

# Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



**Summer 2018**  
**Newsletter**  
**Issue No. 391**



**Margate Civic Society is a  
Founder Member  
of Civic Voice**

At our April meeting, Mike Bundock gave a most interesting talk on Thanet's public clocks including the curious sun-dial that once graced Droit House. After the talk, Mike asked whether we would welcome an article on that sundial for publication in our Newsletter. Such an offer could not be refused and the promised article appears on page 4. Thank you, Mike, both for the interesting talk and the well-researched article. Also in this Newsletter are articles by our Secretary, Geoff Orton, on this year's Heritage Open Days (see page 2), and one on planning matters by Mike Thompson (see page 3). The Society very much welcomes contributions for publication in our Newsletter which should be sent to the Editor (see details on back page).

Nearly two years have passed since the referendum on whether the UK should leave the EU. The result of that referendum was a small majority in favour of leaving the UK. Shortly after that referendum, the Prime Minister first uttered those immortal words "Brexit means Brexit" but here we are still not knowing what Brexit does mean. We are now in a state of Brexit statis with the Cabinet seemingly unable to agree what course of action should be taken - and time is fast running out! We certainly live in interesting times - but will the outcome prove to be beneficial or detrimental to the UK economy? Only time will tell.

Margate Charter Trustees are still wanting to metamorphose into a Margate Town Council but there is very little appetite in the town for such a change to occur. On the evidence of the large increases in Council Tax for all of the Thanet Town Councils (Ramsgate, Broadstairs and Westgate-on-Sea) in recent years, it is likely that the creation of a Town Council for Margate would see a large increase in Council Tax for Margate residents. With District Council elections coming up next year, it would seem prudent to defer any further consideration of a Town Council for Margate until well after those elections have been held.

In the meantime, Margate Civic Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. The 2018 Town Pride awards evening was a great success as was the Society's day-trip to Ypres in Belgium. The Society has arranged for a day-trip to Sheffield Park and the Bluebell Railway in September (see details on page 10) which promises to be a most interesting day out in Sussex. We have Civic Day in June and we look forward to seeing many of our members and those of the local community at 12 Arthur Road on 16th June. We end the year in December with our Christmas 50th Anniversary Celebratory Event - a 1960s-theme evening with films, music, photo-quiz, raffle and refreshments. Do make a note of it in your diary. □

**James Brazier**  
Newsletter Editor

## Welcome to new members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the Society:

Robin Haddon  
Ricky Cox  
David Purdy

**Sally Whitworth**  
Membership Secretary

## Civic Day 2018

**Saturday, 16th June**

**A DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES:**

**Saturday, 16th June 12.00 noon to 4.00pm**

The **Fifth National Civic Day** will be held on **Saturday, 16th June**, which is a celebration of what makes the place where we live attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. This year, **Margate Civic Society** have decided to celebrate the continuing regeneration of the Cliftonville Conservation Area and will be stewarding at **12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville** (which you will recall, recently received a Plaque at this year's Town Pride Awards).

This is an excellent opportunity for Members and the local community to visit this beautifully-restored late-Victorian house (part of the Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative) which will be open for public display. Entrance is FREE and all are most welcome.

During the event, there will also be ample opportunity to find out more as well as how to become a member, should you so wish.

We hope you will give your support and I look forward to seeing you there! □

**Pamela Pople**  
Chairman

## EXTRA MEETING

The Society are holding an extra meeting in June this year at the **Walpole Bay Hotel at 7.30pm on 14th June** when **Rod LeGear** will give a talk on **Margate Caves and Thanet's Underground Heritage**. This talk was previously scheduled for March but was cancelled due to inclement weather. Do come along to it. □

## DISCLAIMER

Please note that the Society is not responsible for the accuracy of material reproduced in the Newsletter. The content of the Newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of the Newsletter Editor, the Committee of our Society or of any individual contributors. □

## News from the Heritage Front

The three Thanet Civic Societies have now taken over the organisation of this year's Heritage Open Days (8th & 9th and 15th & 16th September.) An introductory evening was held at The Yarrow, Broadstairs, in April and a number of our members were there disporting a variety of hats (Birchington Heritage Trust, Westgate Heritage Centre, Drapers Windmill and Monkton Nature Reserve). The National Trust now heads up the overall effort and their representative reeled off the statistics: in 2017 there were 5,588 events, 2.52 million visitors, 2,131 organisers, 46,400 volunteers AND £10 million added to local economies. The National Trust loves Thanet as a compact little 'Jewel in the Crown' with a thriving heritage community.

The 2018 Heritage Open Days lists are still being compiled but at present the ones to watch out for on our patch include:

**12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville:** Winner of Margate Civic Society's Town Pride Award Blue Plaque and being stewarded by MCS – we are promoting Conservation Areas as part of the Civic Voice Campaign led by Laura Sandys. You can follow the Campaign on the Civic Voice website and read about the 'Future of Conservation Areas Report' launched this May as the first of several. Conservation Areas are good for the economy and certainly Cliftonville is improving. At the time of writing, we don't know how far 12 Arthur Road has got with CV's National Design Awards but we have a good record and are hopeful.

