

OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION



SUMMER NEWSLETTER
digital edition

JUNE 2023

No. 27

WELCOME TO THE OHSCA SUMMER NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS

From the Editor	p.1
Volunteers Needed	p.1
All change	p.2
Heritage	p.2
Membership	p.3
Website and Email alerts	p.3
Trees and Green Team	p.4
SEA News	p.4
Lyn Innes	p.5
OHC	p.6
LHG	p.7
Quenin Gate	p.7
OHSCA?	p.7
Committee and Dates	p.8
Digital Extra	pp. 9–21

In the national newspaper *iweekend* for 13/14 May, under the headline *Degrading Local Control Has Been a Disaster for Britain*, political commentator and local resident Patrick Cockburn offered opinions about how local government has impacted Canterbury in recent decades. After reflecting negatively on the nine million pound multi-storey car park at Canterbury West, and ‘Bird’ e-scooters butchered for their lithium batteries, Cockburn also lamented CCC’s “failure to look after the historic fabric of the city”, and how reduction of council services has affected the poor among us the most. He concluded that, if British society is to be revived, local councils must have adequate resources restored if they are to act effectively on their own initiatives, while still being responsible agents for central government. Meanwhile, even though they can do less than before, “they can still do something – and that something can make a crucial difference”.

Given the radical change to CCC following the recent local elections, even though the Council will still be unable to do as much as before, our expectations are high – unrealistically so, perhaps. On p. 2, David Kemsley and Tim Carlyle ponder what our new Council might do with respect to services and the environment – including Canterbury’s degrading heritage.

Community groups also play a role in ‘doing something’ to protect and improve our local fabric and facilities – in the case of OHSCA, we represent some 50 years of voluntary service. Thus we celebrate Richard Young, who has been delivering our newsletters for over two decades. We’d like to thank him and all our other deliverers for their invaluable help. However, the time has come for Richard to hang up his delivery boots. We need someone new to take his place. Indeed, if we are to continue, such renewal is essential – at every level. It will not be long before several others who have done much for the association will also have to step away. **However, requests for new volunteers at all levels continue to fall on deaf ears!** So here we are repeating Lorraine Woodleigh’s call from our last newsletter:

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – REALLY!

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.



Fire Station tulips (photo: Deirdre Hawkes)

Dick Vane-Wright, Editor

ALL CHANGE AT THE CITY COUNCIL

Following the City Council elections on May 4, the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties have joined together to form a ruling coalition. Our elected representatives in Barton and Wincheap are:

BARTON: Pat Edwards (Lab) pat.edwards@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk; Connie Nolan (Lab) connie.nolan@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk; Paul Prentice (Lab) paul.prentice@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk

WINCHEAP: Dane Buckman (Lab) dane.buckman@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk; Robert Franklin (Lib Dem) Robert.Franklin@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk



Congratulations to all, and welcome to Dane, Paul and Robert. OHSCA looks forward to working with you in the same spirit of positive cooperation that we have enjoyed with Connie and Pat over these last four years – and with departing Cllrs Nick Eden-Green (left), Derek Maslin and Dave Wilson, who did not stand for re-election. We thank all of you for the hard work and support – especially Nick, who has been an active member of OHSCA and both its predecessors for at least two decades.

Consequent on the May election, our two wards together with the others across the Canterbury city area are represented in the ruling two party coalition. At the election hustings, pleasingly, we heard a lot of passionate oratory about, among other issues, environmental protection, heritage and conservation, open space, air quality, walking and cycling, traffic congestion, realistic housing targets to meet local needs, and biodiversity. So expectations are high!

Although it is unrealistic to expect change overnight there are opportunities for some quick wins – notably the process already underway for revisions to the Local plan in the light of the public consultation in January, and the usage of the £20m Levelling Up fund that the government has made available. Our World Heritage Site status is at serious risk – the price of neglect over the years as priority was given to so-called economic regeneration schemes, such as the controversial Canterbury West multi-storey car park. Our city needs to be cleaner, greener and more welcoming to visitors. Consider just a few specific examples of what needs to be done:

- The Longport car park opposite St Augustine's Abbey is shabby and dull. Trees and hedging are needed urgently. Repeated requests have been met with prevarication.
- Trees/hedging and World Heritage Site impact need to be given much greater consideration during planning application scrutiny.
- Renewed focus on Air quality with new mobile equipment that can measure PM 2.5, presented as publicly available data. From the limited information we already have, pollution regularly exceeds safe limits in certain areas
- Recognition that there is minimal public recreational space in our OHSCA area and a determined effort to address that need as a priority when opportunities arise.
- Safe accessible pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Rethinking of the proposal to route all hospital and adjacent housing bound traffic from the city end of Old Dover Rd along Ethelbert Rd.

I am sure OHSCA members will have many more suggestions. The key thing is that, now our ward Cllrs hold the reins of power (which they have not, for many years), there is a clear opportunity to change things for the better. We need to take it!

David Kemsley

A FEW WORDS ON HERITAGE

Since stepping down from the committee, I have been busy with the *Sustainable Development Goals Poverty Report*, and ACRA business commenting on the Local Plan – which we now know is to be extensively revised by the new Labour/Liberal Democrat coalition (see above).

