THE WORTHING SOCIETY

President: Anthony Malone

NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

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Listing & Conservation Areas:
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Natalie Cropper John Head
Tony Malone - by invitation

Publicity:
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Barry Richards
Tony Malone - by invitation

NEWSLETTER COMPILER:
Sandra Malone

FORTHCOMING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 28 APRIL 2020

Notice is hereby given that the 38th Annual General Meeting of The Worthing Society will take place on Tuesday, 28 April 2020 at 7.30pm in the Ardington Hotel, Steyne Gardens, Worthing.

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 14th April 2020, to the Chairman.

Doors open at 7pm for coffee and Committee members will be available to discuss matters of interest. The AGM will commence at 7.30pm after which there will be a 'short comfort break' followed by a talk by Sue Standing on "A GLIMPSE OF HIDDEN HEENE"

Proposed new hub extension at Colonnade House

MEMBERSHIP

Dear Members

The Committee would like to thank all our members for their ongoing support and interest in the Society, its meetings and activities. The details of our meetings and other events, which we hope you will enjoy, are listed on the back page of the Newsletter. They are also an opportunity for you to meet and discuss current issues with our Committee members.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our member, Ian Wootten, for his most generous donations to sponsor the blue plaque in respect of WW1 soldier Walter Harrold MM and in respect of the upcoming plaque in honour of Sir Frederick and Lady Stern at Highdown.

I am pleased to report that largely, as a result of our community talks, our membership has increased during the last six months. It was a pleasure to meet and welcome our new members at the Christmas Quarterly meeting at the Ardington Hotel, which is our venue whilst the Library building is being refurbished.

The AGM will be held at the Ardington Hotel on Tuesday, 28th April at 7:30pm followed by a talk by Sue Standing on "A Glimpse of Hidden Heene".

Look forward to seeing you there!

Brenda Whitmell

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

CHAIRMAN'S GENERAL REPORT

I am very pleased to report that during the last six months we have been most successful in continuing to promote the work of The Worthing Society and its contribution to highlighting the unique heritage of our town. The re-dedication of the Lifeboat Memorial Stone and historic Information Board, made possible by a generous donation, was a major event in September 2019 to pay tribute to our early heroic lifeboat crews. This significant occasion, attended by the Mayor, has really contributed to shining a light on an aspect of the town's history which is not so generally known. I am delighted to have been informed by the Local Authority that they will be providing decking to ensure safe access around the beach Memorial Garden to make it accessible to all sections of the community. We hope the decking will be in situ by Easter so the moving tributes and details on the Information Board can be fully appreciated.

Moving forward, an integral part of our Constitution is to stimulate interest, education and research into the town's social and architectural history. Our Blue Plaque Trail, and new compact Town Trail, with associated leaflets, sends out the 'heritage message' in a more contemporary, visual way. The series of talks to like-minded local groups entitled 'Buildings Lost and Saved' have been successful in reaching out to all sections of the community to raise the profile of our conservation work. By meeting local organisations, I am very pleased to say that, during the last six months, we have had the pleasure of welcoming many new members to the Society. By increasing our membership we increase our presence in the town

A new decade commences and with it the challenge continues to safeguard our built heritage and to defend open green spaces from the pressure of encroaching development. Many of our historic buildings are approaching their bi-centenary and will need our ongoing vigilance to ensure they are conserved in an appropriate way. I am indebted, therefore, to the technical work of our Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Sub-Committee (LCAS). The LCAS team is

really the ‘engine room’ of the Society, maintaining our core values by examining weekly planning applications affecting heritage buildings or conservation areas and making informed representations where necessary. Our comments are actively invited by the Planning Department and the Conservation Officer with whom we hold regular, valuable discussions

Another important initiative to support our built environment has been the highly effective ‘South Street Conservation Area Campaign’. LCAS have referred buildings in a dilapidated state to the dedicated Planning Enforcement Team and Conservation Officer. The redecoration and regeneration of heritage buildings, particularly the listed terrace in Bedford Row, circa 1805, has been extremely successful. Major improvements have been achieved in respect of the Grade ll Listed Bedford Hall and the former Southdown Coach Station. We are, of course, most appreciative to property owners and the commitment of Stagecoach in restoring the early coach and bus station which is a key part of our transport heritage

New developments such as Union Place and Station Square/Teville Gate will also begin to define this year. These redevelopments will have a significant effect on the character and the perception of the town for the foreseeable future. The Society will be closely monitoring and commenting on the overall design concepts.

