

BEXHILL HERITAGE MEMBERS MEETING MINUTES
Thursday 6th February 2025 4.30pm
At ST BARNABAS CHURCH, SEA ROAD, BEXHILL

Committee attending:

Steve Johnson	(SJ)	Chair/Treasurer
Simon Allen	(SA)	Projects Coordinator
Alexis Markwick	(AM)	IT Support Officer/Historian
Yolanda Laybourne	(YL)	East Parade
Lorraine Parkes	(LP)	Volunteer Recruitment & Support/Minutes Secretary
Yvonne Menzies	(YM)	Company Secretary/Media & Marketing Coordinator
Edmund Bird	(EB)	Planning Officer
Christina Muskin	(CM)	Membership Secretary

1. APOLOGIES - Natasha Hamblin (NH), Laurie Bush, Jean Morris, Philip Howard-Knight, Robert Brown, Hazel Hanley, Daniel O'Farrell, Alan & Hue Mead, Margaret Hayles, Jane Rowe, Joan Wilson, Terry Clothier, Jane Minter, Diana Hughes, Paul Wright, Val Hunnisett.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE NOVEMBER MEMBERS MEETING: No matters arising. Minutes were approved.

3. PLANNING

Report on the work of the planning officer and committee

EB has submitted an application to Historic England for national listing for the Bexhill War Memorial.

Casework has included advising on a planning application for replacement windows and on the demolition of an outbuilding on Holliers Hill. The outbuilding was previously part of a farm but had sadly been altered too much to allow BH to object to its demolition. BH is concerned about a Grade 2 listed shop in St Leonards Road. It has not been maintained and is now in a very poor state of repair. BH will contact RDC to request enforcement action against the owner.

Producing a local list of non-designated heritage assets

At the last members meeting it was agreed that BH would request that Rother District Council (RDC) establishes a "Local List". EB showed some examples of the buildings that BH suggest should be included. So far 64 buildings have been identified as possible inclusions. At the April members meeting members can nominate buildings to be included and highlight any buildings that they have concerns about regarding condition.

4. PROJECT REPORTS

Normans Bay K6 phone kiosk – SA

It has been a complete restoration down to the bare metal. The door needs to be rehung and shelves to be erected for the books and seeds. The telephone signs have been unveiled. Mel Jukes is the new Chair of the Residents Association and is keen to support with the landscaping around the phone box.

East Parade – Shelter 4 -SJ

The restoration of the benches has begun. The Men's Shed repainted the bench slats. Five more benches have to be completed and should be finished by mid March. All areas of the shelter have five coats of paint, which is needed due to the proximity to the sea. There will be red and green glazing on the top row of glazing. A heritage photo gallery will be added to some of the windows on the east end of the shelter. Members will be able to buy a commemorative plaque. An email will be sent out to members once costs have been advised. Any funds received will be allocated towards the cost of the photo gallery. RDC will assist with the electrics, roof repair and the removal of the hoarding. Members are welcome to come along on a Monday or Friday mornings between 9am and 12pm to have a look at the progress so far. The Open Day will be on Saturday 19th April at 10am. There will also be a BH Heritage Day at the bandstand with information about volunteering for BH, the proposed Local List and a treasure hunt for children.

Third Avenue bus shelter – SJ

The Art Deco style lozenge-shaped shelter will be restored in the Spring. BH volunteers will be able to add learning to point brickwork to their range of skills. W.Ave Arts will be commissioned to paint to a 1960's bus mural on the inside of the shelter. Completion is scheduled for June 2025.

5. UPDATES

Eastern Conservation area proposal – SJ

SJ, YL and the research team have met with ward councillors, Terry Byrne and Hazel Timpe. They also met with the Leader and Deputy of RDC who were all broadly supportive. The meeting with the local MP Kieran Mullen went well although he expressed some slight concern that it could be seen as restrictive. All parties are keen that as many residents as possible are consulted. SJ & YL and the research team to meet with RDC Head of Planning and the Conservation Officer to check if there is a residents consultation process to follow. It will take time to work through the process.

Member visits – Keith Rhodes

The first planned visit is to Windmill Hill Windmill on **Thursday 24th April**. Times to be advised.

Saturday 12th July is the date for the visit to the Dungeness Sound Mirrors. They are located on an RSPB site on an island location. There is a 25 minute walk to them from the car park. Unfortunately the walk is not accessible for wheelchairs as the site is mainly shingle.

Thursday 11th September is the date for the trip around Rye Harbour. There are lovely walks (self-guided) around the Sussex wetlands and a discovery centre to explore. At 14.30 a safari boat will then take us around the harbour.

Details of trips and how to buy tickets will be emailed to members. All tickets will be non-refundable.

Refreshments and raffle

6. Guest Speaker – Niall McCrae

Niall and Rob Hiscocks have researched the fascinating and controversial history of Bexhill's pubs and clubs. Niall gave a presentation with fascinating photos of the pubs and clubs that are no longer here and those that still remain. Niall and Rob signed copies of their book "History of Bexhill pubs" – volume 1 – Old Town and London Road for members.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS including questions to the committee

Dave Hatherell and Alan Starr have written a book – Bexhill on Sea in 50 buildings. Dave will have a table at the April members meeting for members who may wish to buy a copy.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - THURSDAY 10th APRIL – 7pm – ST BARNABAS CHURCH

SJ thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 6.30pm