

OATEN HILL & SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION



NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

No. 33

digital edition

THE OHSCA COMMITTEE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

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In 2024 OHSCA celebrated its 50th Anniversary – an outstanding achievement for a residents' association. In addition to a full programme of social events, walks and talks, the Committee and Special Interest Groups continued to monitor issues like planning, the NHS, the state of the City and litter, history and heritage, the OHSCA gardens and the environment.

We must now look forward to the future and face the challenges which will no doubt present themselves especially in housing, planning and services. With your support, OHSCA will continue to keep an eye on developments and report back to you in our quarterly newsletters. I hope you will renew your membership and, if possible, encourage a neighbour or two to join up as well – the more members we have, the stronger our voice becomes.

At this point I would like to thank Tim Carlyle who, for many years, has extracted local planning proposals from the Council's website which are then forwarded to you in email bulletins. Tim is standing down and we appeal for a volunteer to take over this function in 2025. It takes, I am told, about 1 hour a week.

We also need a newsletter sub-editor to assist Dick Vane-Wright. Dick shared the work with Greta Cotterrell for the past eight years, but Greta has now moved abroad, and he really needs some help – especially as he embarks on writing a new book which will take up a lot of his time.

Would either of these tasks appeal to you? If so, please let me know.

With best wishes to you all for 2025.

Marion Bell, Honorary Secretary (secretary@ohsca.org)



This *Liquidambar* ('sweetgum') is one of two new trees recently planted in the hospital grounds – this one in commemoration of our association's golden anniversary, the other (a *Cercis*) planted in recognition of the exceptional contributions to our community made by Sophie Scott (see p. 2).

MEMBERSHIP

This last has been the quietest quarter of the year, with most new memberships and renewals having been processed earlier. Thank you for making life easy.

As a further step in that direction we shall be enabling new applicants to apply by email *without requiring completion and submission of a paper form* (<https://www.ohsca.org/join.html>). Of course, the traditional method will still be available. Please note that the physical address for membership matters is now 41B Dover Street CT1 3HQ (Tuition Canterbury). It is normally open during office hours. If you are renewing your membership, please try to do so by 31st January. Thank you.

Peter Whisson, Membership Secretary
membership@ohsca.org

WEBSITE AND EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

OHSCA uses the quarterly newsletter as its primary means of communication with members, but I would like to inform new members and remind members that we also have a website <https://www.ohsca.org/> which acts as a back up to the newsletter. You can view the web site at any time and it is especially useful if you lose your paper newsletter or the digital version gets lost in the deluge of emails we each receive every day! The website is updated monthly and contains an events diary and photographs of events:

<https://www.ohsca.org/events.html>

If you have any ideas on what you would like to see on the website, please let me know at the email address below. If you take any photographs of events, please do send them to me. It is always good to keep the web site fresh.

I also send out email alerts, usually reminders of specific activities, but also any changes in previously published activity information. You can sign up to these by including your email address on the membership form and agreeing to its use, or you can send an email to me (see my email address below) asking to be subscribed. You can unsubscribe from receiving the emails at any time by taking the 'unsubscribe' option at the bottom of the email, but please note, that this does not mean that you have resigned from OHSCA. If you wish to resign, a resignation note or email should be sent to the Membership Secretary.

Lucy Fletcher-Jones (email: website@ohsca.org)
OHSCA Website and Events bulletin alerts

FINANCE

We started our financial year in September with a healthy surplus of £8000. Thank you to members for paying their annual subscriptions and generous donations. To date, expenditure has included gifts to speakers, bulbs, newsletter printing, AGM expenses, room hire and hire deposits. Our main expenditure has been £260 on two trees, together with stakes and ties, which the hospital gardeners have kindly planted in the grounds of Kent and Canterbury, close to the main entrance.

The first tree, a *Liquidambar* ('sweetgum'), is in celebration of the 50th anniversary of what was originally the Oaten Hill & District Society (OHDS) –

which later merged with the South Canterbury Residents Association to become OHSCA.

The second, a Judas tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*), is in recognition of the many years in both OHDS and OHSCA that our member Sophie Scott has been active. Sophie recently stood down from being Membership Secretary, and as leader of our Green Team. Many of the trees, bulbs and plants in public spaces in our area are the result of Sophie's involvement with OHDS and OHSCA, over very many years.

As ever, we are grateful to members who continue to support OHSCA through subscriptions and generous donations. The committee welcomes any ideas or suggestions on ways we can utilise our funds to enhance life in the OHSCA area and support our local community. Feel free to contact us if you have any thoughts on this.

Jane Pollok (Honorary Treasurer)

GREEN TEAM

For many years, OHDS/OHSCA members have endeavoured to create and maintain gardens in local public areas. A key force has been the 'Green Team'. This group is now in need of recruitment and renewal. For more information, you can make initial contact with the team via the Hon. Secretary, Marion Bell, by email (secretary@ohsca.org) or telephone (01227 459 949) – or by phoning Dave Goddard on 07484 316 613.

Sophie Scott, Dave Goddard and Deirdre Hawkes



A little bit down but certainly not out – members of the Green Team and volunteers were on active service, litter-picking in Oaten Hill and Dover Street, 6th November 2024.

(photo: Deirdre Hawkes)

SOCIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES GROUP (SEA)

SEA organises social activities and events. Mailchimp reminders are sent to those who have given their email address to the Peter Whisson. We welcome offers to help with activities, to join the SEA sub-committee, or suggestions for future events. Please contact SEA Convenor Lorna Durrani, via social@ohsca.org.

SEA Activities in 2024

Six talks were held in 2024. The last two talks, which included Stephen Scoffham's talk in October *There is no Planet B*, and Phil Perkins' talk in November *Giving the Etruscan gods their due: discoveries at the 2500-year-old temple at Poggio Colla in Tuscany*, were well attended and provoked much discussion. The second Poetry Event planned for December was cancelled because of insufficient numbers. It seems December is not a good time to arrange events. It may be re-arranged in 2025.

The Games & Social Events at the Phoenix Pub will no longer continue formally, or be notified (although some die-hards may continue to turn up, 7 pm, first Monday of each month), and the weekly walks from the Kent & Canterbury Hospital are under review, due to low numbers.

