

# OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER  
digital edition

SEPTEMBER 2023

No. 28

## WELCOME TO THE OHSCA AUTUMN & AGM NEWSLETTER

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### FROM THE EDITOR

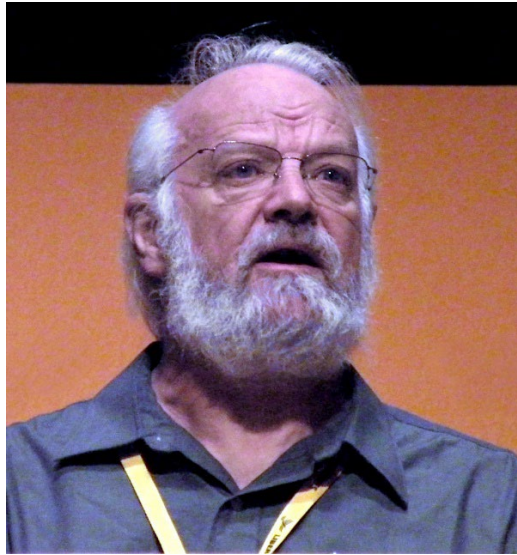
Jan Pahl's picture of the Reed Pond in Old Park, Canterbury, offers a special touch of autumn gold. On 27 October, at our AGM, Jan will present a talk entitled *Old Park and Chequers Wood: a well-kept secret with a rich past and plans for the future* (see p.5). Wildlife is hugely impacted by pollution – so it is a relief that recent Government proposals to relax laws affecting water quality have been blocked (<https://www.edie.net/lords-block-government-plan-to-weaken-water-pollution-rules-for-housebuilders/>). But always keep in mind Thomas Jefferson's dictum: "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance".

It is my sad duty to inform members of the recent death of Michael Steed – not only a figure of national importance, but also someone deeply embedded in the local community. As Mike Brain recalls: "Michael was a much valued member of the Oaten Hill & District Local History Group. He was instrumental in reviving the Group when it might have dissolved after the publication of the early books some 20 years ago. Serving first as Chairman and later as Secretary, he made major contributions to the books on Old Dover Road and Longport. The story of his former historic house in Dover Street is described in the book *Dover Street Revisited*, to be published in October. His local knowledge will be irreplaceable."

A brief account on Michael Steed's life and achievements follows, on p.2. A formal obituary appeared in *The Times* (16 September: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/michael-steed-obituary-6hb63lhms>).

*Dick Vane-Wright*

## MICHAEL STEED (25 January 1940 – 30 August 2023)



[Image by Keith Edkins: CC BY-SA 3.0 ©]  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18709256>

*The text below is reproduced from University of Kent Politics and International Relations News (<https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/polir-news/2023/09/18/michael-steed-obituary/>). For more about Michael, see Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Steed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Steed), and the Canterbury Commemoration Society: <https://www.cantcommsoc.co.uk/michael-steed-1940-2023/>.*

“Michael Steed was a man of many parts. He became an honorary lecturer in the School of Politics and International Relations when he retired on health grounds from the University of Manchester in the late 1990s.

In Canterbury he threw himself into local politics while retaining a keen interest in national affairs, focusing on the academic analysis of elections and electoral processes. A passionate Liberal Democrat, he served as the national president of the Liberal Party in 1978–79, campaigning in favour of proportional representation. He stood for parliament six times, and in 1979 was a candidate in the inaugural European Parliament elections, calling for greater popular control over what was then the European Economic Community. In Canterbury he turned his energies towards local matters.

He served on the city council for four years, representing Barton Ward from 2008 to 2012. He was also a leading gay rights campaigner, serving on the executive committee of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. He was a leading member of the Canterbury Commemorative Society, which successfully campaigned for the placing of the statues of Ethelbert and Bertha in Lady Wootton’s Green, where they proudly stand as a daily reminder of Kent’s illustrious history. He also played an important part in getting the statue of Geoffrey Chaucer placed in the High Street, where he still points the way to London. Michael was active in all sorts of other ways and to the end remained a prominent member of the local community.

At University events, he invariably provided sharp and informed analysis. Few would dare to take him on when it came to psephological analysis! His passing at the age of 83 leaves a gap that will never be filled.” ©Richard Sakwa & Grace Shore Banks, University of Kent, 18 September 2023.

