

THE GORING AND ILEX CONSERVATION GROUP

Conserving the beauty and present character of Goring, the Ilex Avenue,
the trees in Sea Lane and the Goring Gap



NEWSLETTER

Sept 2021



The Covid restrictions have prevented us from holding the normal AGM's. To update members and residents we have decided to produce this newsletter.

2020/21 Review

Introduction

Although Covid-19 has imposed restrictions we want to reassure Members that we have continued to monitor developments or threats to the essential character of Goring and have been active on your behalf. The committee has met regularly via Zoom to discuss any issues that have arisen, in particular, the application by Persimmon to build 475 homes on the northern Goring Gap. Acting in concert with others as part of the Goring Gap Action Group, we are glad to report that the application was unanimously rejected by Worthing Planning Committee. We hope, like all, that we will be able to return to some level of 'normality' but in the meantime we will continue with our aim to conserve the unique character of Goring.

Planning

We regularly observe the latest planning applications for the Goring area and review them in our committee. Where we believe that there is a case for the Group to comment on or object to an application in order to conserve the character of Goring we will communicate this to the planners and also liaise with our councillors on larger issues. In work being undertaken through the "permitted development" rules, it appears that, in Goring at least, there are now fewer stand alone dormers being installed but more single storey extensions and hip to gable roof conversions.

We have also worked with other groups such as the Goring Residents Association, Ferring Conservation Group and the Worthing Society on larger issues which included a resubmission for initially 8 but up to 94 additional beach huts on the foreshore between the Waterfront development and Sea Lane café. Although the initial eight additional huts doesn't sound many, the siting of the huts would reduce two of the largest open sea views and be in front of memorial seats and the full amount would obliterate any sea views from the path. Working with other groups, we managed to generate enough opposition that the proposals were withdrawn and the planners have stated that they do not anticipate there will be any further submissions in either location in the foreseeable future.

As noted in the introduction to the newsletter, the planning application for Chatsmore Farm has been unanimously turned down by the Planning Committee but we expect to hear more from Persimmon on this matter.

Last year, we commented on the McCarthy & Stone socially distanced public consultation for a new retirement homes development on the former Charles Kirk factory near Goring station. The full planning application for this brownfield site has now been submitted and

we have responded with our concerns regarding the four storey portion and the design of the development.

The land in front of the former Police houses in Goring Way was due to be auctioned but in discussion with Sussex police we understand that this has been withdrawn due to a title query raised by the residents. We are told that the future sale, or otherwise, of the title will be established once the query is resolved. We will keep an eye on this area of open space. There was an attempt to sell Highdown Vineyard subject to planning approval for 121 houses. We have learned that Arun District Council planners have indicated they would not support an application for residential development on this site. Again, we await developments and will work with local groups should a planning application be forthcoming.

Local Plan

The public consultation for the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan was completed on 23rd March 2021. This consultation was the last stage before consideration of the consequent representations and submission with the Local Plan and supporting documentation for examination by a Planning Inspector. The Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government on 11th June. Following the submission, an Inspector will begin to hold Hearing Sessions in the autumn. It is hoped that the Inspector's report will be issued in time for the Council to be able to formally adopt the Plan in early 2022. The adopted Plan (to cover the next 15 years) is required to have a five year review so commencement of the Plan's review is expected to commence towards the end of 2023.

This Plan version takes into account comments from the Draft Plan consultation, also Government planning changes since then and further reports to the Council. We are pleased to see that, although the proposed Plan shows a significant shortfall of housing provision against the Government housing target, the Council has robust evidence to demonstrate how all options to increase the rate of development have been exhausted and protection of the Goring Gaps has been retained. Indeed, at the Committee meeting, one of the members asked if consideration could be given to the protection wording for these Gaps being strengthened.

We commented on the Plan within the last consultation remit which covers the soundness, legality and duty to co-operate. The Local Authority has spent much time and effort over the last few years in compiling the Plan with engagement from the community both within and outside Worthing and commissioning various specialist reports. In our view the Plan is thorough, sound and legal in all respects as it seeks to balance additional housing provision against the need to retain and enhance the features that are desirable for both visitors and resident's wellbeing.