SEA Activities Planned for 2025

- **Monthly coffee mornings** will continue every fourth Wednesday of the month, at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel, 7 St Margaret's Street, 11.00–12.00. The next three will take place on Wednesday 22nd January, 26th February and 26th March.
- **Spring Party** will take place on Friday 14th March, at the Kent & Canterbury Club. Martin Latham, well-known Events Manager at Waterstones, has agreed to talk about his book *Kent's Strangest Tales*. A buffet will be provided, and there will be a Kent-themed quiz and a raffle (see digital edition, p. 14).
- **Special Walks:** Two nature walks are planned – one perhaps in pursuit of the iconic Purple Emperor, the other to experience the ever-popular bluebells.
- **Weekly Walks** are under review. For the time being they will take place on Fridays, meeting at 9.30 am at the entrance to the old part of the Kent & Canterbury Hospital. Please check in advance on WhatsApp (contact through Alison or Lucy) to see if anyone is planning to join the walk.
- **Summer Lunch Party** (bring and share) will be held on Saturday 19 July 2025 in a local garden.
- **The Gardening Interest Group (GIG)** will hold a Seed Share and Gardeners' Question Time, and a Plant and Produce Share. Visits to local gardens will also be arranged. Signed-up members of GIG are informed of local gardening event, and can make use of the network for sharing information and getting gardening advice, by contacting Alison Culverwell, Helly Langley, or Sue Hodge.
- **Talks & Literary Events:** Three talks are planned. Peter Taylor-Gooby will talk about his latest book, *Aspasia, The Immigrant Queen*, on Tuesday 28th January (see digital edition p. 13). Peter Donaldson will talk about his book on the Sports Personality of the Year Award on Tuesday 29th April (see digital edition p. 15). Pat Marsh will present her book about Aphra Behn, whose statue will shortly be erected by the Beaney, on Tuesday 30th September.

Lorna Durrani (OHSCA SEA Convenor)

social@ohsca.org

SEA sub-committee: *Susi Brain, Alison Culverwell, Lorna, Terri Kemsley, Helly Langley, Margot Leslie, Hazel & Dick Vane-Wright*



Currently about the only place in Kent where there is a chance to see the wonderful Purple Emperor lies between Borough Green and Tonbridge. In the same wood the Purple Hairstreak, Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral can usually be found. (photo: Iain Leach, Butterfly Conservation©)

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP (LHG)

History of the Kent & Canterbury Club

The Local History Group has been invited by the Kent & Canterbury Club to assist in researching the history of the Club and the Club building (formerly known as "The Elms") in Old Dover Road. It is proposed that the results will be published to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Club in 2025.

We would be grateful for anyone with memories or knowledge of the Club and its operations to get in touch with the Secretary of the Local History Group at history@ohsca.org.



Memories of South Canterbury

The LHG invites members to forward memories of life in South Canterbury, in particular, but not exclusively, of The Kent & Canterbury Hospital, and the former South Canterbury Station. Whilst much has already been written, it would be rewarding to bring experiences together in a local publication. Please contact history@ohsca.org.

Next Meetings

The first 2025 open meeting of the Local History Group will take place on Tuesday 14th January. These meetings occur on the second Tuesday of every other month – the two following being Tuesday 11th March and Tuesday 13th May (2 pm; venue(s) to be arranged).

Margaret Bower (Chair LHG)
and *Mike Brain* (Secretary LHG)

OHC (OHSCA HEALTH CARE GROUP)

The Kent & Medway NHS Integrated Care Board ('ICB') met on 24th November, and the Integrated Care Partnership Joint Committee ('ICP'; including NHS, KCC and Medway Unitary representation) met on 2nd December. *Inter alia*, the ICB's CEO gave a long review of its work; the EK Hospitals Trust's Chair and CEO attended for detailed questioning; there were extensive 'Assurance' reports; policies were approved on the ICB's Environmental and 'Speaking-Up' commitments; and the Chair described his aims to improve and maintain co-operation with other Chairs, within the ICB and with its Local Government and VCSE partners (perhaps also, or more, an ICP responsibility?).

The ICP meeting approved the transfer of two subcommittees on IPPH (Inequalities, Prevention & Population Health) from the ICB to itself; received a multi-page 'Logframe Baseline Report' (Log[ical] Frame[work]); it may not be clear to an outside observer how this relates to other wide-ranging performance reports; and received a 'Children's & Young People's Strategic Framework', which generated discussion as to whether it should reflect only the Children's perceptions (as it did), or should have been 'moderated' by parents' views. But the ICP's main Agenda item was the oral Statutory Partners' Update, from CEOs of the ICB and the two Local Authorities: the KCC's CEO gave a wide-ranging account of its preparations for the 'Winter Pressures'; the Medway CEO was absent, but their Director of People said she could largely echo the KCC Update; and in the absence of the ICB's CEO too, its Medical Director said there was nothing to add on its behalf.

The 'Change NHS' public consultation (see <https://change.nhs.uk/en-GB/>) includes different questionnaires for 'Organisations' and for Individuals; responses by organisations were required by early December, but the latter remains open at least until 31st January. Both are based on three 'shifts': (1) moving more care from hospitals to communities, (2) making better use of technology in health and care, and (3) focussing on preventing sickness, not just treating it. The 'Organisations' questionnaire was brief, concentrating on 'challenges' and 'enablers' in making these 'shifts', and requesting estimates of 'time-frame' for any policy suggestions the organisation offered; while the 'Individuals' questionnaire requests a lot of personal information (for 'profiling' respondents), and asks about personal experience of the NHS, as patient and/or employee.

Denis Linfoot 16th December 2024

The following article by Committee Member David Kemsley, concerning the challenging issues of local planning and development, reflects a fundamental activity of OHSCA, and its founding organisations, OHDS and SCRA (South Canterbury Residents Association). In 2012, SCRA played a key role in initiating what has since blossomed as ACRA. It is only through support of grass-roots groups like OHSCA that a meaningful dialogue of the sort described below can be mounted and maintained. The support of association members is vital. (Ed.)

WHAT IS ACRA AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

ACRA is the Alliance of Canterbury Residents Associations. Our aim is to represent effectively the views of our member organisations on the important issues of the moment affecting Canterbury.

Currently we have 16 member groups comprising a mix of residents' associations, community societies and parish council, within an area bordered by Sturry, Bridge, Thanington and St Stephen's. We work in close cooperation with Canterbury Society, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Canterbury Climate Action Partnership (CCAP), Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID), Save The Blean (STB), and the Canterbury District Biodiversity Network (CDBN). Strategically, our overall aim is to seek to influence planning and decision making at all levels of government, through the preparation and submission of evidence-based comment and advice to the appropriate authorities.

