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COUNCIL FINANCES SUFFER FURTHER PAIN

Jason Ellis



Likely staff salary inflation will add to deficit

HUGH SULLIVAN

The cabinet of Hastings Borough Council held session on Monday evening to review the latest forecasts of the council's future finances – and to hear further bad news. The rapidly rising costs of providing temporary accommodation to

the homeless have been the council's major concern in recent reviews. Now an internal Monitoring Report prepared by Simon Jones, the council's Deputy Chief Finance Officer, has highlighted the likely adverse impact of inflationary increases in the wages and salaries of public sector workers.

Local authority pay rates are set by negotiations between the LGA (Local Government Association) and the public sector unions, and these were reported by Mr Jones as "ongoing". The cabinet was in fact told that the two sides are currently at loggerheads and that the unions are expected to ballot their

members to take industrial action this side of Christmas. However, with the Prime Minister recently announcing that police officers, junior doctors and teachers will be given at least a 6% pay award, the council has been advised to budget

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NEWS

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Many of the controversies and debates in the big wide world beyond Hastings (there be dragons...) have a local dimension.

In this issue, we discuss if private GPs are either necessary or desirable, and how Hastings, along with many other coastal towns, continues to bear the brunt of sewage pollution and corporate laissez-faire. HIP also considers contrasting views on climate change, and whether there really is a shortage of polar bears.

Elsewhere in the paper, our expert contributors take historical perspectives; looking back on the Norman invasion - so good they named a St Leonard's road after it, and Hastings' arguable claim to be the birthplace of British television.

With Bookfest (see back page) just around the corner and Creative Currents in full swing, the Arts section takes its customarily eclectic look at subjects ranging from LGBTQ+ horror film fanzines to Beethoven and Brahms, local photographic hero John Cole's new collection and the link between artist's and psycho-therapist's couches.

Jump up off the sofa and try activities for the over 50s at the Isabell Blackman Centre, or perhaps go blackberry picking.

Sufficient perhaps to take your mind off News page reports on the parlous state of Hastings Borough Council's finances...

Happy reading

New United Boss Sends Olive Branch to Council



Hastings United

Documents filed last week at the Companies Registry on behalf of Hastings United Football Club Limited have shown that the majority financial interest in the club is now held by Ben White, son of Dean White, through his 100% holding in a newly formed company, Aspire Hastings Limited. Directors of Aspire are Ben, Dean and two less well-known local businessmen - Metin Davudovic, who owns a number of fish-and-chip shops in Kent, and Marc Gall, director of the Hastings Sofa Company.

All have had previous involvement in aspects of coaching at the club's academy.

Former majority owners of the club, Daren Burney and Peter Sherlock, have resigned their directorships, but other directors - Dane Martin, Craig Barrow, Hay-

ley Clout and David Ormerod - appear to be staying on.

In a statement issued just before the August bank holiday weekend, Dean White indicated that the club will seek a better relationship with Hastings Borough Council. "Only time will tell if the refusal of the Tilekiln relocation is a missed opportunity for our club and football in general in the local area", he wrote. "Although we are aware of upcoming challenges ahead, particularly around the Pilot Field, we are encouraged by the Council's public stance that they are committed to supporting the club redevelopment of the site, and we are looking forward to forging a strong relationship with them in the future, ensuring that our community can have access to facilities that it deserves, as well as a hardworking

and inclusive football club it can be proud of."

Chris Laverick, host of the Sussex By The Sea podcast which provides both on-field and off-field coverage of the club's fortunes, is encouraged. "The Whites are straight-talking genuine people that live and breathe Hastings football", he says. "They are open to dialogue with our fan base and, it would also seem, with our local council. I personally am very positive about the future of our club under their stewardship."

Lines of Duty

Following a Home Office pronouncement last week that police are to follow "all reasonable lines of enquiry" in their approach to tackling crime, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne has promised that new guidance to this effect is being issued to Sussex Police.

No crime investigations will now be screened out, she says, solely on the basis that they are

perceived as 'minor'.

The Home Secretary had observed that "if any crime type is unchecked, public confidence is undermined". Ms Bourne said she agreed. "What is often considered a minor incident by police can, in reality, have a severely negative impact for an individual. From the first contact with police after reporting an incident, the public rightly expect that something

will happen as a result, particularly when there are reasonable lines of enquiry that can be followed."

She identified shoplifting, drug possession, car theft, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour as crimes which "make people's lives miserable, so we should not give criminals a pass to an easy life." Sussex Police were now committed "to pursuing all reasonable lines of enquiry where there appears to be available evidence to support a potential prosecution".

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DATE	HIGH AND LOW TIDES			SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOON
FRI 8 SEPT	H5:42am	L12:18pm	H6:16pm	6:21	7:28	
SAT 9 SEPT	L1:07am	H7:09am	L1:46pm	H7:55pm	6:23	7:26
SUN 10 SEPT	L2:49am	H8:41am	L3:32pm	H9:19pm	6:24	7:23
MON 11 SEPT	L4:15am	H9:47am	L4:40pm	H10:20pm	6:26	7:21
TUES 12 SEPT	L5:10am	H10:35am	L5:38pm	H11:02pm	6:27	7:19
WEDS 13 SEPT	L5:53am	H11:13am	L6:07pm	H11:36pm	6:29	7:17
THURS 14 SEPT	L6:28am	H11:46am	L6:40pm		6:30	7:14
FRI 15 SEPT	H0:03am	L6:58am	H12:17pm	L7:12pm	6:32	7:12 NEW
SAT 16 SEPT	H0:30am	L7:24am	H12:46pm	L7:42pm	6:33	7:10
SUN 17 SEPT	H0:57am	L7:52am	H1:13pm	L8:13pm	6:35	7:08
MON 18 SEPT	H1:22am	L8:22am	H1:137pm	L8:43pm	6:37	7:05
TUES 19 SEPT	H1:48am	L8:50am	H4:01pm	L9:11pm	6:38	7:03
WEDS 20 SEPT	H2:15am	L9:18am	H2:30pm	L9:39pm	6:40	7:01
THURS 21 SEPT	H2:48am	L9:48am	H3:04pm	L10:11pm	6:41	6:58

* L= LOW TIDE H= HIGHTIDE For beach safety advice visit: nli.org/safety/beach-safety

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Hotel Costs Soar But Council “Committed”

HUGH SULLIVAN

The construction of a Premier Inn hotel on the former Cornwallis Street car park site owned by Hastings Borough Council (HBC), politically controversial since it was first mooted in 2019, has run into major budgeting problems. A report to cabinet issued by the council's Chief Executive Jane Hartnell has recommended that its capital programme budget be increased to over £13.6m to fund the development – almost double the budget initially considered, and around £4.6m above the figure suggested in February this year when the cabinet was previewing the programme for the financial year ahead.