**Drapers Windmill:** KCC have done us proud and both the cap and sweeps (sails outside Kent) are restored and good for another couple of decades at least. There will be a celebration on Saturday, 8th September. Bring a paper bag – we *may* be able to assist with rock-cake production at home. Any Morris Dancer contacts out there? Drapers is about 90% MCS and we are working on the rest.

**Droit House:** our local archaeologists will be putting on a display including *What Was Found At The Caves* on the second weekend and there'll be a chance for some junior sand-tray excavation amongst other educational stimulants. If you've found anything odd in the garden then bring it along.

**Margate Museum/Tudor House:** this is the Centenary Year for Women's Suffrage and the researchers have been ferreting out the local indomitables (*did* anyone throw herself under a donkey?) for an exhibition. But especially intriguing will be the Augmented Reality 'mini town-trail' which Ian Dickie has devised between his two cornucopia - embracing some Blue Plaques *en route*. You download

the 'app' and off you go. Shape of an extensive platform to come pretty smartly – Stratford-on-Avon and Guernsey are already there with 'interactive' information (as also British Museum, V&A, RHS Wisley, National Trust, etc). Forward to the 21st Century!

A full programme will be announced in due course but, alas, it may not include the Theatre Royal or the Winter Gardens as Your Leisure aren't feeling too *communautaire* at present. We hope the TDC Heritage Champion is 'in constructive dialogue.'

We still await the result of the TDC Heritage Strategy Workshops last October: they did, however, stress the abundance of local archaeology (a Bronze Age Barrow for every day of the year according to the late Dr Dave Perkins), the need for central accessibility and the availability of idle council assets. The Old Town Hall hasn't been doing much of late except rot and is eminently suitable for an 'Augmented Reality' operation. Central funds can be provided by 'the Ministry' and all that is required is some drive from on high. We live in hope of 'joined-up thinking' in Cecil Street and never say die.

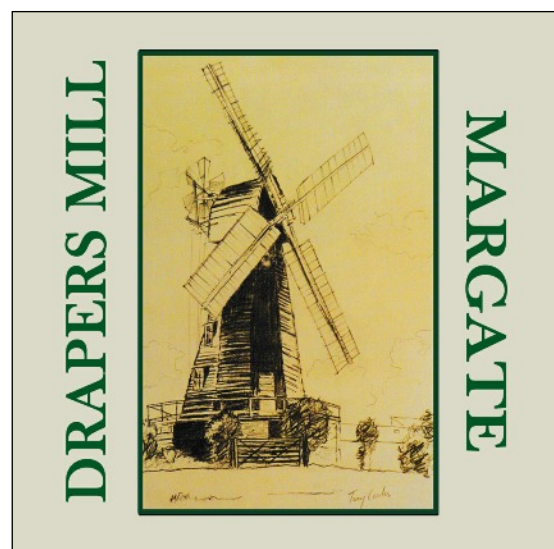
Moves are afoot to seek a listing upgrade of the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital Chapel from Grade II to Grade II\* which would indicate 'national importance'. The 'Father Willis' organ alone is worthy of the upgrade and, of course, the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital has enormous medical history interest, so potential as a museum. The architect, Sir James Knowles, was a literary man and well acquainted with Tennyson and others. The Victorian Society is currently looking for the Ten Most Threatened Victorian Buildings and the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital Chapel is a firm candidate.

And a new government fund has just been announced for restoring 'Seaside Landmarks' – anyone know of a spare Lido awaiting recycling? □

**Geoff Orton**  
Hon Secretary



*This advertising leaflet dates from the time when 12 Arthur Road was operating as The Hotel Cecil (probably in the 1950s)*



*This 'beermat' design was drawn up by our Mike Wilton for Drapers Mill. Robin Colyer (President, Drapers Windmill Trust), likes it so much that he is incorporating it in some souvenir mugs which the Trust will be ordering shortly to sell to raise funds*

## Planning Matters

Your Society continues to involve itself in planning issues and would like to bring its Members up to date with several ongoing planning matters which we feel might be of interest as follows:

(1) MCS continues its battle to save the **former Crown and Sceptre Public House at Acol**. Members will recall that we objected strongly against a planning application to demolish the building and the application was subsequently refused. However, the developer had already commenced demolition of the building and he lodged an immediate appeal against the decision to refuse permission. These appeals can take months to be determined and, in the meantime, further representations by your Society led to a Section 215 Notice being served on the developer requiring reinstatement of all the demolished elements of the building. There is also a right of appeal to the local Magistrates' Court against these Notices and this is what the developer has done. These appeals are usually held quite quickly and it is the outcome of this appeal that we await. If the appeal is dismissed, the developer will be obliged to carry out the remedial work. However, we have asked TDC whether any other powers can be brought to bear sooner as the building must be deteriorating very badly in light of the wet weather we have experienced over the past few months.

