

# THE HASTINGS TRUST QUARTERLY REVIEW

OCTOBER 1995

ISSUE 13

## HISTORIC HASTINGS

**There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune...**

And we in Historic Hastings believe that Hastings is at a turning point as we approach the Millennium. It possesses a most famous name in history worth millions in publicity and a unique heritage stretching from possibly the largest iron-working site in the Roman Empire at the beginning of the first millennium, through the most dramatic change in a country's way of life from the Battle at the start of the second millennium, to what? As we reach the third millennium?

Historic Hastings is a group of people concerned with the proper recognition and presentation of this heritage and is using Hastings Day 1995 to reach a wider audience with the public meeting at Holy Trinity Church. The town is rich in groups with more specialised interests but we felt that it lacked one taking an overall view of our heritage and its promotion to the various authorities concerned. It is certainly not our wish to interfere in any way with the existing organisations but we hope that we can assist appropriately in promoting ideas to fruition. Historic Hastings first met some 18 months ago and, since then, various ideas have been tossed to and fro between ourselves and some of them have been discussed with Councillors and Council officers. For example, our historic town should possess a 'Resource Centre' where, using current technology, access can be gained by all types of interested visitors to a very wide range of information on our past from a multitude of sources not only local but by using the InterNet to go worldwide. The means of achieving this aim are currently being explored.

We are interested in the Maritime Heritage and we have been very concerned that Hastings should not lose the 'Anne' to Eastbourne. So we have become involved in the process of bringing the Borough and Dr Peter Marsden of Shipwreck Heritage together and we very much hope that their negotiations will achieve a satisfactory outcome with the 'Anne' resting here as another 'jewel' of heritage.

Leisure England Ltd are submitting plans in due course to develop the site on the White Rock Gardens as a leisure centre including a 1066 attraction and we are very happy that Historic Hastings has been accepted as consultants for the 1066 section. We shall do our best to give constructive advice on all occasions when we are asked; including the question whether the Gardens, admittedly under used at present, are the ideal site for this development. For example, whether Summerfields with its existing leisure facilities and unused open space, might not prove a better site.

If anybody reading this is interested in joining with us in efforts to boost the town's tourism potential, our contact is through the Hastings Trust.

## Living on the edge – Coastal Towns Regeneration Conference

After months of hard work, and despite a last minute plea by our Board to keep the list open, the conference was cancelled. So Hastings lost the chance to host the only coastal towns regeneration conference in the country which could have had a significant impact on the profile of our town.

To say that we are disappointed is an understatement. However, by national popular demand there are plans afoot to run the conference next year. Watch this space.

In the meantime, Peter Grenell who used to run the California State Coastal Agency has agreed to run a day of workshops on November 7th from 10am to 4pm. Cos: £10. Anyone wishing to attend should contact us immediately on 01 424 446 373.

### THE PRINCE NEEDS THE UNEMPLOYED

*'If you are unemployed and between 16 and 25, don't miss the chance to spend 12 weeks having the time of your life.'*

*Volunteer to become a member of the Prince's Trust Volunteers and you will get to meet new friends, help the community, obtain a City and Guilds Profile Achievement Certificate and spend a week in Wales without any of this affecting your unemployment benefit'.*

This is the message the Hastings Trust is sending out, following a meeting with Graham Gordon, who works for Youth Clubs Sussex Ltd in Brighton; the organisation which holds the franchise to run the Prince's Trust Volunteers Programme in Sussex.

Hastings Trust is now a local contact point for any individual or organisation wishing to obtain further details. A number of groups and individuals have already been approached and more are targeted.

PTV was launched in 1990 with the aim of enabling young people of different abilities, circumstances and backgrounds to develop their personal skills while working in the local community as a member of a team. It is run from over 65 locations throughout the UK, and there have been over 5000 volunteers through the programme to date. This is a new and exciting venture for the Trust and we would appreciate it, if all members could help to pass the word around.

For further information contact: Heather on 01 424 446 373/440 909.