The redevelopment of the landmark Colonnade hub will be a controversial case in point and some compromises may need to be made here. This landmark scheme will require excellent, sensitive design to complement and enhance the conservation area but also provide a vibrant contribution to Worthing in terms of cultural and business life. The challenge, to quote Historic England, is ‘how we manage change in the historic environment’ by protecting the traditional character of Worthing but incorporating some inevitable new design. We can’t ‘mothball’ the town and conservation work is ever evolving, but we can strive, as far as possible, to ensure our voice is heard to protect our heritage but also ensure that the quality of materials and new design are exceptional.

Our Publicity Officer will continue the regular monthly updates to advise you of current planning applications so that you can make your own representations if you so wish. Planning matters can sometimes seem rather remote but, by keeping in touch, we hope you will feel more involved in the significant issues affecting your town.

I am fortunate to have the ongoing support of my colleagues and their expertise as well as the commitment of our much-valued members. Together, I am sure we shall be equal to the challenges that lay ahead.

Susan Belton

Worthing Society Chair

LISTING AND CONSERVATION AREAS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Members: Susan Belton (Chair), Natalie Cropper, David Clark and John Head
By invitation: Tony Malone

(Our 'Watchdog' for anything affecting Worthing's Listed/Local Interest and Conservation Areas)

The Sub-Committee members have continued their excellent work during the last six months in monitoring all issues and planning applications affecting our built heritage environment.

You may be surprised to learn that Worthing has 26 Conservation Areas, 210 graded listed buildings and 750 buildings included on the Local Interest List, which records buildings unique to Worthing's identity. Quite a 'heritage map' to be safeguarded! My colleagues have built up a considerable degree of expertise in carrying out the 'core work' of our Constitution. Working on a rota basis, the LCAS Team typically review over 25 Planning applications per week making between 2-3 representations, as necessary, to the Planning Department. We don't wish to 'mothball' the town but rather aim to ensure that all changes or new developments are of good design to complement their 'heritage neighbours'.

Aside from this regular and valuable work, LCAS have, for the last 18 months, supported The Worthing Society Campaign to upgrade and highlight the buildings in the South Street Conservation Area, close to the seafront. Our Society is always keen to 'put something back into the community' on a really practical, visual level. Working with the Planning Enforcement Team we have been particularly successful in bringing about the regeneration of **Bedford Row**, Grade II listed and circa 1805. Bedford Row came under threat in the late 70's and early 80's. The Worthing Society was part of an earlier Campaign to save these historic buildings for the town and we are now ensuring their ongoing regeneration.

Upgraded terrace of Bedford Row (looking south)

Another building benefiting from the Campaign and now looking stunning, following the removal of the scaffolding (it was in situ 8 years!) is the former 1930's Coach Station. Art Deco in style, this building is now owned by Stagecoach and we appreciate their commitment in restoring this important part of our transport heritage, decorated in the former Southdown Bus Company colours.

Restored Stagecoach bus depot (formerly Southdown Bus Company)

The Gospel Hall, circa 1852, by Charles Hyde, has also been redecorated after several years of neglect. Although further renovations are necessary, the building shows some improvement.

The redecorated Gospel Hall (south end of Bedford Row)

The Campaign continued to review those buildings on the seafront, most visible to tourists. See below another very attractive, period, seafront building which has been successfully renovated. Our heritage buildings are important to the character of the town, providing enjoyment for visitors and thereby contributing positively to the town's tourist economy.

Hitchcocks, 29 Marine Parade (recently renovated period building)

Challenges undoubtedly remain, the Campaign will continue and we have to be vigilant. The LCAS Team will continue with their vital work and will keep a positive liaison with the Conservation Officer and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC). Please see the next article!

Susan Belton

Chair of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Sub-Committee.

IN CONCLUSION - I must thank the members of our Sub-Committee for the ongoing support I have received over the last six months; I expect the coming Spring and Summer months to be very busy indeed.

Susan Belton

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE ON CURRENT ISSUES

Worthing is at a crossroads and this year will see the Committee examine several major, controversial, planning developments. The Society is keen to see the town move forward but make representations where we consider the plans fall short. The Local Plan will also be due for public examination in summer 2020 and we shall be closely monitoring the situation at Goring Gap North. Here is a short summary:

Station Square / Teville Gate

This long awaited application is scheduled to be considered at the Planning Committee on 4 March 2020. Although redevelopment of this long-derelict site is overdue, we consider the proposed plans fall well short in terms of design, height, bulk and mass as they relate to the surrounding location. This is a

'gateway site' for Worthing, giving visitors their first impression of the town for the foreseeable future. An elegant design is desirable rather than the proposed 'Soviet style' brick-faced, tall buildings. The Society will be speaking in objection. Something, as they say, is better than nothing.

