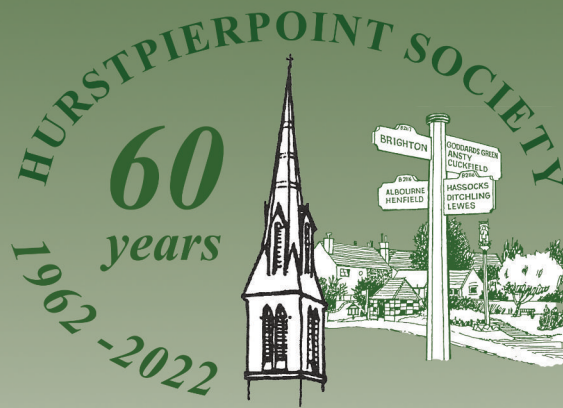


HURSTPIERPOINT SOCIETY

Celebrating 60 Years
Pull-Out Supplement

Produced for *Hurst Life* September 2022



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hurstpierpointsociety.org.uk



Welcome to this commemorative snapshot to celebrate the Diamond Anniversary of The Hurstpierpoint Society. The Society was founded in 1962, and has developed over the past 60 years to ensure the retention of the fabric and legacy of heritage passed onto us, continues to be maintained and enhanced to the benefit of residents; past, present and future.

To understand the reasons for its foundation we need to look back to the period of post-war housing from 1945 to 1960. Housebuilding came to a virtual standstill between 1939 and 1945 and there was a need for many houses to be built following the destruction of so many buildings during the war. In the UK, it was estimated that 500,000 homes were destroyed, and many others were left badly damaged, especially in cities. Many houses needed modernisation, for

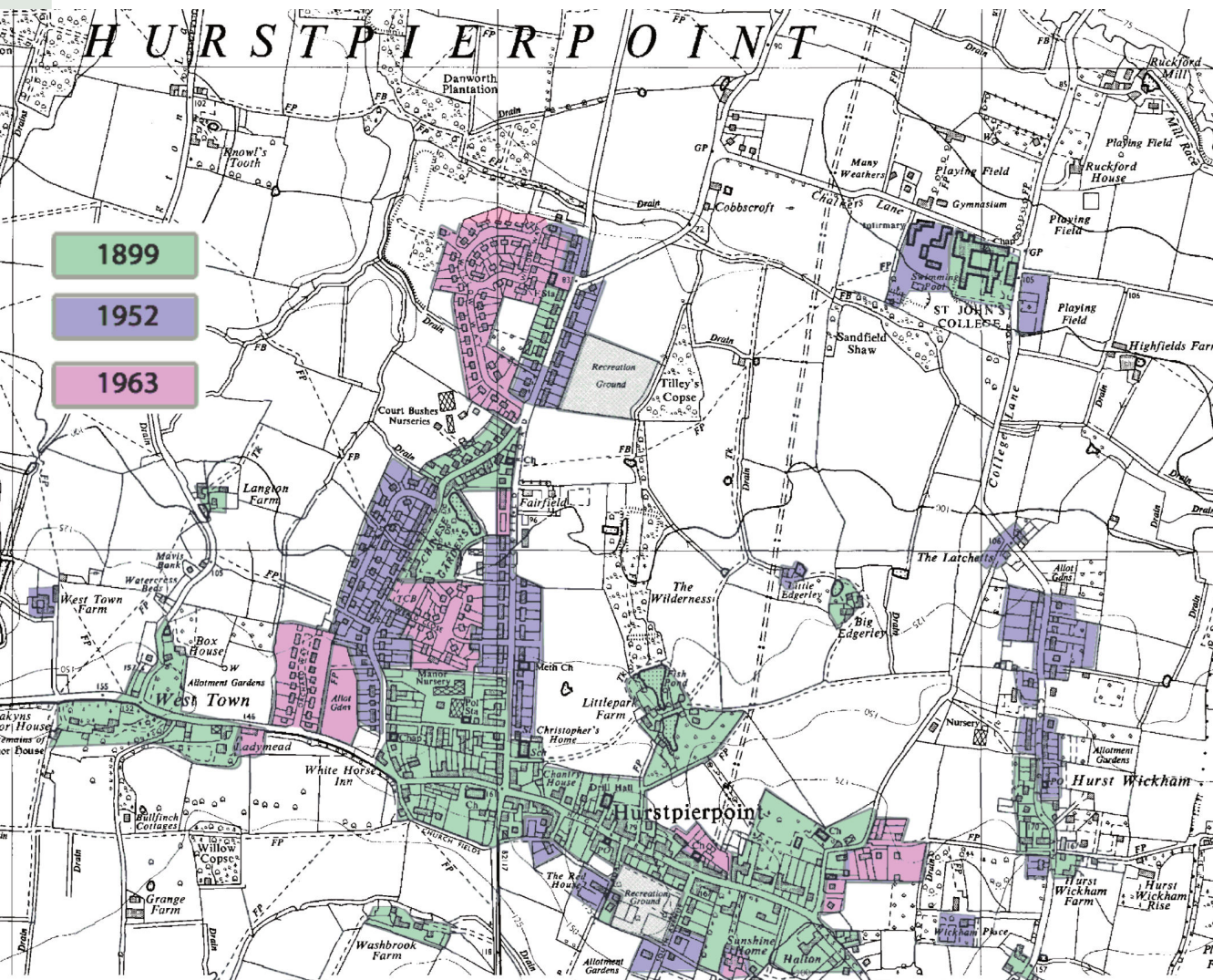
example 500,000 homes in the UK did not have an indoor toilet in 1950.

