

THE WORTHING SOCIETY

President : Geoffrey Godden FRSA

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN/WINTER 2015

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NEWSLETTER COMPILER:

Sandra Malone

FROM THE CHAIR

Revised application for the Aquarena site AWD/1636/14. Wrong building – wrong place.

Scrap the scheme. Show the setting respect.



This tower, 50% higher than Manor Lea, is a vanity project, a piece of developer's bling, a profit project. A job is only as good as the client will allow and Ben Cheal is the client. The concept and design is down to him.

We oppose this environmentally destructive application. It lacks style, is distinctive for all the wrong reasons and a missed opportunity on a once in a lifetime site. The only way is not up.

We urge members to view our document and Roffey's Visual Impact Assessment on our website, or visit WBC's website or call in at the Planning Office. **Our opposition remains absolute** - The scheme breaches local and national policies.

David Sawers leads the team which prepared the riposte to the revised planning application due to be considered by the Planning Committee at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 22nd September in The Assembly Hall. The Society has applied for a slot to speak.

English Heritage, now Historic England, have urged WBC to take on board the importance of managing historic and conservation areas and promoting or reinforcing local distinctiveness. Density remains double that acceptable for city development with good transport links. Roffey plan a density of 212 dwellings per hectare (dph). The recommended 100 dph is more than enough.

Change is seductive and supporters of the scheme see short term economic gain, affordable housing and the sizeable investment by Roffey, regardless of the faults and ugliness of the concept. It is for profit. Roffey spin does not hold water.

We remain suspicious that upper echelons of the Council have put judgment aside for cash. A new Leader of the Council, a new Chair of the Planning Committee to replace Joan Bradley clear the decks. The Planning Committee should not be influenced by any covert understanding between WBC, the landlords and Roffey, the purchaser.

Worthing has become an uglier place since the 50's, its demographic changes have led to a decline in the retail offer. The decline can be halted and new development should be sensitive, modern, zeitgeist, and set standards for the future.

This scheme, with its cosmetic changes, remains unacceptable and should be scrapped.

Start again please... BUT, if the application is refused, Roffey will probably go to Appeal, convinced that any barrier to their scheme has to be overcome. **Tighten your safety belts.**

SOME MATTERS OF THE MOMENT

Lighting

"Pat Bearing's Lamppost" on the Farncombe Road roundabout is still in need of repair and renovation despite our nagging away for over two years. The lamppost was listed Grade II in August 1993 and ought to have been maintained as a routine matter.

On 1 June 2015, I was assured a specialist firm would remove the lantern, restore it to working order and then repaint the column. We wait and we wait. When work is completed, the structure will finally be handed over to the local Council for future maintenance, and then Richard Small will be on the spot!

And so to **Ambrose Place**. WSCC Highways and its contractors act either in ignorance or deliberately flout the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990. The Worthing Society reminded both WSCC and WBC that they have "a general duty as respects Listed Buildings in exercise of planning function when considering the desirability of preserving the building or its setting". The debacle of replacement lampposts in Ambrose Place ignored the duty to "**preserve and enhance**". The awful replacement Heritage Lampposts are still too high and the design out of character with the setting. Yet, comment falls on deaf ears, while new traffic signs re installed adding insult to injury.

Could legal action be taken? At tremendous expense and, even then, the outcome may not be favourable. The Worthing Society used lawyers in the Titnore Lane planning controversy a decade ago and knows how expensive good planning lawyers are!

It is of no comfort but our friends at the Chichester Society have had the same problems and received the same treatment.

Montague Place and Montague Street Environs are still waiting for decisions on the treatment of the paving. A test bed outside H&M has been laid and comments will be surveyed. The suggested red bricks are not a success, in our view. The scheme for Montague Place has not been finalised, much to our surprise neither has funding. Are Officers being obstructive? We thought the political will was there for Montague Place to be the gateway from the seafront to the refurbished Montague Street, Portland Road, Liverpool Terrace, and Bath Place area to make Worthing a destination of choice whilst respecting the Conservation Area, which some would prefer to ignore. The timescale lengthens. We hope the ambition is not thwarted. Design matters should have been decided in outline a year ago. It's a rum business.

The Society is concerned and watchful. Gill Tucker is in touch with Roland Plumb at County. Jessica Gill asks questions.