(2) An application has been submitted for the **erection of 900 houses plus commercial buildings at Westwood Cross on land between Manston Court Road and Haine Road**. The softening of the application by the inclusion of a two form entry primary-school does nothing to inspire any confidence in the proposal with the site being bounded by two totally inadequate access roads, namely Manston Court Road and Haine Road. Despite inclusion within the application of 'improvements' to these two roads, your Society feels that a perfect recipe for gridlock and permanent traffic congestion will result. In the total absence of any new access roads being proposed to facilitate easier access into and out of the site, your Society has lodged an objection to the proposal. It is highly likely though that this will fall on deaf ears as the future of Westwood Cross as a new town centre is being actively pursued - never mind the gridlock.

(3) A proposal by Thanet District Council to convert **three former houses in Warwick Road, Cliftonville**, once used as an hotel but latterly as an House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) into nine flats is being fiercely fought by the Warwick Road Residents' Association and your Society has weighed up the pros and cons relating to this development and has fallen firmly in line with the residents. As a result, we have lodged a formal objection to the development and will assist the residents in any way we can to fight the proposal. We feel that all the good work already undertaken to

change the demographics of the area from an abundance of Houses in Multiple Occupation and flats to more family orientated accommodation would be undone should this proposal be allowed. We would rather see these three properties returned to single dwellings each supporting single family occupation. Excellent examples of best practice already exist in the area and one only has to look at recent examples like the Hotel Leslie and the Europa Hotel, both in Surrey Road, where a 50-roomed HMO and a 20-roomed HMO were acquired and redeveloped to provide five family houses and two family houses respectively. There already exists an over-supply of flatted accommodation within Cliftonville West and if the Council are unwilling to convert these properties back to single dwellings then they should sell them and allow the private sector to carry out the work and re-invest the funds realised from the sale to create the flatted accommodation they appear to require elsewhere in Thanet.

(4) **Manston Airport**. A recent planning application to redevelop the Manston Airport site with Housing and Mixed Usage has been submitted to TDC and your Society has responded as follows:

*Margate Civic Society wishes to raise the strongest possible objection to the above proposal.*

*It is the Society's considered view that the value of the site as a functional airport with all the employment and trading opportunities that will bring far outweighs any short-term gains for private profit that its destruction and redevelopment would provide. In addition, the value as a functional airport in a post-Brexit period will be immeasurable as the UK faces the rest of the world seeking to increase its trading capacity. The site is an existing National asset and it would surely make no sense whatsoever to destroy an existing airport and jeopardise the UK's future for such a short-sighted proposal.*

*Until the outcome of the application for a Development Consent Order is known, this application must either be refused or remain undetermined. Either way, let the applicant appeal either the refusal or a non-determination as a previous appeal relating to a proposed change of use of aviation buildings has been refused and has, therefore, already set a precedent.*

We hope to report progress on these and other matters within future editions of the Newsletter.

**Mike Thompson**  
**Planning and Conservation Matters**

# Margate's Curious Sun-dial

One of the delights of researching local history is making unexpected discoveries. Recently, while preparing some notes for a talk on Public Timekeeping, I noticed the sun-dial that once appeared on the Margate Droit House. This was previously unseen by me and aroused my interest to try to find out more. The sun-dial is sadly no longer in evidence, but when was it constructed and when did it disappear?

A review of the Kentish Gazette soon revealed the announcement of the construction of a *Curious Sundial* by Mr John Abram, a Canterbury-based teacher of mathematics. The text of this article was syndicated and appeared in several newspapers nationally, so it was evidently a newsworthy occurrence. The text is included here as it provides a very worthwhile description of the instrument. This was originally published in the Kentish Gazette in April 1829.

*"Mr John Abram, of Canterbury, teacher of the mathematics, and author of the Kentish Tide Tables, has constructed a curious south-westerly declining sun-dial, which is to be fixed in the front of the Droit-house, Margate, below the transparent clock. The following are the curious properties of this dial: - On the upper part is the hour circle, to show the true solar time. Below the hour circle is the Torrid Zone on a large scale, with the parallels of the sun's declination (hyperbolic curves) corresponding to every half hour of the sun's rising and setting. These half hours are again subdivided into quarters of an hour. The time of the sun's rising and setting, for the day, is indicated by the extreme point of the shadow of the gnomon traversing the corresponding parallel of declination, which by its diurnal progress over the surface of the dial, also shows, at any given instant, the true bearing of the sun by the compass, indicated by vertical straight lines, marked with different points of the compass. There are likewise other parallels of declination, corresponding to the entrance of the sun into each sign of the Zodiac. In short, the dial points out the hour of the day, the sun's place in the Ecliptic, the time of the sun's rising and setting, the length of the natural day and night, and the sun's true Azimuth or bearing by the compass."*



A nineteenth-century engraving of Margate Pier and Harbour with the original Droit House on which the sun-dial can be seen above the entrance door

Sun-dials were regularly installed on public buildings and churches, but those with complications such as described here, were far from commonplace. One example that springs to mind is the one that still graces the wall of St Lawrence's Church, in the Derbyshire village of Eyam. Although this predates our Margate example by some 50 years, it provides us with an insight into what we might have seen locally.



