

# HASTINGS TRUST QUARTERLY

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I was very pleased with the attendance at the AGM. There were only about 10 members who did not attend. We would hope to see all of them at next year's AGM.

During the meeting there were two subjects on which familiarisation talks were given. Mr Collins and Prof Hunter on 'The Creation of a Town Centre Conservation Area', and Mr Turner on 'Local Agenda 21'. They were very informative, and I would like to thank the aforementioned for their efforts. As a direct result of the first talk, it was proposed by a member and carried out that the Trust should submit a petition to HBC. The phrasing of which was agreed by three members prior to those present signing their support of it.

I would also like to thank the staff who set up stands showing our progress on various projects, which we were able to peruse after the meeting and discuss between ourselves over a buffet and drinks.

The Board of Management have identified the Trust's Objectives for 1995 being:

1. Continue to exploit all possibilities for a managed work space in the Observer building.
2. A long lease from ESCC.
3. Financial assistance from Kleinwort for a property (seek out further prospective financiers).
4. Involvement in Mitchells building as a project, with possible occupation.
5. Increase membership especially organisational.
6. Promotional publicity.
7. Projects. Involve Ward Councillors and vary workforce, i.e. community hours, Japanese students, schools, Scouts, Guides, etc.
8. Community Action for 1996.
9. Support John Turner in development and promotion of a Community Resource Database.

As I write this, we have already this year achieved four good success stories:

1. Acquired a van at a very reasonable price from BTCV.
2. Gained a year's extension on our occupancy of 12 Wellington Square.
3. £5,000 assistance from Kleinwort towards a property. This is not as much as we would have hoped, but it will certainly help towards a deposit on a building of our own. If we can get the remaining money soonest, we would dearly like to put in an offer on a building.
4. A very successful project carried out with the assistance of Japanese students.

This is a very positive start to the Year.

Stephen Hinton

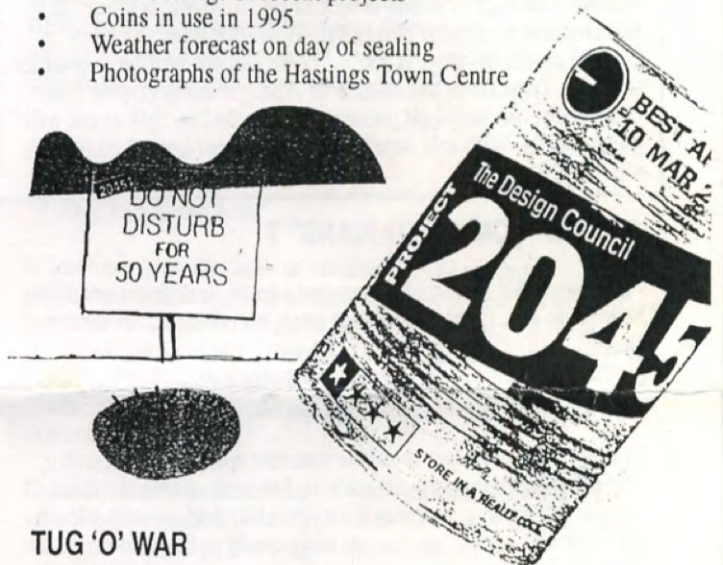
## HASTINGS TRUST TIME CAPSULE

At noon on 10th March, 1995 a Time Capsule was stored in Hastings Museum's Safe (by their kind permission) for 50 years.

The capsule, organised by Hastings Trust was delivered by volunteers Dave Weller, James Rose and Annie Hunter, and was one of 2,045 being stored/buried as part of a nationwide project.

Our capsule included:

- Hastings Trust 1994 Annual Review
- Hastings Trust November 1994 Newsletter
- Photographs and cost estimates of current projects undertaken by the Trust
- Name and signatures of project workers involved on Hastings Trust Letterhead with Logo
- Wheels project and music events organised through the Trust
- Photographs of the projects undertaken by the Trust – before and on completion of works
- Press cuttings of recent projects
- Coins in use in 1995
- Weather forecast on day of sealing
- Photographs of the Hastings Town Centre



## TUG 'O' WAR

The Trust is organising a tug 'o' war competition, with teams competing for the Grand Hastings Trust Environment Trophy (which the winners will keep). The emphasis in this competition will be very much aimed at ensuring that all the competitors have a good laugh and that they all have a day to remember. With this in mind it has been decided that all the teams must be of mixed gender, although teams with an all female membership will be allowed to enter. The competition takes place on Hastings Celebration Day, Saturday 20th May in the town centre (Wellington Place), from 12 noon until about 3pm. For entry forms and further information contact Dave Weller at the Trust on (01424) 446373/440909.



