading up on the Local Plan is advisable. Consulting the committee on proposed comments is important.

Comments are submitted on the CCC portal in a simple process, and bi-monthly reports to the committee on what has been commented on are useful.

3. The final level is preparing **comments on consultations offered by CCC** on, for example, the Draft Local Plan. This has been done in the past – and should be continued if possible, but this entirely depends on the capabilities of the coordinator, is normally done in consultation with the committee, and depends on the time the coordinator has available, as it requires the necessary reading.

Please contact us to discuss details of what you might offer if you are at all interested.

Tim Carlyle

SEA news

Monthly coffee mornings continue to take place every fourth Wednesday of the month in the main lounge of the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, St Margaret's Street from 11.00–12.00. Dates are as follows: 22 March, 26 April, 24 May and 28 June.

Walks: The regular walk takes place on Fridays, starting 9.30 sharp at the old main gates to the Kent & Canterbury Hospital. These walks are open to all members.

Special Walks: Two Natural History Walks are planned in 2023: a *Bluebell Walk* at King's Wood (near Chilham) on 29 April (or 30 April if rain); and on Saturday 27 May (no rain day) there will be an *Orchid Walk* at Denge Woods, near Garlinge Green, meet at 10 am, to be led by Dr Dave Roberts (University of Kent). If interested to attend either Walk, please contact social@ohsca.org, or 'phone Dick on 01227 768 624. Cancelled if weather too bad.

Talks: Four talks were successfully held in 2022. Six talks have been planned in 2023. The first by Peter Taylor-Gooby, *The uses of fiction*, was held on 22 February and attracted a large group of interested members. The next talk will be on **Wednesday 24 May 2023** and will be by **Yvonne Noble** on **Women Writers of East Kent before Jane Austen.**

Yvonne Noble *is* an Honorary Research Scholar at the University of Kent who lives in South Canterbury with her husband Hugh Davies. Both are members of OHSCA. Born in the USA, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, after working in New Haven and Philadelphia on several projects concerning Benjamin Franklin, she completed a Ph.D. in English at Yale University with a dissertation on John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. She taught at the University of Pennsylvania and became tenured at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. In 1972 she married Hugh and moved to England, occasionally teaching since in the USA, at New York University and William and Mary and other colleges. She was a founding member of the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and has remained active in the American and British SECS. She was founder of the Women's Studies Group 1558-1837, which meets for seminars and workshops at the Foundling Museum in Bloomsbury and now sometimes online and which has published three books, lasting over thirty years without the direct support of institutional affiliation. She is also a life member of the Garden Trust, the Modern Language Association, and the Bibliographical Society.

Women Writers of East Kent before Jane Austen.

East Kent abounds in women writers before Jane Austen (not herself an East Kent woman, though long honoured with an appreciation society here). The important Restoration poet, playwright, novelist, and translator Aphra Behn is at last being recognized here with a local society, which aims to put up a statue in Canterbury to match those of Chaucer and Marlowe, all three being authors who did their writing elsewhere. In my talk I will identify other East Kent women whose writing was both recognized and admired in their own time and admired and studied today, while they remain almost unknown in Kent. Finally, I will concentrate on a group from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries centred in Canterbury. Its members include a major scholar who, even though a woman, was allowed to borrow manuscripts from the Bodleian Library and Harley collection and who was published by Oxford University Press. It also includes the major woman poet in English of the eighteenth century, who lived most of

her writing life in Kent and who often wrote on local subjects. They, and others, are linked by a woman poet who lived her entire life in the cathedral precincts, who was well-known and admired as a poet in her lifetime, but till now has been entirely forgotten.

yvonnenoblevirtual@gmail.com

Four further talks have been arranged in 2023:

- Monday 26 June 2023 by Lyn Innes, The last prince of Bengal
- Monday 25 September 2023 by April Doyle, Hive
- Tuesday 21 November 2023 by Malcolm Andrews, A Sweet View. The making of an English Idyll
- Tuesday 12 December by Martin Latham on his book, The Booksellers Tale

The Spring Party took place on Friday 17 March 2023 at the Kent & Canterbury Club. Tim Jones, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Media, Art, and Design at Canterbury Christ Church University, showed us films of Canterbury in the past, followed by a hot and cold buffet. This proved a very popular event.

