



NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Dear members,

I hope that everyone is managing to cope at this challenging time. Your continued support of Bexhill Heritage is certainly appreciated. While most charities are finding it increasingly difficult to operate, I am glad to say that Bexhill Heritage is remaining steady, in good condition and ready to blossom when some normality returns.

Your hardworking trustees and committee are using the downtime to hone our strategic development and project plans which fit with our charity aims. We are continuing to prepare our application for registration with Charities Commission. Once approved, this should stand us in good stead if making funding applications in the future.

We continue to build on partner and associate relationships which can be found on our website, based on the 'TEAM' philosophy of 'Together Everyone Achieves More'.

Threats to our historic built environment continue to appear from many sometimes-surprising directions. We are doing our best to respond sensitively and collaboratively so as to achieve positive outcomes.

Recently, we have applied for the Sackville Road Methodist Church to be registered by the Local Authority as an Asset of Community Value. Currently, planning applications are being prepared for our work on the town's former bandstand. Rother's Cabinet has approved our scheme in principle and councillors have allocated funds for the renovation. The Council will be leasing the bandstand to Bexhill Heritage. This will enable us to manage and maintain this important heritage asset for community benefit.

We are very busy with extensive preparation work for the bandstand renovation. Working within the Government's guidelines, we look forward to a time when these are lifted so that we start practical tasks on site. Our primary focus is the bandstand restoration but we are also undertaking preparatory work for several other projects.

Don't forget our next Members' Meeting on 10th February when there will be an opportunity to hear more about our recent work and to join a discussion about how we might best use the renovated bandstand as a community asset.

Raymond Konyon
Chairman



A wide-angled shot of inside Sackville Road Methodist Church.

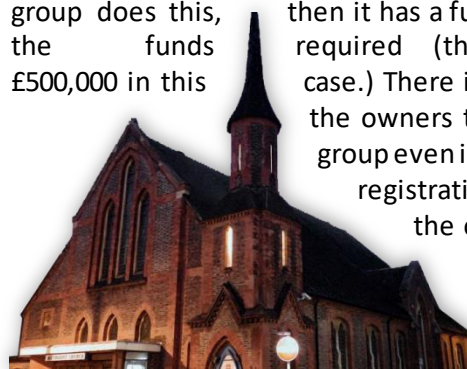
Sackville Road Methodist Church is coming up for sale. In order to give this important building some measure of protection for future community use, Bexhill Heritage has applied to Rother District Council for the church to be registered as an asset of community value.

Our application points out that, over the years, the church and its adjacent rooms have been used by a wide range of charities and community groups for meetings, sales of goods and even concerts. We feel that the church building has the potential for even more valuable and extensive use by the community given its prime town-centre position.

Bexhill Heritage has an agreement with the church authorities to use the main entrance area and foyer as a heritage and tourist information point. Sadly, this facility is currently closed due to current restrictions.

If the Council agree to include the church on their Community Asset Register and it comes up for sale, then community groups have six weeks to register as potential bidders. If a community group does this, the funds required (thought to be around £500,000 in this case.)

then it has a further six months to raise the funds required (thought to be around £500,000 in this case.) There is no obligation in law for the owners to sell to the community group even if the funds are raised but registration does at least provide the opportunity to 'save' the church for future community use.



Architecture Spotlight



Motcombe Court, 17 Bedford Avenue

This 1938 Modernist block was designed by architect Henry Tanner who was best known for his work on the Park Lane Hotel and redevelopment of Oxford Circus in London. It was built by Walter Lawrence & Son who also built the Empress State Building at Earls Court.

In January 1943 a 500kg bomb demolished three upper floors of the east wing. The building was unoccupied apart from the caretaker who suffered superficial injuries. Motcombe Court was rebuilt in 1946.

Thanks to one of our members for the use of his 1934 'Bessie' motorcycle in this photo.

Reminder: we are extending all memberships by three months if you joined prior 1st March 2020.

Keep in contact

 bexhillheritage.org.uk


 [/bexhillheritage](https://www.facebook.com/bexhillheritage)


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If you like what we are doing then please encourage your friends to join with us and strengthen our society.

Our next members meetings are being held online at 7pm on the following dates:

 **Wednesday 10th February 2021**
Restoring Shelter No.1 and its use for the community.

 **Wednesday 7th April 2021**
Topic to be announced.

Join via internet: meet.google.com/zub-wmar-gmz

Join via phone: 020 3937 4515 PIN: 947 559 909#

Planning Correspondence 2020 Roundup

Our Planning Officer David Beales has been busy throughout the last year commenting on significant heritage applications and other planning related matters. You can find them all on our website, here's just a small selection.



We responded to the Rother District Council's consultation on the 2020 budget:

"BH is ready to work with officers and members of the Council to explore options for our charity's greater involvement in the protection, promotion and more effective use of our town's heritage buildings and open spaces. We are concerned, though, that the further development of housing and business in Bexhill may, in some cases, threaten our town's heritage assets. We support further residential and economic development but not at the expense of our heritage."

We made three objections in regards to a planning application where a property wanted to create off-road parking; this was ultimately refused by the council:

"BH objects on grounds of damage to the conservation area which is still characterised by domestic front gardens and is not dominated by paved parking areas. This new parking area will however be very prominent and damaging."

An objection to the Co-Op's previous retail unit at Little Common to be turned into 3 commercial units and 1 dwelling:

"We recommend that the top floor on the Cooden Sea Road and Meads Road frontages be redesigned with a much greater set back from the main façades, be fully 'pented' and clad in slate or tiles."

We made a response to the Government White Paper Planning consultation on their intention to shake up the planning system:

"The paper is good in parts and damaging and disappointing in others. On the positive side BH supports the intention to dramatically alter the Local Plan process to reduce timescales and thus make it more able to respond to emerging social and economic challenges and we are also impressed by the wish to achieve beauty in the built environment. Much less agreeable is a proposal to classify all land as either GROWTH, where permission in principle for development would be virtually automatic; RENEWAL, where redevelopment would be encouraged, or PROTECTION, where the landscape or townscape would remain subject to the same care as currently. We think this would mean that large swathes of our towns could become hunting grounds for those wishing to increase densities and building heights and bulk."

Shelter No.3 Plaques

Unless you are of ceiling-cleaner height, you may have missed the two small plaques that sit at the top of the front two bays. No need to bring along your own step ladders, we'll print them here for you.