After an interruption to negotiations during the onset of the Covid pandemic, HBC concluded an agreement with Whitbread, owners of the Premier Inn brand, in January 2021 under which the council would build the 80-bed hotel complex, then lease it to them for a term of 25 years. The financial details of the contract have never been revealed, the terms being classed as “commercially sensitive”. However, it is clear that the council took on the risk that the building costs might escalate.

According to Ms Hartnell, the then cabinet led by Cllr Kim Forward were warned that, once the deal was signed, they would be committed to delivering the hotel building no matter what extra costs might arise. She reports that exter-

nal advice at the time was that “costs had not increased significantly”, though one might think it should have been apparent by January 2021 that this was a likely economic repercussion of the pandemic.

In fact, the pandemic experience seems to have been a determinative factor. Efforts were required, Ms Hartnell recalls, “to ensure the rapid transformation of the town centre and enhancement of its sustainability...The post-pandemic environment made this even more important to do at pace”.

PLANNING AND TENDERING

Planning consent was self-granted in August 2022 against the opposition of both opposition politicians and some local residents. Two initial tender exercises were then undertaken. The first resulted in tenders in excess of the budget and were “not suitable”, according to Ms Hartnell. The second “identified a preferred contractor, with experience of developing to the hotel operator's specification, but at a cost that exceeds the budget in the capital programme.”

Adding to the costs are updated building regulations, which now require the building to reduce its carbon emissions and incorporate low energy measures.

Ms Hartnell reports that Whitbread have agreed an “improved offer”, including higher rent, a reduced rent-free period and an extension to the build end-date – but of course these don't mitigate the

increase in the council's upfront costs to be reflected in its capital programme budget. In order to proceed with this, full council approval will need to be secured at its next meeting on 20 September.

POLITICAL OPPOSITION

There's no doubt that the proposal to increase the budget will run into political flak on that occasion. Tory opposition leader Cllr Andy Patmore used his column in the Hastings Observer last week to castigate the Labour administration for indulging in a risky commercial undertaking rather than using the site and money to build residential homes. Cllr Matthew Beaver, fellow-Conservative, had argued already at the planning committee meeting that the preference for hotel rooms over permanent housing was “absurd”.

Green party leader Cllr Julia Hilton said this week: “Our councillors have spoken out against this hotel since 2021 when I was elected as the first Green councillor. We tried to get it removed from the Corporate Plan in 2022 but were told then that we were contractually obliged to build the hotel, whether it was profitable for the council or not. We have now been told that the council has to approve the additional cost or the council would be in breach of contract and liable to many millions of pounds of damages. This is not a project we feel is in the best interest of the people of the town but we are being pressured by the senior management team to vote for it due to penalties in the contract that they will not disclose and that only Labour are responsible for.”

She also pointed out that Ms Hartnell's report failed to make

< Continued from page 1

likewise. That level of increase would mean an additional financial burden calculated as £447,000 for the current financial year, and more for the future.

The cabinet had agreed at its meeting in August to dispose of a number of assets – see Report Prompts Council Sell-off in HIP 232 – with a view to applying the capital proceeds to offset any additional borrowing costs. But a fresh misfortune has now been revealed that threatens to eat further into the council's capital reserves: a huge rise in the budget required to develop the Premier Inn hotel on the former Cornwallis Street carpark – see our report on page 3.

Mr Jones' report calculated that the General Reserve balance will be reduced to a little over £4m by the end of March 2024 and could on current forecasts fall to zero a year later. He concluded that this will happen “despite the best efforts of officers and councillors of this Council to address the financial emergency...Even with savings targets being achieved in the majority of other areas it will not be enough to prevent the General Reserve balance being exhausted within the next financial year”.

In reaction to this worsening position, council officers have already held further discussions with the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing

any calculation of lost parking revenue “which has been around £100,000 per annum. If this is multiplied by the 25-year lease, that is £2.5 million in lost parking fees that need to be set against any potential income.

“So now the council is hunting round for assets to sell to reduce the borrowing requirement and is selling off two bits of housing land that could have provided 54 homes for social rent. We are told the council can't afford to borrow the roughly £4 million that would be required to build the homes at Bexhill Road, yet we are committed to borrowing much more than that to build a hotel on a site that was also originally allocated for 20 units of housing including a pocket park and play area.”

CABINET ENTHUSIASM

At the cabinet meeting on Monday night, council leader Paul Barnett refused to be the least discouraged by the increased cost figures disclosed by Ms Hartnell. “I wish to express my delight that this report

(DLUCH) and with external auditors Grant Thornton around alternative options. That's hardly unique: Mr Jones suggested that over a hundred other local authorities are in current discussions with central Government departments around potential support. But beyond that, the question of a section 114 Notice under the Local Government Act, amounting to a formal declaration of council insolvency, loomed large.

In cabinet discussion on Monday evening, Kit Wheeler, the council officer who has the duty of triggering the insolvency Notice, said that would be a “last resort” after all other options were exhausted. He and his finance colleagues would not know how the 2024/25 figures will work out until the Government announce their local government spend for that year, probably only in mid-December.