Pub Games at The Phoenix. A games evening was held at The Phoenix at 7 pm on Monday 13 March. Please note that we will now meet on the *first Monday of each month*. The next

meetings are at 7 pm on Monday 3 April, Monday 1 May, Monday 5 June, and Monday 3 July. Watch out for the mailchimp reminder. **The Gardeners' Interest Group (GIG)** had a successful visit to Doddington Place to see the snowdrops on Sunday 19 February. **The Gardeners' Question Time and Seed Share** took place on Wednesday 8 March at 2.30pm at The Phoenix Pub.

The **Plant Share** and informal social gathering will take place on Saturday 20 May from 10.30–12.30 at the home of Dick & Hazel Vane-Wright, 42 Cromwell Rd.

There will be a **visit to the Old Bladbean Stud** on Monday 22 May. Cost is £7 to cover the guide's fee. Apply to Alison Culverwell at aculverwell99@gmail.com



Margot Leslie, Hazel Vane-Wright, Alison Culverwell at Doddington Place

Members of GIG are informed of local events and encouraged to make use of the network for sharing information or problems by contacting Alison Culverwell, Helly Langley or Sue Hodge.

We plan to hold a **Garage/Yard/Safari Sale** if enough stallholders wish to participate. Please note that we have changed the date. **The date has been changed** from 13 May to **Saturday 5 August,** 11am – 4pm, with Sunday 6 August as backup day in case of rain. A number of people have already expressed an interest in participating but we need more to make it financially viable. It's a good opportunity to think about decluttering and to start putting to one side what you want to sell. This year we would like people to club together and share a space. Please contact social@ohsca.org if you wish to participate as a stallholder. Fee to each stallholder will be £5 to cover the costs of publicity.

Summer Lunch Party will be held by kind invitation at the home of Alison Culverwell and Francis Green on Sunday 30 July. This is a *bring and share* event.

St Augustine's Abbey Picnic will be held on Saturday 20 August 2023 in the grounds of the Abbey. Members of English Heritage get in free. Residents of CT1 and CT2 can apply for a free annual St Augustine's Abbey Resident's Pass. Bring your own picnic. Seating is available.

NOTE: Access for residents to St Augustine's Abbey

We can no longer get free access to the Abbey simply by turning up with proof of CT1 or CT2 residency. So, if as a CT1 resident you want to attend our annual picnic, or just walk in the grounds, without paying the *circa* £8 entrance fee (or being a member of English Heritage), you have to go the trouble of getting a (free) annual St Augustine's Abbey Resident's Pass, *in advance*. This means a form – and a wait of a week or more from making your application – and you need to renew it each year. The Application Form must be completed and handed to

a member of staff on site, along with two passport sized photos of each adult living in your household wishing access (one photo will be used to create the pass, the other will be kept on file for their records). You can get the form from the Abbey entrance desk, or in the near future you will be able to download it from our website. Proof of residency must be shown to a member of staff before they can issue your pass; this can be in the form of two bills dated approximately six months apart or a driver's licence (preferably shown at the same time as handing-in the completed application form). English Heritage staff will try to have passes made and ready for collection within one week, but can be delayed at busy times.

At the next **AGM on 27 October 2023** SEA will organise a social get-together with food and drinks before and after the meeting. SEA aims to organise a range of activities and events to bring the community together. If you wish to help or suggest activities, please contact the Convenor Lorna Durrani at social@ohsca.org.

SEA sub-committee: Alison Culverwell, Hazel & Dick Vane-Wright, Helly Langley, Lorna Durrani (Convenor), Margot Leslie & Susi Brain.

Litter pick

Helly Langley is planning a litter pick, April 15th, 10 am–12 noon, meeting at Biggleston's Link. Any new volunteers interested in joining as a litter picker, please contact Helly through social@ohsca.org for details on requirements and safety instructions.

Membership

First, welcome to our new members. We hope you enjoy the various activities listed in this newsletter. A big Thank You to the 150 members who have paid their subscriptions promptly – you will go on getting the newsletter for the rest of 2023. A couple of people were untraceable so if you are marked UNPAID on the back of the paper newsletter and think you have paid, please email me giving your name, address and approximate date paid.

If you need to pay, and many of you who get your newsletter by email are in this group, please send £5 by cash or cheque made out to Oaten Hill & South Canterbury Association to meaddress on back page. If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, the sort code is 60-04-27 and the account number is 90612094. The reference should be the first line of your address. Please do this now! Huge thanks are due to the many members who have sent donations. You really help us to improve our area.

Sophie Scott, membership secretary

The Green Team

The Fire station planting was designed to cope with drought and heat. The winter snow and rain carried off some of the more experimental planting but happily things are burgeoning again and the bulbs are doing well. We will be replenishing the plants very soon. Milton Road is well established but always needs pruning, deadheading and weeding – there's a fine line between letting wildflowers grow and letting the brambles win! Help is always welcome.