Roffey has asked for an appeal against the refusal for the **West Parade/Grand Avenue redevelopment**. We have no news either from the Inspectorate at Bristol or the Council when or how this will be conducted. Roffey want an open hearing and promise at least five hours of expert evidence. Must we sit through that? Worthing does not want this scheme.

A Blue Plaque for WPC Gladys Moss, Worthing's first woman police constable, will be unveiled on Monday, 16 November 2015, the day after the 96th anniversary of Gladys being sworn in as a constable. Organiser DI Jacqui Jenkins has booked the Town Hall at 10.30 am for a short presentation and overview of Gladys' life before going down to the Chatsworth Road Police Station for the unveiling. She has booked the Mayor and Mayoress of Worthing and also hopes the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner will attend. The plaque funded by the police, will be a welcome addition to Worthing's Heritage offer. I have promised to let Jacqui know how many Worthing Society members would like to attend and support this event. Contact me.

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DID YOU MISS ME ?

While I was recently very ill, the executive Committee carried out the work of the Society without any input from me. Credit to all concerned. I am comforted by the messages of goodwill. Thank you all. St. Luke's at the Royal Surrey County Hospital continues to give me wonderful treatment. I am much better.

OBITUARY

D. Robert Elleray FRSA – President of the Worthing Society

On Wednesday, 27 May 2015, members joined friends and old colleagues at a memorial service for Robert at the lovely little church St. Mary's at Tortington. It was mid-day, the sun shone and after the service his ashes were buried in the family plot and a plaque placed over them. This was followed by a gathering at St. Mary's Gate in Arundel for a splendid buffet. A collection of Robert's books on local history and his poetry were on show. This fitting farewell was organised by his daughter Lucy Vincent.

Robert died on 22 April 2015, after a spell of poor health. Rushed to Worthing Hospital before Christmas, he never returned to his flat. Needing constant care, he resided at Summerlea House Nursing Home until he died.

Robert was present at the inception of the Worthing Society in 1982, Member of the Executive Committee, later Chairman until he held the door open for me to take over in 2005. He accepted the honorary position of Vice President and was President until his death.

Members recalled his talks and guided walks. His legacy of publications provides a huge source of reference for those interested in local history, and is a wonderful memorial. He maintained a keen interest in the work of the Society and remained uncompromising in his opinions. He was pleased with the development of our Newsletter. I took the Spring/Summer 2015 to him on a visit to the Nursing Home to find him about to discuss the planned revised edition of the Pevsner Guides with the local editor.

Douglas Robert Elleray was 90 years old. He would have been 91 on 3 September 2015.

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WE HAVE A NEW PRESIDENT

Geoffrey Godden FRSA has accepted the invitation to become President of the Worthing Society. He met the Committee and said he was honoured and Robert Elleray would be a hard act to follow.

Geoffrey Godden (sometimes Mr Chinaman) is a world renowned expert on ceramics and has many publications to his credit. He comes from a Worthing family and attended Worthing High School for Boys – so is an Old Azurian. He will need no introduction to many members and we welcome this appointment of one who has supported the Society from the start and knew Pat Baring.

David Sumner

CHAIRMAN

LISTING AND CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

(Our 'watchdog' for anything affecting Worthing's Listed/Local Interest Buildings)

Chairman	-	Tony Malone
Committee	-	Natalie Cropper
	-	Susan Belton

An update on a selection of issues, some ongoing, that we have tackled recently. We continue to have regular meetings with Richard Small, WBC Heritage and Conservation Architect, to discuss these and other issues. The agenda is always long!

The old Gospel Hall, Bedford Row

Over the last two months we had some cause for optimism for this tired and neglected landmark of old Worthing. It was built c1850 and is a worthy recent addition (that was nominated by The Worthing Society and accepted by WBC) to the official Buildings of Local Interest List. A 'man of the church' contacted me about this empty building – he and his church were very interested in acquiring a place of worship on, or near, Worthing seafront. We were pleased to help in any way that we could and, at his request, we did that by way of providing the known history of the Gospel Hall. I recently made contact again to see how their enquiries were progressing. They had obtained quotes for necessary repairs and, unfortunately, they were currently unable to raise the funds required for vital repairs. I had wished for a better outcome – i.e. that the building could once again be a place of worship.