### **WHERE HAVE THE YEARS GONE?**

2024 will be the 50th Anniversary of the Oaten Hill & District Society which, in 2016, merged with South Canterbury Residents Association to create the OHSCA we all know and appreciate today. We thank those stalwart residents who, in 1974, banded together to create OHDS and successfully fight the proposed development of the Shrubbery in Oaten Hill. We thank all our members for their continued support during the many changes that have taken place in South Canterbury over the past 50 years. Let's take this 'Golden' opportunity to encourage our friends and neighbours to join OHSCA whose aim is, and has always been, to



support and improve the quality of life of our community. The Membership Form is available from our website: <https://www.ohsca.org/pdfs/OHSCA%20Membership%20Form%202023.pdf>.

Marion Bell, Honorary Secretary

## MEMBERSHIP

As at 1 September, the OHSCA new financial year, we had a total of 241 households; the membership dues total is £1,313 and £834 has been kindly given in donations. We also have 20 households that have not yet paid their £5.00 subscriptions for 2023 – if you represent one of these, please take action now.

If you receive emails through mailchimp but wish to stop them, you may unsubscribe using the link on the bottom of the email. But this alone does not stop you from being a member. If you wish to resign your membership, please also email Sophie on [sophie01@btinternet.com](mailto:sophie01@btinternet.com).  
Sophie Scott (Membership Secretary) and Lucy Fletcher-Jones

## FROM THE TREASURER

Firstly, on behalf of the OHSCA Committee, I would like to thank all old and new members for the annual subscriptions and kind donations we have received over the last 12 months. During this financial year we have been able to purchase 3 garden tables, which will be very useful for our various garden parties, plant shares and any other outdoor activity. We have also bought a voice amplifier for use at our meetings and local talks – the latter proving to be very popular. Plants and bulbs have been bought and planted at various positions, to be enjoyed by all. We have also invested in updating our IT software to enable us to keep up with modern technology. Our other main expenditure is newsletter printing and insurance.

We are fortunate to have, again, a healthy budget and would ask all our members to contact any member of the committee if they have any ideas or suggestions on how we can use funds to enhance our local area.

Jane Pollak

## 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](mailto:social@ohsca.org).

**Monthly coffee mornings** continue every fourth Wednesday of the month, at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, 7 St Margaret's Street, 11.00–12.00. Future dates: 25 October, 22 November, 24 January (there will not be a meeting in December).

**Walks:** The regular weekly walk takes place on Fridays, 9.30 sharp at the old main gates to the Kent & Canterbury Hospital, Ethelbert Road. These informal walks are open to all members and friends. Turn up, and go!

**Pub Games:** Games and social evenings are held at *The Phoenix* at 7 pm, (usually) on the first Monday of each month (next dates: 2 October, 6 November, 4 December, 8 January). Mailchimp reminders are sent.

**Talks:** Following Lyn Innes's fascinating talk in June, and the discussion with April Doyle on 25 September, the last two local-author talks for 2023 will be:

Tuesday 21 Nov. – Malcolm Andrews, ***A Sweet View. The Making of an English Idyll***

Tuesday 12 December – Dick Vane-Wright, ***Talking About Evolution***

For more information about these talks, please go to pp. 14 and 15. [Martin Latham's talk, *The Bookseller's Tale*, originally for December, has been postponed until 15 March.]

**Summer Lunch Party 2023:** this year's most enjoyable *al fresco* event was held, by kind invitation, at the home of Sarah Whittall and Michael Wood, on Sunday 30 July. Any volunteers for 2024?

**The Gardening Interest Group (GIG)** organised a visit on 22 May to Carol Bruce's remarkable Old Bladbean Stud Gardens (<https://www.oldbladbeanstud.co.uk/>), and the annual Plant Share on 20 May. Signed-up members of GIG are informed of local gardening events, and can make use of the network for sharing information and getting gardening advice by contacting Alison Culverwell, Helly Langley or Sue Hodge.

**AGM on 27 October 2023.** SEA will organise a social get-together with food and drinks before the formal meeting (see page 5).

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

## OHC (OHSCA HEALTHCARE GROUP)

[For an extended account, making a number of other points, please go to p.10.]

Since September 2022, I have attended online all six of the ‘meetings in public’ of the new, Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB; I missed the inaugural July 2022 event). This radical change in NHS organisation had inadequate advance publicity; the public learned of it principally through the attrition and closure of the NHS public participation system (for several years, OHSCA members were assiduous participants in the Canterbury District section of this) – but that is now barely a footnote among far wider-reaching changes.

In outline, General Practices and various other medical-support services remain separately contracted to the NHS, and hospital Trusts retain their legal and financial responsibility. However, the 42 English ICBs now have overall responsibility through NHS England to the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) for the operation (including financial viability) and integration of all State health services in their area; furthermore, they are to be leading participants in their area’s Integrated Care *System* (ICS), which is required to coordinate all Health and Care services provided by the NHS, local authority Social Care, and Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) activities. Integrated Care *Partnerships* (Joint Committees of ICBs and Local Authorities etc.) are intended to be key bodies in ICSs, co-ordinating Health and Social Care services.

