



**Hastings &  
Rother  
NARPO**



**Dave Newnham**  
Chair



**Chris Reeves-Fowkes**  
Vice-Chair



**John Levett**  
Secretary



**Karen Paine**  
Treasurer and Welfare

# Phoenix News



**Issue 5**

**February, 2024**

## News from our Chair

Hi Everyone,

So looking forward to Spring! Already snowdrops and daffs are showing and all the shrubs seem to blossom earlier each year. Soon be 'shorts' time too!

Our Christmas buffet at Horntyte and the lunch at The Robin Hood were both well attended and feedback was good for both. (We did have a bit of a panic as 20 minutes before your arrival, we found that instead of 6 tables of 10 placings, they managed 10 tables of 6!!!) However, sanity was quickly restored!

I recently attended the Brighton reunion at The Sportsman at Withdean in Brighton. It was lovely to meet up with mates who I had joined with in 1966 and other colleagues. It was typical 'cop humour' with everyone trying to peel the years back from their former mates and desperately trying to remember just who they were!! I left there after about 3 hours feeling a happy bunny (no I didn't get arrested!!) and knowing just how important our socials and Branches are to some of us.

Stay safe and see you soon.

Cheers!

Dave

## Our Secretary—John Levett

Hi All,

Hopefully not too many of you are suffering the winter blues or this cold/flu thing that seems to go on forever. The good news is the evenings are getting lighter and we have the better weather (hopefully) to look forward to.

I must say the Christmas dinner was a real success with over 60 members attending. A big thanks must go to Dave Newnham and Karen Paine for arranging that. The Christmas buffet that was held at lunchtime at Horntyte also went down well, with members preferring a lunchtime event rather than an evening do.

The Phoenix news has also been a great success again thanks to Karen's hard work. Anyone who has any stories or reminiscences from their service please send them through to be included, hopefully you are getting the idea now.

NARPO HQ are ploughing on with making NARPO a limited company. I am told that it will have little effect on our happy little branch. The current members of the NEC will all become directors in the new company but I'm assured won't be paid for the role (at least at the moment!). All branches have been asked by NARPO HQ for their current bank balances. It is for that reason that the committee are determined that our funds get used for the benefit of our members and not be left in a pot to be potentially be raided by the new company.

Take care,

John Levett.



**NARPO Website:-  
www.narpo.org**

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## State Pension

I thought I would share my experience of getting my State Pension last year. Many of you will already be aware that despite having many more years of contributions than is necessary to get a full state pension (35 years needed and I had 46 qualifying years), I still had a considerable shortfall in 2019 having been retired from teaching for 2 years. After contacting HMRC I was told that this was due to Contracting Out (COPES) and that Police, Teacher's and Nurses pay a lower NI contribution. Like many colleagues and friends, I was unaware of this. You can top up but that is a decision you have to make for yourselves. Is it worth it? I was doing casual invigilation at the time at my local college and was told by HMRC that this was an exception and I would be able to be self-employed for NI purposes and pay Class 2 contributions to top up. Every extra year's voluntary contribution now equates to £5.82 per week extra in State Pension I believe. The top up rates are as follows:-

2022/3

£3.15 pw Class 2

£15.85 pw Class 3

2023/4

£3.45 pw Class 2

£17.45 pw Class 3

So I now have the full State Pension thankfully, but I know from various friends and Facebook groups, that others have not been so fortunate. My sister was a Head Teacher and she has fallen foul of the system. If you are below State Pension age and haven't already done so, get a pension forecast! [Check your State Pension forecast - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk). It's a complicated topic and I can only tell you about my experience. You may be fine, but if you are still below State Pension age it might be worth checking with either DWP (0800 731 0175) or HMRC!

Best wishes

Karen

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***Our AGM is at Horntye Sports Club at 1pm on Thursday 28th March, 2024.  
There will be a buffet and a raffle with £50 1st Prize gift voucher. We look forward to seeing you there. Please note the change of usual day!***

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## Steve Mintram—Phonetic Alphabet experience!

It really happened!

Over the years I have had lots of laughs over peoples (mis)use of a 'phonetic alphabet' rather than *the* phonetic alphabet. It usually occurs when someone is trying to help with spelling something and doesn't really know the phonetic alphabet but stumbles on anyway.

In the phonetic alphabet A is always Alpha no matter how many times it is used, whereas a non-pheneticist seems to think Alpha has been used up when they reach a subsequent A and boy does it get difficult when you've already used X-ray, Yellow and Zoo! At least X-ray was right!

It can be almost as difficult for a non-pheneticist listening to a pheneticist spelling something out.

Recently I had to make a dental appointment by telephone. There was pleasant music playing while I was told how important my call was and a very pleasant sounding young lady answered quite quickly by today's standards. She found me a suitable time, but when it came to spelling my surname she was struggling, so I tried to help: M – Mike and she repeated Mike, I – India, N – November, T – Tango, R – Romeo, A – Alpha, M – Mike. She confirmed the appointment time again and that was that. However, when I arrived for a little early there was no trace of me on their computer list and I was beginning to think I'd made a mistake until I heard the receptionist explaining to a colleague that the time of my appointment was taken by a Mr Mike Indian!

M – Mike, I – India, N – November

Steve Mintram



Hastings & Rother  
NARPO

Phone: 07554521629  
E-mail:  
hastingsrother@narpo.org



NARPO Website:-  
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## Photos from Christmas





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E-mail:  
hastingsrother@narpo.org



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## Our President

Gordon Message



## New Members

John Widdows

Steven Chandler

## Joining the Hastings Borough Police

In 1967 I was Petty Officer on a Royal Navy frigate in the far east. One of the crew was John Dunne whose brother Mick Dunne was already a PC in Hastings Borough Police.

My time in the Navy was expiring in September 1967. John asked his brother to send me an application form for the Hastings Borough Police. I completed form and was told to contact the Police Station on my return to the UK.

On my return to Hastings, I took my wife Pat and the three kids to the beach. I left them on the beach while I went to the Police Station in Robertson Terrace.

I handed in the entry form, and passed the basically reading, writing, and arithmetic test. That evening a patrol car took me to the Police Doctor in St Leonard's for a chest X Ray.

The next morning, I met the Chief Constable and was accepted to start in September.

I was kitted out in the late Ray Barr's uniform as he had just been promoted. I then off I went off to Nutfield for training. I was actually let loose on the public on New Year's Eve in 1967.

Barry Cotterill

## Welfare and Treasurer

We have a healthy balance in the Branch account. I'll give full details at the AGM. I've made various Welfare visits, delivering flowers and treats. Please let John or myself know if you believe someone would benefit from a visit.

Best wishes

Karen

## Footnotes - Janet Mileham

Did you know the game Twister was originally called "Pretzel"?

What do you get if you cross a cow and a camel?  
Lumpy milkshakes!

Line your grill pan with foil and food will cook faster as the foil reflects the heat. It will be easier to clean too!