

THE ILEX CONSERVATION GROUP

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

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7.15pm for 7.30pm Thursday 4th May 2017 at
Methodist Church Hall, Bury Drive, Goring



Members and Non-Members are cordially invited to attend.

Following the AGM there will be a talk by noted Worthing historian

Chris Hare

“The Secret Shore” - Smuggling History & Smuggling Myths

Chris will also bring a selection of his books for sale and signing

Review of the year's events

Planning

Last year saw the publication of the Worthing Local Plan Consultation Document. We spent some time in formulating our replies to the various sections and we hope that our comments will be considered in the next steps of the Local Plan. We will continue to be active in the coming two stages of public consultation.

In the last year, we have again continued to review local planning applications. Our committee reviewed 103 planning applications for the Goring area and commented to the planners on 11 of these. In addition, we supported other local groups on planning matters such as the Montague Centre and Aquarena site and have spoken at local Planning Committee meetings.

In April, an application was submitted for a 46 pitch caravan and camping site on a 0.4 hectare part of the southern Gap. We sent a letter of objection and voiced our concerns at the planning meeting. There were over 400 objections to the proposals and the proposals were refused by the Planning Committee. The land is now fenced and gated and we continue to review activity there.

At present, the Gaps are the least likely of the greenfield sites in Worthing to be developed but this by no means indicates that they are safe from development. We will continue to work with other local groups and liaise with our local councillors, council officers and MPs to try and ensure that these Gaps are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

Camping and Trading on Greensward

We have liaised with the Council regarding unauthorised camping on the Greensward and should this become a concern, the Worthing Council Parks Group and Beach Patrol should be contacted to alleviate the situation.

Flint walls

There has been a loss of historic flint walls in Goring. We are attempting to have these retained where possible and have discussed this with Worthing Council and Planning Enforcement. Planning Enforcement ensured that one illegally demolished wall was reinstated, much improving the street scene.

Trees

Last year we liaised with Worthing Park regarding tree issues in Goring. We are kept informed of impending work and essential work in Ilex Avenue and the Plantation.

These two features are of great importance to the character of Goring. The Ilex Avenue was donated to the people of Worthing in 1935 to be held upon Trust to be maintained for all time as a public walk and pleasure ground. The Ilex Avenue is said to be the longest Avenue of Ilex Oaks in the world. Likewise the Plantation was dedicated to Worthing Corporation, free of cost as the owners (Hesketh Estates) '*consider this belt of woodland is, with the avenue, the finest feature of the estate, and should be preserved for all time*'.

Practical Projects

Over the last year we have with help of volunteers continued to improve the Plantation that leads from Goring Hall down to the sea. Clearing paths and spreading woodchip to make more accessible through the year. A number of small trees were planted last winter as an ongoing project with the aim of taking over from the Sycamores that are too invasive. Continued to remove small Sycamore trees and clearing brambles to give the young planted trees room to establish. If you walked through the area last spring you would have seen many daffodils in flower that were hidden by growth. We erected 4 bird boxes on trees last winter but unfortunately these were all vandalised during the summer and have now been replaced nearer the main drive in view of visitors. Walkers would have heard a woodpeckers nest in the spring close to Amberley Drive and we know Owls are present, certainly at night so keep a look out for interesting birds when walking through.

Our thanks must also go to all the volunteers who have helped over the last year, meeting once a month on a Saturday, regardless of the weather. Usually 10 – 12 volunteers turn for two or more hours. We must thank Dave Philip who provides tea and coffee during our sessions, that has helped build up a community spirit and enthusiasm.

Worthing & Adur Council continues to support us in conjunction with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) who supports similar groups in the borough. They are engaged with some 30 similar groups in Adur & Worthing offering support, funding and encouragement. The Park Rangers occasionally come along and give support on our Saturdays.

This winter we had a donation of a 200 tree and shrubs saplings from the TCV with

guards and stakes from the council that we have planted in February and March.

A grant application to WSCC has been made for funding a notice board that will give information about the area and can be updated with news and provide a focal point.

Anyone physically fit is more than welcome to come along and volunteer with the project work even if it is only once a year usually the second Saturday of the month. Dates of sessions are always published monthly in the Goring Guide. Your contact is Phillip Ellis 01903-504317

email: elsteadbysea@btinternet.com

Traffic Regulation Orders and Parking

The TRO along Marine Drive and Crescent is now in place and has addressed the problem of long term Motorhome parking and storage of these vehicles adjacent to the Greensward. The Group has also been active regarding HGVs using Titnore Lane and obstructing the highway and damaging pavements at the Mulberry shops

Annual Accounts

Whilst our total income for the year rose to £1,841 this did include a one-off receipt of £224 from the Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies, being our share of their assets on closure.

As our expenditure fell to £945 again, a surplus arose which, for this year was £896. When added to our accumulated brought forward reserves, the bank balance amounted to £5,884 on the 31st December 2016. £5,000 of this has been set aside as our Conservation fund, created in previous years to enable us to take whatever professional advice is considered necessary, to help achieve our aims, on behalf of our members and, for the benefit of all local residents.

The Ilex Conservation Group 2017 Subscription

If you were unable to pay your subscription when the newsletter was delivered, could please bring the completed 'tear off' slip to the AGM or alternatively drop it through the letter box of one of the following collectors. A membership card will then be issued.

Name.....Address.....Tel.....

Amount Enclosed £.....(Membership £1 per household but additional donations welcome)