The Government attempted to solve these issues by building over 1.2 million new homes between 1946 and 1951. Four out of five houses were council houses built by local councils, to be rented by families.

As the immediate need for housing was being met, there was a spirit of post-war optimism, with rebuilding and a hope for the future using new technologies. The Festival of Britain in 1951 showed the best of modern technologies and architecture, and this optimistic spirit included the use of new materials and expressive forms.

For example, new building design might have a dynamic mono-pitch roof, the flow of indoor/outdoor space, or a vaulted timber boarded ceiling.

Hurst 1962-1963



From a custom architect-designed modernist single dwelling house in the countryside (right)...

to a terraced townhouse or a block of flats, that were designed to “lift the soul” (centre right):

The creation of new housing estates took place when modernist architects were given the opportunity to demonstrate how their rationally planned architecture would create a bright new utopian world of clean functional housing.



The Long House, Langton Lane

As the map of 1962-63 (left) shows, the village had already extended its stock of social housing through infill at Weald Close, (below right) and previously used land at Willow Way.

With many houses planned on land beyond the existing boundaries, Hurst did indeed grow in the late 60's and 70's to take in fields to the north, east and west of the village.

However, some prominent buildings (marked below) to the west of Pitt Lane, which did not meet the requirements of this modernist



West Furlong Court, West Furlong Lane

Formerly Alpha House and The Poor House (88 & 86), and 84 High Street in 1957



Weald Close; An estate built as infill between Cuckfield Road and Western Road

approach, were demolished and replaced with the current building with flats above Lloyds Pharmacy (right).

In Hurst, with its historical centre, there were worries that other historic buildings could be lost to make way for this new utopia.

Lady Cynthia Barnes was a keen researcher of Nineteenth Century architecture and social history and wanted to protect the existing heritage of the village centre, having seen what was happening elsewhere. She met with a group of like-minded people (unfortunately, we don't have the records of this group but know that the early members included Nancy Bradley, Clive Foster, Frank Mason and Geoffrey Bowles) to form what would later become Hurstpierpoint Society. During the 1960's they were concerned by the loss of buildings in the High Street.

The first meeting of the founding members of the Hurstpierpoint Society took place in February 1962. It started life as both a preservation pressure group and a conservation society.

Following the Civic Amenities Act 1967, that required councils to determine areas of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas, the Society was one of the prime movers in achieving Hurst's original Conservation Area in 1972, centred on the High Street, being the third village in Sussex to obtain Conservation Status.

Lady Cynthia Barnes
Our Founder in her garden at Hampton Lodge



Village High St. block of flats,
shops and parking

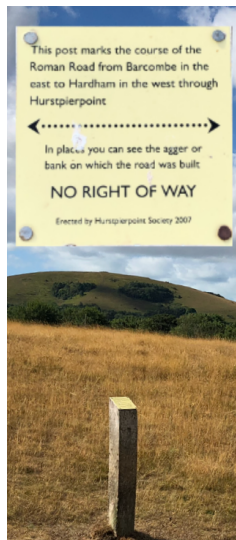
Since that time, the Society has monitored all planning applications in order to protect our shared heritage.

Meanwhile; Planning goal posts moved, technology evolved, climate change and energy efficiency have come to the fore while our local population grows and need homes.

By 2008, it was not about whether or not we had more development, but where and how. To achieve this, the Society started a Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area Appraisal in order to produce a guidance document identifying the elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of the Conservation Areas.

The Appraisal underwent many amendments to take account of changing policies but with the help of Mid Sussex District Council's Conservation Officers, and 10 years in the making, Hurst now has a document describing the historic and architectural features within the village and is a 'material planning consideration'.

Any planning application within the Conservation Areas must demonstrate that its proposals preserve or enhance the special features of the village. It's very easy to undervalue the change to a single feature within these areas, but maintaining the character adds to the overall attractiveness of the village, which helps to maintain the viability of our shops, pubs and services, which in turn, adds to the well-being of our residents.