## HASTINGS ENVIRONMENT WEEK – 19TH/29TH MAY

Preparations are already underway for BT/Civic Trust Environment Week, and once again local voluntary groups and organisations are being invited by the Hastings Trust and Environmental Health Department to stand by their posts ready for the Bumper All-Day launch on **Hastings Celebration Day, Saturday 20th May**.

This year the whole event will take place in Wellington Place and Castle Street. 18 x 12ft tables with colourful protective awnings are available to stall holders, on a first come, first served basis, at the cost of £10 per 6ft table space, and a packed programme of events will be running alongside, of which more news later.

A wide range of initiatives is being planned for the week itself and these will be published in the **Hastings Environment Week Programme for '95** to be printed in the Hastings and St. Leonards Observer 19th May.

**If you are a local group and would like either to man a stall on 20th May or to be included free in our Environment Week Programme, contact Heather at Hastings Trust a.s.a.p.**

### HASTINGS TRUST BENEFIT CONCERT

The annual Hastings Trust concert takes place on the evening of Celebration Day, Saturday 20th May 8.00pm - midnight, in the function room of the Carlisle pub, Carlisle Parade, Hastings sea front. Those of you who were present at last year's gig will know that this is a night not to be missed. The complete line up of bands is still to be finalised, but one of Hastings most popular bands The Bolivian Brothers have already agreed to play. Tickets for this event will be available from the Trust from the middle of April at the probable price of £3 each. As usual all proceeds generated by this event will go to charity, with this year's lucky recipient being the dear old Trust itself.

### ARE WE "COMMUNITARIANS" ?

- as Tony Blair is so widely reported to be and, from what I heard him say, Paddy Ashdown most certainly is. Invited to Demos' March 13 seminar with Amitai Etzioni, the much publicised leader of this American movement, I went to find out.

Communitarians want to regenerate the spirit of community, first of all by balancing citizen's rights with responsibilities. Etzioni insists that we have to reverse the decline of personal commitment to one another, consequently poor parenting and the loss of community- implying that catastrophe will follow if we don't. All 50 at the crowded Demos Seminar - including teachers and social workers as well as academics, journalists and politicians - and the great majority of the hundreds who attended Etzioni's Times/Demos Millennium Lecture that evening - seemed to agree. During the seminar, Paddy Ashdown insisted that these issues transcend party political differences. He emphasised the necessity of intermediary organisations for overcoming the alienation of people and government at all levels - reinforcing my own shared belief in the importance of our Trust for Hastings.

Demos organised the seminar to discuss the issues and the possibility of setting up a "communitarian" network in Britain - an idea received with interest but with reservations. I

believe these have to do with Etzioni's failure to discuss the connections between social and moral problems with the traumas of economic change and threats of environmental breakdown. Friends and I, reflecting on the discussion, agreed that these connections must be made if a politically effective contribution to 'sustainable development' is to be made. Otherwise it may become yet another ephemeral one-issue 'ism'.

I hope Demos will continue the dialogue and that it will lead to a Community Action Network as Tony Gibson wisely suggested at the seminar. I'll keep the Trust informed on developments but readers can keep in touch themselves by writing to Demos, 9 Bridewell Place, London EC4V 6AP.

John F C Turner

## COASTAL TOWNS REGENERATION CONFERENCE

The objective of the Coastal Towns Regeneration Conference is to put the spotlight on and to promote ideas and understanding of the problems of regeneration in coastal towns. In the past, most coastal conferences have dealt with the problems of environment and ecology from a purely "green" standpoint, but no-one seems yet to have dealt with the problem of regeneration as a whole: environment, ecology and economy. This holistic view is the one that Hastings Borough Council and the Hastings Trust wish to promote. We do not want everyone to invent square wheels on their own, when so much is already being done that works - even when the efforts don't work it's an equally valuable learning process.

Another objective is to raise awareness that the coastal regions of Britain are often ignored when it comes to discussing problems. "Urban" and "rural" appear often in strategies, but almost never "coastal".

The conference is aimed at local authorities, government regional offices, town planners, the voluntary sector, businesses - all those with a coastal presence who, by working together can actively tackle the problems we all face.

### 'WILD CORNERS' UPDATE

#### Harold Road Garden

This is progressing well. A few of the original plants did not survive the winter, but this has been offset by the fact that quite a number of spring bulbs have appeared. These were previously obliterated by the mass of rubbish, brambles and nettles etc. We look forward to these flowering soon. We have carried out some additional planting recently. The amount of weeding and litter clearance needed has been minimal.