Canterbury Heritage and Design Forum (CHDF), of which I am chair this year, will be pressing for that review to take note of the advice in the 2022 Review of the Canterbury Conservation Area Management Plan, and the forthcoming World Heritage Site Management Plan. These urge the council to better enforce planning policies to protect the character of listed buildings and conservation areas, and we will also be pressing the new council to adopt policies that also enhance character.

As an example, CHDF have just written to the Kent Gazette and the Council, objecting strongly to the demolition without planning permission of the Cost Cutter shop on St Dunstan's by a developer, and destruction by KCC of the paving around Sir John Hales's historic pump in Longport (https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMEC2C_Sir_John_Hales_Baronetts_Pump_Longport_Canterbury_Kent_UK) – which dates from 1733 (see *Longport Through the Ages*, LHG, 2016, p. 7). The new council must create a clear message that it will enforce protection of Canterbury's heritage, including the streetscape, and demonstrate leadership in calling for improvements in the standards that govern its planning policies, if we are to stop the steady decline of quality in Canterbury's character.

Tim Carlyle

MEMBERSHIP

We are still receiving new members – welcome to OHSCA! – and we hope you enjoy the various activities listed in this newsletter. Thank you to the 211 households who have paid up for 2023 – you will go on getting the newsletter and email reminders for the rest of the year. A couple of people were untraceable; others have not renewed from last year. So, if you are uncertain if you have paid or not, please email Sophie Scott (sophie01@btinternet.com) giving your name, address – and approximate date if you think you may have paid.

If you do still need to renew, please send £5 to Sophie by cash, or cheque made out to Oaten Hill & South Canterbury Association (address on page 8) as soon as possible. If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, the sort code is 60-04-27 and the account number is 90612094. It is important to include the first line of your address as the reference because this helps to identify you. We will only continue sending newsletters and email alerts to those who have renewed by 30 June 2023.

We have many generous members making donations, which total approximately £800 so far this year. We are always keen to hear suggestions from members for small projects requiring funding.

Sophie Scott (Membership Secretary) and Lucy Fletcher-Jones

OHSCA WEBSITE AND EMAIL ALERTS

OHSCA uses the quarterly newsletter as its primary means of communication with members. But I would just like to remind you all that we also have a website <https://www.ohsca.org/> which acts as a backup to the newsletter. You can view the website at any time and it is especially useful if you lose your paper newsletter or the digital version gets lost in the mass of emails we each receive every day! I try to keep it regularly updated, but as it is a public resource, I do not include personal details such as personal emails and street addresses unless given permission. The website also acts as an archive of such items as previous newsletters, books published by the history group and photographs of events. If you have any ideas on what else you would like to see on it, please let me know at the email address below. If you take any photographs of events, please do send them to us. It is always good to keep the web site fresh.

I also send out the email alerts using *Mailchimp* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mailchimp>). As these are only sent to members who have subscribed to them, full details of events are given. If you don't like receiving regular emails but need to know more about an event advertised in the newsletter you can always check the web site events diary <https://www.ohsca.org/events.html> or contact the appropriate Committee member through the email addresses on the contacts page <https://www.ohsca.org/committee.html>, or on page 8 of this Newsletter.

Lucy Fletcher-Jones (OHSCA Website & Events Alerts Coordinator website@ohsca.org)

TREES – AND THE GREEN TEAM

Trees

Some excellent tree news – KCC are going to replace eleven trees in Longport, in place of the dead pin oaks (*Quercus palustris*). More information about this development later.

We have entered the fire station garden for South & South East in Bloom (SSEIB: <https://www.sseib.com/>) – so, if you see a weed, please pull it out – it's not meant to be there! [See also pp. 13/14.]

Sophie Scott, Dave Goddard and Deirdre Hawkes



A *Magnolia* planted in Lichfield Avenue by OHDS several years ago is now doing very well (photo: Marion Bell)



Litter

The last litter pick was much better attended than recently. Please keep it up! Hopefully, Helly Langley and her group will continue to get better turnouts again in future. We have the correct equipment, and all volunteers are covered by OHSCA insurance. So please do look out for the next Mailchimp message about litter, make a note in your diary, and try to get along to help. The sessions are usually only 1–2 hours long and, with sufficient support, can make a real difference to our local area.

SEA NEWS

SEA organises social activities and events to bring the community together. If you wish to help or make suggestions, please contact the Convenor, Lorna Durrani, via social@ohsca.org.

Since the last Newsletter, in addition to our regular activities (coffee mornings, walks, games), four special events took place: a visit organised by Sue Hodge and Gardening Interest Group members to Carol Bruce's unique and truly wonderful gardens (<https://www.oldbladbeanstud.co.uk/>), which she has created at Old Bladbean Stud; the annual GIG Plant Share; an exceptionally erudite yet entertaining talk on *Women Writers of East Kent before Jane Austen* given by OHSCA member Yvonne Noble (Elizabeth Carter, right, was one of several influential authors discussed); and a delightful natural history walk to Bonsai Bank, Denge Wood, where Dave Roberts (DICE, University of Kent) demonstrated and informed more than a dozen members about the local orchids, many seen in full flower. More information or pictures about these special events, too much to include in the printed newsletter, are included below (pp. 15–20). Regrettably, due to a mixture of poor weather, mud and covid, this year's April Bluebell Walk had to be abandoned.