An Edwardian postcard of the original Droit House still showing the sun-dial above the entrance door

Although close examination of nineteenth-century engravings and early twentieth-century picture postcards show the Margate sundial, I have yet to find an image that shows the dial in sufficient detail to know what it truly looked like. The dial does look quite vulnerable, so I imagine that the exposed location caused it to deteriorate and eventually to be removed. If anyone can help with a date for this removal, it would be appreciated.

The reference to the transparent clock is interesting and one presumes that this related to the glass dial that was illuminated at night time. At some time during the recent past the original clock mechanism installed into the Droit House has been replaced by a synchronous electric motor.

Mike Bundock

*The sundial on a wall in the courtyard of Merton College, Oxford which, like the one that once graced the Droit House, employs a gnomon (not shown in this photo) to cast a shadow on to the sundial. Perhaps the sundial on the Droit House operated on similar 'lines' - Ed*



# Presentation of the Society's 2018 Town Pride Awards

The results of the judging of this year's prestigious Town Pride awards were announced by our Chairman, Pamela Pople, at our meeting held on Thursday, 10th May at The Walpole Bay Hotel. Pamela reported on the high standard of the refurbishment works and of the attractive architecture of the new developments for all the properties nominated by members of the Society for this year's Town Pride awards and our President, Ralph Handscomb presented the awards in the presence of the Member of Parliament for Thanet North, Sir Roger Gale, the Mayor (Cllr Rosamund Dixon), the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Julie Dellar and the Mayor's Consort, Geoffrey Dixon. Many of the Mayor's fellow Councillors were unable to attend our meeting due to a TDC meeting being held on the same evening.

This year, the Judging Panel decided to award two Town Pride Plaques & Certificates and five Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates, as follows:

**Town Pride Plaques & Certificates** were awarded to:

12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville

The Cinque Ports Public House, Marine Terrace

and the five **Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates** were awarded to:

40-46 Sweyn Road, Cliftonville

Former Dreamland Cinema frontage, Marine Terrace

Former Nurses' Home, Canterbury Road

Banks Ale & Wine House, 244 Northdown Road

35 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea

## Town Pride Plaque & Certificate awarded to:



12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville



L to R: Sam Causer (Studio Sam Causer Ltd); Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Rob Page (ex-Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative Project Officer), Harry Scobie, Vice-President, Margate Civic Society; Christopher Walker (owner of 12 Arthur Road); and Pamela Pople, Chairman, Margate Civic Society

## and to:



L to R: Christopher Lees (Cinque Ports PH); Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Harry Scobie, Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society; Louisa Heller (Cinque Ports PH); Darren Petrucci (Assistant Manager, Cinque Ports PH); Dave Bates (Project Manager, WFC Construction Co); and Pamela Pople, Chairman, Margate Civic Society,



Cinque Ports PH, Marine Terrace

## Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates awarded to:



*Former Dreamland Cinema (exterior),  
Marine Terrace*



*L to R: Nick Dermott, Heritage Advisory Officer, TDC;  
Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Nick  
Bushell (Contracts Manager, Coombes Builders); Harry  
Scobie, Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society; Derek  
Newman (Project Manager, Coombes Builders); and  
Pamela Pople, Chairman, Margate Civic Society*



*L to R: Ravi Kumar (Director, BuildVantage); Ralph  
Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Harry Scobie,  
Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society; John Sheldrake, the  
developer's consultant; Chris Mole, Architectural Assistant,  
Alexander-Sedgley Architects; and Pamela Pople, Chairman,  
Margate Civic Society*



*Former Nurses' Home, Canterbury Road, Margate*



*40-46 Sweyn Road, Cliftonville*



*L to R: James Young; Ashley Jackson (Housing Strategy Officer);  
Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Harry  
Scobie, Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society; Bob Porter (TDC's  
Head of Housing & Planning Services); Annette Claudel; Nicola  
Hackman; and Pamela Pople, Chairman, Margate Civic Society*

and to:



35 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea



L to R: Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Philip Toghill (owner of 35 Sea Road); Harry Scobie, Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society; and Pamela Pople, Chairman of Margate Civic Society



L to R: Ralph Handscomb, President, Margate Civic Society; Harry Scobie, Vice-Chairman of Margate Civic Society; Steve & Julie Garratt (owners of Banks Ale & Wine House); Pamela Pople, Chairman, Margate Civic Society)



Banks Ale & Wine House, 244 Northdown Road, Cliftonville

## GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION – OUR PRIVACY POLICY

Members may be aware that the General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, is a new European framework for data protection which came into effect on 25th May 2018. It has been brought into UK law to replace the Data Protection Act 1998. The terms of GDPR apply to all organisations, from the largest to the smallest – from Facebook to Margate Civic Society.

The Society is obliged to explain to you what data we collect from you, how we store it and how we use it. We are also obliged to advise you of your rights to see what data we hold for you and to have it deleted if you so wish and to opt out of receiving communications from us.

As a member of the Society, we hold the following information about you: Name, postal address, e-mail address where you have supplied one, telephone number where you have supplied one, the category of membership (i.e. single or joint, paper Newsletter or e-mail Newsletter) and the amount you have paid for membership and the date

you paid it. This information is stored in an Excel spreadsheet held on a personal computer owned by the Membership Secretary. The computer is password protected and is kept at the Membership Secretary's private residence.