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## WORKING TO IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENT

# Mailbox

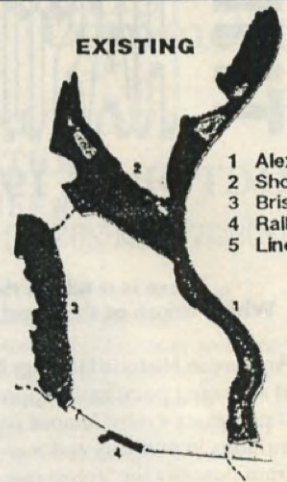
'Hastings Greenway' is a community based project which proposes a series of linked environmental improvements connecting Summerfields Wood and Alexandra Park along semi-derelict railway land. It has a far wider significance, in urban renewal terms, by including the intention to examine a number of buildings and structures along the Greenway with a view to realise their potential by refurbishing them and bringing them back into beneficial use.

The Greenway is intended for both recreational use and for journeys to work on foot or by cycle. The project as a whole offers an opportunity to develop the potential of currently semi-derelict land, buildings and structures into a unique community amenity bringing social, scenic, historic, ecological and educational benefits.

Many of you will have seen the original concept presentations drawn up by John Hibberd and Tim Jameson. These were presented to councillors and officers at the Council Chambers and at a public open day at the Trust's offices during Environment Week. Since then the Trust has adopted the overall management of the proposal and is working with John and Tim as consultants to draw up a bid for funding from the Single Regeneration Budget in partnership with Hastings Borough Council and Railtrack South. At present negotiations are progressing well with all parties showing full support.

# HASTINGS C

EXISTING



- 1 Alexandra Park
- 2 Shornden Wood
- 3 Brisco's Walk
- 4 Railway Station
- 5 Linear Park

## conneXions

## PROJECT UPDATE

Has it really been that long since the last Newsletter?

What have we been doing with our time?

Firstly I would like to mention the introduction of a regular maintenance programme. After completing a project we like to ensure that enhancement work does not fall into disrepair, but it is not always possible, for a variety of reasons, to rely on other people for the long-term maintenance. So we introduced

a maintenance programme for those projects that fell through the noose.

At present projects on the maintenance list include: Croft Nursery, New Road/Brackendale, St James's Road, Harold Road and Hollington Junior School. Secondly, completed projects since March: All Saint's Street (painting of railings), Woods Passage (re-building of steps), Robsack School (manufacture and sitting of bird boxes in Rocky Shaw woods), Borough wide (cleaning Street signs), St Helen's Park Road (re-surfacing footpath), Church Wood Road (litter and path clearance), New Road/Brackendale (stream and land clearance and culvert re-build), St Helen's Woods (repairs to leaking pond), Croft Nursery (shed demolition and removal), Lower Church Passage (enhancement), Bohemia Road (painting of shop for Hastings Opera), Old London Road (another footpath), Wellington Road (painting railings), The Stade (painting of the Edward and Mary) and Marline Wood (bridge demolition and re-build).

It is possible that I have missed out several projects but I am sure members will be impressed with the number and range of projects represented here.

I should mention the current projects but I can see from my notes that there are at least eight in progress and my typing is painfully slow so catch an update in the next Newsletter or pop-in. Of course none of this would be possible without support so I would like to thank all who have and continue to help me and the project team.



*Rebuilding steps*



*Painting the railings*



*Site clearance*



*Footpath clearance*



*Refurbishing the woodwork*

## GREENWAY



Funding for the initial feasibility study is coming from Hastings Borough Council and hopefully the Royal Institute of British Architects Community Projects Fund. The proposed Greenway will form a new well landscaped linear park linking Alexandra Park via the Waterworks Road subway and Hastings Station to Briscoe's Walk and the Summerfields area of Bohemia. In the opposite direction it is proposed that a new cycle way be provided alongside Alexandra Park following the line of Lower and Upper Park Roads and then via an upgraded byway, Upper Clarence Road, to Silverhill. Further links to a wider network of footpaths and cycle ways could be considered at a future date. The Railway embankment which adjoin the proposed route, although designated as wildlife corridors, are at present only sparsely planted. A policy of restricted access and an ecologically based management programme will seek to enhance the wildlife potential of these areas. Where new public access is planned, a more park like planting regime would be provided as a reflection of Alexandra Park. Where feasible the proposals also include the creation of a series of small 'packet parks' and cycle ways reflecting the needs of the local neighbourhood communities. Mostly traffic free, the proposed Greenway is intended as a public amenity for residents and visitors. Access would normally be restricted to pedestrians and cyclists with easy access for prams and wheelchairs. With the inclusion of a variety of community based facilities along its route there is potential to appeal to a wide cross section of people. Fuller details of the proposal are available from Rod at the Trust offices.



