

# **Hastings Old Town Residents Associations**

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Newsletter January 2012

## ***Unique Old Town Flavours for 2012***

The end of the World may be nigh' – but not in Hastings Old Town. As well as the regular festivals there will be some really exciting things for us all to enjoy. The Jerwood Gallery, the completed Open Space, the new Stade Hall and the award winning toilets are real achievements.

### **Jerwood Gallery**

January 2012 marks the implementation of their ambassador programme, where 2 children from every school in Hastings will undertake a 'hardhat' tour of the Gallery in advance of the public launch. They will return in March to conduct a formal trial of the completed building and exhibitions. Further projects to support the curriculum will evolve in 2012. On March 17 the formal opening will take place. Thereafter the impact on local people and visitor numbers will help traders and the local economy. Galleries in St Ives and Margate have created real and lasting regeneration.

### **HOTRA**

Our AGM will be on Friday 4 May in the new Stade Hall where our Guest Speaker will be Quentin Blake. He has long and happy associations with the Old Town. He was the first person to support our funding appeal for the Pelham Playa multi use games area. He is Patron of our Hastings Storytelling Festival and attended the very first session last April. He has written books for children but is internationally famous for his illustrations, especially for Roald Dahl for whom he created such memorable images.

### **Events to Make 2012 Special for Local People**

**Roland Jarvis** is a celebrated local artist. At his studio in Tackleway Roland shows an exceptional range of skills. As an horologist he makes incredibly accurate clocks and automatons, yet as an artist he produces pictures in a cubist style. In the Stade Hall HOTRA is honoured to sponsor an exhibition of Rolands work at the start of May. The Electric Palace recently featured a short film about his life and work. Each seat could have been sold twice such was the demand. Not to be missed !

### **The Boat Project**

Steve Ashmore who lives in the High Street writes :

*This year I am to become part of a crew chosen from the public and trained from scratch to sail a very special boat from Weymouth around the south east coast and into London as part of the Cultural Olympiad. The work started last year when coastal towns were visited and people were asked to donate a piece of wood which had a story behind it. Over 1200 pieces*

*were given and the stories recorded. The pieces of wood have all been sliced to a thickness of 8mm and inlaid into the surface of the boat. This is a 30 foot racing yacht – yet to be named. I was nominated –by my wife Mandy- and selected to be trained by the Royal Yachting Association. The training would normally take 4/5 years. There is an experienced skipper. The boat will be launched in May for a maiden voyage along the south coast stopping at five places where there will be special events. The boat will be at Hastings from 7-10 July. More details later.*

### **The Winkle Club**

The club will install a wonderful new Winkle created by local artist Leigh Dyer on Winkle Island in April. This old and well respected local charity was surprised how quickly the funds were raised. Good luck with all your efforts.

### **Other Things Happening in 2012**

**January** First meeting of a working group chaired by Cllr John Hodges to look at Pedestrian Safety in the High Street and across the whole of the Old Town. There will be representatives from residents, traders and tourism interests. The hope is to find agreement that can be fed into the review being conducted by ESCC Highways officers. With the change of contract from November parking will be one of the complex issues. Not an easy task but there should be strong local input.

Also there will be a meeting of the various groups who organise the major events and celebrations throughout the year. The last few years have seen alcohol related unacceptable behaviour occur once the events have taken place. There needs to be a shared approach involving the groups + the Police. A lot at stake.

**February** Work will commence on the construction of a playground for younger children facing the Pirate Golf course. Some parents and children are involved with ideas and plans. HOTRA has been pressing for this for 6 years. The new Foreshore Trust will pay for this facility which can be enjoyed by local and visiting children. Also some Outdoor Fitness Gym equipment will be installed at various points along the promenade. Future plans include converting the ground level parts of the White Rock Baths into a cycle project. Altogether these ideas will help encourage fitness activities. These improvements are long overdue and very welcome.

### **Licensing: Jerwood Gallery ‘Off-sales’ licence application**

HOTRA have asked that more thought be given to this small aspect of a large, complex application. Jerwood have responded positively and shown their willingness to listen to local concerns. The appeal against the Review of the London Trader will be heard soon. Local people have endured unacceptable noise etc for far too long.

### **Funding Future Needs**

Once upon a time any physical improvements were funded by local or national government bodies. For example the cost of works on the Stade Open Space, the new Hall, the toilets

and Highways changes [ about £5m ] were paid for by CABE, ESCC and Hastings Council. The cost of the Gallery [ about £4m ] was met by the Jerwood Foundation. Times are changed and now many projects turn to the Lottery for help. HOTRA secured £10,000 from Awards for All for the improvements to Butlers Gap. Hastings Council paid for some other upgrades but Leigh Dyers lovely sculptures are thanks to this Lottery pot.

The Arts Council paid for over 80% of the first ever Hastings Storytelling Festival. On this occasion HOTRA were very fortunate to secure the money which paid for the performers fees, costs and advertising. Around 800 people were able to enjoy free events as a result. A 2012 Festival is being planned.

Recently Kim Stallwood who organises our website attended a training session run by the Big Lottery Fund. The message he brought back was straightforward. If there is an idea that will help improve peoples lives then ask one of the Lottery bodies for help.

**Do you have an idea for a project to help local people ?**

A secure bike store has been suggested as so many local people have nowhere to keep a bike. Send your ideas to [dick@hotra.org.uk](mailto:dick@hotra.org.uk)

**MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE**

£10 per person. Please make cheques payable to HOTRA. Simply write your name, address [and email if you have one] on a piece of paper and put it in envelope marked HOTRA. Drop it into Nelson House Antiques in the High Street, or leave at our Treasurers Phil White, Eight and a Half Exmouth Place. A receipt will be issued.