Council leader Paul Barnett, who also holds the finance portfolio within the cabinet, described the financial situation as “very very serious”. But he was also defiant. “We are intending to be here next financial year, not to hand over to some Government quango the running of our council...So we need to make some tough decisions and we need to make them soon. We can't assume that the cavalry will come over the hill”.

The cabinet voted unanimously to accept the content of Mr Jones' report.

has come forward”, he said. “What's changed since 2021 is buildings regulations, and that's in a good way.” The specification, he argued, is now tougher on carbon emissions and conserves energy better.

He was also pleased that Whitbread had responded positively by improving their offer.

Cllrs Andy Batsford and Maya Evans spoke with equal enthusiasm. Cllr Batsford said: “This about a large hotel chain wanting to be in Hastings – it's a signal that this is a town to invest in”. Cllr Evans pointed out that the building of the hotel would coincide with the advent of the Garden Town development of adjacent streets as a key feature of the Town Deal investment. “In the next five years we'll see the town centre dramatically transformed”, she said.

The financial details were not, however, discussed in public session – nor was it clear to what extent they will be disclosed to the full council when the matter is put before them on 20 September.



NEWS

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Hugh Sullivan



Stand Up To Racism demo at Bexhill, July 2023

Northeys: Back to Lock and Key

HUGH SULLIVAN

As anticipated in HIP 232 (*Changing of the Guard?*), the Home Office are now proposing to use the former prison site at Northeys, Bexhill for detention of people arriving illegally in the UK under the recently enacted Illegal Migration Act.

That's at least according to Government Minister and MP for Battle and Bexhill, Huw Merriman, who issued a statement last Thursday that "following discussions I have held with my colleagues across Government over the last few months, it is now proposed that the centre, if it proceeds, will only hold those who have arrived illegally in the UK and are awaiting removal from the country. This means the centre will be a close, detained and secure site and that those staying will not be expected to remain longer than 45 days."

It is not clear what this stated maximum period could be based upon. Mr Merriman must be well aware that the Home Office's record of arranging deportations over recent years has never remotely

matched its rhetoric, and labelling migrants as "illegal" will hardly change that. Moreover, the MP acknowledges that the existing buildings at Northeys "will require total demolition and rebuild" before they can be reused as intended.

In this, Mr Merriman sees an opportunity for local enterprise. "I will work with our local business community and JobCentrePlus to ensure local businesses and residents benefit from this work," he said. He promised to host a meeting in Bexhill "in the coming weeks...in order to explain what this means for the town".

He also added that he would in due course "represent residents of the centre to ensure welfare and care requirements are met".

SUTR OPPOSITION

However, the Home Office policy change which Mr Merriman reported as positive has outraged local pro-refugee campaigners. Daniel Rushby, of Bexhill Stand Up To Racism (SUTR), said: "This is terrible news. Northeys will become a centre for the mass deportation of asylum seekers and migrants. Since the initial announcement in April we have been campaigning in defence of refugees, and we know that the people of Bexhill are compassionate and caring. People seeking asylum are not criminals and should be welcomed into our community, just like Ukrainian refugees. The government should demolish Northeys and build

affordable houses, not a prison camp, bringing jobs to Bexhill without relying on cruelty to refugees. SUTR opposes the Northeys detention centre, and we will organise to prevent deportations to Rwanda or anywhere else."

Simon Hester, chair of Hastings and District Trades Union Council, said: "Tory politicians are desperately trying to save their careers by scapegoating refugees and stirring up racism. The cost-of-living crisis faced by millions of workers is not caused by people seeking asylum but by the government's own policies. The NHS and schools

are collapsing because of years of cuts and privatisation. Migrant workers have been central to all that is best in Britain. Gary Lineker was right. The creation of a new detention camp at Northeys has echoes of the 1930s. The trade union movement in Rother and Hastings will stand with refugees and migrants and oppose Tory racism."

The quite separate 'No to Northeys' campaign group are also unimpressed, albeit for rather different reasons. Their co-founder, Bexhill town councillor Nigel Jacklin, said on Monday: "When I last checked, the Home

Office fact sheet had not been updated and said people would be free to come and go; this was what the Home Office said in Scampton [another site previously proposed for mass accommodation of asylum seekers] when we were there last Thursday.

"Whilst this use is less bad than the original proposals (to use the site as an open accommodation centre) we will continue to oppose it.

"LACK OF TRUST"

"Having visited and spoken to fellow campaign groups in Wethersfield and Scampton, it is clear that local people lack confidence in the Home Office's ability to plan anything, communicate with people or take local residents' concerns into account. The use of emergency legislation to ride roughshod over local planning and consultation procedures is wrong, and is of deep concern to fellow local councillors in the Independent Network to which I belong."

Mr Jacklin said that his group do welcome "any measures that will stop illegal arrivals" and that "bringing arrivals by boat to an end is what virtually everyone wants", so as to eliminate the need for large-scale accommodation centres. But he was on that day handing in to Rother District Council the group's petition (with over 1,500 signatories from Rother and 500 others from Hastings, St Leonards and Eastbourne) asking them to "oppose asylum seeker centre proposals".

"We collected the last 200 signatures yesterday," he said. "Opposition remained strong, as did a lack of trust in the various authorities."

New Head of Housing

Hastings Borough Council (HBC) has appointed a new Head of Housing whose previous career has straddled the charities and local government sectors.

Chris Hancock started his job at HBC last week, moving from his role as Services Development Director for Crisis, a national charity for people facing homelessness.

He has also worked with the National Homelessness Practitioner Support Service funded by the former Department for Communities and Local Government) providing support to local authorities in the east, south east and London. Before that, he worked for other local authorities in their housing departments.

Hancock, who lives in Hastings, said: "I am incredibly excited to be joining my own local authority to lead our Housing Services. The challenge has never been greater to balance the resources available to us and the need for our services, but it is already clear to me that the team I am joining have the commitment and ambition to tackle it. I am also looking forward to meeting all of our partners as soon as I can and hearing from others and getting their help in making Hastings a place where everyone has the home that meets their needs."