'Bluestocking' Elizabeth Carter (died 1806), writer and polymath, born Deal, 1717, painted by John Fayram as *Minerva*, Goddess of Wisdom (National Portrait Gallery)

Monthly coffee mornings continue every 4th Wednesday of the month, at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, 7 St Margaret's Street, 11.00–12.00. Future dates: 28 June, 26 July and 27 September. There will be no coffee morning meeting in August.

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

Pub Games at The Phoenix: Games evenings are held at *The Phoenix* at 7 pm on the 1st Monday of each month (next date: 3 July). Watch out for the Mailchimp reminder.

Talks: Following Peter Taylor-Gooby in February, and Yvonne Noble in May, four further talks have been arranged in 2023:

- Monday 26 June – Lyn Innes, *The Last Prince of Bengal* (see article below)
- Monday 25 Sept. – April Doyle, *Hive*
- Tuesday 21 Nov. – Malcolm Andrews, *A Sweet View. The making of an English Idyll*
- Tuesday 12 Dec. – Martin Latham, *The Bookseller's Tale*

Hive, published in 2022, is a novel about near-future Britain deeply affected by climate change. April Doyle lives in rural Kent; for more information, please go to p. 21.

Summer Lunch Party: this year's *al fresco* event will be held, by kind invitation, at the home of Sarah Whittall, on Sunday 30 July. This is a *bring and share* event. More details nearer the time by Mailchimp – or contact social@ohsca.org.

St Augustine's Abbey Picnic: Saturday 19 August in the grounds of the Abbey. Members of English Heritage get in free; residents of CT1 and CT2 need to apply for a Resident's Pass to get in free of charge (see p. 4 in March Newsletter; you can download the application form from <https://www.ohsca.org/>). Bring your own picnic. Seating is available.

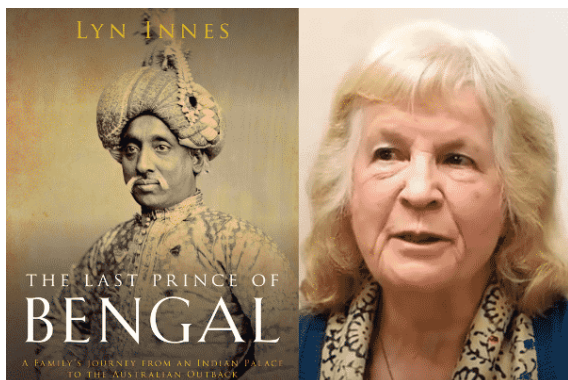
The Gardening Interest Group (GIG) organised the recent Bladbean visit and the annual Plant Share (see pp. 15/16). Members continue to be informed of local events, and are encouraged to make use of the network for sharing information and gardening problems by contacting Alison Culverwell, Helly Langley or Sue Hodge.

At the **AGM on 27 October 2023** SEA will organise a social get-together with food and drinks before and after the formal meeting.

GARAGE/YARD/SAFARI SALE CANCELLED. Following the recent death of Osman Durrani, we are unable to organise this co-ordinated event, as planned and notified for August 5/6 in the March Newsletter. However, some individual garage or yard sales may take place that weekend. Please look out for information on Mailchimp.

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

LYN INNES – AND THE LAST PRINCE



The seventh of our OHSCA Author Talks, on Monday 26 June 2023, will be by Lyn Innes, on *The Last Prince of Bengal. A family's journey from an Indian palace to the Australian outback.*

Lyn Innes is the great-granddaughter of His Royal Highness, the last Nawab Nizam of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Born and educated in Australia, she moved to North America and developed her interest in cultural nationalism, focusing on Irish, African, African American and Caribbean literatures. She earned a PhD from Cornell University and taught at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she became associate editor of *OKIKE: An African Journal of New Writing*, founded by Chinua Achebe. Innes co-edited two volumes of African short stories with Achebe. Lyn is currently Emeritus Professor of Postcolonial Literatures at the University of Kent, Canterbury.

Lyn's publications include *The Devil's Own Mirror: the Irish and the African in Modern Literature* (1990); *Chinua Achebe* (1990); *A History of Black and South Asian Writing in Britain*

(2002, 2008); *The Cambridge Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English* (2007) and *Ned Kelly* (2008).

Lyn is currently editing the three autobiographical narratives written by Francis Fedric, a fugitive slave who lived in England 1857–65, and researching the history of black and Asian writers and artists in Ireland. Lyn Innes has been on the Board of *Wasafiri* (<https://www.wasafiri.org/>) since 1984.

The Last Prince of Bengal

The Nawab Nazim was born into one of India's most powerful royal families. Three times the size of Great Britain, his kingdom ranged from the soaring Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal. However, the Nawab was seen as a threat by the British authorities, who forced him to abdicate in 1880 and permanently abolished his titles. The Nawab's change in fortune marked the end of an era in India and left his secret English family abandoned.

