



THE WORTHING SOCIETY

President:

P. A. SNOW O.B.E., J.P., M.A., F.R.S.A.

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2008

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FORTHCOMING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice of Calling of Annual General Meeting of the Worthing Society on Tuesday 22nd April 2008

Notice is hereby given that the 26th Annual General Meeting of the Worthing Society will take place on Tuesday 22nd April 2008 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 8th April 2008, 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 John Mills, archaeologist, on
'West Sussex Settlements Lost to the Sea'

Subscriptions for the year 2008-9 (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.

THE WORTHING SOCIETY – ITS FUTURE

***“Search the parks in all your cities,
You’ll find no statues to Committees”***

An axiom – but we need one!

For over 25 years, The Worthing Society (and before that the Civic Society) has built up a reputation as the local watchdog on conservation issues, while being actively concerned with the present and future of the town. Our opinion is given and sought on all major planning matters and strategies dealt with by the Local Authority and Government as they affect our town and its environs. Our help is often requested and enlisted by individuals when a planning matter causes alarm and concern – many are not members of the Society!

During this time, the Society has been kept active by the efforts of dedicated and indefatigable individuals who have given freely of their time. However, some of us are approaching our ‘sell by date’ and it is not possible, nor desirable, that the same individuals carry on indefinitely. I realise that many groups and Societies have a similar concern but our future depends on enrolling new members to the Executive.

I would like to hear from anyone who is sufficiently interested and concerned to consider joining us. Computer skills would help. Our urgent vacancy is for a Minutes Secretary who is computer literate.

Email contact

A suggestion has been put forward that some members would be willing to receive the Newsletters and other communications by email. Those interested, please let Barry Richards know via his email address: barry.richards@btinternet.com

David Sumner
CHAIRMAN

An update from your Publicity Officer/Vice Chairman

My brief is, as usual, to keep you in the picture regarding the work of our Committee since the last newsletter.

I am sure that it will come as no surprise if I say that there has been no respite in the range, or volume, of issues that have required our attention. So please bear with me while I run through just some of the tasks that have occupied the Committee's time.

We have, as always, been involved in a relentless flow of planning matters including the site for Worthing's replacement swimming pool; the precarious future of Castle Goring; the development proposals for Sea Place & The Yacht Club; the proposals for a South Downs National Park; demolition of 28-30 Marine Drive; the total rebuild of The Eardley Hotel to its original design; demolition of 5 substantial houses at Broadwater Street West to build a home for the elderly; Lemo UK 'hi-tech' replacement offices and factory in North Street; demolition of the Art College in Union Place to make way for the McCarthy and Stone apartments for the elderly/ infirm; Northbrook College proposals to consolidate their facilities on a bold new campus on their existing Broadwater site; 6th Form College plans in Bolsover Road; the 'Desert Quartet'and so the list goes on.

We have had (or hope to have) a very positive impact on some of these proposals but on some, notably the demolition of the Union Place Art College, we lost the day. Sometimes the world of big business carries a lot of weight in these matters.

Aside from these major developments there has been a steady flow of applications for 'back-garden' developments and proposals that could have a detrimental affect on existing street-scenes. We continue to oppose these whenever we feel that we have sufficient justification but, in order to retain and build on our credibility with Worthing Borough Council, we must resist any 'NIMBY' (Not In My Back Yard) attitude.

We are conscious of the importance of maintaining good working relationships with Worthing Borough Council and the local media and keeping in the public eye. To that end, the Society has been interviewed at length by Splash FM (our local radio station); had letters published in the Worthing Herald; represented the Society at the Planning User Group; the Conservation Area Advisory Committee; the South Downs National Park meetings and the Distinction In Buildings Awards.

On a wider note - we have agreed to take a 'stall' at the Rotary Club Hobbies and Leisure Exhibition at the Assembly Rooms on March 8th and we have booked an exhibition space for the Society at Worthing Library from 11th October until 25th October. Please spread the word amongst your friends and family so that we can maximise these opportunities.

So, we have indeed been busy. On the assumption that our Chairman will make a plea for members to consider a role on the Committee I too will make the same request. Given 'more hands to the pump' we could streamline and expand the portfolio of work that we do on your behalf. And yet again I will make a plea that you encourage friends and family to join the Society. More members equals more 'clout'.

Tony Malone
Publicity Officer/Vice Chairman

WORTHING'S PLANNING TRAVAILS

Worthing Borough Council has had to take back its draft Core Strategy to be re-written, after the Inspector appointed to examine it concluded it was unsound before he had started the examination process. The Inspector was highly critical of the draft, writing that

“The objectives generally lack any detail, appearing as general aspirations and no more... I would need convincing that there is a robust evidence base, one that has underlain the development of the strategy ... The policies are largely aspirational in nature. Most are expressed in vague terms and are not locally specific.... I am concerned that the scale and scope of my concerns is such that a very major re-write of plan would appear necessary to make it sound”.

At a meeting with Worthing Borough Council on February 4th, at which the Society was represented, the Inspector elaborated on his criticisms. He emphasised that the Core Strategy should drive everything the Council was doing and its preparation should therefore involve all of the Council. Worthing's officers accepted that the Core Strategy needed rewriting, to improve its clarity and to meet the criticisms of the Inspector.