Cllr Simon Willis, lead councillor for housing, said: "We are very excited that someone with Chris's deep experience and local knowl-



edge is joining us to help us to urgently address the housing crisis we face in Hastings. I am looking forward to working with him to ensure that every resident has a safe and secure home."



A New GP Service: Private and Remote

HUGH SULLIVAN

GPs have been the gatekeepers of the British medical system since the advent of the NHS 75 years ago. Access to medical help should come initially, save in an emergency, from your local GP.

But from the perspective of patients, it has become increasingly hard to consult a GP, with the chances of seeing the same doctor from one appointment to the next ever smaller. The options for residents of Hastings and St Leonards are pithily described on the website of DRGP, a new private clinic being set up by local GP Dr



Vimalendran Ratheesh, as follows:

1. ring your local NHS surgery at 8.30am, wait on hold for several minutes and hope you get an appointment;
2. send an Engage Consult online request to your surgery to try to get an appointment;
3. ring 111 and hope to get called back within 4-12 hours;
4. go to A&E at the Conquest and wait 4-8 hours to be seen;
5. use Sussex Premier Health

and speak to their private GP for a fee of £110;

6. use Benenden Hospital and pay £100 to speak to their private GP;
7. wait till the next day and try again at 8.30.

Dr Ratheesh, who trained as GP in Hastings between 2011 and 2015 and has worked as a locum GP in a number of NHS practices in the town and elsewhere over the past seven years, is offering a further option: the launch of a new private GP 'telemedicine' clinic which he intends to operate personally.

Access to DRGP will be online or by telephone. It will be marketed primarily in Hastings, promoting Dr Ratheesh as "Dr Rad...local GP with local knowledge". However, as it will not involve any face-to-face consultations, it is accessible in principle from anywhere in the country.

Time slots of 15-20 minutes for a telephone or video consultation on the same or next day can be booked at a cost of £55 (it was planned to be £70, but some initial market research seems to have induced a £15 reduction).

LIMITATIONS OF SERVICE

It is clear that the service which Dr Ratheesh/Rad offers is severely limited. He will not have access to the enquiring patient's NHS notes. Unlike larger private providers like Sussex Premier Health, he has no capacity to order blood tests, scans or other diagnostic aids. He won't be seeing any patients personally, so can make no physical examinations, though he claims that video consultations can generally serve for this purpose. He can't make any NHS referrals. All he can effectively do is provide an initial screening, provide private prescriptions for collection at a local pharmacy and sick notes for up to two weeks, and otherwise advise his consultees, if they appear to have more complex medical needs that require further examination and/or treatment, to consult further, either with an NHS GP or a private specialist.

Dr Ratheesh is not, however, defensive about this. In particular, since the onset of the Covid pandemic, doctors have become used to assessing cases remotely, and he thinks that the need for actual physical examination is rare. He admits that the lack of diagnostic test capacity is limiting, but says that he intends to provide Radox self-testing kits which will allow simple blood tests to be carried out by patients themselves.

He is also unapologetic about setting up a private clinic outside the remit of the NHS. "I've worked in Hastings as a fully qualified GP for seven years but never full-time

and always as a locum. Nevertheless I calculate that I've done more than 27,000 consultations over that time. The demands on full-time doctors within the system are overwhelming and getting worse."

He has worked for the Clinical Commissioning Group in Hastings including as an advisor for workforce planning and recruitment. So he has been well placed to observe the shrinkage of capacities in local GP practices and the dwindling proportion of GPs employed within them. "Most of my GP training colleagues left the area after training. There are 20 fewer GPs practising across the borough compared to seven years ago," he says, "and those that remain are increasingly overworked and burn out quicker. Hastings does not have the same access to medical services as most big cities and towns. Morale is low, people are leaving and are not going to come back."

"My clinic is not going to eat into NHS provision. On the contrary, it will increase capacity. In the meantime, if you are concerned about privatisation of NHS GP services, look at the American corporations Centene and Babylon Health which own huge numbers of GP practices across the country. That's a much greater threat to the public service ethos of the NHS system than I am presenting."

■ For a full debate on privatisation within the NHS see page 10 – Free at the Point of Delivery

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

CRITICAL THINKING

Dear HIP

With all due respect to Neil O'Warne (*A Threat to All* in HIP 233), it is just as silly to say that all conspiracy theories are bad as it would be to say that they are all good. You have to be selective, that's all: exercise a little critical thinking rather than indulging in blanket generalisations.

Take 9/11 for example: it is obvious there was a conspiracy. Everybody agrees on that. The question is, who were the conspirators? You can subscribe to the "official" conspiracy that it was all down to Al Qaeda, or to one of the alternatives, depending which you find more credible, but the truth has to involve one conspiracy theory or another. You cannot avoid that.

It may be of interest to quote from a book written by Arthur Naiman about the 9/11 event:

"When knowledge leads to terrifying conclusions, people look for ways not to pay attention to it. Calling a clearly-reasoned, evidence-based argument a "conspiracy theory" fits that purpose admirably. Once you slap that label on it, you're free to ignore it."

Peter Bolwell

IN DEFENCE OF THE AZUR

Dear HIP

As a newcomer to Hastings and St Leonards, on many occasions I have eaten at the Azur. The food is certainly not "below standard, as was quoted by Francesca Rowe (letter in HIP 233).



I'm not sure where this lady has eaten in the past but, as I have eaten in some of the best places in the world, the food was first class: the seafood salad was the best I have ever had. The staff were very accommodating and very pleasant, with a great knowledge of wines.

Sarah Mills

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Please be aware we may need to edit letters for reasons of space and we will only withhold names if this is necessary for the protection of the writer.

SUSSEX INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY MARINE PROTECTED AREAS BYELAW 2023

Regulatory Notice; Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, sections 155 and 156

Notice is hereby given that Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority intends to apply to the Minister for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to revoke the 'Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2017' and to confirm the 'Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2023'.

