

# The Amberley Society

The aim of the Society, is the conservation and improvement of the amenities, character and interests of Amberley and its surroundings

## Newsletter May 2012

General Meeting  
**Friday, 18th May 2012 from 6pm**  
Wisteria Cottage, East Street, Amberley



### Summer Social Gathering

Join the Chairman who is celebrating  
25 years' residency at

### Wisteria Cottage

Tours of both the cottage and garden  
looking at the history and renovations

#### May Meeting

By popular request, and also as I have a bit of an excuse to celebrate, our summer meeting will be held at my home. We will meet from 6pm in the garden where the marquee will be pitched to provide some shelter as we can't all fit in the cottage. There will be a brief talk at 7.30pm and also a rolling slide show. As many will know, most of the building renovation work, together with wood, metalwork, furnishings and paintings have been crafted by my own hands or those of my family. There should be plenty to interest all and an opportunity for us to meet and socialise. If members wish to bring guests please ask me beforehand.

#### The Black Horse

There is widespread concern being expressed about the future of the pub which remains closed. Obviously with something so central and vital to our community we look forward to it re-opening as soon as possible. At the Amberley Parish Council (APC) meeting on 9th May, 2012, Horsham District Councillor Jim Sanson said he had been in contact with the licencing officer and that there were no indications that it is not going to remain a pub.

#### Amberley Art and Artists

Following the success and interest of last summer's meeting I have been asked if any of the paintings could be reproduced as greeting cards, with brief details of the artists and their Amberley connections. If there is sufficient interest and a volunteer to organise it, the Society could consider publication.

#### South Downs Network—Rampion Wind Farm

A presentation by E.ON to build between 100-200 wind turbines, 13km off the coast of Brighton, given at the South Downs Network's recent AGM, was attended by Geoff Uren and Grahame Joseph on behalf of the Amberley Society. The SDN has produced its First Community Consultation response and this, together with the E.ON brochure on its plans, will be available for inspection at the May meeting.

#### Environment Agency - LTRAS — Lower Tidal River Arun Flood Risk Management Strategy

This was the main topic at our AGM in February and publication of the strategy document by the Environment Agency is still awaited. For further details see [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/LowerTidalRiverArun](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/LowerTidalRiverArun). An article from the meeting was published in the *Parish Magazine* and is included below:

## Strategy for managing flooding of the Arun

The tidal section of the Arun, which reaches up as far as Pallingham Weir, north of Pulborough, has been managed in various ways over the centuries for priorities very different from those required for the next 100 years. Past management for concerns such as commercial navigation have been superseded by the need to cater for increased run-off from buildings and infrastructure, drinking water resources, economics, plus anticipated sea level rises and increased extreme weather events from global warming. The present drought highlights the need for responsible management of water as a valuable resource. Today, far more data is known and computer hydraulic modelling is available to aid understanding for any review.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), commissioned a scoping document from consultants Atkins. From that, the Environment Agency (EA), as the operating authority, has been tasked with producing a Lower Tidal River Arun Flood Risk Management Strategy (LTRAS), to manage the tidal section of the Arun for the next 100 years. Flooding in this section of the valley can be caused by three factors:

- Prolonged and high levels of rainfall;
- High tides, particularly spring tides (contrary to popular belief, spring tides are not seasonal but occur around the time of a new or full moon); and
- Storm surges, which are usually associated with high wind speeds during deep Atlantic depressions.

Catastrophic flooding would usually occur with a combination of the above and 'disaster management' is a major part of the new strategy. The floods in Cockermouth in Cumbria, or Brisbane in Australia, are recent examples of the economic impact caused by the washing away of bridges and other infrastructure.

Without building a Thames-type barrier across the Arun, or raising banks, it is difficult to prevent the incoming effects of high tides and storm surges. Outgoing water volume flowing down river against the incoming tide can be controlled. This can be accomplished by slowing the river down by two methods: either increasing its distance by opening up some of the old natural meanders, and holding back the water over a larger area, known as flood storage.

A flood plain such as the Wildbrooks acts like a big sponge, naturally buffering the river against the tide. In 1840 the Tithe map shows a total flood plain for the River Arun of 1,500 hectares but today it has been reduced to only 100 hectares, plus 400 hectares of grazing marshland.

A more natural approach to flood management can have many benefits for cost and sustainability, along with improved water quality and wildlife benefits. The Wildbrooks flood plain will be key to much of the new strategy, but, as such an internationally important, specially protected area, it is governed by many national and international constraints such as the *European Habitats Directive*. The EA has been working with Natural England under whose responsibility it falls. Dr Tony Whitbread, chief executive of Sussex Wildlife Trust was also present at the meeting and spoke eloquently about some of the issues involved.

The EA was unable to give detail of the strategy until it is published, but did say it was looking at a holistic approach. The environmental, technical and economic factors are all considered for every aspect of interest such as agriculture, businesses, infrastructure, homes, people, bio-diversity, historic structures and recreation. In its analysis, it applies a benefit-cost ratio to balance and find the most cost-effective and appropriate solutions.

The EA team emphasised that complexities in reaching the right solutions had taken longer than expected, resulting in a delay to publication of the strategy, which is now expected later this spring. There will then be a three-month consultation period during which it will share its findings and receive feedback. On completion of that process, it will formally report its findings and seek approval. Implementation, subject to funding, is projected for the winter of 2012.

### Grahame Joseph—Chairman

Wisteria Cottage, East Street, Amberley BN18 9NN

Tel: 01798 831340

e-mail: [grahamejoseph@gmail.com](mailto:grahamejoseph@gmail.com)