#### New Road/Brackendale

Near to the Harold Road site our Community Action (C.A.) team have cleared a mass of rubbish from the Bourne stream that was blocking the culvert under New Road. This included a tumble dryer, gas fire, car exhaust and a mass of other rubbish completely filling a large builders skip. As the stream is around 12 metres below the surrounding land, down a very steep bank, extracting the rubbish presented its own difficulties. We borrowed a large builders bag from Travis Perkins Ltd and a long rope from BTCV. Dragging this up the bank is good practice for tug-of-war if anyone needs it! (See separate article). Thanks to Travis Perkins Ltd., Drinkwater Sabey Ltd. and BTCV. The area at the top of the bank, facing



New Road and Brackendale was originally planted with a variety of trees and shrubs, presumably when the adjacent flats were built. They have not been maintained for several years and had become overrun with brambles and nettles. These have been cleared around and are being pruned as required to bring them back to good order. We are currently looking at the options for the future of this area.

### St. Thomas's Road

Following extensive research and correspondence with local residents we have now managed to determine the ownership of a small neglected area adjoining a garage block. The biggest problem is dogs fouling the area and we are currently drawing up plans for an enhancement project that will also deter them from the area.

### St Helen's Park Road

Following our path laying and clearance project in Hillside Road we have carried out a similar project in St Helen's Park Road for St. Helen's Park Preservation Society. Around 6 tonnes of chippings were shovelled into barrows and layed along 300 metres of path in only two days with a team of five volunteers. This was helped on the second day with the use of a 'Power Barrow'. Edward, who has been helping our C.A. team with some of the job search, joined us for the day and took to the 'Power Barrow' like a duck to water! He reckons to have walked over 12 miles with it during the day. A letter of thanks from Sheila Pratt, Honorary Secretary of St. Helen's Park Preservation Society is copied below

### St James's Road

Planting and maintenance continues in the gardens adjoining the steps.

### Schools

We have recently erected several bird boxes in Rocky Shaw Wood, adjoining Robsack Wood Primary School. This has now provided an additional opportunity for the school children to study the environment first hand. Thanks are due to Steven Healy, one of our Community Action volunteers, who expertly constructed the boxes and Stamco Ltd who donated the timber.

We received a mention in Southern Water's magazine, 'Conservation Matters' for our work with The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers at Grove School during Pond Week last September. The article is too large to reproduce here, but is displayed on the project board in our office.

### Wellington Steps

Wellington Steps and the adjoining wall are hacked, chiselled and patched, despite gales and various adverse conditions. Templates are made, to re-cast decorative cornices. Grills and the expanded metal are ready to pick up, so 'the job is on!'

### THE WHEELS PROJECT

The owners of the land, that we hoped to use as a site for the Trail Park, have contacted us with an offer for us to lease the site on a yearly basis. Normally this news would have been greeted with a great deal of excitement, but unfortunately the figure being quoted is so high that there is no real cause for any celebration. Their offer is to go in front of the WHEELS committee in the very near future.

### FUNDING

#### Wishes can come true

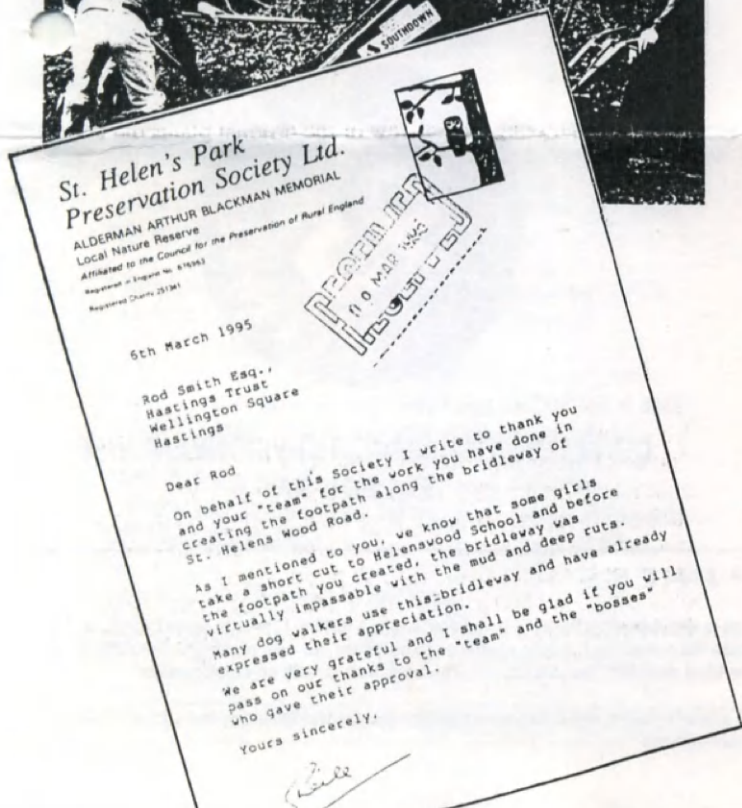
It has long been the wish of Hastings Trust to have a permanent home and asset base. There being no fairy godmother to wave a magic wand, the Trust has set up a purchase fund to raise money for a deposit on a building. It is with the greatest pleasure that I can inform members that The Ernest Kleinwort Foundation has launched the fund with a donation of £5000.