The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2023 retains established management measures for four Marine Protected Areas through existing Schedules 1-4, but includes the addition of a fifth Schedule, relating solely to the area designated as Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone. The proposed Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2023 Schedule 5 will protect sensitive species and habitats by introducing a zonal approach to managing fishing activities within Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone, including exclusion of 'towed-gear' from part of the site.

The full Byelaw, regulatory notice, impact assessment and information on the formal consultation drop in sessions can be found here: <https://www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk/live-consultations>

Any person wishing to comment; object or approve on the confirmation of the above byelaw and the provisions within Schedule 5 (the existing Schedules 1, 2, 3 and 4 are not subject to change or consultation) must make representations in writing before Friday 6th October 2023 to:

Marine Conservation and Enforcement Team, Marine Management Organisation, Lancaster House, Hampshire Court, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 7YH. Email: ifcabylaws@marinemanagement.org.uk

Also send a copy of this representation marked 'Byelaw Consultation' to the **Sussex IFCA, 12a Riverside Business Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 6RE. Email: admin@sussex-ifca.gov.uk**





COMMUNITY

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Bringing Facts to Social Media

DR JAMES PRENTICE, a researcher at the University of Sussex, argues for more support for fact-based discussions on social media.

During the 2019 election, I decided to conduct a voting intention poll for the Hastings & Rye constituency as part of my doctoral research in electoral politics. I didn't expect it to get more than a handful of views after posting the results on social media, but to my surprise, I found that someone had shared it on a page I had never come across before, *Hastings Decides*.

Having joined the group, I found to my further surprise that a range of individuals were spreading misinformation about the work I had conducted. Some went as far as to say that the data had mostly been falsified or that I had made no effort to find a representative sample; this despite my website documenting details of people who

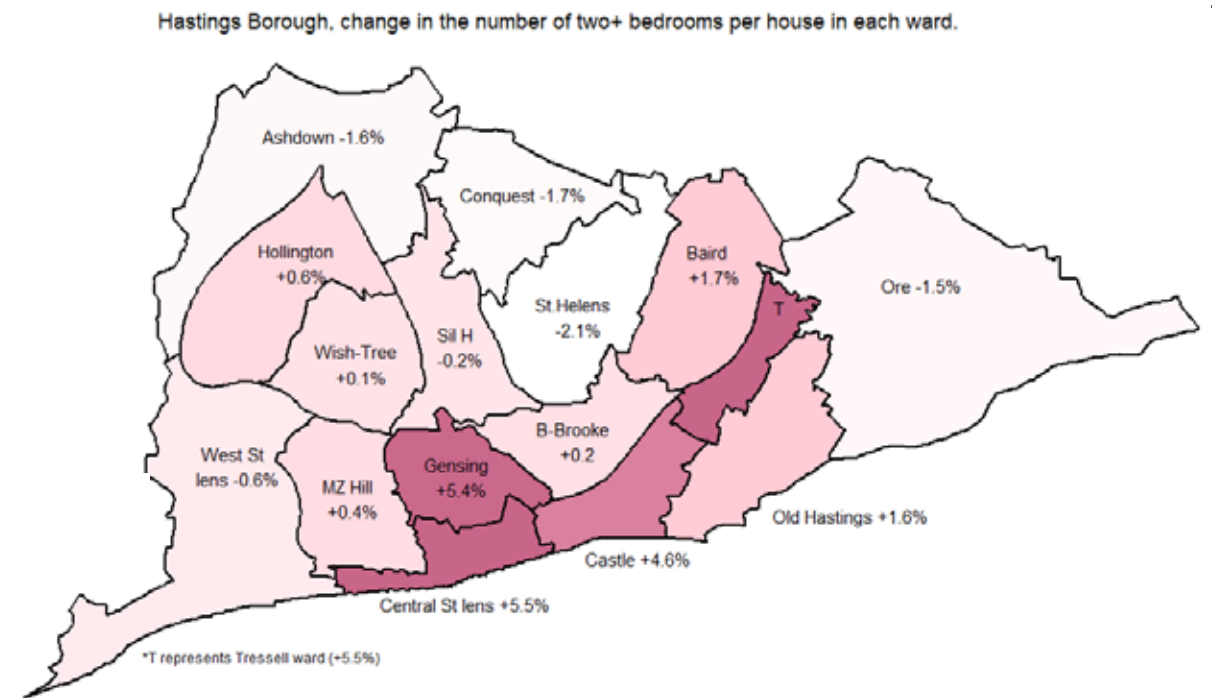
had taken part in the survey, and also outlining how closely this matched the population of Hastings & Rye.

GOING VIRAL

Before I knew it, someone had sent it to BBC News and the poll was getting coverage on the Daily Politics Show, where a panel discussed the growing influence of social media on UK elections. Despite my poll being covered by the BBC and shown to be accurate by the result in Hastings & Rye, I still get people telling me they have heard rumours about the research not being accurate or trustworthy.

From such early experiences, I quickly learnt harsh lessons in sharing factual content on social media. Sadly, the first lesson I learnt was that some people on social media have their own agenda and will try to discredit factual information and promote less reliable sources as long as it confirms their end goals. For example, I found that those supporting the party projected to be behind in the poll I had conducted tended to be the ones who most strongly attacked the poll.

Later I also found that such people would frequently share inaccurate information and rumours – and occasionally material bordering on dangerous con-



spiracies. Alarming this material can sometimes gain traction that few people are prepared to push back on. Indeed, when I have challenged such material myself, I've received very strong responses, making it understandable why others are unlikely to challenge such posts.

LEARNING THE LESSONS

I subsequently learnt to follow where people share information

I've posted to ensure that those seeking to spread misinformation can't discredit the factual material before I at least have a chance to get my own point of view across.

I also learnt that people tend to react better to factual information when it's communicated both visually and verbally; for some reason, visual information seems less open to being attacked by misinformation. For example, my most recent work on how the census demonstrates the changing nature of Hastings uses colourful maps to indicate these changes in different parts of the town; this seems to have encouraged more positive responses and kept the 'angry mob' away from my posts.