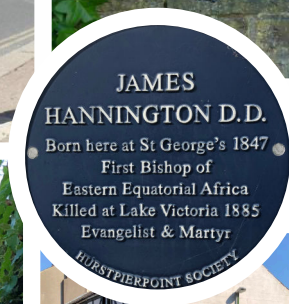
Enough of
The Big Stuff...
What Did The
~~Romans~~ SOCIETY
Ever do for US ?



Since those early days centred on 'preservation and conservation', and to add to the visual impact of buildings within the village, the Society has invested in infrastructure projects relating to conservation and historical significance.

These include the plaque at the door of St George's House, bollards on pavements and the historic mile post (front cover) in the High Street, ensuring that replacement streetlights preserved the historical swan neck pattern, the provision of kissing gates on local footpaths, restoring Victorian street signs and marking the route of the Roman Road...

... just so we all remember what the Romans did here too!





We've also looked to encourage and benefit many local projects including donating funds for the remodelling of the Village Garden, the St Lawrence Fair sculpture, and improvements to the Players Theatre (inside and out).



The Refurbished Players Theatre



We've given financial support to community projects including the roofing over the St Lawrence School swimming pool, the siting of benches, the High Street Christmas lights, campaigns fighting against unsustainable development, the outstanding Woodland Flora and Fauna Group and the training of first responders in health emergencies.

We encourage community spirit by producing Christmas cards from paintings by local artists, supporting and attending St Lawrence Fairs, Hurst Festivals and the High Street Christmas Fairs.

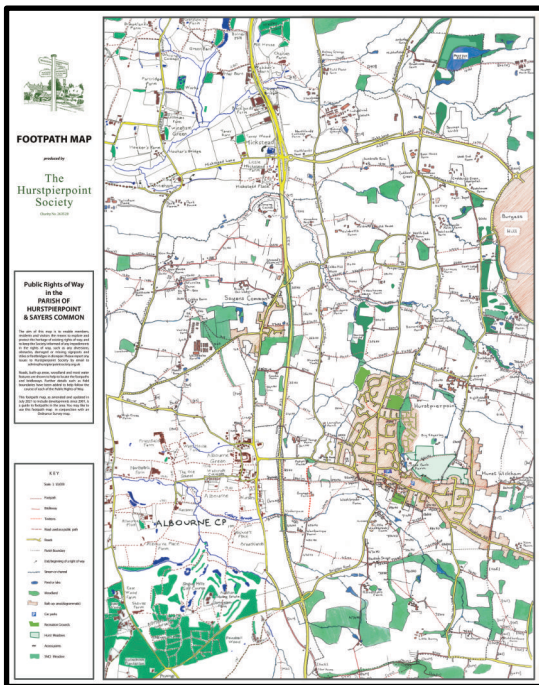


Entering the 21st Century with more concern about our environment and thinking about the name of Hurstpierpoint with Hurst being the Anglo Saxon for a 'clearing in the forest', (a uniquely Sussex and Kent term of many places formed in the Forest of Anderida. see right) the Society carried out a survey to assess the capacity for additional trees in the village, to improve its visual and environmental aspect and leave a long-term legacy.

The survey revealed that the greatest opportunity for tree planting was in the grass verges to be found on many roads throughout the village and in 2011 we paid WSCC to provide and plant three different varieties of Maple tree on Albourne Road.

Since then we have planted over 100 trees throughout the village including a replacement tree outside St Lawrence School to mark its 150th anniversary.

Our Patron, Judy Parfitt at
St Lawrence School



A large informative map is now in place near the main carpark with leaflets available nearby, and a fully integrated online version of the Trail has links to further information about the people, places and events of Hurst.

Perhaps one of the few good things to emerge from two years of the pandemic lockdown.



Throughout 60 years the Society has relied on volunteers. The Trustees on the committee freely give their time, meeting regularly to keep a watching eye on the Village to protect its character and charm, supporting the vibrant community for future generations.

We produce two newsletters a year, which our small army of Collectors deliver to members, and collect the subscriptions (from those not using our online capabilities) to keep funding the many projects we undertake.

We hope you have enjoyed this overview of the last 60 years, and as we enter a period of new challenges, it is important that we continue to attract like-minded new committee members with fresh ideas, and new collectors to continue our legacy into the future.

Also, if you are not a member and wish to keep abreast of what we're doing from our Newsletters, and propose new projects, membership of The Hurstpierpoint Society is a simple online process, so please



contact us through our website Hurstpierpointsociety.org.uk

...and if you are new to the village...

within the village. These are now available at the Parish office, the Charity Shop and at events we attend. We hope that it will remain "current" for some time to come!

The largest and most recent project to date, in August 2021, was the launch of the Heritage Trail around the centre of the village for current and future residents, as well as visitors, to have the means to discover the heritage of our village.

In partnership with the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, the Society developed a fully interactive comprehensive 21st Century 'Slight Sketch of a Picture of Hurst', based on Ian Nelson's Village Walk, which was a regular event at Hurst Festival for over a decade.