I wrote in the Summer Newsletter about the Patricia Hewitt Inquiry into the operation of ICSs. The Inquiry addressed 19 of its 36 recommendations solely to the Government, and a further 15 to the Government and other parties; few will be implemented.

ICS Joint Committees, like ICBs, should have meetings ‘held in public’, so that the public can hear what policy and practical decisions are taken, and how. In Kent & Medway in 2023, the ICS Joint Committee has ‘met in public’ in February; the April meeting was cancelled; there were ‘Listening Events’, but no ICS ‘meetings in public’ during June and July; the ICS website still publicises a meeting for 6 September – but this was replaced with “a closed workshop to reflect on the integrated care strategy”, and the 6 September meeting is postponed to 7 December.

In fact, an interim Integrated Care Strategy was approved by the ICB earlier this summer, and was understood to be accepted by the other partners in the Integrated Care System. Also approved was a Joint Forward Plan, i.e., how the Strategy is to be realised over the next five years. This will certainly bring many ‘challenges’, but to me as an outside observer, two challenges in particular stand out: resources, and preparatory thought. OHSCA’s digital version of this Newsletter carries my further remarks on these challenges, but to make just one point here: my main impression of the September ICB meeting was of its members’ growing realisation that its effective powers do not fully support its system-wide responsibilities for operational performance and financial balance.

PS: I wrote in OHSCA’s Summer Newsletter about Niall Dickson’s (Chair of the East Kent Hospitals Trust) postponed 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lecture, “Can the NHS deliver, or is it in terminal decline?” I haven’t heard of a new date for the lecture.

*Denis Linfoot* (Convenor, OHC), 16 August 2023

## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP (LHG)



We meet at 2 pm every second Tuesday in alternate months. 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). Our next dates are expected to be: 14 November and 9 January.

The Revised Edition of our book on Dover Street is now available (cost: £10.00). For more information, please go to p.13. Sophie Scott is continuing with our book of activities in the LHG area (i.e. in South Canterbury), in celebration of our first 50 years (1974–2023 – see p.2). If you are interested in helping Sophie and the team, do come along.

Following the AGM on 12 September (held at Ersham Rd), the current LHG committee is: Derek Ray (Chair), Mike Brain (Secretary), Maggie Bower (Treasurer), Susi Brain (Minutes Secretary and Illustrator), and Marian Heath (Archivist).

*Derek Ray*, Chairman LHG, and *Mike Brain*

# **OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION**

## **AGM 2022/2023**

7.00 for 7.45 pm, Friday 27 October 2023

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

*7.00–7.45: informal Social Gathering with drinks and snacks, hosted by OHSCA Social Events & Activities group*

7.50: Jan Pahl (Canterbury Society – see below) will give a talk about

### **Old Park and Chequers Wood**

#### **AGM AGENDA**

ca 8.20 pm:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of AGM held 21 October 2022 (abridged minutes p. 6; full minutes at <https://www.ohsca.org/pdfs/OHSCA%20AGM%20Minutes%202022.pdf>)
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 31 August 2023
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. Proposals for revisions to the Constitution (if any)
11. Nominations for Officers and Committee for 2023–2024 (see page 7)
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 meeting (approx. 9.00 pm)

#### **Old Park and Chequers Wood: a well-kept secret with a rich past and plans for the future**

Old Park and Chequers Wood is an area of open space to the east of Canterbury. Recent archaeological digs have shown that early humans lived there around 600,000 years BC, making it the oldest excavatable site in the UK and one of the oldest in Europe. The area supplied water to the religious houses of medieval Canterbury, became a deer park in which Henry VIII went hunting, was used as a training ground for the British army, and now includes the Canterbury Golf course.

Old Park is also rich in wildlife, designated by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Research by local naturalists has revealed the presence of many rare birds, including nightingales and turtle doves, mammals such as badgers, wood mice and shrews, eight different species of bat and 268 different plant species, including the clove-scented broom rape.

However, many local people still do not know that there is such an amazing open space almost on their doorsteps. In addition, there are many threats to the area and much that could be done by way of improvements, both to protect the wildlife and to enable local people to access this open space. Concern about these threats led to the setting up in 2021 of the Friends of Old Park and Chequers Wood (OPCW). Their aim is to:

- Protect the area from development and ensure proper management
- Identify and preserve the diversity of wildlife and connectivity of habitats
- Promote appropriate public access and reduce anti-social behaviour.