Another important discovery is that more people read social media threads than I had initially thought. As there can be a tendency to only see comments from people hostile to factual research, it's easy to view this research as unproductive. However, the longer I've shared my research on social media the more I've had chance encounters with individuals in person who give me more positive feedback. Indeed, I've come across elected officials who have found my research useful for them in understanding the town and which has helped them make decisions. From this feedback, I've learnt that my audience is much broader than I initially thought: in fact, since installing a site visit tracker on my blog I've found that some of my articles focusing on



Andre Hunter on Unsplash

Hastings' developments have reached over 250 views.

DON'T GIVE UP

I've come across others with similar experiences who no longer write about local news, share factual information or try to moderate local discussion groups. Perhaps most people are not as weird as I am and are reluctant to spend their free time providing research that only seems to provoke a negative response.

However, I suspect that if they'd kept going, they would have encountered others who were very supportive of their work. This is why I feel we need to show more support for those trying to improve discussions by sharing such material: if we don't support such individuals, then we will lose good content that can better inform online discussions about our town. We will then only be left with those seeking to spread rumour and misinformation, leading to poorer conclusions – and making us all worse off.

■ You can see Dr Prentice's research on capturepolitics.co.uk

There's Always the Ombudsman

These days, it's not unusual to get frustrated by the lack of accountability of our service providers. And when we try to do something about it, there doesn't seem to be any way of actually talking to anybody. Local government and social care are two areas where there is often particular frustration.

Now in its tenth year, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's annual review of complaints offers a unique insight into the health of local government services in England. It's perhaps no surprise that 33% of complaints and enquiries received were about Children and Education and 14% of them were about Planning & Development – another area that causes much debate in Hastings.

In the South East, which of course includes Hastings, the overall rate of upheld complaints was

76%, above the average of 74% for all regions (which in itself is not a bad rate).

Paul Najsarek, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, says: "We all want ...the reassurance of a safety net if we fall on hard times, but all too often the complaints we receive show this isn't what people experience." No argument with that.

He also acknowledges the huge challenges facing councils and their ability to do their work effectively – perhaps especially when it comes to dealing with complaints. He points out "It's more important than ever for them to focus on getting the basics right in services for residents and handling complaints effectively." And while acknowledging that local authorities often get things right, he says: "We frequently find councils repeating the same mistakes, ploughing ahead and not taking a step

back to see the bigger picture."

Paul Najsarek echoes a common view: "Council leaders now need to focus on learning from common faults and injustices so they can make a significant difference to the people our local authorities serve."

And even more important is the expected outcome. The Ombudsman remedies individual injustice and, by sharing the learning from the complaints it investigates, improves local public, and adult social care services.

Published recently, its annual review also shows over the past year, from 15,488 complaints and enquiries it received, the Ombudsman made more recommendations to improve council services than ever before (2,412).

Over the past year, in 99.3% of cases, local authorities have complied with and implemented the Ombudsman's recommendations.

■ The review report is available from the Ombudsman's website at lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports alongside data sheets to compare statistics for each local authority.



A regular column to update readers on the damaging effects of our current management of water in Hastings and the surrounding area and what people are doing to improve the current disastrous situation. There will also be some reference to developments in relevant national campaigns. If you have any updates, please contact community@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk marked *Clean Water Watch*.

OLD ROAR GILL

Following the cancellation of the third meeting of the campaign group on Friday 18 August, Cllr Andy Batsford organised a clean-up on Friday 25 August: "Two hours of clearing out wood and debris to help [keep] the Old Roar Gill flowing." There was some concern regarding safety as well as advice from a Natural Flood Management officer who said that work should be carried out by professionals, and that some 'obstruction' was required for flood management.

LOCAL NEWS

Article in Sussex News: *Bexhill beach branded a 'no-go' area following discovery of sewage waste*. According to a Southern Water spokesperson "Our teams discovered that debris found by a customer was located next to a private outfall." But no word about who was responsible or how it could be prevented. The spokesperson also said that Southern Water "take cleanliness of beaches very seriously" but failed to show how, apart from quoting investment figures.

BOYCOTT WATER BILLS CAMPAIGNS

A growing movement around the country to stop payment for the disposal of sewage until demands for improvements met. Isolated grassroots movements are springing up in many parts of the country, but with no central coordination. Hastings boycott has linked with Whitstable and you can find all you need to know about boycotting water bills as well as links to other campaigns on their website boycottwaterbills.com.

Update! There is some uncertainty in the boycott movement as it is creating legal precedent. However, having had conflicting advice from the Consumer Council for Water (CCW), about the legality of boycotts, they have now clarified in writing to Boycott Water Bills that such action is appropriate.

LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

A meeting was held 7 September at Eastbourne Town Hall to discuss strategies in public protesting and local government involvement to bring about change in Southern Water's policy of sewage dumping. The meeting was called by, amongst others, Cllr James Murray lead for climate change and sustainability. Check Friends of Seaford Bay Facebook page for updates.

HASTING BOROUGH COUNCIL

The council has confirmed that it has no statutory powers to regulate Southern Water, the responsibility of the Environment Agency. However, it acknowledges it does have responsibility for parts of the town in public ownership that have been affected by the inaction of Southern Water such as Alexandra Park. It has pledged to do all it can to hold Southern Water to account for any failures to carry out its duty to safely dispose of sewage using information and data that enables them to do so, working with the Environment Agency where appropriate. It will also collaborate with any community organisations who are working to that end. However, the current state of the council finances means that there is no money available to fund any such organisations. To report problems with Southern Water you can use this link: tinyurl.com/myfu7bb3

NATIONAL PRESS

The government plans to let developers further pollute our rivers. Search 'Guardian + England's rivers at risk as Michael Gove rips up rules on new housing' for information. To sign the 38 Degrees petition, search: 'Stop property developers polluting our rivers'.



Black Gull Flies South

ROD WEBB attended the much-delayed official opening of a new bookshop in St Leonards, and to honour its contrast with the 'here today gone tomorrow' nature of modern life, has delayed writing about it for over a month. The Black Gull is still there.