## ROUND AND ABOUT

### HASTINGS BOROUGH BONFIRE SOCIETY'S FAMILY FUN-DAY

There were a lot of people, including myself, who were hoping and praying that the rain that re-appeared a few days before the event would pass over and not spoil all the planning and hard work that had been put into the Bonfire Society's Fun-day success. It was to be the main fund-raiser to enable us to put the Bonfire itself on and buy the fireworks.

Fortunately, much to the delight of our intrepid 'Mindors', who had stayed at the Oval overnight to ensure nobody got near the 'real-ale', which had been put in place Saturday afternoon to allow time to settle.

The 'real-ale', which is known as 'Hastings Rouser', is brewed exclusively for the Bonfire Society by the Pett Brewery and was on sale again at selected pubs around Bonfire night, Saturday 14th October, Hastings Day.

As this was the first Family Fun-day, we had organised, we knew that we would make mistakes. The main lesson we learnt was that we did not have enough stalls to keep people entertained, a fault we shall remedy next year. But the Fun-day achieved its objective by raising between £1500 - £2000, which will ensure at the main event, the Bonfire itself, goes ahead as planned.

I would like to thank all those who worked at the Fun-day and all the clubs and companies who sponsored the event either with money or in kind.

### Nelson Tigers free 1995 R.N.L.I. Beach Concert

This year's Beach Concert once again proved to be a huge success and raised in excess of £2000 for the Lifeboat. A larger crowd than ever before was in attendance, taking advantage of the lovely sunny weather to stand, sit or merely lay on the beach and enjoy the excellent music provided by a cross section of some of the finest bands Hastings has to offer. All of them gave their services and time free of charge, as did all the bar staff, collectors, stage crew and virtually everybody else connected with the event. To each and every one of these lovely people I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks. Despite a few technical problems with the P.A. (which led to a rather long delay before the Dharmas came on) everyone had a good time. Those at the back of the audience who had difficulty hearing the music during the latter stages of the concert can rest assured that next year the P.A. - which simply wasn't powerful enough for such a large audience - will be much bigger.

## THE TRUST SUPPORTS LOCAL AGENDA 21

The Trust is actively supporting the Borough Council's Local Agenda 21 initiative: an agenda for the changes we must all help to make in order to ensure a livable 21st Century for ourselves, for our children and future generations. At the 1992 Rio Earth Summit in Brazil, 178 nations agreed to work on an agenda for saving civilised life. It was also agreed that the agenda for 2001 to 2009 will grow democratically out of the myriad of Local Agendas - a bottom-up process reversing the now discredited and dangerous dependency on ignorant impositions from distant and unaccountable powers.

Local development trusts, such as our own, working in partnership with their local authorities, practice the principles of community building and regeneration that underlie the Local Agenda 21 process. Hastings Trust contributes a meeting place and information on all aspects of Agenda 21 - a computerised database and collection of short, easy-to-read articles for all concerned, whatever their particular interest, age or orientation.

Thanks to Barclays Commercial Services, which have provided the Trust with state-of-the-art equipment, we can now help anyone to search through the 200 articles that we have already obtained and annotated (and those contain leads to many more sources). In a minute or two the computer will scan, select and print out a list of the articles that deal with the subject or subjects of the enquirer's choice. He or she may then read the articles at the Trust or request photocopies - at 12 Wellington Square, (please telephone 01 424 446 373/440 909) to book an appointment. Subject to availability, the Trust also provides meeting space for the Local Agenda 21 working groups already formed and for the NGO Forum. The working groups include Council members and officers as well as the private citizens who associate with the Forum of local Non-Governmental Organisations. Both services support the Borough's initiative, based at Environmental Services, 44 Wellington Square, (opposite the Trust's present offices at No12) where Nick Hutchinson, the Local Agenda 21 co-ordinator, is personally available on Wednesdays, but where there is no room for meetings.