At the same time we endeavour to keep a close eye and intervene where we can with a view to improving those important day-to-day matters that so greatly affect the quality of life, wellbeing and safety of local residents – e.g., air quality, cleanliness, public transport, poverty, social and affordable housing provision, pollution levels in river Stour and lakes, safe guarding of prime agricultural land, and preservation/enhancement of green open space and woodland.

We have two established sub committees:

- Local Plan SG
- S Canterbury community liaison SG – responsible for liaising with Corinthian/GummerLeathes, the developer of the development previously named Mountfield Park.

Our Officer Team comprises:

- Chair – Stefan Colley (from Barton RA)
- Vice Chair – Tim Carlyle (OHSCA)
- Treasurer – Janet Morgan (Littlebourne and Stodmarsh Road Community Association)
- Business Secretary – David Kemsley (OHSCA)

Officers are elected for a one year term at the Annual General Meeting and are permitted to stand for re-election if they wish. Our meetings are held quarterly and usually in person.

We decided last summer to try a new way of debating and agreeing our priorities for 2025 and, accordingly, we arranged a committee dinner. This was held in a city-centre restaurant on 28th November. With a private room made available to us, this facilitated a very useful and fully inclusive discussion of our tasks for the forthcoming year, whilst recognising (as indeed witnessed in recent weeks) that things can change very quickly. On 28th November we decided which matters we needed to focus on (primarily but not exclusively) in the months to come. These are listed below, with a brief update under each of the headlines:

Forthcoming publication of the new National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF) following a three month public consultation

As promised, the government has now released the definitive document and ACRA, along with other local partner groups, is engaged in examining the seemingly limited but potentially significant changes from the consultation version. The annual housing target for the Canterbury area remains at approximately 1200 new dwellings per year – which is in line with the draft Local Plan published earlier in the year. ACRA has difficulty in reconciling this highly ambitious target (calculated by the government with the use of a contentious affordability ratio) with the hard evidence of local needs assessments and population change. ACRA welcomes the policy of Brownfield first, but is concerned that developers will aggressively push for easier and cheaper options of Greenfield space.

Strong encouragement of Canterbury City Council to be vigorously proactive in its search for Brownfield sites for new housing developments

ACRA submitted a formal paper to City Councillors urging the council to take a very determined and energetic approach to the task, and identified a selection of potential Brownfield sites across the wider Canterbury area.

A position statement on potential local government restructuring which could lead to the establishment in Kent of additional unitary authorities (possibly with directly elected Mayors), supported by empowered town and parish councils

At the 28th November dinner, Dave Wilson (Chair of Westbere PC), who has extensive knowledge of local authority governance, offered to draft a discussion paper for inclusion on the agenda for our meeting in March. Dave finalised the paper (19 pages of expert insight and analysis) shortly before the Christmas break and the publication of government proposals for local government restructuring. It is clear that the new government wants to move ahead very quickly with these changes and, accordingly, ACRA swiftly circulated the discussion paper together with an explanatory context press statement which has been sent to all local media, our MP, KCC and CCC Cllrs partner groups, and to the full ACRA membership. Updates will follow due course.

Air Quality with particular reference to health impact as defined by the WHO and positive action intervention

ACRA is delighted that six new Air Quality sensors have been installed at various locations across the city. Public access to live data is an important first step in achieving a clear understanding of the level of air pollution levels here and the consequent risk to public health.

ACRA believes that modest government targets based on virtually meaningless 24 hour averages are of little practical value, and that a true understanding of health risk can only be achieved by comparison with the rightfully more challenging targets set by the WHO. ACRA acknowledges that pollution levels have declined in line with reductions in post covid traffic volumes, as working from home practice is more prevalent than pre-pandemic. However, we remain unclear about any CCC

actions that might have made a direct impact outside of its own assets – which are, nevertheless, very welcome.

River and lake pollution and limited impact of new development wetland-mitigation-schemes on existing pollution levels

ACRA welcomes the establishment of the joint Canterbury/Ashford Stour Environment Credit initiative, but is concerned that a solution to the eradication of existing pollution in the river and adjoining lakes remains elusive.

Food security and fresh water supply

Canterbury is part of a wider area of East Kent formally designated as water stressed. Together these two issues are of vital importance for younger and succeeding generations.

More emphasis in local media on issues of community wide interest including KCC/CCC meetings and local politics in general

I wrote to the Editor of the Kentish Gazette to detail the reasons for our concerns in response to his request for feedback, and added some constructive suggestions for future coverage. He has acknowledged our letter with thanks.

Integrated and better public transport

Integration of our train and bus services is of vital importance. The long standing aspiration for an integrated multimodal transportation hub has not materialised. Bus service provision across the city is uneven. Evening services are infrequent or non-existent. Passenger facilities at the bus station are very poor, with no digital information boards and until very recently no customer support staff available on the stands. Against this background it is disappointing in the extreme that only a very small amount of money was made available from the £20 million Levelling Up fund for better bus services.

David Kemsley (OHSCA Committee member and ACRA Business Secretary)
December 2024

The next two articles, by South Canterbury resident Bill Wilkie and Member Nigel Fletcher-Jones, continue our recent series about local charities actively promoted or supported by people living in the OHSCA area. To date we have covered Canterbury Food Bank, Bright Shadow, Connecting Canterbury, Friends of Westgate Parks, and East Kent Mind. The Editor would be grateful to hear from anyone about other local (East Kent) charities that members or other local residents support (editor@ohsca.org).

ACORN CHARITY

ACORN (Accommodation Care Occupation Recreational Needs) became a charity to support young adults who found that there were no facilities for them after the age of 18.

Jenny and Paul Blake (whose son was diagnosed with cerebral palsy leaving him with special needs),

along with other parents, set about providing somewhere for these young adults to live and be supported – ACORN was originally founded in 1986. Following extensive fundraising activities and generous individual donations, a site for a purpose-built bungalow in Sussex Avenue was purchased from Canterbury City Council. The land was blessed by clergy of all denominations. When the construction reached foundation level, the ACORN site was donated to Sanctuary Housing, who completed the project.



Aerial view of the ACORN bungalow, Sussex Avenue (Bill Wilkie)

The official opening was conducted by Virginia Bottomley on 6th July 1994 (below), and was supported and attended by various dignitaries, including Julian Brazier. The management of this facility was taken over by MCCH (Maidstone Community Care Housing).