Union Place

The former police station site in Union Place is also ripe for redevelopment. Good design is essential for this town centre site which will define this area for many years to come. It is close to the Chapel Road Conservation Area and several listed buildings. The Consultation showed only outline designs, so was difficult to assess, but there is concern about the cluster of three very tall buildings at the east of the site and the effect on the surrounding area.

* Disappointing that the plans do not include a new leisure facility such as a skating rink.
* Concerns that the additional 3-4 extra screens to the Connaught Theatre could have an adverse impact on the Dome and Pavilion theatres. We are awaiting more detail and/or a planning application.

Local Plan

The next public examination of the Local Plan is expected in summer 2020. The Society has commented in depth on all aspects of the plan, particularly the protection of our heritage assets and our open green spaces.

Goring Gap North / Chatsmore Farm:

The northern section of Goring Gap is vulnerable to redevelopment. The owners, Persimmon, put forward a Consultation late last year to build 470 homes. There is vigorous opposition from local residents groups, the Society and the MP Sir Peter Bottomley. Currently, there is no news following the Consultation and a planning application has not yet been submitted.

* Since the Consultation it has become apparent that several important archaeological finds have been located and handed to Worthing Museum. The Council have advised the County Archaeologist and a survey will be needed if a planning application is submitted.

* The Council's position in the emerging Local Plan is to protect this land from redevelopment but there is nothing to stop a landowner/developer putting in an application. We must be vigilant.

Worthing A27

The National Budget Report is expected on 12 March 2020 which will outline a 5-year programme. The Committee will be monitoring the situation as to how the report will affect Worthing.

Conclusion

We will keep you informed, via our Group Email, as things progress. Fasten your seatbelts for a busy year ahead!

Susan Belton

Worthing Society Chair

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AN APPRECIATION

I would like to extend my thanks to my colleague David Sawers for his expertise in planning policy and assistance in helping me to assess the larger planning applications.

WORTHING CONSERVATION AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAAC)

The original legislation creating Conservation Areas was the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. As part of their duties under this Act, local authorities were given powers to establish advisory committees in order to help with their decision making in individual Conservation Areas. Subsequent Government guidance, in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, said :

"Local planning authorities are asked to consider setting up conservation area advisory committees, both to assist in formulating policies for the conservation area (or for several areas in a particular neighbourhood), and also as a continuing source of advice on planning and other applications which could affect an area. Committees should consist mainly of people who are not members of the authority; local residential and business interests should be fully represented. In addition to local historical, civic and amenity societies and local chambers of commerce, the authority may wish to seek nominations (depending on the character of the area) from national bodies such as the National Amenity societies and the Civic Trust."

Worthing Borough Council set up its Conservation Areas Advisory Committee (CAAC) in the late 1970s. Given the compact nature of the Borough, it was decided to have one committee to cover all of Worthing's conservation areas rather than individual committees for each area.

Currently, the CAAC meets every 4 weeks at the Council offices in Portland House. It is chaired by a local architect, Andrew Borley, who has practised in the area for many years. There are usually 4 or 5 members in attendance, including 2 from The Worthing Society (Natalie Cropper and John Head). The meetings are organised and attended by the Council's Conservation Officer, Richard Small, who presents and explains the applications under consideration. These can vary in number from only 4 or 5 to perhaps 15 or more, depending on what has been registered by the Planning Department in the preceding month. They cover all proposals in Conservation Areas and all those affecting Listed Buildings. After the meeting, the Chairman sets out the Committee's views and forwards these to the Development Control Manager and they are taken into account by the officers dealing with the various applications and by the Councillors in making their decisions.

Because the CAAC is a Statutory organisation set up in response to Government guidance, its views carry more weight for the decision maker than those of The Worthing Society. That is why it is important that we are represented on the CAAC. Our views usually coincide, although that is not always the case and The Worthing Society will not hesitate to pursue a different line if we consider it necessary. Also, the CAAC is restricted to advising the Council on applications affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, whilst The Worthing Society is, of course, able to comment on a wide range of planning matters and also to take a proactive role, such as the Blue Plaque Trail and the South Street campaign.

John Head

Executive Committee Member & CAAC Representative

A NOTE ON PUBLICITY

We continue to raise our profile in the community by taking the heritage message out to members of the public but also to the key decision makers in our town. We are trying to adopt a positive approach to the conservation and development of our heritage environment by recognising that the solutions to preserving and enhancing our historic buildings are varied and can involve change. Some buildings we need to preserve as they stand and others have to be developed sympathetically in order to have a role in the 21st Century. It is only on rare occasions that these buildings cannot be saved due to severe dilapidation and the prohibitive cost of renovation. However, the message is also that Heritage Economy and that the fantastic Conservation Areas, Statutory Listed Buildings and buildings on the Local Interest List contribute hugely to the economy of Worthing and could do more if protected and publicised in the right way.