In addition to the Membership Secretary, the information may also be viewed but not stored by the Chairman, Hon Secretary, Newsletter Editor and Hon Treasurer. The information will be used solely for purposes connected with the administration of the Society, such as e-mailing or posting Newsletters, e-mailing information about events which we consider will be useful to members and general work in connection with amending or updating membership information. The data we hold about you is never passed to outside organisations. □

**Mike Wilton**  
**Hon Treasurer**

## The line-up of the 2018 Town Pride Awards proudly held by their winners



*L to R: Christopher Lees (Cinque Ports PH); Dave Bates, Project Manager, WFC Construction Co, Cinque Ports PH); Darren Petrucci (Assistant Manager, Cinque Ports PH); Philip Toghill (35 Sea Road); Christopher Walker (12 Arthur Road); Bob Porter, Head of Housing and Planning Services, TDC (44-46 Sweyn Road); Steve Garratt (Banks Ale & Wine House); Nick Dermott (on behalf of the former Dreamland Cinema frontage), Architect and Heritage Advisor, TDC; Chris Mole, Architectural Assistant, Alexander-Sedgley Architects*



*The front row show their appreciation at the close of the awards:  
L to R: Sir Roger Gale MP; Geoffrey Dixon, Margate Town Mayor's Consort; Cllr Rosamund Dixon, Mayor of Margate; Cllr Julie Dellar, Deputy Mayor of Margate; and Ralph Handscomb, President of Margate Civic Society*



*Harry Scobie, our Vice-Chairman, presents Pamela Pople, our Chairman, with a bouquet of flowers from the Committee as a token of thanks for all the hard work Pamela had put into this year's Town Pride Awards to make it such a success*



*The above design is courtesy of our member Arnold Schwartzman OBE RDI. The design incorporates the Clock Tower which was erected to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee*



## **The following are extracts from Pamela's speech when announcing the winners of this year's Town Pride Awards:**

### **Town Pride Plaque and Certificate awarded to:**

#### **12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville**

This is an exceptional and meticulous restoration that truly turns the clock back to yesteryear. Quality materials have been used throughout and the restoration of the leaded light glazed structure at first floor level preserves a unique and stunning original feature. The interior has received the same attention to detail. This represents a firm belief by the Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative in the worthwhileness of restoring Cliftonville and is a tribute to Heritage Advisor, Nick Dermott, Rob Page, ex-Dalby Square THI Project Officer and Studio Sam Causer. We were delighted to see so many local tradesmen employed in the restoration work and the painstaking work involved in getting as near the 1895 original as feasible is awesome and its contribution to Cliftonville's ongoing regeneration inspiring.

#### **Cinque Port Public House, 59 Marine Terrace**

This is a beautifully executed high quality restoration using traditional materials throughout. The fine fenestration to the front elevation has meticulously replicated the original timber window sections and the complementary sign writing to the flank wall is quite exceptional. The new appearance and the careful manner in which the renovation has been carried out is a huge asset to the town as well as replacing a run-down and rather seedy public house with one which can be enjoyed. This beautiful and elegant restoration has been sympathetically undertaken, with attention to detail, inside highlighting the Mods and Rockers' culture of the 60's. A most striking and attractive addition to the regeneration of Margate, it raises the profile of the seafront and also provides excellent bar and restaurant facilities, thus contributing to the community amenity admirably.

### **----- 'Highly Commended' Certificate Awarded to: Former Dreamland Cinema frontage, Marine Terrace, Margate**

The restoration of the exterior commenced in February 2011, with repairs to the building beginning in June 2011. Works by Coombs Builders were funded by a Coastal Communities Fund bid which TDC secured in 2014 and the restoration of the exterior was completed in summer of 2017 with yellow neon installed to highlight the building.

The restoration of the former Sunshine Cafe and cinema entrance foyer at Dreamland, is a significant step towards further increasing visitor enthusiasm in Dreamland and making the entertainment complex work as a whole. This is a beautifully-executed restoration using correct materials to this famous and iconic Art Deco seafront building. The neon illumination at night-time is truly stunning. Arguably the most important building in the town and in an extremely prominent location. Prior to the renovation, the premises were shabby and run down, covered in graffiti and spoiling the appearance of the seafront. The renovation has been carefully planned and implemented, restoring a

true Art Deco appearance and it is commendable that local tradesmen have been used wherever possible.

A welcome cleaning up of the seafront which stands alone as worthy of recognition and we are delighted to see that these premises have been transformed so effectively which enhance the seafront significantly .

### **Former Nurses' Residence, Canterbury Road, Margate**

How gratifying to see that the historical Nurses Residence at the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital on the borders of Margate and Westbrook has now been beautifully restored and sensitively converted by London based company BuildVantage, into 29 luxury apartments, including three stunning penthouses. An impressive, large-scale conversion carried-out sympathetically to this long-term empty former Nurses' Home. The use of traditional materials throughout retains and complements the original architectural detail beautifully. This is a very large and important building on the main route into Margate. The renovation has retained the building's character, whilst modernising and cleaning it, also providing much-needed stylish accommodation.