Finance

Our annual accounts to the 31st December 2019 reflected subscriptions and donations, from our 667 membership households, of £1,541. Our total expenditure was £1,327 and thus a modest surplus of £214 arose.

However our annual accounts to the 31st December 2020 present a far different picture as we received £45 in donations from members, and incurred costs of £678. These costs related to our ongoing work in the Plantation; Spring bulbs of £124; Contribution of £112 towards the cost of the replacement artwork on one of the Information Boards by the Goring Gap; and our ongoing membership of the Open Spaces Society.

So whilst our deficit in 2020 of £633 did reduce our reserves, we still maintain our £6,000 Conservation Fund, which has been built up steadily over many past years.

News from the Plantation

Over the last two years our work has continued with a few more volunteers gained a pace and with more recognition from the public walking through praising our work. This year has been difficult for everyone and we have been only able to work when permissible. Sadly, our new trees received vandalism regularly through the summer months, but we will not stop planting as some do eventually survive.

Meeting once a month for 2 hours on a Saturday our volunteers have achieved just over 400 hours physical work over the last 12 months. Several have been forced to leave due to age and health and we always welcome new volunteers especially those younger and physically fit.

We have planted native Bluebells, Daffodils and snowdrops that will become an annual autumn task. We have planted 250 young trees that slowly establish under the canopy of the larger trees. Establishing trees is not easy when you consider the high winds that constantly batter the Plantation from the sea.

We have cut down a large area of brambles and we can now see throughout the trees that provides a safer area. We continue to cut down brambles, dead trees and vegetation together with spreading woodchip along the inner paths and which are now more manageable.

We do give a brief report each month in the Goring Guide of our progress but do remember this work is completely carried out by volunteers from the community. If you are fit and able do come along and join us to help improve the Plantation even if it's only once a year.

We are always in need of volunteers and a few younger ones will take some of the effort of four older volunteers,

We thank all those volunteers that have given their time freely to maintain and improve the Plantation. We pay particular thanks to Phillip Ellis who has decided to stand down as project leader after 20 years of dedicated effort. Thank you Philip. We are current looking for his replacement.

Noticeboard Refurbishment

Our group is responsible for the upkeep of the four information boards, three in the Ilex Avenue and one on the coastal footpath between Goring and Ferring. The information board on the coastal footpath has taken a severe battering over the years and the artwork had started to deteriorate. With the help of the Ferring Conservation Group we have replaced the artwork and refurbished the wood surround.



Littering Enforcement

David Rolph, a member of our committee, has investigated how littering is enforced in neighbouring local authorities. He found that East Hampshire District Council had created their own company, EH Commercial Services Ltd., to tackle the issue and helped several Councils to reduce litter in their area. As a result, David contacted Worthing Borough Council to suggest that a year's trial to assess the service provided would be a good idea, and we are very pleased to report that such a trial was approved in December 2020, and is currently underway. It will be interesting to find out if the trial is successful.

Membership Subscriptions / Donations

The Covid restrictions has made the usual door to door delivery and renewal of membership difficult if not impossible. Last year (2020) we decided to give members a 'subscription holiday'. We have decided to extend the 'subscription holiday' for this year also (2021). Over the past ten years our membership households averaged 727, and the average total of members subscriptions and donations received was £1,568

We would however encourage you if you are able to make a small donation towards our funds, this can be done by using the tear-off slip at the foot of the page or by crediting our bank account. Details below.

Account Name Goring & Ilex Conservation Group

Account Sort Code 09-01-29

Account Number 64220493

Reference Short address ie. 27 Acacia Ave. (max of 14 characters)

A written receipt will be issued for all donations received.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Your details (name & postal address/e-mail address) will be kept securely. Please be assured that we will not pass your details on to any third party.



The Goring & Ilex Conservation Group Donation

If you are able, you can use this tear-off slip to make a donation this year.

Pop the slip with your donation through either of the two letterboxes below, a receipt (paper or e-mailed) will be issued for all donations received.

John Daley

48 Aldsworth Avenue

Bob Niall

34 Marine Crescent

Name.....Address.....

Amount Enclosed £.....

Tel.....

E-mail.....