The first resident moved in during the winter of 1993, after which the original three residents very quickly increased to ten. The accommodation provided support above that supplied by assisted living. The residents had their own bedroom, communal kitchens and sitting rooms, together with specially adapted bathrooms. ACORN continued to offer financial support, including providing two specially adapted buses, and improving the outbuildings, grounds and boundaries. Sometime

later a sensory room was added, which was funded by sponsorship arranged by ACORN. So the fundraising continued, including a dedicated golf day every year at Canterbury Golf Club.

It has been amazing to watch the residents interact with each other and develop in their physical, emotional and psychological abilities. This has been reflected in the inspections and reports by the Quality Care Commission, who have also recognized the high professional standards and management of care by the committed staff.

In 2017 KCC were reviewing their policies for special needs against the background of a spending review. It appeared that they were considering moving away from the Acorn model and replacing it with assisted living. In ACORN's view this was entirely inappropriate for the residents who required considerably more support.

Paul Blake and Bill Wilkie attended a number of consultation meetings with KCC, Sanctuary Housing and MCCH. This resulted in an agreement to continue with an improved and updated Acorn bungalow and architects were employed to design the project. At this time, the number of residents was reduced to six, and the status of the residents was improved so

that they became protected tenants, giving them extra rights and better occupational security.

The 30th anniversary was celebrated in 2023 with a party, inviting all who had so kindly supported ACORN. Attendance included the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, the Bishop of Dover and a military band, together with the residents, family and friends.

This facility offers professional care to its tenants. ACORN continues to provide additional financial support for the bungalow and its residents. This funding is outside the budget of Sanctuary and MCCH. The expenditure of ACORN is monitored and regulated by the Charity Commission to whom a detailed financial annual report is submitted every year.

Bill Wilkie (Trustee, ACORN, Registered Charity 295235)

A CANTERBURY TALE: THE GREY FRIARS

One day, nine poor men disembarked at the ancient port of Dover and were promptly detained by the authorities. They were locked in a small room while investigations were made as to who they were and where they had come from.

The next day, they appeared before a magistrate who swiftly accused them of being spies and robbers rather than the travellers from southern lands they claimed to be. Smiling, one of the men took a cord around his waist, and offered it with the words, *'if you take us for robbers, here is the rope with which to hang us.'* Hearing this, the magistrate set the men free as he believed that no-one who could so freely offer

themselves up to death could possibly have evil intentions.

The year was 1224 and the nine men had been sent by Francis of Assisi to minister to the poor of England. After their short incarceration, the party set off along the Roman road to Canterbury—where thousands of the poor arrived each year to seek the aid of Saint Thomas Becket who was renowned for the healing miracles he had performed since his martyrdom in 1170 at the hands of four of Henry II's knights.

Indeed, when the group arrived in Canterbury they first found lodgings for two nights in Christ Church priory (known at the time as 'The Priory of the Holy Trinity') where Archbishop Becket had been murdered. Four of their number then left for London leaving behind five to find their place in Canterbury. These were Brother Agnellus of Pisa—a deacon and head of the new Franciscan province in England; William of Ashby and James—novices; Laurence of Beauvais—a former smith; and William of Florence.

The five friars were taken under the wing of Alexander of Gloucester, the Master of the Poor Priests' Hospital, parts of which can still be seen in Stour Street within the city. Initially, they were given a small room to the rear of the school that had been established within the hospital where they remained during the day only emerging into the schoolroom when the pupils had gone home. Alexander soon allowed the Franciscans to use a small island in the River Stour which runs behind the hospital. Within the Franciscan Gardens today, the idyllic setting of this island belies the 13th century reality that this would have been little more than low-lying marshland and gardens just upstream from the fuller's fields and tanneries for which the area was well-known.



The site occupied by the Franciscan Friars when they arrived in Canterbury in 1224. The building beyond is the Poor Priests' Hospital, the warden of which allowed the Friars to settle here (Nigel Fletcher-Jones).

There is no reason to believe that the shelters and oratory built by the friars in those first years were constructed of anything more than the most basic materials. Many years later, when the Franciscans had become established in England, St. Francis appeared in a vision to a Warden (head of a Franciscan House)

elsewhere, Friar Robert of Slapton. The Warden led the saint around the great stone buildings of his friary which the saint viewed in complete silence. Eventually, Friar Robert asked the saint, '*Father, what are you thinking about?*' St. Francis replied, '*look around this house.*' The warden looked again and saw that the house was built of only twigs, mud, and dung. '*Such ought to be the houses of the Friars Minor* [the Grey Friars],' said the saint. It seems unlikely, then, that St. Francis would have given instructions to his English mission other than to build the meanest of structures and unless the waterlogged conditions of the site have prevailed there is little hope of recovering archaeological material from the first settlement, other than, perhaps, within the small cemetery which we believe was in the south-east corner of the island.

The friars ministered and preached to the poor from their makeshift dwellings for almost fifty years and, perhaps inevitably, soon became the recipients of gifts from the pious and wealthy of the city. In 1267 an alderman of the city, John Digge, purchased several acres of the southern and eastern part of the island of Binnewith (Anglo-Saxon: '[the island] *within the willows*') adjacent to the original settlement which allowed the friars direct access to Stour Street not far from the entrance to the Poor Priest's Hospital. The passageway that leads from the east gate (*Porta Orientalis*) and part of a bridge over the Stour built in 1309 can still be seen within the Franciscan Gardens.

Gradually, the friars accumulated over 18 acres (7 ha) of land within the city walls in the western part of Canterbury, creating orchards, gardens, and meadows for their use and a new gate, the *Porta Borealis*, was built on St. Peter's Street (Canterbury's high street) with a new road—25ft (7.5m) wide—passing down to the heart of the friary.

That heart was, of course, the friary church which was constructed mainly of chalk and field flints but dressed with limestone from the quarries at Caen in Normandy—the favoured stone that was used, and is still used, for construction at Canterbury cathedral. The work began in 1267 and the church was consecrated in 1325.

The plan of the church was long (77 ft (23m)) and narrow (27ft (8m)) and included a feature unique to the Franciscans in England—a 'walking place'. This was a covered passageway surmounted by a steepled bell tower that separated the choir, which was reserved for the friars' prayers, and the nave where the friars preached to the populace. The high altar within the choir was, unsurprisingly,

dedicated to Saint Francis. Only parts of the west end wall of the choir and of a door leading to the walking place have survived to the present.