# Report

## COMMUNITY ACTION

*good to be kept active and to be seen to be doing something positive to help"*

"learnt a lot"..."helpful and beneficial"...

"job satisfaction"...

"happy and content with Hastings Trust – wish it was longer and available as employment"

*"very enjoyable – good to work in a group again"*

"good team spirit at Hastings Trust"

"rewarding and worthwhile"

**confidence has grown since commencing on scheme"**

"gaining experience and have made new friends"

These are some of the comments the Trust has received from its Community Action participants. We are delighted that they feel so positively about volunteering. We have a lot to thank them for, as does everybody who lives here or comes to visit Hastings, and look forward to continuing with the scheme.

We cannot, however, afford to be complacent. The Trust has to date been involved with Community Action only on a sub-contracting basis, and this has its own problems. We are looking to become a Community Action provider in our own right, whilst on the training front, we are looking to secure funding to set up a training centre and to provide volunteers with the opportunity to gain a nationally recognised qualification.

## Newsdesk

The Hastings Trust was saddened to hear of Hugh Hanson's recent death and the subsequent resignation of his wife, Alma Hanson, from the Hastings Trust Board of Management.

Alma was our Burton's St. Leonards Representative on the Board, and we would like to thank her for her service and dedication to the Trust over the years. She was a vociferous voice, and worked tirelessly for the town. In particular, helping on the 'front-line' in the fight to regenerate St. Leonards.

Alma still continues to be a member, and we have no doubt she will continue to make her voice heard. Our sincerest thanks Alma, for all your efforts.

Take special care of yourself and remember our thoughts are with you at this time.

# Chairmans Comment

## DEVELOPMENT TRUSTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

I have just returned from a three day Annual Conference in Liverpool run by the Development Trusts Association. What is the Development Trusts Association? You may well ask. It is an association set up three years ago to support the growth of Development Trusts throughout Britain. There were 15 Founder Members, of which Hastings Trust is one. The number of new members has astonishingly grown to 135 this year. But perhaps this is not so surprising when:

- Local Councils can identify with a Trust as a useful partner in application for funding from Central Government for regeneration.
- For local residents a Trust is a platform to air their ideas and theories and use its expertise to produce a sound project plan.

Liverpool is the ideal setting for urgent urban regeneration. On Day One we were taken in mini-buses to any two of ten Trust which have done a wonderful job in revitalising their communities. (Needless to say they are on a much larger budget. With Liverpool City Council paying out £10million to the Trusts last year out of a budget of £450million, i.e. 2.2%).

In the morning of Day Two we were listening to speakers from Local and Central Government on the Role of Trusts in The Regeneration Policy, The Teething Problems of Partnerships and The Way Ahead. In the afternoon you were able to choose a Workshop to visit, and it was very pleasing to see that our Director, Christine Goldschmidt, was presenting a Workshop.

Later that evening, over a beer (where in my experience a lot is learned at shopfloor level during conferences) I was equally pleased to hear from a Mr Patrick Redmond that two years ago, whilst trying to set up a Trust in Burslem, a pottery town of Stoke-on-Trent, he had invited Christine up to give a presentation on the Way Ahead, which had steered and enthused them into becoming what is now a very visible and self funding Trust. 'If only', I thought to myself.

It was indeed the subject of self funding that focused my mind for the majority of the three days. All the avenues Christine has gone down are sound and must continue to be exploited. All the work the Trust has achieved in five years and still we live on a financial knife edge! I am a positive thinker however, and I look forward to the time when the Board and Staff can divert more of their energies to projects as we thrive in financial stability.

That will be to EVERYONE in Hastings advantage.



The HASTINGS TRUST exists to improve the environment in Hastings and St Leonards promoting good practice in conservation and community regeneration.

**IF YOU CAN HELP US, OR WE CAN HELP YOU,**

please contact us at the following address:

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