This illustrated talk will be concerned with the history of the Old Park and Chequers Wood, with the wealth of wildlife found there and with how this great local asset can be saved and protected both for wildlife and for local residents.

Jan Pahl is on the committee of the Friends of OPCW. As a keen walker she is particularly concerned with opening up access to walkers, while also ensuring the protection and diversity of wildlife. Jan was Chair of the Canterbury Society for over 10 years, and is now a Vice President.

**Contact** the Friends of OPCW on: [info@canterburyoldpark.org.uk](mailto:info@canterburyoldpark.org.uk)

**See the Facebook** page on: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsfoldpark>

### **ABRIDGED MINUTES OF OHSCA AGM, FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER 2022**

(full minutes at: <https://www.ohsca.org/pdfs/OHSCA%20AGM%20Minutes%202022.pdf>)

30 members signed the attendance record. 7.00–7.35 pm – Social Gathering.

7.35 pm – *Where It All Goes – The Story of Local Recycling*. A presentation by Lynne Moore, Canterbury City Council. David Kemsley thanked Lynne for a very informative and enjoyable insight into how CCC and KCC tackle local recycling. He presented her with a copy of *The Oaten Hill Story* – a LHG publication.

8.00 pm – OHSCA AGM

1. Apologies for absence were received from 14 members.
2. Minutes of AGM held 15 October 2021. These were agreed and signed without amendment. (3) There were no Matters Arising.
4. Annual Report from the Rotating Chairs. David Kemsley explained how, without a Chair or Vice Chair, he, Tim Carlyle and Marion Bell had shared the Chair on rotation. We welcomed Lorraine Woodleigh's nomination to join and he hoped other members would consider joining the Committee as three members were standing down.
5. Annual Report from the Treasurer (a copy of Accounts are filed with the Minutes). Jane Pollok presented and ran through the OHSCA Accounts which show a year-end balance of £6,430. She thanked members for their additional donations.
6. Approval of certified Accounts for the year ending 31 August 2022. The Accounts were certified by Hilary Adams, who was presented with a thank-you gift.
7. Annual Report from Membership Secretary. Sophie Scott said 241 households have paid their subscriptions; 24 have not renewed to date. She pointed out that all subscriptions are due 1 Jan.
8. Annual Reports were received from Special Interest Groups: Local History; Green Team (Sophie Scott and the Green Team won an Outstanding Award for Milton Road in the "South and South East in Bloom – It's Your Neighbourhood", and a Certificate of Excellence in Canterbury In Bloom); Planning (Tim Carlyle explained the timetable for the Local Plan and the criteria for objections. He offered to chair a meeting to advise members more fully on the Local Plan); Social Events & Activities (SEA); OHSCA HealthCare group (OHC); and OHSCA Newsletter.
9. Recommendation regarding annual subscription. Jane Pollok recommended that the annual subscription for 2023 remains unchanged at £5, but it will be reviewed in the coming months.
10. A Proposal for revisions to the Constitution – See pages 5&6 of the Autumn Newsletter 2022. Denis Linfoot explained that the proposed revision in the Constitution would allow OHSCA to operate with a smaller Committee reducing the quorum from 5 to 4. The amendment was agreed unanimously.
11. Nominations for Officers and Committee 2022–23. The nomination papers are on file.
12. Elections for Committee members 2022–23. The following were unanimously elected *en bloc* to form the next OHSCA Committee: Hon Treasurer – Jane Pollok; Hon Secretary – Marion Bell; Membership Secretary – Sophie Scott; Committee Members – Lucy Fletcher-Jones, David Kemsley, Helly Langley, Lorraine Woodleigh. Hilary Adams was nominated Auditor for 2023. The Committee will continue to operate a rotating Chair.
13. Other Business. Cathy Sales announced that she is requesting that the *Via Francigena* (which passes through the proposed Mountfield Park development) is registered as an Asset of Community Value.
14. End of formal meeting. David Kemsley thanked everyone for coming, Hilary Adams for certifying the accounts, Marian Heath for her LHG display, SEA for the refreshments, and stalwart Committee members and sub-groups for their continuing support. The Meeting closed at 9.30 pm. *Marion Bell* (Honorary Secretary), November 2022.

# **OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION**

## **Officers and Committee Nomination Form for 2023–2024**

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 20 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](mailto:secretary@ohsca.org)). If you are unable to deliver your nomination before 20 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 20 October, at the latest.