#### **40-46 Sweyn Road, Cliftonville**

A long-term empty former hotel now transformed and returned to residential use providing a welcome mixture of family accommodation and a fine addition to the Cliftonville street-scene. Demolishing an ugly frontage and restoring the houses has made a huge difference to the appearance, and ambience, of this street as well as providing accommodation. This is firm evidence of Thanet District Council's determined commitment to make Cliftonville family friendly and congratulations to them on a tasteful conversion. Another excellent project under the LIVE Margate banner.

#### **35 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea**

This project, which replaces an unsightly gap on the seafront, was particularly recommended by Westgate members as blending so stylishly with other developments and is a good example of sensitive design that is possible for residential properties. This is a striking modern exercise in both design and materials which compliments the existing street-scene beautifully.

### **Banks Ale & Wine House, 244 Northdown Road, Cliftonville**

A sympathetic and tasteful restoration of the former Midland Bank/HSBC Bank building, this conversion preserves and enhances the original architectural features of the building very well indeed. The owner has undertaken a superlative job of revitalizing these premises as a small social venue that is greatly required at this end of Northdown Road and the premises are an asset to the street scene and to the local community of which I am sure they will be proud. □

**Pamela Pople  
Chairman**

MARGATE CIVIC SOCIETY

# Our Autumn coach trip SHEFFIELD PARK AND THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY



If you are a member of Margate Civic Society or will have a National Trust membership at the time of the journey, the ticket price is **£28**.

Otherwise the ticket price is **£38**.

The reason is that the higher price includes National Trust entry to Sheffield Park, which MCS and NT members do not have to pay.

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

Leaving Wheatsheaf 8.30am, pick-up in Margate, Westgate & Birchington

Arrive Sheffield Park National Trust gardens approx. 11am

Reserved seats on the 3.45pm Bluebell Railway to East Grinstead & return

Arrive back in Thanet approx. 7.30pm

Tickets on sale at meetings or contact Mike Wilton on 01843 844717 or email [treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk)

## Ypres visit 15th May 2018



*Our coach party on arrival at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing*

Fifty-three members of our Society and friends paid a most memorable visit to the Belgian town of Ypres (Ieper) on Tuesday, 15th May 2018. This was the fourth of our annual visits to the Continent (we visited Dunkirk in 2015, Bruges in 2016 and Arras in 2017) and the event has now become a highlight of the year for many. It was fitting that we visited Ypres this year for 2018 is the closing year of the Great War centenary commemorations. The visit to Ypres closed by attendance at the very moving Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate which is held at 8.00pm every evening. The weather in Ypres was perfect with a blue sky. Our thanks go to Mike Wilton for making all the arrangements although, unfortunately, he was unable to join us that day.



*The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing. The architect of this fine building was Sir Reginald Blomfield.*



*The magnificent bronze model, located on the Ramparts, of the Menin Gate Memorial*



*One of the many bronze 'guardian lions' on the upper floor of the Menin Gate Memorial*



*An old postcard showing the Menin Gate as it was before the Great War. Note the statues of the lions on either side. This image is courtesy of Marion Simpson who, with her son Andrew, were members of our party*



*These attractive bronze pathway-markers indicate the heritage trail around Ypres. The markers feature (L to R) the Cloth Hall, St Martin's Cathedral and the Menin Gate Memorial*



*The magnificent bronze model of the Cloth Hall to be found near the front of the Cloth Hall*



*The Royal British Legion Poppy Shop,  
Grote Markt*



*The Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
Information Centre, Menenstraat*



*Top of the Cloth Hall  
tower*



*The guilded fiery  
dragon weather-  
vane atop the Cloth  
Hall tower*



*The Nave, St Martin's RC Cathedral.  
Note the height of the Nave*



*The Nave, St George's Memorial Church. Every object in this  
church was given in memory of someone who fell in the Great  
War or some organisation that was involved in the Great War*



*Royal Flying Corps Memorial  
Window, St George's  
Memorial Church,  
Elverdingestraat*



*CWGC signpost on the ramparts at the  
Menin Gate*



*CWGC Ramparts Cemetery (Lille Gate). This  
cemetery, on the bank of the moat around Ypres,  
has to be one of the CWGC's most attractive  
cemeteries*



*Memorial Plaque to the Chinese Labour  
Corps, St George's Memorial Church.  
This plaque was erected around ten  
years ago*



*The Belgian 1914-18 Memorial,  
Vandennepeereboomplein*



*IWGC (Imperial War Graves Commission) signposts at the Lille Gate.  
The Imperial War Graves Commission was renamed the  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960*

The town of Ypres was totally destroyed by enemy action in the Great War. Many of the houses were rebuilt in the 1920s in exactly the same architectural style as they had been built before the Great War but the rebuilding of the Cloth Hall was not finally completed until 1967. Many of the houses proudly display on their facade, the year in which they were rebuilt as can be seen in many of the following photographs:



