



THE WORTHING SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010

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FORTHCOMING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice of Calling of Annual General Meeting of the Worthing Society on Tuesday 27th April 2010

Notice is hereby given that the 28th Annual General Meeting of the Worthing Society will take place on Tuesday 27th April 2010 at 7pm in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.

Nominations are invited for the following posts:

- ◆ Chairman
- ◆ Vice-Chairman
- ◆ Honorary Secretary
- ◆ Honorary Treasurer
- ◆ Honorary Membership Secretary
- ◆ Honorary Social Secretary
- ◆ Honorary Publicity Officer
- ◆ Honorary Legal Consultant
- ◆ Six members of the Executive Committee

All nominations, supported by a seconder and with the approval of the nominee, should be sent, not later than the 13th April 2010, to

Mrs. N. Cropper
3 Ilex Way
Goring-by-Sea
BN12 4UZ

The business meeting at 7:00pm will be followed by coffee, before a talk by Colin Bowley on "Sussex Piers – development & demise of the seaside pier in Sussex"

Subscriptions for the year 2010/11 (Single £7, Joint £10) are due on April 1st. These may be paid at the A.G.M. or send cheques made payable to The Worthing Society to Mrs. S. Miller, Membership Secretary, at 92 Lyndhurst Road, Worthing, BN11 2DW, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope please.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

West Durrington

On and on it goes – the file grows!

Worthing's Development & Control Committee will meet at 2 p.m. on the 15th March to consider the latest controversial outline planning application from the West Durrington Consortium. The meeting will be held at the Assembly Hall because of the widespread public opposition and interest.

Four years ago, at a similar event, permission was granted for the development, including a major re-alignment of Titnore Lane, to satisfy the policy of WSCC Transport Department. Before the 106 Agreement was signed, your Society mounted its legal challenge citing the latest guidelines from the Department of Transport and succeeded in persuading the WSCC to reconsider the policy which would cause major environmental damage and the loss of ancient woodland.

The Worthing Society's opposition to the development goes back a decade to the first inquiry and has been related in previous newsletters. Media coverage given to those seeking a referendum on the matter, rejection of the whole scheme, internet petitions, living in the trees to save them and so on, helps to maintain public awareness but the development is in the Local Plan and the only way forward is to seek modifications.

The Society lodged detailed objections to the latest application on 7th January 2010 calling for the exclusion of Parcels 5 and 6 (the two fields facing Titnore Lane) as the 110 houses planned are not needed to meet Government housing targets. If this recommendation is ignored then the proposed link road through The Lag should be reduced to a pathway and cycleway to comply with the Inspector's report on the Local Plan.

The Conclusion of our submission clarified the Society's stance:-

"If the West Durrington development included the land west of The Lag, it will cause substantial environmental damage. This damage would be wholly unnecessary because Worthing has a large surplus of development sites beyond those required under the Regional Plan. Developing this land would therefore put Worthing Borough Council in breach of its responsibilities under the EC's Habitats directive. If this land should, nevertheless, be committed for development, despite the risk of litigation, that such a decision would imply, the link through The Lag should be limited to a footpath and cycleway".

We have applied to speak at the meeting. Members support would be welcome.

West Parade

The DCC refused the planning application by Roffey Homes to demolish the three houses to the east of Marine Gardens on West Parade and replace with a block of 13 apartments in a pastiche deco style. The Society was among many who objected to the scheme which was recommended by the Officers. In refusing this proposal, the DCC put down a marker but there may be an Appeal. No.44 (the house flanking Marine Gardens) was built in 1930 for J. Kennedy-Allerton, the far sighted Town Clerk and designed to stand beside the Gardens with its Pavilion. The house has suffered neglect and changes to some of the fenestration but could be renovated and the original architect's drawings are available. The Society has applied to English Heritage for a 'listing' of the Pavilion.

Project Worthing

The Project Worthing concept has been promoted as an alternative to the more modest Council replacement Aquarena pool and complex. It is offering the prospect of an arena with a 50-metre pool, ice rink and conference facilities together with a lagoon on east Worthing beach for water sports and a 500-house village further on. No need for the Council to borrow more money and rejuvenation as well! In return, the Council will immediately grant a 100 year lease on the present Aquarena and paddling pool site and put the £10million fund it has saved for a replacement Aquarena into a Community Trust to run the Arena, the Pier, Connaught Theatre and Assembly Hall.

So, it's not for free! Is the gift horse worth mounting?

The Arena will have no parking facilities and will rely on park and ride. No pool or ice rink pays for itself. When the building is at the end of its useful life, the land would not revert to the Council. Should the whole project go badly wrong financially (assessed cost £560million), who would pick up the pieces? Does Worthing need another 500 houses built on reclaimed land with generated traffic onto the A259? And so on. The Council will have to analyse the implications and liabilities of the scheme. Although the Council's replacement Aquarena plans fall short of some people's aspirations, it can be delivered soon, and it will belong to Worthing. That is where my money would go.