### **OHSCA: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2023–2024 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 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](mailto:secretary@ohsca.org)

**Jane Pollok** Honorary Treasurer: [treasurer@ohsca.org](mailto:treasurer@ohsca.org)

**Sophie Scott** Membership Secretary/Green Team/Planning subcommittee: 27 Ersham Road CT1 3AR Tel: 01227 456 285 [sophie01@btinternet.com](mailto:sophie01@btinternet.com)

**David Kemsley** ACRA rep./OHC subcommittee/Press Liaison: [press@ohsca.org](mailto:press@ohsca.org)

**Helly Langley** Committee Member/Planning subcommittee

**Lucy Fletcher-Jones** Website Coordinator/events bulletin alerts: [website@ohsca.org](mailto:website@ohsca.org)

**Lorraine Woodleigh** Committee Member: [volunteers@ohsca.org](mailto:volunteers@ohsca.org)

Weekly CCC Planning Bulletin: an additional volunteer is greatly desired! (please contact: [secretary@ohsca.org](mailto:secretary@ohsca.org), [volunteers@ohsca.org](mailto:volunteers@ohsca.org))

Local History Group Chair (LHG): **Derek Ray** [forstal22@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:forstal22@yahoo.co.uk) 01227 464 845. For information about Local History publications, email: [history@ohsca.org](mailto:history@ohsca.org) – or go to OHSCA website: <https://www.ohsca.org/history.html>

Secretary LHG: **Michael Brain**: [history@ohsca.org](mailto:history@ohsca.org) 01227 767 343

SEA convenor: **Lorna Durrani**: [social@ohsca.org](mailto:social@ohsca.org) (current members of SEA: see p.3)

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](mailto:gretaohsca@gmail.com)

**Dick Vane-Wright**: [dickvanewright@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:communityliaison@kent.ac.uk)  
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/studentservices/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, mid October to January:		
	14 November:	LHG (tbc – p.4)
	21 November:	Malcolm Andrews talk (p.3)
every Friday:	22 November:	Coffee morning (p.3)
2 October:	4 December:	Pub games (p.3)
20 October:	12 December:	Dick Vane-Wright talk (p.3)
25 October:	8 January	Pub games (p.3)
27 October:	9 January:	LHG (tbc – p.4)
6 November:	24 January:	Coffee morning (p.3)



## DIGITAL EXTRA

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*Come Rain or Shine* (we had both; picture by Sarah Whittall)  
Terri and David Kemsley enjoying the Summer Lunch Party, 30 July 2023 (see p. 3)

## OHC (OHSCA HEALTHCARE GROUP) – EXTENDED ACCOUNT

Since September 2022, I have attended online all six of the ‘meetings in public’ of the new, Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB; I missed the inaugural July 2022 event). This radical change in NHS organisation had had inadequate advance publicity; the public learned of it principally through the attrition and closure of the NHS public participation system (for several years, OHSCA members were assiduous participants in the Canterbury District section of this) – but that is now barely a footnote among far wider-reaching changes.

In outline, General Practices and various other medical-support services remain separately contracted to the NHS, and hospital Trusts retain their legal and financial responsibility. However, the 42 English ICBs now have overall responsibility through NHS England to the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) for the operation (including financial viability) and integration of all State health services in their area; furthermore, they are to be leading participants in their area’s Integrated Care *System* (ICS), which is required to coordinate all Health and Care services provided by the NHS, local authority Social Care, and Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) activities. Integrated Care *Partnerships* (Joint Committees of ICBs and Local Authorities etc.) are intended to be key bodies in ICSs, co-ordinating Health and Social Care services.

ICP Joint Committees, like ICBs, should have meetings ‘held in public’, so that the public can hear what policy and practical decisions are taken, and how. In Kent & Medway, in the whole of 2023, the ICP Joint Committee will have ‘met in public’ just three times: in February; the April meeting was cancelled; there were ‘Listening Events’, but no ICP ‘meetings in public’, in June and July; the ICP meeting scheduled for 6 September was replaced with “a closed workshop to reflect on the integrated care strategy” (I quote from an Enquiries email address which I discovered with some difficulty at KCC; the ICS website still lists this ‘open’ meeting in its past ‘Events’, as if it had taken place); and with the 6 September meeting postponed to 7 December, the ICP will have ‘met in public’ only thrice in 2023.