The Last Prince tells the true story of the Nawab Nazim and his family as they sought by turns to befriend, settle in and eventually escape Britain. From glamorous receptions with Queen Victoria to a scandalous Muslim marriage with an English chambermaid, and from Bengal tiger hunts to sheep farming in the harsh Australian outback, Lyn Innes recounts her ancestors' extraordinary journey from royalty to relative anonymity.

This compelling account visits the extremes of British rule in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, exposing complex prejudices regarding race, class and gender. It is the intimate story of one family and their place in the defining moments of recent Indian, British, and Australian history.

Collated by *Lorna Durrani*

OHC (OHSCA HEALTHCARE GROUP)

On 26 April, Niall Dickson, Chair of the East Kent Hospitals Board (EKHUFT), was to give a lecture at Kent University entitled "75 years on – can the NHS deliver or is it in terminal decline?"; a good question, but the lecture was replaced at very short notice with a questions panel, due to 'purdah' during the local elections campaign (see pp. 10–12, below).

Pending a new date for the lecture, I am replacing my usual notes on recent NHS news and meetings with some personal thoughts on the background to the lecture's title/question. I cannot do so without venturing close to issues which are inescapably political, but I will try to spare the Editor from having to censor anything *Party*-political.

The starting-point is that during the last 10–15 years the NHS's funding has become progressively more inadequate to fulfil the NHS's developing remit. (The same is widely true of other public services – in the condition of the roads, and public transport, for example.) Pay, running costs and investment have all been gradually but cumulatively squeezed; and just as a patient in poor condition is less able to resist an acute infection, the weakened NHS has found it harder to cope with two severe ailments – Covid, and high inflation – whose visitation on us may look like intolerably bad luck, but both of which should reasonably have been expected to arise sooner or later.

The inability to get and keep staff (and to keep them working) has knocked-on into all the presenting problems: waiting lists at all levels, delayed and cancelled operations, bed-blocking, and so on. And the service which should have been a safety-valve for hospitals, social care, not only suffers too from inadequate funding, with Council Tax capped, but is under other Authorities' management; it has been blindingly obvious for years that this management crevasse is a crippling handicap, and there have been repeated promises to close it.

The NHS's default solution is reorganisation. The reorganisation introduced last July (the Integrated Care Boards and Systems, and the spreading network of Joint bodies) was perhaps the most sudden and least publicised in NHS history – maybe even the least thought-through. By November a Review had been set up, chaired by the Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Health 2005–07, now an ICB Chair and ICS Vice-chair in East Anglia; the Review's remit is too long for my space here (190 words), so I reduce it to 'How to make the new system work.' The introduction to its 89-page April 2023 report includes the insight "ICSs have been born in difficult times. The answer is not simply more money, although of course that is needed, particularly in social care. . . .", and while the 36 recommendations spread through the

Review would comprise an extensive reform of Health and Care services, going far beyond ICBs and ICSs, the seven recommendations in its final Chapter largely go back to Square 1, e.g. “DHSC*, DLUHC* and NHS England should align budget and grant allocations for local government (including social care and public health and the NHS)”; in other words, the difficult things we knew needed to be tackled, before the Integrated Care reorganisation took place.

(*Department of Health & Social Care; Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.)

Back at the ranch, the Kent & Medway ICB owns a collective deficit of several hundred million pounds (the largest part being EKHUFT’s shortfall), and as well as a rather unreal requirement to eliminate this, has according to its CEO an unprecedentedly high ‘savings’ requirement on its 2023/24 budget. At ground level, once one gets through the waiting lists, it is truly astonishing how good most of the services remain. But it is difficult to believe that there will be much progress, either tactical or strategic, before the next general election, and the next government, whoever they are, will have an extraordinarily difficult task; Hewitt correctly says that more money is not a complete solution, but it is an indispensable part of it – and with a public which has been taught to believe that public services cost too much, and which may well still be enduring significant inflation.

So I am looking forward to hearing Niall Dickson’s twice-postponed lecture: “75 years on – Can the NHS deliver or is it in terminal decline?”

Denis Linfoot, Convenor, OHSCA HealthCare monitoring group (31 May 2023)

[For further information from Denis affecting these issues see his report, pp. 10–12.]

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP (LHG)

We meet at 2 pm every second Tuesday in alternate months, currently at the Phoenix pub on Old Dover Road. You are welcome to join us (and do as much or as little as you like – we try to offer activities for both experienced and new members). *The Phoenix* provides a range of drinks, some with and some without alcohol. Our last meeting was on Tuesday 9 May. A number of us have had health problems so numbers have been down; in 2023 so far about 5–10 turn up for about an hour. *The Phoenix* has a more or less level access door, allowing wheelchairs and mobility scooters to enter. Any member of OHSCA is welcome to join us. There is no subscription to the LHG and the AGM takes place just before the OHSCA AGM, in Autumn. Our next LHG meeting will be on Tuesday 11 July at 2 pm. An agenda will be sent out before we meet. Do come even if you don’t get an agenda.