Conservation Areas Review

The Council is to undertake a review of conservation areas but funding is limited and the most important ones will be done first. Welcome news.

I will present my Annual Report at the AGM and hope as many members as possible will attend the business part of the meeting - **7 p.m. start!**

David Sumner

A FEW WORDS FROM TONY MALONE (VICE CHAIRMAN/PUBLICITY OFFICER)

There has been no let-up in The Society's involvement in matters affecting our town. Many of these have been ongoing for a substantial time and so there is really no need for me to reproduce the list here – simply refer back to the previous newsletters! Other matters, however, such as a potential major development in Montague Place, have only recently arrived on the agenda (although applications that would affect this area have cropped up several times over the years). More about this project if and when a planning application is lodged.

We are also actively involved in gaining best advice on how to prepare and submit bids for funding from one or more of the bodies that allocate grants to societies such as ours. We have various projects for which we would like funding and will keep you informed of the outcome.

Representatives from the Committee have also attended a course and workshops to better equip us to publicise the Society and, hopefully, to attract new members. We hope to be putting that into practice as soon as possible. Watch this space.

I'm sorry to say that we are **still** without anyone to take the minutes at Committee meetings – and so it ends up with either the Chairman, or me, obviously trying to take a constructive part in the meeting whilst attempting to record the proceedings. Its very far from ideal. There **must** surely be someone out there who can spare about two hours every three weeks to help us out? I think that perhaps members are put off by thinking that some expertise is needed – it really isn't. Its simply a matter of writing down salient points; what decisions were made and what action points result from those. Inevitably, whoever is taking the minutes simply asks for confirmation of what they are writing down if they are in any doubt. One of us always proof-reads the draft of the minutes anyway before it is released to the Committee. So there is very little responsibility on the person actually writing the minutes....i.e. no blame attached!

Another issue which is taxing me is communication with our members. Situations occur fairly frequently when it would be really useful for us to know the views of our members. I appreciate that this is difficult for members who have no access to E-Mail...but I would like to ask those of you who DO have email access if you would consider letting us have your opinions. We have recently changed our Web Site, www.worthingsociety.org.uk to enable you to easily set up an E-mail with your comments. Just click on the "Contact Us" Link in the top right panel of Links. Complete and send the E-Mail and I will ensure that your comments are put to the Committee

Tony Malone

THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Finally established on April 1st 2010

The many announcements about the establishment of the South Downs National Park may well have left members confused about what is really happening. Hilary Benn's announcement last November was that he had confirmed the Order establishing the National Park, and that it would come into existence on March 31st 2010. His previous announcement last March was that he intended to establish the National Park. The South Downs National Park Authority, which will run the National Park, will now come into existence on April 1st, while the Sussex Downs and East Hampshire Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will then cease to exist because they will have been incorporated into the National Park. The Authority will spend its first year recruiting staff and deciding its key policies and strategies. It will come into full operation on April 1st 2011.

The most important issue to be decided is how many of the decisions about planning applications should be delegated to local authorities in the area of the National Park: The Authority will take control over planning from the local authorities, but it may not want, or be able, to deal with the thousands of planning applications which are generated within the area every year. Its other tasks will be to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, while promoting the public's ability to understand and enjoy the Park. The piece of cultural heritage that particularly interests us is the grade 1 listed mansion of Castle Goring, which has been included in the final boundary of the Park - after a six year campaign by the Worthing Society and other local amenity groups.

The members of the National Park Authority are being selected this month. There will be 27 members, of whom 14 will be councillors from local authorities within the Park - one from each authority, except that Worthing and Adur will share one seat - six will come from the Parish Councils within the Park, and seven will be experts chosen by the Secretary of State.

The hostility among Conservative politicians towards the National Park has not entirely dissipated. West Sussex County Council, which opposed the establishment of the National Park, has said it will not allow the



National Park Authority to take over management of the footpaths in the Downs from the South Downs Joint Committee, which now maintains the paths. This action implies that the Council will incur additional costs to maintain the paths, at a time when it is trying to reduce its expenditure.

South Downs National Park



Nick Herbert, MP for Arundel and the South Downs and shadow spokesman for environmental affairs, has shown a more adult approach to the National Park. He has recently said that the important thing now is to make the Park a success, and to bring along the people who have concerns about it.

(Photos courtesy of Richard Reed (Chalk Hills, Ditchling and Western Weald) and Paul Millmore (Lewes))

The South Downs National Park is unusual in that so many people live within its boundaries, and so much of the land is farmed. Farming practices may not be universally admired for their effect on the landscape, but any changes can only come voluntarily. The National Park Authority may have money to give grants to promote good farming practices; but, as Mr Herbert has said, "It is only through the goodwill of the farmers doing the right thing that we can achieve the outcomes that we want".