As the integration of Health and Care services, and the associated issues of financial provision and control, were a main objective of the July 2022 NHS reorganisation, one might perhaps have hoped for earlier progress, or at least ‘reflection’, on the relevant Strategy. Of course the setting-up of any public body, let alone a multi-£bn one with many new and inherited targets and priorities, absorbs much time and attention. The ICBs have been no exception, but they have also each had to produce an interim Integrated Care Strategy (mainly comprising high-level aspirations.) In Kent & Medway, this was approved by the ICB earlier this summer, and was understood to be accepted by the other partners in the Integrated Care System; they have also had to produce a Joint Forward Plan, i.e. the realisation of the Strategy during the next five years. In doing so they no doubt experience many ‘challenges’, but to me as an outside observer, two challenges in particular stand out: resources, and preparatory thought. Even the electronic Newsletter doesn’t have space for an adequate appraisal of either of these challenges, but –

Even in 1948, NHS finance was a problem, but the fundamentals are much more demanding now than then: increased population; increased life expectancy (and not yet, unfortunately, increased *healthy* life expectancy); enormously increased medical and surgical sophistication and capability; and desirable as greater capability is, the cost of it increases more than proportionately with national wealth. Governments have tried to cope with this challenge (or hide it), as in other sectors, by year-on-year ‘savings’, including cumulative erosion of real-terms pay, so it is feeding into human-resource problems, too.

As to preparatory thought: the Government claims that the Integrated Care System is the latest evolutionary stage following the ‘Sustainability and Transformation Plans’ announced in

December 2015. But the new System is clearly a more radical break than that, and (reorganisation being the NHS's reflex action – the knee-jerk before conscious thought) there is little sign of practical preparatory planning. I wrote briefly in the June Newsletter about the Hewitt Review, which looks very like an attempt to retro-fit the arrangements which the Integrated Care system needed for its initial stages. The Review reported rapidly to the DHSC, in April this year. There were 36 recommendations, each stating both a required action, and specifically who should do it; 34 of the 36 recommendations request Government action or decision, and while 15 of these are addressed jointly to other entities as well (mainly to ICSs and/or ICBs, but a few also to local government), no fewer than 19 recommendations call only for central Government action.

The recommendations were picked up in a House of Commons Health & Social Care report which was on a limited aspect of Integrated Care Systems (“autonomy and accountability” – not “will ICSs work?”, or “how will they work?”, or “what powers and resources do they need?”) To quote a knowledgeable body (the Royal College of Pædiatrics & Child Health), “the Government response agreed with the principles expressed in the [*Commons* and *Hewitt*] reports but not the substance of the recommendations”; and no further Government response is expected.

I mentioned above the September ‘meeting in public’ of the Kent & Medway IC Board (not the cancelled IC Partnership meeting); here I return to it briefly: there were intimations of ‘support’ (which connotes fairly intensive supervision) by NHS England for the ICB’s struggles with East Kent Hospitals’ finance and performance problems; and reports on the Corporate Risk Register and the Board Assurance Framework; but no big Strategy or Forward Plan presentations this time – a ‘rather thin’ agenda, the Chair called it. So he invited members to air any concerns, not necessarily arising strictly from the meeting papers. Several members did so, and my main impression was of their growing realisation that the Board’s actual powers do not fully support its system-wide responsibilities for operational performance and financial balance. For example, we know all too well that EKHUFT (East Kent Hospitals) has intractable performance issues, and currently this year has a deficit of some £21m (and is way off target with its ‘recovery plan’ – but we do appreciate its very genuine difficulties).<sup>\*</sup> NHS England will certainly ‘hold to account’ the EKHUFT Board and officers, but they will also hold the ICB responsible for failing to secure perfect performance by the EKHUFT Board and staff. Board members foresee this, and at least the possibility of the same arising elsewhere in their patch. But without powers of direct control over the Trusts, General Practices etc. in Kent & Medway, they begin to anticipate blame for failures which they do not have powers to prevent. Risk Registers and Assurance Frameworks are supposed to give an opportunity to take remedial action against foreseen failures, but opportunities are not much use if the necessary powers aren’t there.

It might seem rather late for this realisation to be arising with Kent & Medway Board members, but apparently it is doing so. Is the ICS’s wish “to reflect on the integrated care strategy” a similar thought? And Kent & Medway is only one of 42 ICBs. What is happening in the others? – in Patricia Hewitt’s Norfolk & Waveney ICB and ICS, for example?

<sup>\*</sup>I wrote in OHSCA’s Summer Newsletter about Niall Dickson’s (Chair of the East Kent Hospitals Trust) postponed 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lecture on “Can the NHS deliver, or is it in terminal decline?” I haven’t heard of a new date for the lecture.