*Rebuilt 1922, Boomgaardstraat*



*Original built in 1640, rebuilt in 1922, Dehaernestraat*



*Rebuilt 1922, Boomgaardstraat*



*Cafe Central, Grote Markt*



*Rebuilt 1922, Boomgaardstraat*



*Rebuilt 1922, Vandenpeereboomplein*



*Rebuilt 1922, Dehaernestraat*



*Close-up of the year-date on Cafe Central showing that it was built in 1929*



*Rebuilt 1922, Dehaernestraat*



*Rebuilt 1922, Boomgaardstraat*



*The Nazareth building in Rijselstraat. Before and after the Great War, it was used as the town's old-men's hospice and later as the police station. It has recently been converted to residences. The dates shown on the front of the building (1914 and 1918) indicate its period of non-existence*



*The Courts of Justice, Grote Markt*



*The guilded Belgian Lion weather-vane atop the Courts of Justice in the Grote Markt. The building faces the Cloth Hall*

I hope that readers of the Newsletter will enjoy looking at these photographs as much as I enjoyed taking them during our one-day visit to Ypres. □

**JB**

# Civic Voice's 'Big Conservation Conversation' campaign

*Research by Historic England and the Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation (IHBC) shows that one in five local authorities now have no conservation officer. Many authorities, at best, have limited part-time advice. The scale of the local government cutbacks means that we really must question the capacity of many local authorities to cope with even their statutory conservation duties.*

**- Laura Sandys, Civic Voice Vice-President**

## Executive Summary

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance according to Section 69 The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

In 2017, Conservation Areas across England celebrated 50 years since the introduction of the Civic Amenities Act. A key part of the 50th anniversary was Civic Voice's campaign, the Big Conservation Conversation. The campaign arose from feedback from our members that we should celebrate the positive impact that Conservation Areas have made to England since 1967.

But today, England's Conservation Areas are at risk, greater risk today than ever before. But if Conservation Areas are regarded as an asset, to assist in regeneration of our towns, they require adequate resources to manage them.

In October 2017, another 47 Conservation Areas were added to the national Heritage at Risk 2017 register meaning that nearly 10% of the nation's heritage at risk is a designated Conservation Area. More Conservation Areas are now on the 'at risk' register than ever before.

Undertaking the 'Big Conservation Conversation' campaign alerted us to the fact that many civic societies were experiencing significant challenges with protecting their Conservation Area due to the perceived impact that funding cuts to local government were having on conservation and planning departments. Responding to this feedback from Civic Voice members, we wanted to further probe this situation and undertook a survey asking the question, "What does the lack of a conservation officer actually mean to the health of a Conservation Area?"

The results of this initial survey highlighted a stark finding, that over 70% of respondents did not consider Conservation Areas were being afforded the necessary protection.

Viewing these statistics alongside IHBC and Historic England research on the decline of conservation staff in local government, it is a sobering picture.

Critical gaps now exist with 21% of local authorities having no dedicated conservation officer. There is now a clear inability for many authorities to carry out non-statutory functions such as community outreach and Conservation Area character appraisals. This is not the view of Civic Voice, but the view of local authorities and community groups who responded to us.

Local consultation, engagement and participation have a vital role in creating high-quality developments, but this depends on councils having well-resourced planning and

conservation departments. These areas are reducing in priority for councils because local councils are now experiencing difficult economic times.

The problem will continue to get worse unless we address the root cause of the problem now. That is that underfunded and under-resourced conservation departments are not being prioritized by national government for funding and support.

We hope this report and its recommendations go towards supporting Historic England in its work as the Government's advisory arm whilst, at the same time, inspiring communities across the country to step up to the challenge and support local authorities looking at ways of managing Conservation Area for future generations.

## The purpose and function of Conservation Areas

A Conservation Area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Local Planning Authorities have a duty under the Act to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Council is also under a duty to review existing Conservation Areas, 'from time to time' and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

Conservation Areas are not single buildings, but groups of buildings and areas which have special architectural or historic significance. For designation, the significance need not be at a national level: local interest is sufficient. Because the designation covers an area, significance can include the spaces between buildings and natural features. Topography, the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries, archaeology and landscape features such as gardens, parks and greens, trees and street furniture can all contribute to its significance.

Conservation Area designation does not prevent development from taking place but is a tool to help manage change. The aim of management is to protect the significance which led to the designation and ensure that development preserves or enhances that special interest. In exercising their planning powers, local planning authorities must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Conservation Areas are an important part of the England's heritage, representing a cross-section of the best surviving examples of different phases and types of development from residential to industrial areas, open spaces and town centres. Conservation Areas foster local identity and can be catalysts for social and economic regeneration. Historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being, and quality of life. They contribute to the quality of urban spaces and add unique character to the places where we live. They add to our cultural identity and to local distinctiveness. □

The above text is from Civic Voice's excellent publication *What is the future for our Conservation Areas?* published in May 2018. A PDF of the full report is available on request from our Secretary, Geoff Orton.