We have two activities at the moment. One, led by our Treasurer, Maggie Bower, is finishing off a Revised Edition of our book on Dover Street. We hope to complete that this year and we suggest prospective and new members monitor what the team are doing. The second activity is led by an experienced LHG activist Sophie Scott. Prospective members are urged to join her in preparing a book of activities in the LHG area (i.e. in South Canterbury) in celebration of our first 50 years (1974–2023). If you are interested in helping Sophie and the team, do come along.

The current LHG committee has five members, but with scope to expand. Currently (i.e. until our AGM), they are: myself, Derek Ray (Chair), Mike Brain (Secretary), Maggie Bower (Treasurer), Susi Brain (Minutes Secretary and Illustrator), and Marian Heath (Archivist).

Derek Ray, Chairman LHG

CATHEDRAL ACCESS

How to get a Cathedral Precincts Pass was described on p. 1 of our March Newsletter. Roger Thornington has now drawn our attention to the latest cathedral news, notably concerning Quenin Gate: <https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/news/posts/cathedral-restores-quenin-gate-access/>

WHAT’S IN A WORD? (or acronym) – AN OCCASIONAL SERIES. No. 1: OHSCA

Ontario High School Chess Association – or

Ohio High School Athletic Association – or

Out-of-Hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrest – really! – but the preferred answer is, of course,

“A lively and active community group with a written constitution”

(https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/service.page?id=zgCH8_5kGck)

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 025 245: 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 456 285 sophie01@btinternet.com

David Kemsley ACRA 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: an additional volunteer is greatly desired! (please contact: secretary@ohsca.org, volunteers@ohsca.org)

Local History Group Chair (LHG): **Derek Ray** forstal22@yahoo.co.uk 01227 464 845. 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 767 343

SEA convenor: **Lorna Durrani**: social@ohsca.org (current members of SEA: see 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; OHC = OHSCA HealthCare subcommittee; SEA = Social Events and Activities subcommittee

Some useful contacts

- For problems with student neighbours contact University of Kent student community liaison officer:
01227 816156 or email communityliaison@kent.ac.uk
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/student-services/community/index.html>
- If you are concerned about security or have an urgent query and need to talk to the Canterbury City Council 'Out of Hours' team, their number is 01227 781 879. This redirects to CCC Control Room staff on duty 24/7.
- To report illegal parking: <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/parking-and-roads/report-illegal-parking/>
- To report graffiti (with possibility of removal depending on circumstances)
<https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/environmental-problems/report-graffiti>

OHSCA dates, from mid June to October:		30 July:	Summer Lunch (p.5)
every Friday:	1 hour local walk (p.5)	19 August:	St Augustine Picnic (p.5)
26 June:	Lyn Innes talk (p.5/6)	4 September:	Pub games (p.5)
28 June:	Coffee morning (p.5)	12 September:	LHG at the <i>Phoenix</i> (p.7)
3 July:	Pub games (p.5)	25 September:	April Doyle talk (pp.5/21)
11 July:	LHG at the <i>Phoenix</i> (p.7)	27 September:	Coffee morning (p.5)
26 July:	Coffee morning (p.5)	27 October:	AGM (autumn newsletter)

DIGITAL EXTRA

Contents:

75 years on – can the NHS deliver or is it in terminal decline? <i>A report and review by Denis Linfoot</i>	pp. 10–12
Pictures: Fire Station planter	p. 13
Pictures: Milton Road	p. 14
Pictures: Plant Share (page 4)	p. 15
Pictures: Old Bladbean Stud (page 4)	p. 16
Orchids at Bonsai Bank, Denge Wood, Saturday 27 May 2023	pp. 17–19
Yvonne Noble's <i>English Women Writers of East Kent before Jane Austen</i> (page 4)	p. 20
April Doyle and <i>Hive</i>	p. 21



Chalk Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*)
photographed by Dick Vane-Wright, Bonsai Bank, 11 June 2023
identified by Dave Roberts (see p. 17)

University of Kent Centre for Health & Social Services (CHSS) annual lecture

(postponed from 2022)

Wednesday 26 April 2023, 18.00, at the Colyer-Fergusson Hall, University of Kent

75 years on – can the NHS deliver or is it in terminal decline?

by Niall Dickson CBE

Chair, East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT)

A report and review by Denis Linfoot (OHC)

Karen Cox (KC) opened the proceedings, firstly to announce that *Niall Dickson (ND)* could not give his lecture because, as a holder of public office, it had only just been realised he was in purdah pending next week's local government elections. *Stephen Peckham (SP)* indicated that it was hoped to announce a new date shortly. However, ND's purdah did not prevent him from chairing a Q & A panel, replacing the lecture. A hand-out provided half-page biographic notes on all five participants (see below.)

KC also referred to new developments in the organisation of Health and Care research – Professor Stephen Peckham (SP) is not only Director of CHSS but has leadership appointments at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), and in a consortium based in Manchester University, as well as at CHSS and the LSHTM, and there is now a new Institute for Health, Social Care & Wellbeing at the University of Kent, of which he is co-director.

