

## **WARD REPORT - OLD HASTINGS - JUNE 2012**

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Both work and events continue in tandem on the pier renovation programme, driven by the need to meet the early August submission date for the Round Two bid, and the ever present requirement to raise matched funding. One significant criterion for the bid is to demonstrate continuing public support for the project. This can be achieved by the healthy level of trust membership, and the impending introduction of a "vote for the pier" button on the web site. To register your support all that is needed is a visit to the web site ([www.hpwr.co.uk](http://www.hpwr.co.uk)), and while you are there the opportunity presents itself to both view and comment upon the architect's plans. During the month the "Jubilee Jollies" took place on the promenade adjacent to the pier, it was well supported but most encouraging was the many constructive and positive comments that were received regarding the project. The next planned event features a second year project by the architectural faculty of Brighton University where the students will be submitting their designs for a pier. It is planned to hold a public exhibition of these designs at the Trinity Street Gallery where the pier's own architects dRMM will be present to discuss any comments with the visiting public.

One of the most successful programmes of entertainment that this Town has been fortunate enough to enjoy has been brought to the Stade for the duration of the Summer and Autumn months. "Stade Saturdays" as this series of music, dance, and artistic performances has become known is fast establishing Hastings as a centre for cultural activities. This series of spectacular occasions provide an ideal complement to the very obvious attractions of the new Jerwood Gallery, and the already busy programme of carnivals and all year round events. During the month the attractions included Hofesh Schechter's dance company, and Close Act the Dutch street arts company who produced Pi Leau. This company attracted some 3,000 people producing a spectacular performance, but both of these fantastic acts are justifiably acclaimed as

world class groups of entertainers. The ensuing month continues with an almost endless array of events with a visit of "The Boat", (you can all remember so generously giving of your old wooden artefacts to be used in its construction) over the weekend of July 6th and 7th. This activity will be accompanied by a programme of exhibitions and music at several locations on the Stade. On the evening of July 17th and the morning of July 18th the Olympic Torch will be in Town, again accompanied by top class entertainment at several locations along the route. Not least amongst the supporting acts is the colourful and highly cosmopolitan St.Leonards Festival , especially staged in the Warrior Square area to coincide with the passage of the Olympic flame. Things only get better as the month goes on, with our now annual event of Pirate's Day taking place on July 22nd with yet another attempt to recapture the world record. The climax of this event, apart from the hoped for success in record breaking, will be a visit from the world famous aerobatics team the Red Arrows. And all of this does not detract from the usual pattern of summer events, no wonder people are now saying "let's go to Hastings, there is always something happening there".

Following last year's evaluation of the Isobel Blackman Centre it is now functioning as both a day care centre and a community hub, including cafe facilities. A specification is currently in preparation to include the recommendations that came out of the evaluation process directed at a single organisational responsibility for all aspects of the centre. It is expected that the transition to a single organisation will include a consultation exercise that will take on board the view of both the carers and the users, hopefully culminating in a newly appointed organisation commencing their duties by January 2013. At the other end of the ward I have made strong representation to those responsible for traffic management to evaluate the current problems of "rat running" in the Clive Vale area. Once again some motorists are choosing to avoid the traffic delays at the Sussex Arms Junction by using Ashburnham Road and other parallel routes, but are compounding the problem by the use of excessive speeds. This has resulted in death of at least one pet that could have been avoided by travelling at a speed that is consistent with the residential nature of Clive Vale. I would be interested in your views on the introduction of either some form of traffic calming or the introduction of a 20 mph limit.

Over the years Hastings Borough Council has built an enviable record in its attitude and investment in all matters green. We have introduced measurable targets on carbon emissions into the Community Strategy, committed heavily and without cuts into the development of the Country Park, placed our allotments beyond development, and continue to seek ways to effect reductions within our ecological footprint. Many of you will have heard of our other countryside park at Pebsham, and now we are about to declare the remaining parts of Ponswood as a local nature reserve. I wonder how many other towns in the UK can boast a country park at each end, and a string of nature reserves in the middle. For those of you who enjoy the flora and fauna of the Fairlight Country Park a new species has been introduced. This is a herd of rare Sussex Cattle, traditionally sporting long horns for tearing through undergrowth and allowing them to graze and prevent pastures from becoming overgrown, which is essential in encouraging a diversity of flora and fauna to flourish in the Park. The presence of these natural creatures all contribute to a successful ecological management strategy that has allowed bird species such as linnets and yellowhammers to flourish, where in other parts of the UK they are in decline. Our Country Parks, Town Parks, and open spaces are the green lungs of this Town, and contribute hugely to our successful tourism offer.

Despite the unkindness of the elements a very successful "Explore Your Shore" partnership project between HBC's Play Hastings Team and Access to Nature Project with contributions from Sussex Wildlife Trust, provided a combination of fun mixed with education, for a number of school children during half term holidays. The children who attended were able to learn about our coastal environment, including the iguanadons whose presence some 140 million years ago are evidenced by remaining footprints. It was also brought home to many of these young citizens the effects of discarding their rubbish on the shore, with an exhibition of various items of packaging assembled in the order of their period of natural degradation. It was a great honour to be invited to the launch of RX 150 "Roy's Boys", during the week that preceded the Jubilee Celebrations. It was very fitting that a boat from our most traditional industry was chosen by the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex to represent the Town and the County at the fantastic one thousand boat's river pageant on the Thames. For a working trawler it was a long journey

to make, but there again to celebrate a Diamond Jubilee is certainly no short hop.

Following my report in last month's newsletter regarding the accretion of shingle problem on the fishing beach, the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) has agreed to make some funding available for the purchase of two shingle operating bull dozers, which is tremendous news with the problem now reduced to finding only the matched funding element. The life of the fisherman is most definitely up and down, and not only when they are at sea. The big news during the month is the potential phasing out of the abhorrent system of the discarding of fish mistakenly taken in excess of the iniquitous limits imposed by the system of quotas. However, if this sounds like the good news it ought to be, then the conundrum that is posed by the imposition of these new rules implying that fish taken in excess of quota can be neither landed nor discarded, needs resolving along the lines of common sense. Unfortunately those who set quotas in the mistaken belief that they bear any relationship to the availability of fish stocks, and then attempt to support that aberration through needlessly discarding the precious resources of our planet, have no real understanding of how to pursue an ecological balance as part of a sustainable fishery. They appear to remain blissfully unaware of the economic misery that the consequences of their misguided actions can inflict upon a whole community. The fight for justice continues with the building of a very powerful lobby, all demanding an equitable and timely solution. The influential voice of Greenpeace is now on board, asking you all to become a "fisherman's friend" in the interests of preserving our Town's oldest industry.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to any of you who may have received some strange emails from me around the middle of the month. The subjects apparently ranged from a recipe for strawberry jam through to cures for arthritis.....all very interesting but they didn't come from me. Along with several others my computer was hacked and my contact's list hi-jacked, I suspect that it will never make the Leveson enquiry, but it's still annoying for those of you who's time was wasted.

Kind Regards, John Hodges & Dawn Pool