# What's On

**Margate Civic Society** (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville)

Date	Subject
<b>2018</b>	
14th June	'Margate Caves and Thanet's Underground Heritage' by Rod LeGear MCIfA (Vice President, Kent Archaeological Society, Chairman, Kent Underground Research Group) <i>(Note: The Society does not normally hold meetings from June to September inclusive. The meeting on 14th June is an extra date as our meeting programmed for March 2018 had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. Both the speaker and the subject for our June meeting are the same as had been announced for our meeting in March.)</i>
4th October	AGM followed by 'Thanet's Gift to the World' by Dr Andrew Brown BA, PhD, MCBA, Planning Director, South East Planning Group, Historic England
1st November	'Time to Thank Them' by John Drewy, Patron of The Nursing Memorial Appeal
13th December	Christmas 50th Anniversary Celebratory Event - a 1960s-theme evening with films, music, photo-quiz, raffle and refreshments - full details to be confirmed



Westgate Heritage Centre (in the back of St Saviour's Church)

From Wednesday 2nd May 2018, the Centre will open on Wednesdays 11.00 am to 1.00pm and on Saturdays 10.00am to 12 noon. From September, the Heritage Centre will be open only on the first Saturday of each month from 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon with a talk at 10.30am.

On the first Saturday of each month there will be a talk at 10.30am

Date	Subject
<b>2018</b>	
7th July	Illustrated talk by Heritage Centre member Pat Orpwood on Freddie Lonsdale, playwright and London Theatre Manager, who had important links with Westgate-on-Sea
4th August	Illustrated talk by Heritage Centre member Colin Osborne '100 years of a Westgate Family'. Colin's family have been associated with Westgate since 1916 and its story is a fascinating vignette of the town's story
6th August to 18th August	<b>10.00am to 4.00pm</b> (not Sundays) Westgate Art Group Summer Exhibition in St Saviour's Church. The Heritage Centre will be holding an <b>exhibition</b> on " <b>Westgate-on-Sea in the Great War</b> ", which will include a display board about the RNAS seaplane base at St Mildred's Bay.
1st September	Illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch on Dr Edith Summerskill MP whose father was a Westgate GP and who, herself, attended St Saviour's School. This talk is part of the Heritage Centre's contribution to the national project celebrating the centenary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act, which enfranchised women for the first time. We shall follow this theme when we take part in the Heritage Open Days' programme on Saturday September 15th 2018 from 12 noon to 4.00pm, in the <b>Town Hall Buildings</b> which will be especially open to the public that day <b>free of charge</b> . On that day, at 12.30pm and at 2.30pm, Dr Dawn Crouch will give a short talk on 'The Role of Westgate Women in the Great War'. There will also be a slide show at 1.00pm and at 3.00pm and display boards available. Please note that these events will all take place in the Town Hall Buildings in St Mildred's Road
6th October	Illustrated talk by Sally Whitworth on the Rammell family - the one-time owners of Streete Court and other land relating to Westgate. This is the last in the series 'The Stories of Three Wills'

**Come and browse through our collection of material and photographs of Westgate, which is growing all the time. We have large-scale maps and plans which reveal great detail about your street or area**

# Margate Civic Society

[www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk)

Supported by



Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity. It is a founder member of Civic Voice and is affiliated to both the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies and the Kent History Federation.

The Society's purpose and aims are to encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Margate and its environs (Birchington, Westgate-on-Sea, Cliftonville, Westbrook, Garlinge, Acol, Sarre and St Nicholas-at-Wade); to stimulate public interest and care for the history and character of the area; and to encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general amenity and historical interest. To this end, Town Pride awards are given annually to those buildings which have been refurbished, cleaned or modified and which, in the opinion of the Society, have enhanced the appearance of the town. New high-quality buildings are also eligible for the award. The Society also vets planning applications and makes known to Thanet District Council any objections to those applications which it considers necessary.

Evening meetings are held monthly between October and May at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville. The lectures, mostly digitally illustrated, are interesting and of local interest; they are also varied in their appeal. A Newsletter is published four times a year.

## Committee for 2017/18:

**President:** Mr Ralph Handscomb, 14 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3AB (Tel: 01843 293169)  
(e-mail: [handscomb@talktalk.net](mailto:handscomb@talktalk.net))

**Chairman:** Mrs Pamela Pople, Hurston Cottage, Sloe Lane, Westwood, Margate CT9 4DX (Tel: 01843 221689)  
(e-mail: [pamela@hurstoncottage.co.uk](mailto:pamela@hurstoncottage.co.uk))

**Vice-Chairman:** Mr Harry Scobie, 59 Gloucester Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3NP (Tel: 078 6227 6466)  
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**Secretary:** Mr Geoff Orton, 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 01843 835085)  
(e-mail: [geoff.orton@tesco.net](mailto:geoff.orton@tesco.net))

**Treasurer:** Mr Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF (Tel: 01843 844717)  
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**Membership Secretary:** Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 07949 835777)  
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**Planning and Conservation issues:** Mr Mike Thompson, 7 Seymour Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5HT  
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If you are interested in joining our Society, please fill in the enrolment form below:

✂.....

## Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £ .....

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

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## Subscription rates for 2017/18:

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Annual (Electronic Newsletter#)	£10.00	£14.00	£2.00	£20.00

*Please note that Life Membership subscription is no longer available*

and send it to the Membership Secretary, Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR

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