

St. Pancras Corporation Charity Society
A Registered Charity



Patron: His Grace The Duke of Richmond and Gordon

Established in 1689 in Chichester

**Affectionately known as the
'Wheelbarrow Club'**

Mayor – Burgess Simon Palmer

2023

Some positive reasons for wanting to join Chichester's oldest club

- Because it's just that! Formed long before Rotary, Lions or Round Table were conceived, the St. Pancras Corporation can claim to be the oldest dining club in the United Kingdom to have met continuously for over three hundred years. Whilst the earliest constitution has been lost, enough has been recovered and a brief history is given on the back page.
- The raison d'être of the Corporation is to celebrate the traditions of the long history of the Club through social events and dinners at different locations in the area, and to raise money for our chosen charity each year.
- After attendance at the Annual Dinner, guests may seek to be elected as a Burgess of the Corporation, to pay a small annual subscription, and support the limited functions arranged each year. These include the Annual Dinner in November, the Annual Walk delivering gifts to the "Old Dears" in December, a Golf Day in July and a BBQ on Founders' Day in August, amongst a few others.
- The Club is run by an Executive Committee of twelve Aldermen and Burgesses chosen from the Officers of the Corporation and chaired by the Mayor who is elected at the AGM and holds office for two years. By tradition, the election of the Mayor is confirmed by a vote at the Annual Dinner.

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION OF ST. PANCRAS

MAYOR

Simon Palmer

TOWN CLERK

Alderman Philip Johnson

SURVEYOR

Alderman Bill Craven

TREASURER

Alderman Stuart Dobbin

NOTARY

Nick Greenfield

CHAPLAIN

Mark Moranne

TOWN CRIER

Alderman Richard Plowman

PURVEYOR

Richard Dyer

VINTNER

Simon Palmer

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

Paul Willard

MACE BEARER

Richard Johnson

RECORDER

Paul Willard

ARCHIVIST

Richard Hancock MBE

HIGH CONSTABLE

Mark Astley

CONSTABLES-AT- MACE

PYROTECHNICS OFFICER

Stuart Ingrey

SANITARY INSPECTOR

Ray Webb

Michael Johnson, Neil Davies
Tim Clemens, Martin Silcocks
Michael Best, Peter Evans

CUP BEARER

vacant

BUILDING INSPECTOR

Michael Bish

Andrew Cutler

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Peter Kennett

Expression of interest

To: The St Pancras Corporation
recorder@stpancrascorporation.org.uk

or post to

Simon Palmer. Mayor, St Pancras Corporation.
Reynolds Barn, Farm Close, Chichester. PO18 8AW

I would like to be invited to become a Burgess of
St. Pancras Corporation Charity Society

Name (block letters) _____

Address _____

e-mail _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Sponsored / invited to join by:

Name (block letters) _____

Address _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

**If successfully elected to join the Corporation, the annual subscription is £25
which is to be paid by Standing Order, details will follow, if accepted.**

**Please note that completion & submission of this form does NOT guarantee that
membership will be offered.**

SOMETHING OF OUR HISTORY

The Oldest Dining club in the UK

St. Pancras Corporation, Chichester, was originally an Orange Club pledging itself to William and Mary. It was founded in 1689 at The Unicorn, a well-known inn just outside the City walls, once the site of the Chichester Observer offices. Its original constitution was Mayor, Aldermen, Town Clerk and Common Council men, two Sergeants at Mace and Crier'. It was to meet on 4th November, the day William of Orange landed in England 'and they should dine and eat all ye good things in Season and that there should be a plentiful supply of Wine and Ale, and everything provided to content the Stomach'. William III's nephew Charles, first Duke of Richmond, presented 'a Fatte Bucke' for our inaugural dinner on 4th November, 1689.

The Lennox family has been connected with our Corporation ever since that date. His direct descendant Charles, 10th Duke of Richmond, was our Mayor in 1999 and 2000, whilst his father, 'Freddie', 9th Duke of Richmond, was our Mayor in 1948 and 1949. Other members from the family include the Earl of March in 1850, and Lord Henry C.G. Gordon Lennox our Mayor in 1847, 1865, 1877 and 1886, dying in office in 1887. It was Lord Henry who presented our mayoral chain which we still use today. Another family member was Lord Walter C. Lennox, Mayor in 1889-1898. Both of these men were MPs for Chichester.

From 1689 until the inn closed in 1960 the Corporation dined at The Unicorn. Since then we have dined at various locations in the vicinity. It was from these convivial functions that the Corporation received its nickname The Wheelbarrow Club. Tradition has it that apprentices were instructed to wait outside The Unicorn with wheelbarrows in which they pushed home those of their masters who were drunk or incapable. This custom is celebrated by the symbol of a wheelbarrow on the club tie.

After the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 the political and religious bias gradually disappeared, and the Club became open to all kindred spirits. We had a Roman Catholic Mayor in 1897 and in 1910. He was Lord Edmund Talbot, MP for Chichester, who later as Lord Fitzalan of Derwent in 1922 was the last Lord Lieutenant of All Ireland.

To commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, the Corporation decided to supplement the income of the ladies in Dears Alms-houses in the Hornet (affectionately known as Our Old Dears) and to provide a Christmas Dinner for them each year. Until 1971 the Corporation marched in procession to the alms-houses carrying festive fare for the inmates on Christmas Day. When the old alms-houses in the Hornet were sold and the money used to build new bungalows at Riverside, St. Pancras, it was found that some of the ladies were away, or wanted to be away, on Christmas Day, so the day of the procession was altered. Our walk now takes place on a Saturday before Christmas and, preceded by Morris dancers, we progress at lunch time with gifts for the Old Dears before returning to the Nag's Head for well-earned refreshment.

In 1966 the Corporation became a Registered Charity. Our aim is the continued support of the Dears Houses and their ladies, and to contribute to building or buying more houses.

The fact that the Corporation has survived since 1689 is due to the perseverance of its Aldermen and Burgesses and to the fact that it has adapted itself to modern conditions. Long may it continue to flourish!

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