Our aim is now to match each £1 of the Kleinwort donation with £5 to reach our goal. Anyone wishing to match the gift will be inscribed on the Trust's roll of honour.

For further information, please contact Christine on 446373.

### Environmental Projects

Christine and Rod recently met with English Nature, who are considering funding to manage the 'Wild Corners' and schools projects on a full-time basis. We await their decision, imminently. We are also hoping to secure a contribution from East Sussex County Council. Further funding is being sought to cover administration costs as well as for plants and materials on individual projects.





## European Social Fund

Heather and Rod have spent many hours slaving over forms for a grant application for European Social Funding to support training of volunteers in traditional building skills. Our application for just under £40,000 successfully passed through preliminary selection, initial scoring and an appeal. Unfortunately we missed out at the final selection process, but are on the reserve list should further funding become available or other projects drop out.

Even if we do not secure funding this year the work put in has been a useful exercise for future applications to the EEC or similar bodies.

## Tools

As many of you will be aware we recently suffered the theft of a substantial amount of our tools valued at almost £800. Despite the fact that they were securely locked in a trailer on site, our insurance does not cover their loss. John Turner successfully located the Ernest Cook Trust, who have contributed £500 towards replacing these.

## Bourne Sculpture

A substantial amount of the funding has been raised for the sculpture and we have applications pending at present to progress this further

Apart from those mentioned there is also a regular need to raise funds for all the other practical projects, office costs etc., etc.....

## A Voluntary Fundraiser

As you can see from the above a substantial amount of time has been taken up by fundraising and this is always likely to be the case. We are now keen to recruit a voluntary fundraiser to co-ordinate the various appeals and hopefully initiate others. If anyone is interested or knows of anyone who may be interested please contact Christine or Rod to discuss it further.

## PLANNING FOR REAL A FUTURE FOR THE STADE

Remember the vociferous campaign against Sportsfayre Ltd's scheme for a leisure centre on The Stade last year? Well, much to their credit, the Council responded with a cry of their own: Let's have a Planning for Real exercise to help us develop a brief. And they did.

Technical Services and The Trust got together, a splendid model was produced and the first public session held in the George Street Hall in November 1994.

Other sessions have been held with those organisations who requested them. The interim results are currently being drawn together, to form a draft report to Technical Services.

Following consideration by the Council's Policy Committee and consultations with English Heritage, a second public session to discuss those interim findings will be held.

Watch this space and keep your eye on the local press.

## FEDERATION OF SUSSEX AMENITY SOCIETIES

Hastings Trust is one of 120 societies and organisations affiliated to the Federation and nominates one member of the Executive Committee. The Federation exists to support member societies and to deal on their behalf with Regional matters, for which we use established access to Ministers involved. Thus, one of our biggest tasks has been to deal with Local Government Planning reviews of County Structure and Borough plans. Formidable documents, but they do represent our future.

Topics with which the Federation has been concerned in recent years include the sewage outfall at Bulverhythe, the Sainsbury site, the Stade development, and access to the Conquest Hospital.

The Federation has also taken a clear position on road development proposals. We have, in general, supported the Department of Transport schemes for A259 improvement, but have strongly opposed the A259 becoming a mini-motorway to blight the 1066 tourist countryside. So, YES to a dual carriageway for Pevensey, Bexhill and Hastings Western Bypass, but NOT for an Eastern Bypass. Here we support the DoT for a single carriageway from the new A21 roundabout past Icklesham and Rye into Kent. We have also asked for urgent consideration on the planned spur roads from the A259 junction at Mayfield.

## DOG-FREE AREAS FOR CHILDREN?

Grass-roots concern about the problems of dog-fouling in the public parks is behind a petition organised by the Hastings and Rother Childcare Campaign which is currently doing the rounds.

If you are concerned and would further information, contact Nancy Cooley on 441116.



**DON'T FORGET HASTINGS ENVIRONMENT WEEK  
19TH/29TH MAY**

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## STOP PRESS

We are pleased to announce that we are not moving from our current premises in the immediate future. We have arranged a further 12 month lease to include the currently vacant upper floors. This will give us valuable breathing space to raise the remaining funds to enable us to purchase our own premises. The additional rooms will more than double our existing space, enabling us to provide a dedicated resource room, which will be a strictly no smoking area.

As a result of the reorganisation of the offices we are now seeking additional office furniture, and would welcome any donations. Please contact us for details of our requirements.