At the east end of the nave, instead of an altar, a door with a rood above would have simply allowed entrance the walking place. To the north of that door, along the nave screen was an altar to St. Clement and, to the south, an altar to Mary, the mother of Jesus ('Our Lady'). A small chapel of the Holy Saviour lay to the

south of the nave. Many of the great and the good of eastern Kent left instructions that they should be buried in the nave to the benefit of the friary. In 1492, for example, Hamo Bele of the village of Elham requested burial for himself and his wife, Elizabeth, in the middle of the nave below a tomb 3ft (1m) high, and we know of many similar interments. For the less well-heeled there was a substantial cemetery to the north of the church which became a favoured place for burial.

Unfortunately, with the exception of one, we currently know little about the church's associated buildings, but, as elsewhere, these would have included a refectory, dormitory, chapter house, infirmary, and library. The Canterbury friary certainly gained something of a reputation as a place of study in line with other Franciscan establishments (which produced Roger Bacon and William of Ockham among many others), and the satirical poet and writer, Alexander Barclay (1476-1552) is known to have lived here for a time.

These buildings were grouped around an almost triangular cloister, the open side of which faced the river and the warden's house which straddled the Stour—the only major building to have survived to the present.



The warden's house is the only building to have survived from the Franciscan friary (Nigel Fletcher-Jones).



The lancet arches over the River Stour mark the warden's house as Early English architecture. The capitals of the columns supporting the arches mid-stream may have been decorated and it is possible these were acquired from the Norman Christ Church priory, after the fire in the quire there in 1174 (Nigel Fletcher-Jones).

The dissolution of the friary in 1538, alongside so many monastic establishments in England, was complicated here by the extraordinary story of Elizabeth Barton ('The Holy Maid of Kent', 1506–1534). Barton, a nun at St. Sepulchre's Benedictine convent in Canterbury, developed a reputation for extreme holiness and supernatural powers. Among those who supported the young woman's claims at the time were the former and present Wardens of the friary, Friars Riche and Risby. Barton strongly opposed Henry VIII's annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and the construction of the Church of England and around 1532 began to prophesy that, if the king remarried, he would die within a few months and descend to a place in Hell that she had personally seen. In due course, she was tried for treason and, alongside her six companions, executed for treason on the 20th April 1532 at Tyburn. Friars Riche and Risby are said to have been twice offered life if they would accept Henry VIII as supreme Head of the Church of England, offers they refused.



Today the upper floor of the warden's house is used as a chapel by Anglican Franciscans (left). An eighteenth century screen divides the upper floor (right). The removal of attics in the early 20th century revealed the timber roof. Some of the substantial rafters were clearly reused and may have come from the friary church (Nigel Fletcher-Jones).

A subsequent commission formed in April 1534 visited all the Franciscan friaries, and, although we know of only two Canterbury friars who refused the oath of allegiance to the king, Queen Anne, and their issue, it seems that others had already been sent, or had fled, to France. The friary continued to function, however, even under Friar John Arthur, who daily reproved those that remained '*because they rebelled against the King and held so stiffly to the Bishop of Rome*'. Meanwhile, the citizens of Canterbury continued to make gifts and request burial in the cemetery.

On 5th May 1538, Henry VIII commissioned Richard Ingworth, Bishop of Dover, to take possession of the keys, seals, and goods of English friaries and the commissioner reached Canterbury on the 13th of December. Neither the Deed of Suppression nor the Letter of Submission have survived, but these were of a common form with blanks left for the appropriate location and dates. In modern English, the Letter of Surrender would have called on the Grey Friars of Canterbury to agree that Christian practice '*does not consist of dumb ceremonies, wearing of a grey coat,*

disguising ourselves in a strange fashion..., a cord full of knots [representing poverty, chastity, and obedience], and other papist ceremonies' and hence to surrender 'into the hands of our [Sovereign Lord] all our house of St. Francis...with all lands, tenements, gardens, meadows, waters...most humbly beseeching his most noble grace to dispose of the same [at] his most gracious pleasure'.



Among the elements of the friary to have survived is this 15th century gate which overlies the north-east corner of the Franciscan church (N F-J).

The fate of the few remaining friars is unknown. There is no pension list, but we assume that those that had remained would have received five shillings and been allowed to depart.

In February 1539, the former friary was let to Thomas Spylman, the local receiver of the Court of Augmentation, for 40 shillings a year. The following July, Spylman bought the whole site, including the church and bell tower for £100, selling it on to Thomas Rolf in 1544 for £200. In 1549, Rolf received permission to reduce the wide path from the High Street to the site of the friary church to the narrow passage that still exists today. We assume that throughout this process the church and other buildings—with the exception of the Warden's house which was used for a variety of domestic purposes—were quarried for other buildings.



This 1844 drawing shows a variety of domestic structures and some friary ruins abutting the warden's house. The timber-framed Tudor building built by the Lovelace family as their Canterbury residence can be seen beyond.

Through a series of wills, by July 1576 *'one house and site of the Grey Friars in the City of Canterbury'* passed fully to the Lovelace family of Bethersden, Kent, who built a timber city residence here that incorporated formal gardens, the fine brick walls of which are still

standing in the Franciscan Gardens and include a significant quantity of cut and dressed stone from the friary church. (An excavated and repositioned 15th century friary gate stands ornamentally close by.)



The Lovelace family are known to have had formal gardens to the north of the house, which are in the process of being re-created. A fine Tudor wall separated the enclosed gardens from the river bank. Note the dressed stone re-used from the friary church in the wall and the bridge (partially) of 1309 beyond (Nigel Fletcher-Jones – and pictures below).

Over time the site passed through several other hands, and was partially rented out as a Victorian tea garden and, later, between 1914 and 1994, became a market garden. Meanwhile, the warden's house was carefully restored under the owner Major H. G. James beginning in 1919 and contains an eighteenth century screen, and a former 'lock up' among other features. The upper part of the building, which may have reused timbers from the friary church, was later converted into a chapel and vestry and is now used for services by Anglican Franciscans.

The warden's house and surrounding Franciscan Gardens were purchased in 2000 by the charity which runs the medieval Eastbridge Hospital of Saint Thomas the Martyr which is adjacent to the Franciscan Gardens. The charity seeks to maintain the gardens, walls and buildings in a way that offers residents and visitors a green oasis within the busy city of Canterbury and might meet the approval of Saint Francis.



The complex of medieval and Tudor building that make up the Eastbridge Hospital of St. Thomas the Martyr as seen from the Franciscan Gardens.