SP, also welcoming the audience, suggested that the main thing to be grateful for about the NHS is that it is still here, providing free access and treatment, after 75 years; and [*or but?*] he added that Aneurin Bevan, who in promoting the creation of the NHS had been inspired by medical collectives in Scotland and, especially, in the Welsh valleys, had recognised that the NHS, once established, would have to 'grow and change.'

SP introduced the evening's panel members [*the following notes are condensed from the hand-out; note that only one, Professor Ian Philp, is a medical professional*]:

Niall Dickson (ND), now Chair of EKHUFT [*I think he said he is now Chair of the East Kent Health & Care (previously 'Integrated Care') Board – one of four in Kent & Medway – but this is not in the hand-out and I can't find confirmation on-line*], though an honorary Fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and General Practitioners, and of the Queen's Nursing Institute, graduated at Edinburgh not in a health-related field but in politics and history and has had a varied career, in journalism (BBC broadcasting, *Nursing Times*, etc.), Age Concern, as Chair of the Leeds Castle Trustees, and as CEO of various Health and other organisations (including the General Medical Council, the King's Fund, and the NHS Federation [*the Health Service employers*].)

Professor Stephen Peckham (SP), in addition to rôles mentioned in KC's remarks, above, is also referred to as Director of the Applied Research Collaboration in Kent, Surrey and Sussex of the NIHR (National Institute for Health & Care Research: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/>), which is funded by the Department of Health & Social Care. As we know, he has local interests and activities wider than Health & Care, notably the Environment.

Professor *Ian Philp (IP)* has an Edinburgh MD degree, has been a practising physician in the NHS for 35 years, has been Professor of Health Care for Older People at Sheffield University, was a WHO adviser on person-centred care for older people, and in 2000–08 was National Clinical Director for Older People in England, responsible for the National Service Framework for Older People.

Dr *Sarah Harvey (SH)*, an Honorary Professor in Public Health and Primary Care at City University and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, has been an adviser to the former Health & Social Services Select Committee, a director of various Health Service organisations, has assisted in the Sir Robert Francis review of Mid-Staffordshire Hospitals, and has designed work on end of life care, health and social care integration, and understanding the role of Police & Crime Commissioners.

Professor *Laurie McMahon (LM)* is Professor of Strategy and Organisational Design at the Cass Business School, London, and co-founder and Director of “*The Realisation Collaborative* – an independent organisation that specialises in helping organisations, teams, boards and partnerships to develop creative responses to their environmental challenges through the use of simulation and other behavioural modelling techniques.” He has worked with Dr Sarah Harvey, was a Fellow of the King’s Fund, and “originated the use of behavioural simulations in the NHS as co-designer of the ground-breaking ‘Rubber Windmill’ project in 1990.”

Opening the Panel phase, ND asked for an audience show of hands to indicate optimism or pessimism on the question ‘Will the NHS be scoring better or worse in 10 years from now on fundamentals such as free access and treatment, and quality of care?’ The response was strongly pessimistic.

The first question to the panel (at about 6.30 pm) was ‘Is the NHS underfunded?’ IP, not surprisingly, mainly wanted to talk about the over-80s; they account for a high proportion of Health & Care expenditure (and IP is an older-patient specialist.) He maintained that over-80s are more concerned about well-being and quality of life than about health issues [*but he did not discuss the obvious connection between them*]; he said that too much is being spent on hospital stays, and that expenditure on health and care of the elderly should be better-targeted. [*I have for long anticipated that public discussion of strategic triage in favour of the younger and more viable population would arise; this is the first clear sign of it that I have heard.*] SH’s main point was that more should be spent on children’s mental health; the waiting lists are ‘huge’, and this is less well-funded than in other western European countries. SP did answer the question – for example when Covid came, the UK did have the organisational structure to deal with it, but due to the chronic underfunding of Health and Care services, the UK ended at the bottom of the European league table [*I think he meant specifically on fatalities.*] The under-funding, he said, has led to serious staff shortages, in social services as well as in Health. LM said that productivity must be improved [*which might be seen as a tacit answer to – admission of – the under-funding question.*]

Supplementary ‘questions’ from the audience were all, or nearly all, statements not questions, usually quite long. A ‘question’ at this point [*I think from a junior doctor*] was to the effect that people should understand that we can’t do everything everywhere all at once.

ND, winding up on the Panel’s comments, said that the number of patients not getting access to social care is the big problem – a not surprising observation from an acute-hospitals Chair.

ND’s next question was whether, recognising that there is a shortage of money, the elderly should be prioritised less [*see my note above*]; and he asked the audience for a show of hands on whether we would be willing to pay more tax for Health and social care; the answer was strongly Yes.

[*I couldn’t follow LM’s response to ND’s question*]; SP said: (1) even when the NHS was comparing best with other Western countries on specific measures of performance, the UK was comparing badly on mortality; our society is not good at keeping people healthy; (2) our public opinion is wise and balanced in general about priorities, but we nevertheless expect instant attention for every health problem we have; for example, we are now extremely good at saving very premature children, which is what people want, but many of them have life-long health and/or care issues, which entail high long-term costs. SH said that the NHS needs to

have a debate with the public on ‘Can we, or need we, do everything?’ And IP drew attention to a correlation (confusing, as he corrected himself more than once) about falls and the elderly: if I sorted out the confusion correctly, over-75s who either have two falls within a year, or who have one fall from which they can’t get up, are exposed to five times the ‘risk’ (but of what? further falls? serious illness? death? and within what period – a year?) that other over-75s experience. [*But the statement of a correlation tells nothing about the direction of causation?*] He added something about ‘a wealth of community assets.’