The Society's opinion is that the Core Strategy reads as if it had been rushed out before it had been adequately edited and checked. It is a difficult document to read, with the same subject appearing in several places, and the figuring is often difficult to follow. We also considered that there is a disconnection between the objectives, such as contributing to the effort to reduce carbon emissions, and the policies of the strategy; and that the Sustainability Appraisal, which assesses the environmental impact of the strategy, does not perform this task at all adequately. We suggested that this Appraisal might be more penetrating if it was written by an independent consultant, instead of being written within the Planning Department. We are therefore pleased that the Strategy will be now re-written. No timetable for the re-writing has yet been set, but it is likely to be around one year.

It is unlikely that there will be any changes in the basic policies of the Strategy, which are to redevelop parts of the town centre, such as the block containing the library and law courts, and pay for this by giving planning permission for flats on parts of the site. But the document will have to be clearer about the feasibility of this policy, and of the alternatives that could be adopted if it did not work out as planned. The Society criticised this policy and pointed out that it is inconsistent with the Council's objective of helping to fight global warming. Building, especially the materials used in it, produces a great deal of carbon.

One reason for the problems Worthing has suffered may be that it underestimated the scale of the task. As the Inspector emphasised, a Core Strategy covers all activities of a Council, and cannot therefore be produced solely in the Planning Department. The resources needed to produce it are therefore greater than those needed to produce the old Local Plans. Another difficulty Worthing faced, like other local authorities, is that government advice on the preparation of Core Strategies and other elements of Local Development Frameworks has kept on changing; a new advice note was published in draft only three years after the first version appeared. Only one local authority in Sussex (Horsham) has yet completed a Core Strategy, and most are making slow progress with their completion.

David Sawers, Committee Member

EVENTS FOR 2008

- FEB - Tuesday 26th at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre
Speaker: David Brock, Regional Director, English Heritage about 'Castle Goring' Worthing's Grade I listed building
- APR - Thursday 10th at 10:30am a GUIDED WALK of HISTORIC HORSHAM led by Dr. Annabelle Hughes
Cost £3.75 p.p.
- APR - Tuesday 22nd at 7:00 p.m. A.G.M. in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.
Speaker: John Mills, archaeologist, talk entitled 'West Sussex Settlements Lost to the Sea'
- MAY - Saturday 24th at 11:00am a GUIDED WALK of ARUNDEL and BURPHAM led by Chris Hare
Cost £5.50 p.p.
- JUL - Sunday 20th a 'WINE & CHEESE OPEN HOUSE' at BEACH HOUSE from 12-2p.m.
Tickets £5.p.p. will be on sale at the quarterly meetings. Alternatively, please send a cheque made payable to the Worthing Society with an enclosed s.a.e. to Mrs. Richards, 2 Beach House, Brighton Road, Worthing, BN11 2EJ
- SEP - Tuesday 25th at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre
Speaker: Tony Pratt - talk entitled 'Horsham to Littlehampton in 100 Years – The River Arun & It's History'
- OCT - Saturday 11th – Saturday 25th annual EXHIBITION at Worthing Library
- NOV - Tuesday 27th at 7:30p.m. QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.
Speaker: to be advised

SOCIAL OUTINGS FOR THE WORTHING SOCIETY - 2008.

APRIL 10 HISTORIC HORSHAM

We are delighted to advise that this tour will be lead by a renowned resident of Horsham, Dr Annabelle Hughes, who will accompany our group of 15 on an hour's walk through the historic town. Afterwards, there will be time enough to visit the Museum (free) and to visit other historic buildings in and beyond Horsham.

For those who would like to travel to and from Horsham by Metrobus, do ensure that you check the Metrobus timetable closer to the date to check that the bus times have not been changed.

There is currently an 8:22am departure from Worthing Pier which arrives at Horsham Bus Station at 9:17am. This gives one plenty of time to browse in the shops and/ enjoy a coffee or breakfast at one of the local cafes before the tour at 10:30am . Please book and pay in advance. Cost £3,75 a head. Only 15 places.

The tour will start promptly at 10:30am.

MAY 24 ARUNDEL & BURPHAM

A DAY'S OUTING with popular historian,Chris Hare who we are very pleased to advise joined our committee last year.

The plan is to meet Chris outside Arundel railway station at 11am. The tour will end at 12:30pm. Lunch could either be taken in Arundel at The Swan or The George and Dragon at Burpham. We would reconvene outside the latter at 14:15pm for our Burpham tour which would end at approximately 15:30/15:45pm when we would have a pre-arranged tea at Burpham Country Hotel. Cost still to be advised - £5.50 for the tours plus tea and cake. 30-35 participants.

JUNE/ AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER OUTINGS TO BE CONFIRMED LATER .

Bookings: Christine Roberts – deputy social secretary.

e-mail: travel_editor@btinternet.com

Tel: 01903 700 325

24 Marine Crescent, Goring by Sea, Worthing BN12 4JF