To support this philosophy we have given talks to the Worthing branch of the U3A, presented the results of the South Street Area Campaign to members of staff at Worthing Borough Council and talked about some of our seafront buildings to a 'Films on the Gallery Wall' event at Colonnade House. Sue continues to write her monthly column in The Worthing Journal.

We have also been considering what Blue Plaques to fund in 2020 as they play an important role in publicising the town's heritage environment. We have two new Blue Plaques planned this year: Sir Frederick and Lady Stern, who founded Highdown Gardens, and Angela Barnwell, the Olympic swimmer who trained and lived in Worthing. The dates and locations of these events are still being planned but we will keep you advised.

We have also been consulted on proposed developments of a number of key buildings and sites in the town and this has resulted in several meetings where we have been able to put across our views and often make suggestions for improvement. We may not always agree with planners and developers but it is far better to engage at an early stage to try and influence outcomes than always ending up with an unsatisfactory planning application which we have to oppose. Indeed, Sue has spoken at a number of Planning Committee and Council meetings over recent months on proposals covering the Beach Huts at East Worthing (*refused*), Bistrot Pierre (*approved*), HMO in Selden Road (*approved*) and Sea Defences (*consultation*). These have been widely reported in the media.

Hopefully, our profile and influence continues to rise.

David Clark

PUBLICITY OFFICER

SOME 'GOOGLE' IDEAS FROM THE PRESIDENT!

Here are some ideas to help you to make optimum use of the Worthing Borough Council's website. For those of you who use a computer, all you need is just a basic knowledge of using Google as a means of exploring the internet and you can then try out the experiments shown below to get a taste of what you can learn from the WBC website. It really does contain a mine of information that can be explored just by using a few well-chosen search words.

It really is quite simple but If you are not confident that you are computer-literate enough to try this I am sure that any friend or family member who is perhaps a little more conversant with Google would be more than glad to help you, as would some of our local libraries who are have the facility to provide basic tuition. It's worth it!

Here are just a few suggestions for you to try using Google:-

One at a time enter these strings of words marked * into the search bar and press 'enter' -

**** Worthing Borough Council conservation and heritage***

This will take you straight to the options to view a whole host of interesting information on, for example, details of Worthing's Listed Buildings; Local Interest List (i.e. buildings of some architectural or historic merit but not deemed sufficient to be listed by English Heritage) and Worthing Conservation Areas.

**** View planning applications Adur and Worthing councils***

This will display that part of the WBC website that guides you through the process of viewing and commenting on any planning applications plus being able to view comments on them made by others. Lots of interesting information there.

**** Worthing Borough Council Planning Committee***

Taking this option enables you to view various things about Worthing Planning Committee, such as the discussions in respect of planning applications at past Planning Committee meetings.

**** Worthing Borough Council seafront investment plan***

This presents you with the latest WBC Seafront Plan and makes interesting reading. You might see plans for our seafront that you never knew before! Just click on it to read it. If you want to print it there is an option provided to do just that.

**** Worthing Borough Council Planning Enforcement Register***

This will give you the capability of viewing details of properties that have been the subject of an Enforcement Notice. You may be surprised at the number of entries and the hard work that is going on behind the scenes to keep our town 'ship-shape'.

What else can I view?

If you are curious to find out about other things going on within the auspices of WBC don't be afraid to experiment! For instance, if you want to see any Historic maps of Worthing on the WBC website, just try typing words that describe what you are looking for into Google – e.g. ***Worthing Borough Council historic maps***. You may be pleasantly surprised at the range of Worthing maps over the ages that can be viewed online.

All in all the WBC website can provide a great deal of interesting and useful information. Or, if you prefer, you can use it as just interesting reading material!

Tony Malone
President

Worthing is a very attractive place to live, work, visit and do business……

Heritage, creativity, culture and tourism come together in Worthing to create a vibrant appealing town. These fundamentals are vital to who we are and where we want to be, for our identity and sense of place, and to our aspirations and values. They shape our vision for where we want to live and work and for which we want others to invest and visit.