*Denis Linfoot* (Convenor, OHC) [originally drafted 16 August 2023; updated 29 September]





OHSCA Public Service: litter collecting



OHSCA Public Service: gardening



## DOVER STREET REVISITED

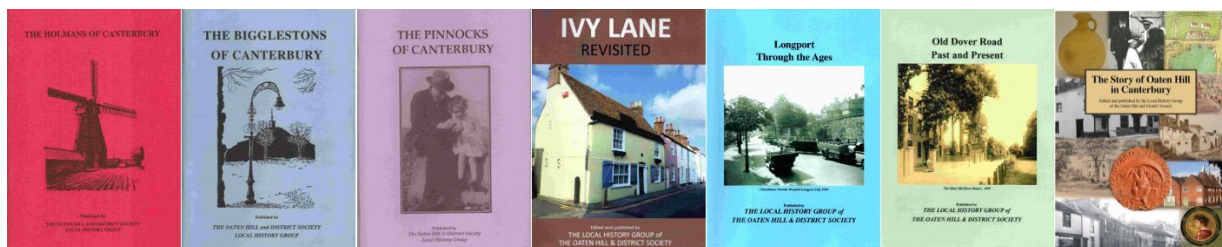


The Local History Group is about to publish the latest volume in their history of local streets series. The history of Dover Street was published some 30 years ago and is now out of print. The previous edition comprised a series of memories of residents recalling the street as it was between 1900 and 1990.

The new edition seeks to explore the lives of those who lived and worked here during the past 200 years. The area has been broadened to include Vernon Place and Oaten Hill Place.

The book, fully illustrated with colour photographs, is available to order at the pre-publication price of £10.00 from the LHG at [history@ohsca.org](mailto:history@ohsca.org)

A full list of publications can be viewed at <https://www.ohsca.org/history.html>. These include:

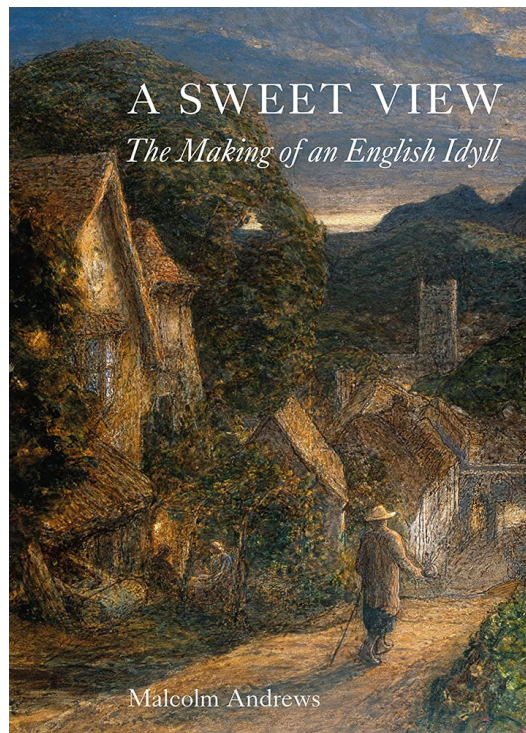


## LOCAL AUTHOR TALK: Malcolm Andrews

The eighth talk in our series of Local Authors' Talks will be by **Malcolm Andrews** on Tuesday 21 November 2023, about his book, ***A Sweet View, The Making of an English Idyll***.

Malcolm Andrews is Emeritus Professor of Victorian and Visual Studies at the University of Kent, and was for 30 years the Editor of *The Dickensian*. He edited two novels for the Everyman Dickens series, *David Copperfield* (1993) and *The Pickwick Papers* (1998) and is the author of *Dickens on England and the English* (1979), *Dickens and the Grown-up Child* (1995), and *Charles Dickens and His Performing Selves* (2006), a study of Dickens's Public Readings and the relationship he developed with his readers and listeners during that career. Recent work has been on Dickens's humour, and his book *Dickensian Laughter* was published by Oxford University Press in 2013.

Malcolm is the author of many books on landscape aesthetics, including *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760–1800* (1989), *The Picturesque: Sources and Documents* (1994), and *Landscape and Western Art* (1999). In 2021 his book *A Sweet View: The Making of an English Idyll* was published by Reaktion Books.



*A Sweet View* explores how writers and artists in the nineteenth century shaped the English countryside as a partly imaginary idyll, with its distinctive repertoire of idealized scenery: the village green, the old country churchyard, hedgerows and cottages, scenic variety concentrated into a small compass, snugness and comfort.

The book draws on a very wide range of contemporary sources, and features some of the key makers of the 'South Country' rural idyll, including Samuel Palmer, Myles Birket Foster and Richard Jefferies. The legacy of the idyll still influences popular perceptions of the essential character of a certain kind of English landscape – indeed, for Henry James, that imagery constituted 'the very essence of England' itself. The countryside idyll forged over a century ago is still with us today.