The first years of the National Park will be difficult, as it establishes its policies and its relations with the previously hostile local authorities of the area, and with the rather suspicious landowners and farmers. Locally, we will hope that the Authority shows more interest in the condition of Castle Goring than Worthing Borough Council has done.

David Sawers, Committee Member

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND PROJECTS IN WORTHING

With local government straining under the financial squeeze, and with worse to come, it is time to give three cheers for the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), without whom, libraries, archives, and museums would find it very hard to operate, and totally impossible to commence new initiatives.

In Worthing there are currently three very important pieces of historical research underway – all funded by HLF. Firstly there is the continuation of the Time for History project, the original work culminated in September last year with the publication of the book and DVD, 'Through the Hard Times and the Good – an oral and social history of Worthing', written by the project manager and Worthing Society committee member, Chris Hare. Due to the excellent sales of the book, enough money has now been raised to pay for a follow-on book, which will include many of the fascinating memories and anecdotes of Worthing in the 40s and 50s for which there was not room in the first book.

The second project involves the Friends of Broadwater Cemetery, so ably and enthusiastically led by former Worthing mayor, Councillor Tom Wye. Here HLF is financing a full and detailed history of the burials at the cemetery, to be written and researched by Paul Robards. There will also be a ready-read 'A-Z' of significant burials, courtesy of The Sentinel; and a history of the military burials and its associated campaigns, to be written by Chris Borrowdale, another expert from amongst the Friends. Chris Hare will be leading a series of adult education workshops on the cemetery and its famous interments on Saturday afternoons, from April to December this year. These sessions will be free, for more details contact Chris at chrisharex@yahoo.co.uk

Lastly, but by no means least, there is the All Our Yesterdays project, which looks to conserve, index and open up to the public oral history interviews kept at West Sussex Record Office at Chichester, and printed archives held at Worthing reference library. Chris is the project manager and has set himself the ambitious task of completing the project by November 2011. Volunteers are currently being trained in research and indexing techniques and skills. Anyone interested in further information should email Chris at chris.hare@westsussex.gov.uk or call him on 07794 600639.

Put simply, without HLF none of this work would be taking place, and the town would be a poorer place as a consequence.

EVENTS FOR 2010

- FEB - Tuesday 23rd at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre
Speaker: Dave Allport, MBE will give a digital presentation entitled 'Cruise in the Solent'
- APR - Tuesday 27th at 7:00 p.m. A.G.M. in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.
7:30p.m. Speaker: Colin Bowley on 'Sussex Piers - development & demise of the seaside pier in Sussex'
- APR - Wednesday 28th a VISIT to two 18th century National Trust properties – Clandon Park, West Clandon and Hatchlands Park, East Clandon – near Guildford.
Book early for our 16 seater bus – Cost £12.50 p.p. plus £11 for non NT members
- MAY - Tuesday 18th a VISIT to the village of Ditchling - Coffee/tea & cake on arrival, a guided walk and entry to the Museum – Cost £10 p.p.
(optional lunch at one of four restaurants in the village, or bring your own picnic)
- JUN - Thursday 10th a VISIT to Mottisfont Abbey (National Trust), near Romsey
Book early for our 16 seater bus – Cost £16 p.p. plus £7.50 for non NT members
- AUG - Sunday 1st a 'WINE & CHEESE OPEN HOUSE' at BEACH HOUSE from 12-2 p.m. Tickets £5.
For tickets, **for this event**, please send a s.a.e. and cheque made payable to the Worthing Society to:
Mrs. Richards, 2 Beach House, Brighton Road, Worthing, BN11 2EJ
- SEP - Tuesday 28th at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre
Speaker: Dr. Janet Pennington on 'Sussex Inns & Their Architecture'
- OCT - Tuesday 26th from 2.30 – 3.30 'A Behind the Scenes' TOUR of Worthing Museum & Art Gallery
with Laura Kidner, Curator of Art & Exhibitions Tickets £2.50
For tickets telephone Mascha Richards on 01903 - 214519
- NOV - Tuesday 23rd at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre
Speaker: Heather Ongley of The Cowdray Heritage Trust on 'Cowdray – Past, Present & Future'
- DEC - Saturday 11th John Rutter's Christmas Celebration Matinee Concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall. Tickets, from Mascha Richards, will go on sale in September.
Price £33.

To BOOK, contact Christine Roberts, Social Secretary, Tel: 01903-700325. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope with your payment, so that final details can be mailed to you, and post to:-
24 Marine Crescent, Goring-by-Sea, BN12 4JF

Please remember that prior to quarterly meetings Committee Members will be available from 7p.m. to talk to members wishing to discuss matters of interest or concern.

Visitors/Guests are welcome to attend the lectures – fee £2.