Sophie, Dave and Deirdre

Trees

KCC have been trying to plant a replacement tree in Ersham Road, but the traffic cones aimed at stopping people parking keep being moved. Workmen heading for the McCarthy & Stone site are possible suspects.

Sophie Scott, Green Team

OHC

Social Care is crucial to health care, and KCC, like most Care-providing Councils, have used their comparatively recent permission to exceed the 2% cap on Council Tax increases, up to effectively 5% (though only up to a 3% increase for KCC itself). Even so, their Care services were facing a double-figures percentage cut. I don't know where the main retrenchments are to fall; from rather slender anecdotal evidence, I think the Council have genuinely tried to exercise benevolent judgement, but with an overall saving of the magnitude required, some Care services must be badly hit. A 5% uplift in the Councils' Council Tax income can't plug the gap resulting from years of below-inflation income revaluation, especially in the context of increasingly vocal public and political awareness (and ineffectual promises) of the importance of Social Care to Health services.

Meanwhile, there seems no end presently in sight to the strike action by NHS staff, and no indication how normal service may be recovered – nor when recovery attempts might be made. This is the point where any attempt at further comment risks accusations of imbalance; but it seemed to me interesting, at the Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) meeting on 7 February, which I watched on-line, when a member asked about the relevance of the longer-term plans on this meeting's agenda to what staff including managers are currently having to face, the Chair said that that was a matter for Part 2 of the meeting; that is, a part 'not held in public.' It had become normal over the last 20–30 years for public governing bodies to hold their meetings in public except for business involving genuine personal or financial confidentiality; however, while there must obviously be a lot of anxious talk about the current crisis going on among NHS managers and governors, it is evidently not good for the public to know what is being said.

I mentioned in my New Year note the ICB meeting held in November. There was a 3-month interval between that and the February meeting, but they will be back on their 2-monthly cycle with a March meeting (too late to report on here). A lot of time is still spent on setting up procedural plans and procedures (a penalty of the NHS's endless cycle of re-organisations), but some changes in service provision and locations came up for approval (at least partly, one may guess, to adjust to the receding prospect of a long-term settlement of secondary and tertiary hospital services for Kent and Medway); by the way, the Finance Director requested permission to change the budget for the current year (ending on 31 March) from a break-even out-turn to a deficit of £25.3m. This will have to be recovered in the 2023/24 year; the Finance Director had already mentioned that for next year's budget he calculated the 'efficiency requirement' (which I take to be the current Newspeak for 'savings') to be 5.3% (a figure "above previously delivered levels", as he put it). One can see why the employers' and the staff side's representatives think that help is needed from somebody else to resolve matters.

Denis Linfoot, convenor, OHSCA HealthCare monitoring group (OHC)

Local History Group

We last met on March 14th. Our next meeting is scheduled for May 9th, both in the Phoenix pub, Old Dover Rd., at 2pm. We continue to revise the Dover Street draft and also hope to create a book to celebrate the 50th anniversary of OHDS/OHSCA. This will feature photos that illustrate the people and projects we have been researching since 1974 when OHDS LHG began. Do come along, we heartily welcome all OHSCA members and all shades of opinion.

Derek Ray, Chairman LHG

Blue Plagues for Canterbury

Brief notice of this Canterbury Society scheme was given on page 3 of the New Year newsletter. If this initiative is to go ahead, more money is needed. If you wish to make a contribution, you can **donate at GoFundMe** (https://www.gofundme.com/the-canterbury-society-blue-plaque-appeal), or direct to The Canterbury Society's NatWest bank account (sort code 60-04-27; account no. 90903129; reference: Blue Plaques).

Canterbury City Council elections 4 May: Photo ID needed

As a consequence of government legislation, people will not be allowed to vote at Council elections unless they have an approved form of photo ID such as a passport. For pensioners this can be the KCC bus pass, but young people's bus passes and student ID cards would not be accepted. Make sure you bring personal identification carrying your photo when you next vote. Residents could apply for a postal vote, which would obviate the need for a photo ID.