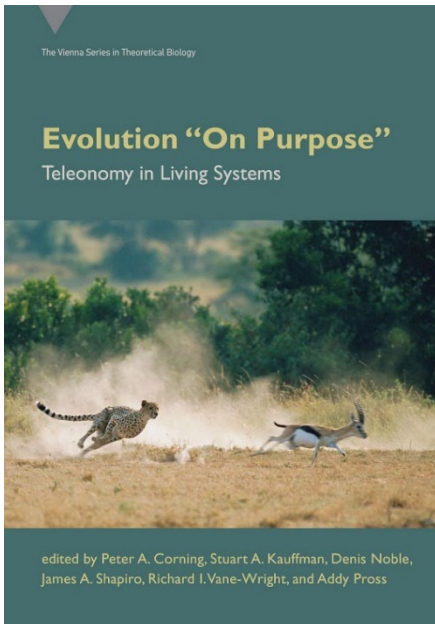
At the Kent & Canterbury Club, Tuesday 27 November, 7.00 for 7.15 pm. £5 per person (cash at the door); cash bar. Please book via [social@ohsca.org](mailto:social@ohsca.org). There will be a Mailchimp reminder about a week before the event.



## LOCAL AUTHOR TALK: Dick Vane-Wright

Our final local author presentation for 2023 will be on Tuesday 12 December, by **Dick Vane-Wright**, who will be *Talking About Evolution*.

Born in Kent, and a Canterbury resident since 1998, Dick is perhaps best known among academic circles as a specialist on tropical butterflies and other insects, who has now been associated with London's Natural History Museum for over 60 years. However, alongside this constant entomological thread, since undergraduate days at University College London, he has always taken a close interest in the theory of evolution. Over the past two decades his writings about evolution have become more prominent, as part of the growing challenge to the 'neo-Darwinian' orthodoxy championed by Richard Dawkins and many others, in which all organisms, including ourselves, seem little more than "prisoners of our genes".



During August, two new works on the controversial issues involved, in which Dick took a major editorial role, were published: a special issue of a journal published by Oxford University Press; and a book in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press *Vienna Series in Theoretical Biology*. These two publications<sup>1,2</sup> comprise contributions by over 30 evolutionary biologists, chemists, physiologists, physicists, semioticians and philosophers of science, amounting to more than 600 printed pages.

Dick's brief talk will endeavour to present and discuss, in an accessible manner, some of the issues at stake. These include such questions as *How and where did life originate? – What is a living system? – Does life have any purpose? If it does, can this affect how evolution takes place? – Is the course of organic evolution predictable? – Is free will an illusion, or not?* The presentation will conclude

with an account of arguments about "*The Gene Delusion*" [an allusion to Dawkins's *The God Delusion*] which forms a key chapter in another very recent (and relatively accessible book), 'Understanding Living Systems', authored by brothers Ray Noble (University College London) and Denis Noble (University of Oxford) (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

"Most people are fascinated to learn who their great-grandmothers and grandmothers were and what they did. Many are fascinated by ancient human history: the rise and fall of the Aztecs, Egyptian dynasties, the cultures of ancient China, Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome. This set of papers is for those who seek to understand how we, *Homo sapiens*, could come into existence from 'brute matter' alone. Here, we join many others who totally accept this biological origin, without recourse to the supernatural, but seriously question the neo-Darwinian Modern Synthesis (hardened or extended) of how this evolution has come about, and, finding the mainstream synthesis wanting in so many respects, the search for better answers must continue. We conclude that the answers lie somewhere in embracing the active, purposeful, goal-directedness of all living systems . . ." (Richard I Vane-Wright & Peter A. Corning, from the introduction to *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* volume 139(issue 4), p. 352).

Further information about issues at stake can be found at: <https://www.thethirdwayofevolution.com/>.

<sup>1</sup>Vane-Wright, R.I. & Corning, P.A. (eds). 2023. Teleonomy in living systems. *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* 139(4): [iii] + 341–587.

<sup>2</sup>Corning, P.A., Kauffman, S.A., Noble, D., Shapiro, J.A., Vane-Wright, R.I. & Pross, A. (eds). 2023. *Evolution "On Purpose". Teleonomy in Living Systems*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, ix + 379 pp.

At the Kent & Canterbury Club, Tuesday 12 December, 7.00 for 7.15 pm. £5 per person (cash at the door); cash bar. Please book via [social@ohsca.org](mailto:social@ohsca.org). There will be a Mailchimp reminder about a week before the event.