We have outstanding heritage with Jane Austen, Oscar Wilde and Harold Pinter to name but a few; we have an inspiring museum with one of the world's best costume collections; we have a perfect copy of the Sistine Chapel; we have one of the oldest cinemas in Britain; we have an award winning pier; we have world renowned sculptures with the Frink Heads saved for the town by The Worthing Society; we have academic creative excellence at Northbrook College; we have community partnerships such as Creative Waves who bridge the worlds of creativity and heritage; we have innovative creative industries with Colonnade House amongst the hubs; we have a wealth of creative events such as The Worthing Light Festival; we have hundreds of artists who display their skills annually on the Worthing Open House trail; we have our own artist quarter with East Beach Studios located in a heritage promenade setting; we have an expansive blue plaque trail of notable former residents and impressive examples of architecture throughout the ages: we have the sea, our beautiful promenade and glorious countryside with the South Downs National Park on our doorstep.

The Worthing Society's work is therefore essential to keep our heritage protected.

In a recent Heritage Alliance report the importance of the connection between heritage and creativity is further highlighted: *"Heritage constitutes a source of identity and cohesion for communities all around the country and strengthens their feeling of belonging and connection to the places in which they live. Creativity contributes to building an open, inclusive and pluralistic society. Together, heritage and the creative industries lay the foundations for vibrant, innovative and prosperous places, proud of their past and ready for their future."*

If more proof were needed to show that Worthing is on the right track, here are a few statistics:

1. **In the UK, over 1.8 million people work in the creative industries.**
2. **They contribute almost £84bn in gross value added (GVA), equivalent to 5.2% of the economy**
3. **In 2011, the Government outlined their ambition for the UK to become a world leader in the creative industries, with employment forecast to grow by 32% by 2020.•**
4. **The tourism sector is a major provider of employment and growth contributing £126.9 billion to the national economy and employs 3.1 million people, which is 9.5% of total employment.**
5. **The cultural and heritage sectors are also major contributors of economic value, plus of course vital to the quality and purpose of our lives and fundamental to our identity and sense if place. For example, our publicly invested cultural sector returns 0.4% of the UK's GVA and contributes indirectly to GVA through tourism, overseas trade and regional growth.**

1. Department of Culture Media and Sport (June 2015) Creative Industries 2015: Focus on Employment.2. Department of Culture Media and Sport (January 2016) Creative Industries Economic Estimates.3. BIS, (2011), The Plan for Growth.. Creative & Cultural Skills, (2010), Sector Skills Assessment for the Creative and Cultural Industries. 4. Throughout this report 'tourism' sector/industries/economy refers to both tourism and visitor economy. It includes international tourists and domestic visitors for leisure and or business unless otherwise stated.. Deloitte (2013) Tourism: jobs and Growth. The economic contribution of tourism to the UK economy, VisitBritiain.5. All sourced from: Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the national economy, CEBR for Arts Council England, July 2015. Article inspired by OxLep report.

THE WORTHING SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2020

FEB - Tuesday 25th at 7.30pm. **QUARTERLY MEETING** at the Ardington Hotel, Steyne Gardens.

Speaker: South Downs Film Makers will show their films "**THE SHOREHAM LIFEBOAT, a FERRING DOCUMENTARY** and a selection of short comedies".

Doors open at 7pm for Coffee / Tea and Biscuits ……..……..Cost £1.50

APR - Tuesday 28th at 7.30p.m. **A.G.M. at the Ardington Hotel**, followed by lecture.

Speaker: Sue Standing on **"A GLIMPSE OF HIDDEN HEENE"**

Doors open at 7pm for Coffee / Tea and Biscuits……..……..Cost £1.50

JUN - Sunday 21st from 3:00 - 4:30pm **"A SPECIAL CELEBRATION TEA** for the **BI-CENTENARY of BEACH HOUSE"** in the Ayrton Suite ……..……..……Ticket: £5.00

SEP - Tuesday 22nd at 7:30pm. **QUARTERLY MEETING** at the Ardington Hotel, Steyne Gardens

Speaker: Craig Daters, Lead Ranger, Central Downs on "**SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK"**

Doors open at 7pm for Coffee / Tea and Biscuits ……..……Cost £1.50

NOV - Tuesday 24th at 7:30pm. **QUARTERLY MEETING** at the Ardington Hotel, Steyne Gardens

Speaker: Andy Thomas on **"LEWES and BONFIRE NIGHT"**

Doors open at 7pm for Coffee / Tea and Mince Pies ……..Cost £1.50

DEC - **CHRISTMAS LUNCH** at the **Arundel Restaurant, Northbrook College, Littlehampton Road, Worthing**……Date and Cost TBA

Tickets can be purchased at the A.G.M. on Tuesday 28th April or alternatively please send a cheque, made payable to 'The Worthing Society' enclosing a S.A.E. to:
Mrs. 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

For membership enquiries please contact our Membership Secretary
Brenda Whitmell (tel: 01903 905922)