CCC Pollinator Action Plan

Although much Angst has been expressed about CCC's Local Plan 2020-2045 (see e.g. New Year newsletter pp. 5-7), these concerns mainly relate to urban heritage, housing, transport and local services. Within the document, once finalised, we anticipate some good sections on the green environment, including open spaces (although for the OHSCA area this will likely amount to nothing), trees — and pollinators. The draft CCC Pollinator Action Plan 2023–2028 states that "Together with our partners and stakeholders we aim to protect and improve habitats for this threatened group of insects [pollinators] by changing the way that we manage the land that we own and control, and by empowering everyone who lives and works in this district to take relevant informed actions too." The plan has six basic aims, the last three of which have good potential for involvement by local residents: (iv) raise awareness of different types of pollinators and their habitat needs within CCC and across local communities, businesses and landowners; (v) empower individuals, organisations and community groups (e.g. Friends Groups) to take action to protect and monitor pollinator populations; and (vi) increase local knowledge and understanding of pollinators by supporting monitoring and data collection. Actions, some of which OHSCA Green Team and the Gardening Interest Group might consider promoting?

Dick Vane-Wright

Miscellany

Answers to the New Year issue's quiz

Here is the Quiz Question:

Answer: They are all anagrams

What's the connection? of countries

Pains moan tearier Spain, Oman, Eritrea
Reign regalia chain Niger, Algeria, China
Serial plane mail Israel, Nepal, Mali
Also pure rabies Laos, Peru, Serbia

Protective effect of flavonoids

Medical research from Western Australia on 900 older women, median age 80, found that a diet rich in flavonoids (such as tea, fruit, red wine, dark chocolate) acted to protect against calcification of the abdominal aorta. In another study, this time from Chicago in the USA, people with the highest intake of flavonoids showed a slower decline in cognitive performance, even after adjusting for age and sex and other factors such as smoking. The Editor is delighted, given that she enjoys these flavonoid items!

Shut the toilet lid

In a scientific report, seen in the British Medical Journal by the Editor, a laser illuminated video recording of the aerosol cloud emitted by a flushing toilet showed that as soon as the flush starts a plume of droplets containing urine, faeces and other particles shoots upwards into people's breathing zones. All the more reason I say to close the lid before flushing. But what happens in those public toilets without lids? I hate to imagine.

Greta Ross (Cotterrell), Editor

OHSCA COMMITTEE 2022-2023 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

David Kemsley ACRA /SCA rep./OHC subcommittee/Press Liaison: press@ohsca.org

Helly Langley Committee Member/Planning subcommittee

Lucy Fletcher-Jones Website Coordinator/events bulletin alerts: website@ohsca.org

Lorraine Woodleigh Committee Member: volunteers@ohsca.org

Weekly CCC planning bulletin currently suspended; new volunteer required (contact secretary@ohsca.org)

Local History Group Chair LHG: *Derek Ray* forstal22@yahoo.co.uk 01227 464845. For information about Local History publications, email: history@ohsca.org – or go to OHSCA website: https://www.ohsca.org/history.html

Secretary LHG: Michael Brain: history@ohsca.org 01227 767343

SEA convenor Lorna Durrani: social@ohsca.org (current members listed on p.5)

OHC David Kemsley, Alison Culverwell, Denis Linfoot (convenor), Dick Vane-Wright

Newsletter distribution: Deirdre Hawkes

Tree champion: Helly Langley

Newsletter editors: Greta Ross (Cotterrell): gretaohsca@gmail.com

Dick Vane-Wright: dickvanewright@gmail.com

If you are uncertain who to contact, please direct your enquiry to the Honorary Secretary (see above).

Note: ACRA = Alliance of pan-Canterbury Residents' Associations; SCA = Southern Canterbury Alliance; OHC = OHSCA HealthCare subcommittee; SEA = Social Events and Activities subcommittee

OHSCA dates from end March to end August (AGM will be on 27 October): every Friday: 1 hour local walk (p.3) 24 May: Coffee morning (p.3) 22 March: Coffee morning (p.3) 24 May: Yvonne Noble talk (p.3/4) 3 April: Pub games at the *Phoenix* (p.4) 27 May: Orchid Walk (p.3) 15 April: Litter pick (p.5) 5 June: Pub games (p.4) 26 April: Coffee morning (p.3) 26 June: Lyn Innes talk (p.4) 29 April: Bluebell Walk (p.3) 28 June: Coffee morning (p.3) 1 May: Pub games at the Phoenix (p.4) 3 July: Pub games (p.4) 9 May: LHG at the *Phoenix* (p.6) 30 July: Summer Lunch Party (p.4) 20 May: Plant Share (p.4) 5 August: Safari Sale (p.4) Visit to Old Bladbean Stud (p.4) 22 May: 20 August: St Augustine Picnic (p.4)