ND then asked the panel: the ICBs’ money is all applied to the curing of illness; does society as a whole need to rearrange resources to focus on prevention of illness?

SP said that the ICBs are ‘riven’ with problems – they comprise ‘a strong provider voice’, ie over-representation of Acute services, with Primary Care under-represented. He said it is a matter of life-style versus [*the development and application of*] medical science, and gave the example of children’s obesity and the condition of their teeth: clearly, two related failures, but addressed by quite unrelated service, in different locations; our structural divisions are in the wrong places. (LM said ‘But the structure is there – don’t reorganise it again.’)

ND directed the panel’s attention to the staffing problem: IP said that it is job satisfaction (the awareness of giving help, not any pleasant conditions) which keeps social care staff from moving to materially ‘better’ jobs. LM added that the development of training pathways to enhanced work within professional fields was an asset; it wasn’t clear to me whether he was also suggesting that there ought to be more scope for movement between professional fields. SP said that what the NHS needs most of all is ‘people-management.’ A student in Hong Kong was quoted, who had asked him how the NHS works [*I’m not sure whether this was an innocent open-ended question, or whether there was an overtone of ‘How can such a convoluted organisation possibly work?’*]. The answer was “I’ve no idea – it’s the people who make it work.” SH, addressing yet other angles, remarked that the Government doesn’t understand how long it takes to train professional staff; and added that some staff loss arises because when a problem, such as chronic over-work, is developing, it isn’t identified quickly enough and intervention is too late. ND, finally, mentioned that many jobs have changed in the last ten years.

On being invited to speculate on the future: LM said he thought that the public’s view of the NHS would shift, and that there might be more support for changes in emphasis in services, of the kinds outlined earlier in the present meeting; but it was also possible that the public would get fed up with the NHS, and would want alternatives to it. SP said that he thought the NHS would probably get worse before it gets better – and he was speaking of developments on a time-scale exceeding 10 years. The other two panellists expressed overall optimism about the future of the NHS.

ND then asked the audience for a re-run of the earlier show of hands, in the light of the panel’s discussion, to indicate optimism or pessimism on the question, of which I hope the following is a fair representation: ‘Will the NHS be scoring better or worse in 10 years from now on fundamentals such as free access and treatment, and quality of care?’ The response was again strongly pessimistic.

Denis Linfoot, 28 April 2023



Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, on the first day of the National Health Service
5 July 1948, Park Hospital, Davyhulme, near Manchester
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aneurin_Bevan)



Brilliant late spring colours at one of the revived Fire Station planters, pictured by Deirdre Hawkes.



Contrasting late spring flower forms in Milton Road, pictured by Deirdre Hawkes and Dick Vane-Wright.

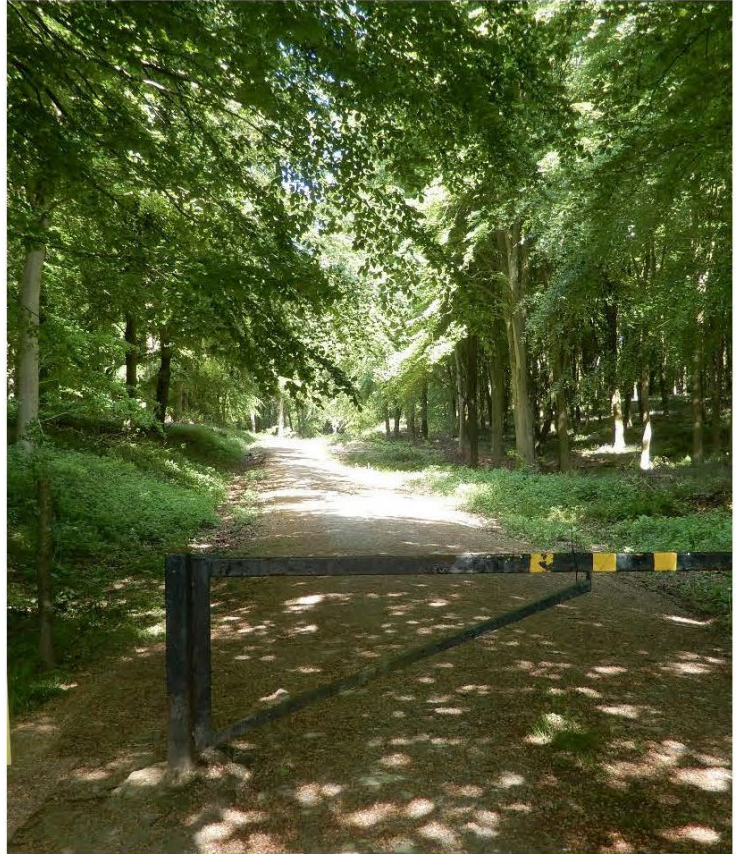


OHSCA-GIG Plant Share, 42 Cromwell Road, Saturday 20 May 2023 (photos: Dick Vane-Wright).