Nigel Fletcher-Jones (The author is a Trustee of the Eastbridge Hospital charity which has been in existence since 1180 and includes the Franciscan Gardens, Canterbury. Donations to the charity for the continuing restoration and maintenance work at the two historic sites are welcome and can be made via <https://franciscangardens.org.uk/support-us/>)

MINUTES OF THE 7th OHSCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 25th OCTOBER 2024

HELD AT KENDALL HALL, ST MARY BREDIN, 59
NUNNERY FIELDS CT1 3JN

Attendees: Simon Thompson, Denis Linfoot, Diane Billam, Len Hinksman, Sue Cumber, Daphne Reeve, Greta Ross, Rob Veltman, Judy Seymour-Ure, Madeleine Thomas, Jane Carey-Harris, Lorna Durrani, Mike Brain, Susi Brain, Bertram Leslie, Steve Raffae, Maggie Bower, Terri Kemsley, Nigel Fletcher-Jones, Joy Shaw, Nick Shaw, Deirdre Hawkes, Peter Whisson, Rena Boothe, Alison Culverwell, Francis Green, Dick Vane-Wright, Hazel Vane-Wright, Connie Nolan, Bandana Srinivasar, Keith Rishworth, Hilary Adams. Committee members – David Kemsley, Lucy Fletcher-Jones, Helly Langley, Jane Pollok, Marion Bell.

7–7.45 pm – **Social Gathering** with refreshments provided and served by SEA members Susi Brain, Alison Culverwell, Lorna Durrani, Helly Langley and Hazel Vane-Wright. Many thanks to them.

7.50 pm – “**Via Francigena – the road from Canterbury to Rome**”. A talk by Connie Nolan

Connie is the local Councillor for Barton Ward and has the remit of Culture on the full Council. She presented her talk with photos and illustrations of her travels promoting the Via Francigena, which follows an ancient trackway from England into Europe. For over 2000 years it was a well-travelled trade route. In 990, Archbishop Sigeric walked the *Via* to collect his pallium from Rome – it was the established road to the Holy City.

Connie spoke of her various visits to places along the way including Calais, Vevey, Pavia and Fidenza, where pilgrims are welcomed and encouraged to walk the *Via*. She met local people driving forward the re-introduction of the *Via* as a tourist attraction for walkers, cyclists and, in some suitable places, wheelchair-users – but it became obvious to her that the final section between Dover and Canterbury was virtually unknown.

Her plan is to promote this section to complete the pilgrimage route to and from Rome. In the summer she organised a walk from the Cathedral to Patricbourne where she hopes a ‘champing’ site could be established for pilgrims. A similar walk is planned next year. It is hoped that Dover Council will embrace the idea and link up to complete the route. Connie pointed out that many tourists come to the UK to walk ancient trackways and pilgrim routes, so the *Via* could possibly be extended to London. Italy, France and Switzerland are keen for the *Via Francigena* to become a World Heritage Trail. Connie concluded by asking us all to support her efforts to promote this final section of the route.

David Kemsley thanked Connie for telling us all about this wonderful historical route on our doorstep, and presented her with a thank-you book token.

8.30 pm – **AGM AGENDA**

1. Apologies were received from: David and Gwyneth Hartwell, Dorette Simpson, David McLellan, Tom Lynch,

Deborah MacVean, Jeff Derham, Tim Carlyle, Michael Reeve, Sophie Scott.

2. Minutes of AGM held 27th October 2023

These were agreed without amendment.

3. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising from the Minutes.

4. Annual Report from the Rotating Chairs

David Kemsley told the members that OHSCA had again operated without either a Chair or Vice Chair for another year and sincerely thanked Committee members for carrying out their individual tasks – Helly (litter), Jane (treasurer), Lucy (website and IT), Marion (secretary) and until recently Sophie (membership, trees and green team and newsletter distribution).

As Sophie Scott is not very well and does not wish to continue with Membership duties, we are very grateful to Peter Whisson for stepping into the role and pleased to receive his Nomination for Membership Secretary on the Committee.

In addition David thanked all the other people without whom OHSCA could not operate: Dick Vane-Wright newsletter editor and projectionist for the evening; Lorna Durrani and her SEA helpers for organising social events and for providing the splendid refreshments; Tim Carlyle who goes through local planning applications and prepares the Planning Alert emails; Deirdre Hawkes who helps with newsletter distribution and all the deliverers; the History Group; Helly Langley for being the OHSCA litter clearing champion; Denis Linfoot who attends and reports back on NHS Integrated Care Board and Partnership meetings; Hilary Adams who certifies OHSCA accounts; Marian Heath, the History Group Archivist, who prepared our splendid 50th Anniversary visual display tonight.

David paid special tribute to Sophie’s many years of service to OHDS and OHSCA in various roles, including Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Head Gardener of the Green Team and active member of the History Group. Not only will we be presenting her with a bouquet this week but, as requested by her, in due course, be planting a tree at the Hospital.

David hoped that more people would join the Committee – it is half the size it used to be – but manages to cover the essential roles. Our low-key meetings are held every 2 months and new members (both generalists and people with special interests) would be very welcome.

Marion expressed appreciation to David for attending the ACRA meetings and he brought members up to date with the Council’s current planning strategy, the Local Plan and Mountfield Park (now called the South Canterbury Development).

5. Annual Report from the Treasurer (copy of Accounts filed with these Minutes)

Jane Pollok presented and ran through the OHSCA Accounts which show a year-end balance of £7,813. Members were thanked for their generous donations. To celebrate OHSCA’s 50th Anniversary, a Garden Party was held, and the noticeboard revamped – so it might last another 50 years!

6. Approval of certified Accounts for the year ending 31st August 2024

The Accounts were certified by Hilary Adams, signed copy filed with these Minutes. A copy will be put on the website. We are very grateful to Hilary and she has been presented with a thank-you gift.

7. Annual Report from Membership Secretary
With Sophie unable to attend there was no official report but membership currently stands at 241 households. We welcomed 2 new members this evening.

8. Annual Reports from Special Interest Groups

Local History Group – Maggie Bower recalled the well-attended 50th Anniversary walk around Oaten Hill led by David Potter. They have also republished The Story of Oaten Hill by popular demand. The Group has plans to gather further oral histories about the area.

Green Team – Deirdre Hawkes and Dave Goddard continue to work on the OHSCA gardens and spring bulbs will shortly be planted.

SEA – Lorna ran through a busy year of events in 2023–24 and reminded everyone of Phil Perkins' talk "Giving the Etruscan gods their due" on 18th November and the Poetry Evening on 10th December. Monthly Pub Games and Coffee Mornings continue.