The Ship Inn

The last news that we had was that the former Ship Inn – part of the exterior painted bright blue if you recall – was back on the market to let. It is currently empty. Richard Small intends to encourage the owners, or the new Lessees, to repair and reinstate the external woodwork and reconsider the colour of the external paintwork. ***(See Jessica Gill's potted history and update of The Ship in this Newsletter. For cost purposes, the Newsletter is printed in black and white so, unfortunately, you won't see the impact of the blue paint in Jessica's last photograph!)***

'Pat Baring's' Listed street lamp in Farncombe Road

Unbelievably, at the time of writing, nothing has changed. The glass is still broken and the light does not work. We will be 'having words' with WBC Engineering Department who, many weeks ago, said to our Chairman "leave it to me". We did!

But it's not all doom and gloom. There are some 'good news' stories:-

The old Lifeboat House

Many of you will know by now that this Local Interest Building, previously painted a garish pink, has now been repainted white, albeit in a slapdash way. That has to be an improvement. In an attempt to prevent this kind of thing happening in the future WBC have now created guidelines, yet to be published, regarding the future restrictions on the colours that seafront houses may be painted. These restrictions are in the form of an Article 4 Direction, a useful and versatile tool available to the town's Planners (but not able to be implemented retrospectively). I hope that WBC will remember, in the future, how useful Article 4 Directions can be when used to target specific local Planning issues.

Grade II Listed 83 Marine Parade

Against all the odds, the successful restoration and decoration of this old Georgian building has at last been completed. It is satisfying to, at last, remove it from our 'At Risk' register (**and** from the monthly meeting agenda!).

The Alexandra Tavern, Lyndhurst Road

As we nominated the Tavern (and it was accepted) for the Local Interest List we are particularly pleased to see what a fine job has been done on its interior and exterior renovation.

The Egremont inn, Brighton Road

This is another building on the Local Interest List. It had become shabby and run-down and was finally closed. However, a local man saw its potential and bought it. From reports that I've had, he has done a good job of sympathetically renovating the interior. Many thought that it would never re-open so it's good to see this one bucking the trend of pub closures.

Tony Malone

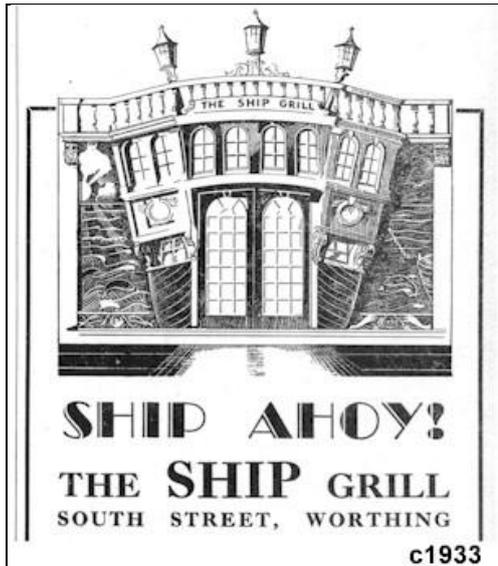
**Vice Chairman of The Worthing Society
Chairman of Listing and Conservation Sub Committee**

“DECIDE BEFORE THE TIDE”

Jessica Gill's installation “**Decide Before the Tide**” covered in the Spring/Summer Newsletter now has Council Approval. WBC purchased the beach from the Crown Estate long ago in a moment of enlightenment. But permission for the sculptor's installation must still be obtained and WBC's CEO Alex Bailey is applying. If successful, that leaves the matter of funding!!! The indefatigable Jessica remains undeterred.

This “iconic” sculpture would really put Worthing in the news.

From Jessica Gill : A potted history of



The Ship 31 South Street

In 1933 this magnificent building opened as 'The Ship Grill' by John Gardner. It later became a pub and remained so until 1984.

Apparently, the ship had portholes along the inside walls, which were partially filled with water and at the touch of a switch a wave motion would start up in each one.

It has also has been said that when the national anthem was played, no one was required to stand up. This was not a sign of disrespect, but rather one of tradition. The inside was built to mimic a galleon where, due to the low ceiling, standing was difficult and so the King's or Queen's heath was toasted from the seated position.