A new bookshop arrived unobtrusively in St Leonards last year and perched on the corner of North Street and London Road. It slowly built up some loyal customers by word of mouth. Looking at their website you can see that customers are impressed with what they find. A typical comment is: "One of the most brilliant places I have ever been." Except that's for the Black Gull Bookshop in London.

If you look really hard you might come across *thebookguide* (an excellent guide to bookshops) with the following comment about the bookshop in St Leonards: "Very well stocked with a full range of books, attractive premises, sensible prices and especially strong on art."

But on Saturday 5 August, the Black Gull finally had its official opening, shyly pretending it was actually a private viewing for artist Susie Freeman, whose work you can see displayed in the window – as well as in the Victoria & Albert Museum among many collections. At the same time it proclaimed itself to the world with its very own shop signage and the opening of its online bookstore.

The Black Gull himself, Chris Overfield, turned out to have many friends and admirers, and the 'private view' was bursting with people, some having travelled miles to be at the party. And what a party! One of those affairs where the



Chris and Amanda discuss how it's going

guests want to go on all night, but the host realises he hasn't got the stamina he used to have.

Amongst the throng, I was able to talk to quite a few people to capture their reaction. One early comment from someone who "wanted to think further" was simply: "I'm staggered." Praise indeed. Another commented: "It's fantastic. Its selection of books is so exciting and intriguing." Someone who works for Chris talked about how much she had learned working there: "I have great conversations and Chris is a top geezer to work for ..."

All very positive. Toby, Chris' son, was surprised that so many people had turned out in support: "We're touched that the locals have taken to us so much ... we're really bloody chuffed."

Another guest was equally blown away by the town as he was the bookshop, commenting that St Leonards was "absolutely lovely" and suggesting that its location, including being by the sea, attracts "a different kind of person" who is "more open minded" and "more interesting". Another suggested that the Black Gull will help change the community and attract even *more* interesting people to the town – on the basis that books play their part in education. Although there is some truth in this, I suppose it is the combination of exist-

ing and future independent shops, as well as the latent creative energy of the town that helps the community grow – let's hope for the better.

And to remind me that this was a private view, I was also given a guided tour of the window display by Chris' partner Amanda while taking a breath of fresh air, away from the heaving throng.

The only person I was barely able to speak to was Chris Overfield himself – and who has flown away on holiday.



Bacteriology Illustrated – Suzie Freeman



COMMUNITY

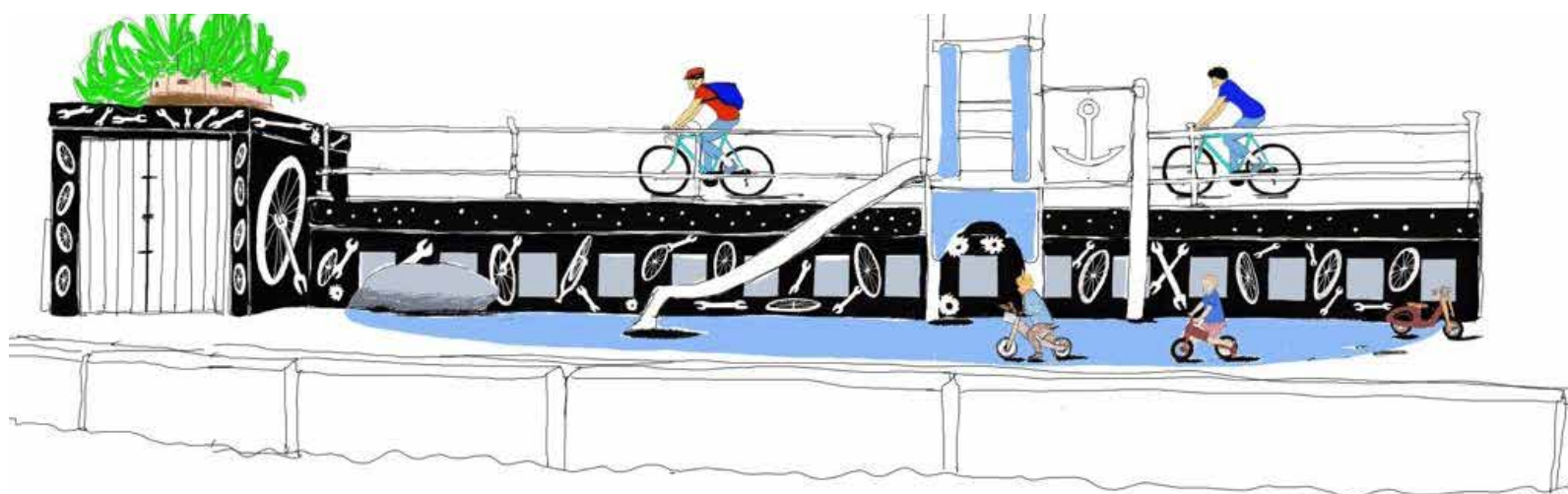
HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE...  HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Keeping the Wheels Rolling

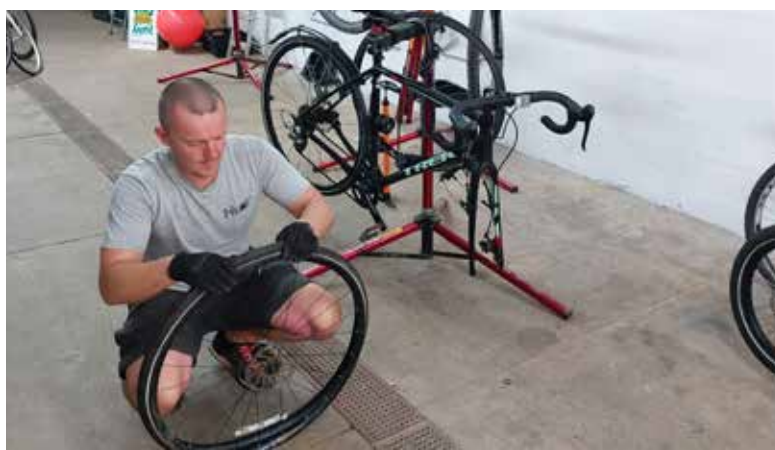
ROD WEBB talks to Mat McDonnell about how Bike Lab became The Bike Project and what this means.

