



NEWSLETTER

December 2022

Dear members,

First of all, thank you for the support you give Bexhill Heritage. Your membership helps to fund our restoration work and certainly gives us 'clout' with the relevant authorities.

It's been a very busy autumn.

Our Bandstand restoration is nearing completion. Our contractors have done a superb job recreating the original roof. I hope that you've taken the opportunity to view the magnificent ridge crest and specially-made clay tiles. We plan to open on the weekend before Easter. Please check our website for details of: progress; our opening weekend and how to book the Bandstand for an event. Thanks to Rother District Council and to our members and sponsors for their support throughout the project. Most of all, huge thanks to our dedicated team of restorers, without them the restoration would not have been possible.

Bexhill Heritage's opposition to the Town Hall redevelopment plan has been heard. Tony Lightly, our consultant chartered surveyor, made an excellent case to the council's Planning Committee. This helped to persuade the majority of councillors to reject the scheme. However, the council's officers will be bringing back a revised scheme for approval in the coming weeks. We're watching this carefully and will oppose any plan that diminishes and overwhelms our Victorian Town Hall with poorly-designed new buildings. The good news is that the Town Hall has recently achieved 'Grade II Listed' status. This will give it a higher degree of protection against inappropriate development.

Meanwhile, our committee are making plans for 2023. We intend to launch a series of visits and excursions for members to complement our regular meetings. Details will be available in the spring. We're also committed to supporting the Town Centre Conservation Area as the best way of protecting its distinctive architectural features. We also plan to consult on an extension of the Conservation Area further east where there are many heritage buildings that we simply must not lose.

Thanks again for your support. Please accept the very best wishes of your committee for a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Steve Johnson
Chairman



Bexhill Heritage volunteers celebrated the 'topping out' of the East Parade Bandstand on 25th November. Topping Out has ancient traditions which include placing a fir tree on a new building's highest point once the roof is in place. Having hoisted the fir tree, the Bexhill Heritage team raised their glasses in thanks to everyone involved in their ambitious restoration of this iconic building.

Booking the Bandstand

When the bandstand is unveiled for public use in April 2023, we'll be opening it up for all kinds of entertainment, clubs, charities, music, board games, children's activities and poetry to name a few. To see details of the full schedule please visit bexhillheritage.com/bandstand where you will also be able to view our booking system currently being trialled - this will go live on the 1st January 2023.

It's a simple as selecting a date from the calendar, selecting a timeslot that suits your function, filling in your contact details and clicking 'Request booking'. This will send your request to the Bandstand committee, who will review and send you a confirmation. If successful, all you have to do is turn up on the day!

Select an available date:

January 2023						
SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Available
Booked
Pending
Partially booked

Select an available timeslot:

10:00 - 11:00 (Games Cafe)

11:00 - 12:00 (Games Cafe)

17:00 - 18:00 (Children's groups and clubs)

You may also email bandstand@bexhillheritage.com if you have a special event out of range of the booking system.

Architecture Spotlight



Malet Memorial Hall, King Offa Way

Built in 1912 and dedicated October 1913. Designed by George Herbert Gray, 8th Earl De La Warr's Architect/Surveyor and Town Mayor (1918-1920).

Lady Ermyntrude Malet commissioned the building to her husband, Sir Edward Malet (1837-1908). He was a high-ranking British diplomat who retired to Wrestwood on Hastings Road (now St Mary's School and College).

The Church of the Good Shepherd occupied the first floor and the ground floor was the Malet Memorial Institution. Its purpose was to compete with public houses by providing a 'respectable' meeting place for working men where religious instruction could also be provided. Its use ended in 1995.

A memorial plaque remains above the main doors, the inscription, albeit very worn, reads as follows:



Keep in contact

 bexhillheritage.com

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

Next Members' Meeting will be held at 7pm on the following date:

 **Thursday 9th February 2023**

Location and details TBC.

Exploring a New Conservation Area for the Town

BH is proposing the idea of extending the existing Conservation Area east covering the area south of the railway line and north East Parade up to Brookfield Road.

We believe it will highlight and better protect those buildings with special architectural and historic interest. Planning policies and decisions will have to take into consideration the area's character and appearance.

Our next step is to define and record the area's streetscape and architectural integrity. We plan to do this in close consultation with local residents associations, councillors and the local authorities.

The Old Town has had a Conservation Area since 1975 and the town centre was given designation in 1992.



Existing Conservation Area (left) and proposed extension (right).

2022 Planning Officer Update

Crikey, a busy year on the planning front! Here are some of the more notable events:

We raised strong objections to the demolition of Beulah Baptist Church, Buckhurst Road, and its replacement by an ill-designed building. We also sought to have the church 'Listed'. We appeared at the consequent Public Inquiry, where we were in accord with RDC, and the Inspector dismissed the appeal. The church remains unlisted but our involvement has drawn attention to the building's architectural importance.

We continue to disagree with Rother District Council (RDC) over their opposition to the replacement of traditional design timber windows (usually single glazed and sliding sash) by double glazed, UPVC windows of the same design and finish. Our adopted policy is to allow them when they are a very close replica. RDC do not have a policy but have recently refused several such applications which we thought were satisfactory and told them so. The fact is that over the last five years the industry can now supply a very good copy and we believe the public should be permitted to use them if they wish. As a result we have been invited to attend a meeting with councillors to put our case. We will see!

Our horror over the council's own planning application for the Town Hall site, referred to by our BH Chairman, has ended with them refusing it on design grounds and then the Town Hall, and thus its site, being listed. The worthy originator of the listing is still unknown to us. The controversy will rumble on.