



September 2017 Newsletter

The best news for residents in many years

On Wednesday 23rd August Hastings Planning Committee unanimously agreed to the Change of Use for the former Ice House in Rock a Nore Road. At the meeting Old Town Councillor Dawn Poole spoke powerfully on the pressing need for a new G.P.'s surgery. Previously Cllr Bacon had made a strong written submission. The HOTRA organised petition had reached 1,723 signatures. This is the largest Change of Use petition ever received by Hastings Council.

Previously for nearly 2 years the application had been refused. The watershed in the whole process came when the District Valuers office had recognised that use as a hotel was not viable. Once that point had been reached there were no Planning grounds for refusal.

Dr Craig Namvar can now go ahead with the conversion of the 'shell'. This will not happen overnight - finance, building contractor selection and the construction will all take time. HOTRA hopes to be able to arrange a meeting in October when Dr Namvar will be able to up date every one.

In the mean time there is a need for significant action outside the building.

Rock a Nore road and its pavements are in need of significant improvement. You can help by pressing ESCCllr Tania Charmin to seek early commitment from ESCC Highways.

Disabled parking and access - the obvious location is inside Rock a Nore car park at the rear of the Shipwreck Heritage and Fishermens Museums. Some dedicated spaces already exist. The shortest route is between the 2 museums using a wide but unmade pathway. This could easily be tar-paved. For this press Hastings Council leader Peter Chowney.

It should be recognised that G.P. Provision across Hastings is far from adequate. Dr Namvar's commitment here deserves our sincerest thanks.

Unacceptable behaviour in the Old Town

When the new Public Space Protection Orders were being discussed earlier this year concern was raised about what was happening in Swan Gardens, in St Clements churchyard, and in and around George Street and the High Street. The consultation allowed certain areas to be specifically listed.

Inevitably the first test came in August. Repeated rowdy behaviour began affecting the lives of residents and businesses nearby. Alcohol, nitrous oxide and drugs were being used. Some days young people were gathering from late afternoon, with many there till after midnight.

On 23rd August matters worsened. That evening at least 4 different people contacted Hastings Police who failed to send any officers. Paving slabs were pulled up and smashed in Swan Gardens. On the Stade open space and nearby beach much glass was smashed which necessitated a special clean up by Kier.

Unsung heroes over these past few weeks are the 2/3 volunteers who first thing every morning go into Swan Gardens and the churchyard to clean up the litter.

Since then Cllrs Dawn Poole and James Bacon have raised the lack of action with the Police through Hastings Council. Some other agencies are to become involved and action is promised.

Inevitably when low level crime is ignored more serious crime follows. It has been reported that on 4 occasions lead has been stolen from the roof of the Old Town Hall. [There is an area of the churchyard that is hidden behind the Old Town Hall and provides easy cover].

Amber Rudd MP has also been asked to secure action. Old fashioned folk might hope that such embarrassing events would have some impact within the Home Secretary's constituency. The excuse of insufficient Police resources cannot be offered as these problems are not seen on this scale elsewhere in Hastings.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Good news at last

Following the awful fire in September 2015 at Marine Parade HOTRA have been pressing for smaller size fire appliances to be purchased. The Borough Fire Commander and the fire crews have demonstrated their strong desire to protect the Old Town, its residents, buildings and businesses. Their task in some of the less accessible parts of the Old Town is very challenging. All the more reason for them to be provided with the most appropriate equipment.

When they checked it was clear that none of the standard size fire appliances could access Hill Street and Exmouth Place. [By Swan House the road is simply not wide enough]. Pressure on ESFRS was added to when there was a fatality in a fire in Brighton where the narrow streets and poor parking significantly delayed fire crews.

HOTRA checked what was happening in other parts of the country. Kent decided in 2015 to order over 30 smaller appliances. Devon and Cornwall soon did likewise, then Hampshire ordered an Initial Response vehicle. This has almost all of the same equipment as a standard machine but is more able to react sooner. Now Surrey are about to order for their area. Almost all these service teams are using the first vehicles as a 'pilot' to help evaluate what is best. In a few weeks time East Sussex will make a decision on the most appropriate machine and 2 should be in service after Christmas - 1 in Brighton, 1 here in Hastings.

HOTRA are grateful to ESCCllr Phil Scott for his repeated intervention on this matter with the Fire Authority.



Hastings Storytelling Festival November 2017

As well as the work through Artist and Storytellers in residence in local schools highlights confirmed are :

Thursday 9th at 4.00 at White Rock Theatre - Childrens Laureate Lauren Child, creator of the Charlie and Lola stories

Friday 10th at 8.00 at St Mary in the Castle - India Re- imagined -an evening of food, music, dance, and stories from India

Saturday 11th at 8.00 at White Rock Theatre Benjamin Zephaniah and supporting performers

Sunday 12th from 12 on Stade open space The Childrens Day - bands, storytellers and parade around the Old Town at 3. All welcome

Check www.hastingsstoryfest.org for the latest details

Croft Road Traffic Survey

Many roads in the Old Town are not adequate for the ever growing volume of traffic and size of vehicles. In the opinion of many residents Croft Road is too congested, and traffic speeds are too high. One way of solving this problem is to make the road a one way street. HOTRA has compiled this survey to determine whether there is support for this idea. If that proves to be the case then ESCC Highways will be asked to consider the idea. If they agree there would then be an open and transparent consultation conducted by them.

1. Tell us whether you agree or disagree with these two statements...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
There is a traffic problem in Croft Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One way working would help reduce the problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. If one way working is introduced in which direction would you prefer traffic flow? (Please answer even if you oppose one way working.)

Uphill No preference Downhill

3. Do you own a car ? Yes No

4. Where do you park your car? On road Off road Not applicable

5. Do you have anything else to add ?

6. Your contact details

Name

Address

Postcode

Return to Dick Edwards, 13 Tackleway OR Nelson House Antiques 80 High Street
BEFORE FRIDAY 20th OCTOBER

You can also complete this form online by going to our website: www.hotra.org