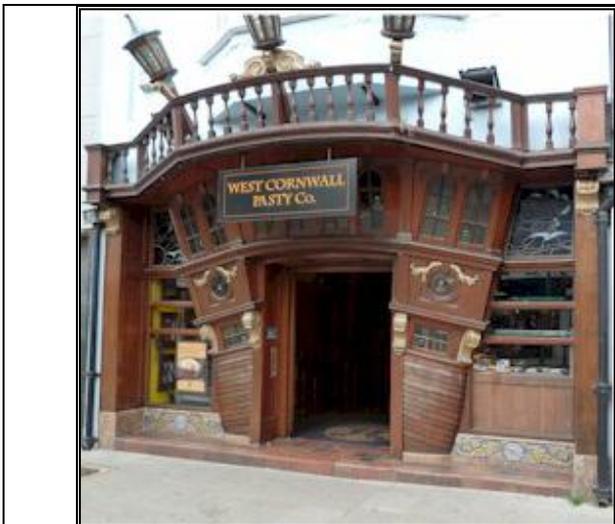
Landlords serving at the helm of this narrow but very long bar are thought to be:

- 1933 - John Gardner
- 1940's - George & Betty Evans
- 1979/80 - Alan & Elizabeth Clifton
- 1984 - Closed as a pub.

It later became the Bristol & West Building Society, then the Cornish Pasty Co. and finally Busby's Artisan Bakery.



The last of these occupants tried in vain to attract new trade with a bright blue paint make-over to the external woodwork – sacrilege but at least they didn't rip the wood down, which was a possibility. A portion of the woodwork did, however, fall off including the lanterns and railings and these haven't yet been replaced. This old building is currently awaiting new owners and, hopefully, a return to its former glory.



TO FINISH OFF.....

MESSAGE FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

A big thank you to those of you who have renewed your membership of our Worthing Society. Please find enclosed a "reminder" form for those who have overlooked renewing. We all know how time flies and things get forgotten, but we do need your membership to enable us to continue with all the work that we do to protect "sunny Worthing". We look forward to hearing from you.

It never ceases to surprise me that we have some really generous members. We again thank Mrs Phillips, Mrs Field, Mr and Mrs Harrison, A Sullivan and M Gorman and now Mr Jordan for their much appreciated donations. Thank you so much.

I also take this opportunity to thank Mrs Janet Beeson for stepping in and helping me on the door at our April meeting. Her help was certainly invaluable and enabled me to collect membership subscriptions and kept things moving along. I may call on you again someday Janet.

Susan Miller

IMPORTANT DIARY NOTE

At our Quarterly meeting on 22 September 2015 at Worthing Library Lecture Theatre, we will be showing the film "Looking back at Worthing – the last 200 Years".

STOP PRESS

LAST DEMO AT THE AQUARENA SITE, BRIGHTON ROAD, SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2015 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.). SHOW YOUR SUPPORT TO SAVE WORTHING SEAFRONT.

**SAY NO TO
SKYSCRAPER
ON OUR BEACH**

Join SWS on Facebook www.facebook.com/SaveOurSeafrontWorthing

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 22nd September at 7:30pm - QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.

Film : “Looking back at Worthing – the last 200 Years”

Tuesday 6th October at 11 am - Visit to award-winning Highdown Vineyard Tour, Tasting, & Ploughman’s Lunch **Ticket: £20**

Tuesday 24th November at 7:30pm - QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.

Speaker : Geoffrey Godden on “WW II – Worthing Home Front 1939 - 1945”

At this meeting mince pies and mulled fruit punch or coffee will be served. **Cost £1.00 per person.** Also, a pre-Christmas raffle will take place. Donations of raffle prizes will be very much appreciated on the night.

Monday 7th December – Coach outing to the Royal Albert Hall for John Rutter’s Matinee Christmas Celebration Concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Ticket £45

Tuesday 23rd February 2016 at 7:30pm - QUARTERLY MEETING in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre.

Speaker: Rob Wassell on “The History of Beachy Head & Belle Tout Lighthouses”

Tickets will on sale at the September Lecture or alternatively telephone Mascha Richards 01903-214519 or send a cheque made payable to The Worthing Society enclosing a S.A.E. to Mrs M Richards, 2 Beach House, Brighton Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 2EJ

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 £3.00

Don't forget to look at our website for the latest news

www.worthingsociety.org.uk

and if you wish to email the Executive Committee, our email address is

worthingsociety@yahoo.co.uk