OHC – Denis Linfoot spoke about recent developments to the patient forum and he has continued to attend meetings online and write updates for the newsletters.

Newsletter – Dick Vane-Wright has agreed to continue as our newsletter Editor for 2024. Consideration is being given to a 4-page A5 flyer being delivered to all non-

member houses at New Year to reduce the weight for deliverers.

9. Recommendation regarding annual subscription
Jane Pollok recommended that the annual subscription for 2024–25 remains unchanged at £5 – but it is always subject to review.

10. Proposals for Revisions to the Constitution
No revisions were proposed.

11. Nominations for Officers and Committee 2024–25
The nomination papers for 7 applicants are filed with these Minutes.

12. Elections for Committee members 2024–25
The following were unanimously elected *en bloc* to form the next OHSCA Committee:

Chair and Vice Chair (no nominations received)

Hon Treasurer – Jane Pollok

Hon Secretary – Marion Bell

Membership Secretary – Peter Whisson

Committee Members: Lucy Fletcher-Jones, David Kemsley, Helly Langley, Sophie Scott

Hilary Adams was nominated as Auditor for 2025.

The Committee will continue to operate a rotating Chair.

13 Any Other Business: there was no AOB.

14. End of formal meeting.

David thanked everyone for coming and the SEA group for providing the refreshments. The Meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Marion Bell (Honorary Secretary)



Newsletter deliverers gathered for Coffee and Mince Pies at the Kent & Canterbury Club, Wednesday 4th December, to thank them for their invaluable work on behalf of the OHSCA community (photo: Marion Bell)

MARION'S NEW YEAR WORD GAME

Imagine that the words below are crossword puzzle clues (not cryptic). Find the correct answers (number of letters given) and you will notice a connection between them. What's the link?

1. BRIGHT (5)

5. CROSS (5)

9. MALICE (3)

2. NOT BRIGHT (3)

6. PUBLIC (5)

10. COMPLETED (3)

3. APE (5)

7. BRIO (3)

4. HERB (4)

8. MERGE (3)

OHSCA COMMITTEE 2024–2025 AND CONTACTS LIST

Chair and Vice Chair	Vacant (currently the Committee operates a rotating Chair)
Marion Bell	Hon. Secretary/main OHSCA Contact: 13 Wells Avenue, CT1 3YB; Tel. 01227 459 949; secretary@ohsca.org
Jane Pollok	Honorary Treasurer: treasurer@ohsca.org
Peter Whisson	Membership Secretary: 41B Dover Street CT1 3HQ (Tuition Canterbury); Tel. 01227 785 549 or mobile 07950 259 845; membership@ohsca.org
Lucy Fletcher-Jones	Website Coordinator/events bulletin alerts: website@ohsca.org
David Kemsley	ACRA rep./OHC subcommittee/Press Liaison: press@ohsca.org
Helly Langley	Committee Member/Planning subcommittee
Sophie Scott	Committee Member

Planning	New volunteer needed (see p. 1; please contact secretary@ohsca.org)
Local History Group	Chair LHG: Maggie Bower, maggie_bower18@outlook.com Secretary LHG: Michael Brain, tel. 01227 767 343; history@ohsca.org For information about Local History publications, email: history@ohsca.org – or go to OHSCA website: https://www.ohsca.org/history.html
SEA convenor	<i>Lorna Durrani</i> : social@ohsca.org (current members listed on p. 3)
OHC	<i>David Kemsley, Alison Culverwell, Denis Linfoot</i> (convenor), <i>Dick Vane-Wright</i>
Newsletter distribution	<i>Deirdre Hawkes</i>
Tree champion	<i>Helly Langley</i>
Newsletter editor	<i>Dick Vane-Wright</i> : editor@ohsca.org

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

- ACRA Alliance of Canterbury Residents' Associations
- OHC OHSCA HealthCare subcommittee
- SEA Social Events and Activities subcommittee

Some useful contacts

- For problems with University of Kent student neighbours contact student community liaison officer: 01227 816 156 or email communityliaison@kent.ac.uk; <https://www.kent.ac.uk/studentservices/community/index.html>
- For problems with Canterbury Christ Church University student neighbours contact student community liaison officer: 01227 925 367 or email communityliaison@canterbury.ac.uk
- Police: call 101 to report non-emergency incidents; 999 for emergencies
- 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 problems with noise or other antisocial behaviour, contact CCC's Environmental Health Team: envhealth@canterbury.gov.uk, or telephone 01227 862 429
- For recycling enquiries, or to report missed bin collections, go to <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/bins-and-waste>
- To report illegal parking: <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/parking-and-roads/report-illegal-parking/>, email parking.enforcement@canterbury.gov.uk, or telephone 01227 862 429
- To report graffiti (with possibility of removal depending on circumstances) <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/environmental-problems/report-graffiti>
- For information about Cathedral Pass: <https://www.ohsca.org/publications.html> [go to p. 1 of Spring 2023 Newsletter]
- For St Augustine's Abbey Annual Pass, go to: <https://www.ohsca.org/news.html>

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Purple Emperor: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/purple-emperor>

OHSCA 2025 dates, late January – May		26 March	Coffee morning (p. 3)
22 January	Coffee morning (p. 3)	23 April	Coffee morning (p. 3)
28 January	Talk: Peter Taylor-Gooby (p. 3)	26 April (tbc)	Bluebell Walk (p. 3)
31 January	Subscription due by now (p. 2)	29 April	Talk: Peter Donaldson (p. 3)
26 February	Coffee morning (p. 3)	13 May	LHG meeting: 2 pm, venue tbc
11 March	LHG meeting: 2 pm, venue tbc	26 May (tbc)	Plant share (p. 3)
14 March	Spring Party at K&C Club (p. 3)	28 May	Coffee morning (p. 3)

OHSCA TALK TUESDAY 28th JANUARY



The first of our OHSCA Talks FOR 2025 is on Tuesday 28th January 2025. Professor Peter Taylor-Gooby will talk about his latest book *The Immigrant Queen* and why he wrote it. Peter will bring signed copies of his book for sale at half-price: £5.

Date: Tuesday 28th January 2025.

