

Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society

www.naylandconservation.org.uk

Registered Charity 268104

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2023

As the impact of the pandemic receded into the past the Society began to return to normal activities in 2023.

COMMITTEE: During the year we retained our existing committee and in October we were fortunate to be joined by Karen Freeman. However, as Karen is likely to be moving from the village in 2024, we may be losing her in the next twelve months. The current membership of the committee is as follows: - Chairman Mike Hunter, Vice Chairman Martin Wright, Secretary Mandy Cook, Committee members John Partridge, Lucy Carpenter, Suzanne Cullen, Colette O'Shea, Karen Freeman and Richard Evans, our Hon. Treasurer, all of whom are offering themselves for re-election in 2024-2025. I extend the thanks of the Society's members to the committee who have worked tirelessly for the good of the parish and its residents over the past twelve months.

Sadly, Frank Warren, who had retired from our committee in the year 2022/23, passed away last year and he is much missed by his friends and family. We have also been advised that on Christmas day, Margaret Dowding who had been a committee member of the Society, also passed away and we send our condolences to her family.

John Alexander has continued in the role of Life President and as usual our website manager Lorraine Brooks has continued to provide invaluable support to the Society and I express the Society's thanks to her.

OPEN GARDENS: As the date for Open Gardens approached, it became apparent that a significant number of our usual garden openers were unable to participate and so with much regret the decision was made to cancel the event. It is to be hoped that Open Gardens will return to the village in 2024.

MEETINGS: Your committee held eleven meetings in 2023. The Society's AGM was held in March and was followed by a fascinating talk on the subject of "Stamp Design" by Nayland resident Mark Wilkinson.

Our June speaker meeting attracted a huge audience who were delighted to listen to Sir Bob Russell who spoke about his childhood memories of Nayland.

At late notice, Terri Bannister agreed to replace our October speaker and she delivered a most enjoyable talk on the activities of her late father's war experiences in Poland. Our final speaker meeting in November featured Sian Dawson who spoke on the subject of the florilegium (a collection of plant drawings) of Sir Cedric Morris. This unusual topic was accompanied by some brilliant plant illustrations.

PLANNING: Your committee made representations on seven planning applications during 2023. As a result of the dissatisfaction with a number of decisions made by the Babergh District Council planning office, felt by both the Society and the Parish Council, the Society arranged a meeting with the Head of Planning, the planning officer in charge of our parish and the Head of Planning Enforcement. To the credit of the officers present it was accepted that a number of decisions had been made by the Council in error. The Council also offered a direct means of communication with the Parish Council if any concerns arose in the future. It is hoped that a more satisfactory way forward may now be enjoyed.

The planning register for the parish of Nayland with Wissington is reviewed every week by committee members and substantial consideration is given to every application.

20 MPH ZONE: As a result of pressure from the Society, Suffolk County Council arranged for speed testing to take place at various roads within the village. One of the key criteria for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit or zone is that existing speeds are at or below 24mph. The result of the test confirmed that mean speeds were below the 24mph requirement and therefore this test was successful. However, our County Councillor withdrew his support for the project and the Parish Council have yet to decide whether they wish to take matters further.

REVEREND JONES: Following the acquisition at auction of the volume of music written by the Reverend Jones and the donation of a volume by Society member Foster Jones, the committee instructed Mike Roffe to construct a display case to permit the books to be shown in St. James Church. This project has now been completed and the books can be seen on the southern aisle of the church. In addition, there is a QR code on the front of the display case which permits access to the Society's website where scanned copies of each page of both books can be viewed.

OTHER ACTIVITIES: Our Spring Footpath Walk took place on the 14th of May when Chris Hunt took members on a circular walk from Wiston to Little Horkesely. In conjunction with the Parish Council two litter picks were undertaken, one in April the other in October and Society members also participated in the two village hall gardening sessions.

The Society also participated in the summer event to raise funds for the village hall by showing the film of Nayland, commissioned by members of the Society in 2022.

Similarly, the Society took part in the Christmas tree festival at St. James in December to raise funds for the Church. Both events were well attended.

MEMBERSHIP: The subscription rates are currently £8 single and £12 double for annual membership, £40 for single and £60 for double Life Membership. Membership currently stands at about 260.

Finally, the Data Protection legislation requires that our records are dealt with in a secure manner and everyone who receives emails from the Society is reminded on a regular basis that if they wish to be deleted from our data base we shall be happy to oblige. For the avoidance of doubt our membership list is not made available to anyone or any organisation outside of the Society.

Mike Hunter
January 2024