OHSCA-GIG visit to Old Bladbean Stud Gardens, hosted by owner and gardener Carol Bruce, Monday 22 May 2023.

OHSCA natural history walk to Bonsai Bank, Denge Wood, with Dave Roberts (DICE, University of Kent), Saturday 27 May 2023. Eight species of orchid were seen, the identification of the last of which (probably the Lesser Butterfly Orchid) remains to be confirmed. A subsequent visit two weeks later by Bert & Margot Leslie and Hazel & Dick Vane-Wright revealed a ninth species (see page 9).





A: Early Purple – *Orchis mascula*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchis_mascula ©

B: Lady Orchid – *Orchis purpurea*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchis_purpurea photo: DV-W

C: Heath Spotted – *Dactylorhiza maculata*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dactylorhiza_maculata DV-W

D: White Helleborine – *Cephalanthera damasonium*.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cephalanthera_damasonium ©



E: Fly Orchid – *Ophrys insectifera*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ophrys_insectifera ©
F: Common Twayblade – *Neottia ovata*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neottia_ovata ©
G: Greater Butterfly – *Platanthera chlorantha*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platanthera_chlorantha DV-W
H: "Bert's Shiny Broadleaf" – not in flower – possibly Lesser Butterfly Orchid, *Platanthera bifolia*.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platanthera_bifolia. DV-W

A dozen ‘English Women Writers of East Kent before Jane Austen’ noted by Yvonne Noble in her local authors talk (24 May 2023 – page 4).

Margaret (More) Roper (1505–1544)
Mary Carleton (1642–1663)
Aphra Behn (1640–1689) ?Eaffrey Johnson – born Harbledown?
Elizabeth (Robinson) Montagu (1718–1800)
Sarah (Robinson) Scott (1720–1795)
Elizabeth Carter (1717–1806 – see page 4)
Catharine (Sawbridge) Macaulay (1731–1791)
Sarah Dixon (1671–1765)
Elizabeth Elstob (1683–1756)
Anne (Kingsmill) Finch (1661–1720)
Mary (Castillion) Robinson (1669–1697)
Lady Elizabeth (Chute) Oxenden (ca 1656–1696)

Suggestions for how to find the writings of these women, and information about them:

HathiTrust (1800 – copyright, some earlier – <https://www.hathitrust.org/>)
Google Books (1800 – copyright, some earlier – <https://books.google.co.uk/>)

Access under licence at the University of Kent:

Early English Books Online (ECCO)
Eighteenth-Century Books Online (EBBO)
Orlando (History of British Women Writers)
[Free access during Women’s History month]

Elizabeth Carter’s home in Deal



“At the end of Middle Street is another notable house on the corner of South Street, a large plaque announces the home from 1762 to her death in 1806 of a famous daughter of Deal, Elizabeth Carter. Poet, classicist, writer, translator & member of the ‘Bluestocking Circle’. A friend of Samuel Johnson, her translation of *All the Works of Epictetus* – the first translation of this Greek Philosopher made her name.”

<https://highstreetdeal.co.uk/blue-plaque-walks-in-deal/>

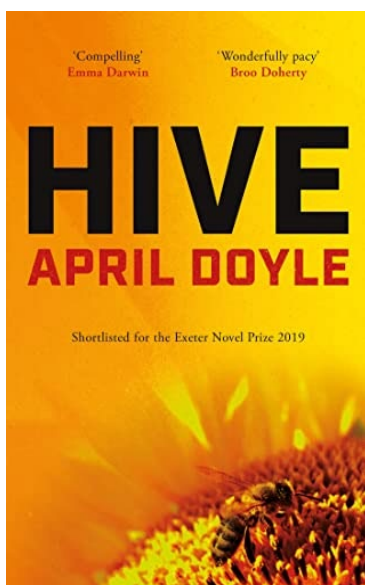
APRIL DOYLE



... will speak about her novel *Hive* on Monday 25 September (p. 5, above)

April Doyle is a writer, tutor and editor who lives in rural Kent with her husband and two sons. She has been teaching creative writing since 2012. April's short stories have been published in women's magazines in the UK and Australia, and her short story *Elsewhere* was published in an anthology *Tales From Elsewhere* in 2016. Her short story *Rise on the Wings* was long-listed for the 2019 Mslexia Short Story competition.

Hive



Near-future Britain:

Climate change has led to food shortages and civil unrest. Pollinating insects are in steep decline.

Commercial bee farmer Victor Martin travels around the farms of Kent with his hives to pollinate fruit trees and crops.

Local research entomologist Dr Annie Abrams is devastated when she's ordered to give up her captive bee colonies – her life's work – to join forces with Victor and ensure a harvest.

But the bees are dying.

Their only hope seems to be an experimental alternative to insect pollination: robot pollinators called nanodrones. But why does the drone designer seem so familiar? And who is behind the shadowy organisation intent on sabotaging their vital work?

Can Annie and Victor win their battle to save the bees – or is it too late?