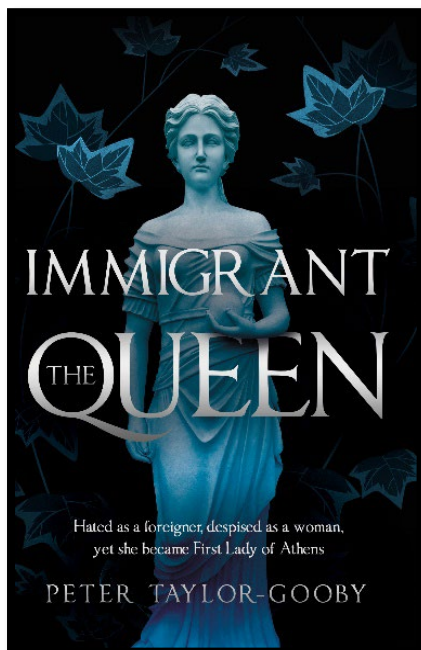
Time: Doors & Bar open at 6.30 pm; Talk starts at 7 pm followed by discussion. We will end by 8.45 pm. Bar 6.30–8.45 pm. Payment for drinks by credit card only.

Place: Kent & Canterbury Club, The Elms, 17 Old Dover Road, CT1 3JB. Parking available at rear of Club.

Booking: Places are limited; open to all OHSCA members and their guests on a first come first served basis who book via social@ohsca.org. Please book as early as possible so that we can ensure the event is viable and preferably at the latest by Tuesday 21st January. The talk will be held in the upstairs room. I may be able to book a downstairs room if given sufficient notice.

Payment: £5.00 per head (to cover room hire costs), *in cash payable on the door*.

Cancellation: If you book but later find you are unable to attend, please contact social@ohsca.org or 01227 456623/07753514351.



The Immigrant Queen

The true story of Aspasia: trafficked to Athens, she became the lover of Pericles, a close friend of Socrates and the author of political speeches and philosophical dialogues. She was the model for the statue of Athene within the Parthenon and celebrated throughout Attica for her wit and beauty. Her writing is quoted with respect by later philosophers and she appears in the comedies of Aristophanes. She successfully defended herself when accused of blasphemy – the same charge for which Socrates was executed.

Then men forgot her.

The novel sets the story of this remarkable woman against that of Fifth-Century Athens – a city at the root of Western philosophy, drama, history, art, architecture and democracy, but marked by misogyny, imperialism, contempt for foreigners and the brutal treatment of slaves.

Peter Taylor-Gooby OBE is Research Professor of Social Policy at the University of Kent, a Fellow of the British Academy and a Trustee of Canterbury Food Bank. He has written four fiction books, alongside his academic writing, *A Kinder City*, *Ardent Justice*, *The Baby Auction* and *Blood Ties*.

OHSCA SPRING PARTY FRIDAY 14th/21st MARCH 2025 (final date tbc)

We invite all members to join us for the OHSCA Spring Party on Friday 14th or 21st March 2025 at the Kent and Canterbury Club, The Elms, 17 Old Dover Road, Canterbury CT1 3JB. It promises to be an enjoyable evening, with an opportunity to socialise with members and guests, to hear a talk by Martin Latham, Manager of the Canterbury Branch of Waterstones, and to enjoy a hot and cold buffet. There will be also be a raffle and picture quiz.



We will start at 6.30 pm with an opportunity to socialise in the Bar, followed at 7 pm in the upstairs or downstairs room with a talk by Waterstones' longest serving manager, Martin Latham, about his book *Kent's Strangest Tales: Extraordinary but True Stories from a Very Curious County*. Martin Latham has been the Manager of the Canterbury Branch of Waterstones for over 35 years, and is the author of *The Bookseller's Tale* and *Londonopolis: A Curious and Quirky History of London*.



Following Martin's talk, there will be a picture quiz and a raffle. A hot and cold buffet will be served in the downstairs room at 8 pm. Drinks will continue to be available in the bar. This will offer members the opportunity to sit at the small tables or circulate as they wish. The evening will end at 9 pm. There is ample parking at the rear of the Kent & Canterbury Club.

The cost of the event will be £20. We have kept the price of tickets as low as possible to cover the cost of the buffet and hire of the venue. Places are limited to 35 so please book early to secure your place and at the latest by 1st March. Please contact social@ohsca.org or by telephone 01227 768 624 to reserve a place and send £20 in cash/cheque made payable to OHSCA by post or by hand to Dick & Hazel Vane-Wright, 42 Cromwell Road, Canterbury CT1 3LE. Please include your email address and/or postal address if not on the internet. We will then send you a ticket electronically to your email address or by post if you are not on the internet. There will be no admission without a ticket. Please indicate if you are unable to access the upstairs room so that we can plan accordingly.

OHSCA TALK TUESDAY 29th APRIL

The second of our OHSCA Talks is on Tuesday 29th April 2025. Peter Donaldson will talk about his book *And the Winner Is: the BBC Sports Personality of the Year and British Sport*.

Date: Tuesday 29th April 2025.

Time: Doors & Bar open at 6.30 pm; Talk starts at 7 pm followed by discussion. We will end by 8.45 pm. Bar 6.30–8.45 pm. Payment for drinks by credit card only.

Place: Kent & Canterbury Club, The Elms, 17 Old Dover Road, CT1 3JB. Parking available at rear of Club.

Booking: Places are limited; open to all OHSCA members and their guests on a first come first served basis who book via social@ohsca.org. Please book as early as possible so that we can ensure the event is viable and preferably at the latest by Monday 21st April. The talk will be held in the upstairs room unless you notify me in good time that you are unable to access the stairs so that I can make alternative arrangements.

Payment: £5.00 per head (to cover room hire costs), *in cash payable on the door*.

Cancellation: If you book but later find you are unable to attend, please contact social@ohsca.org or 01227 456623/07753514351.

Outline of Talk

The BBC's sports personality of the year is now 71 years old. Love it or hate it, the show serves not only as a barometer of shifting sporting passions but also of societal change. Although, with Keely Hodgkinson's recent triumph, we have had four female winners in a row, only 16½ women (if you count Torvill and Dean as one which, rather like Ant and Dec, they must be getting sick of) have ever held the BBC trophy.

SPOTY's inequity, however, does not stop with gender. Ethnicity and class get a look in as well. Will a black footballer ever win SPOTY? What do anglers and darts players have to do to be voted in as the nation's favourite sporting personality? And how can it be possible that more royals have topped the public poll than rugby players (of either code)? This talk will attempt to address questions such as these.

About the Author

Peter Donaldson is a history lecturer at the University of Kent. He is the author of three other books, including *Sport, War and the British* which was shortlisted for the British Society of Sports History's Lord Aberdare Literary Prize in 2020. He has yet to be nominated for the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year award.



<https://news.williamhill.com/tv/sports-personality-of-the-year-2024-leading-contenders/>