One of the first positive things I noticed when I came to Hastings was the existence of the Bike Lab. But however much I wanted to check it out, it never seemed to happen. Just locating it took persistence, as the only evidence was the usually closed door in the promenade wall opposite Warrior Square. Once located, I kept forgetting to turn up on the one day it was open – distracted by the many other things the town has to offer.

Bike Lab was set up eleven years ago to promote cycling culture in Hastings as a “free to access, volunteer-run, weekly community bicycle workshop”. During that time, in a nutshell, they re-



ABOVE: Sketch for outside mural BELOW: Mat fixes a tyre



A New Lease of Life

RUBY COX talked to manager Dean Stewart at the Isabel Blackman Centre to find out how it was doing in its mission to change perceptions of both the IBC and life after 50.

The Isabel Blackman Centre (IBC) in Winding Street reopened its doors one year ago on 29 July revealing a space for older people that is not only refurbished, redesigned and revamped, but also reimaged. Primarily a day centre in the past, IBC now offers a huge range of classes, groups and opportunities for learning and enjoyment in line with the ethos that life after 50 should be lived to the full and be fun, exciting and fulfilling.

Bought by a consortium of community groups, IBC in Perpetuity, from East Sussex County Council, it is now run by Age UK and a team of committed volunteers. At the heart of it all is the licensed café/restaurant which is open to the general public (not just over 50's



Isabel Blackman Centre

and serves freshly prepared affordable meals and snacks throughout the day.

Although it is taking some time for the image of the old IBC to fade from the public eye, it's becoming clear that, given the opportunity, older people maintain a vast variety of interests which stretch far beyond sitting and chatting with a cup of tea and a biscuit (although there is plenty of opportunity to do that too!).

Dean told me that many classes are now fully booked, and new ones are starting up all the time, often in response to requests from members (Spanish is the latest). Classes like Yoga and Tai Chi have proved particularly popular, and various exercise classes are avail-

able, tailored to different levels of fitness. There are also classes designed to help with specific conditions (such as diabetes) and referrals are received both from the NHS and from ESCC to help with physical and mental health problems.

IBC is particularly proud of the gym, a space where older people need not feel they have to compare themselves with Lycra clad gym bunnies, but simply enjoy exercising with others facing the same challenges as themselves.

One particular success is the LGBT support group, which meets on Monday afternoons, clearly indicating the need for older members of that community to be able to come together and talk about issues that are important to them.

Occasional activities such as the quiz, cinema and table tennis complete the picture, along with treatment rooms where massage and facial treatments can help banish aches, pains and wrinkles. And last but not least, there is also a shop selling good quality used clothing where you can pick up a bargain or two.

■ So if you want to know more, just pop in or visit the website isabelblackmancentre.co.uk And don't forget IBC are always looking for more volunteers!

furnished over 900 bikes, helped more than 1,200 people maintain bikes, provided over 1,500 volunteer mechanic hours and delivered over 400 workshop sessions. And during that time, all I managed to do was donate one bike.

Things are different now. There's a notice on the door as well as a Jake Bowers 'bike sculpture' on the roof. There are also plans afoot to create a bike-related mural along the wall it shares with the promenade.

Having arrived early, I had a coffee and watched as Mat finished off two bikes, which were subsequently collected, and chatted to Jo, one of the eight core team members. The atmosphere was relaxed, and the customers were clearly happy with the service. It turned out that both used their bikes to get to work, one a doctor at the Conquest.

Like so many other areas of life, the pandemic had led to a rethink. Horrible as it was, the empty roads and greater emphasis on healthy living was a real boon for bike riding. But Bike Lab had to close, and many of the key volunteers moved away during that time. Another factor in the rethink was the closure of the nearby High Tide Bikes last year, when the owner Andy Tompkins felt it was time to move on.

It was decided that the community would be best served by having a paid professional team to enable Bike Lab, now The Bike Project, to operate full time. As Mat says: "The pandemic showed there was an appetite for riding in Hastings, despite the hills."

The Bike Project was therefore incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with the business model initially based on retail repair work, taking up the slack from the closure of High Tide. Other income will be derived from the developing side of second-hand bike sales and bike hire. No more "lurching through uncertain pots of grant funding". But emphasising

the community nature of The Bike Project, Mat says: "We need to make money, but big bucks are not the issue."

Mat was keen to emphasise the vital part countless volunteers have played in getting the project to where it is: "We continue on the shoulders of many good people who gave generously of their time as well as the support of the council over the last decade." And the aims are similar: to get as many people riding bikes as possible, with a focus on ecology, community and creativity – or "reuse, repair and ride" to be succinct.

To emphasise the community nature of the project, we are now sitting outside on the promenade – and being interrupted. One interruption turned out to be another core team member, Boris, "who helps with all the practical stuff". This led to Mat also highlighting the involvement of Anna Sabin, a keen cyclist and environmentalist, in the sketching out of the design for decorating the promenade wall. There is a sense of community as an extended family.

Accessibility is important, so you can dip in your toes every Thursday 4-6 pm at the free-to-access Bike Kitchen sessions. "The focus is on preventative maintenance, to stop small problems becoming expensive problems and keep you rolling," Mat says. And perhaps to draw you in?

Sitting outside in the sun on a busy promenade led naturally to Mat's answer about how he sees the project developing: "As a hub for the practical rider," he says.

■ To donate a bike, particularly kids' and young adults' otherwise destined for the waste stream, send a picture to donate@hastingsbikeproject.org. Drop off times can be arranged. To get involved or help run the project, contact volunteer@hastingsbikeproject.org



Inconvenient Facts

JONATHAN ANDREWS presents a personal take on the climate change debate and questions the assertion of NASA - the US science and technology agency - that 97% of scientists believe humans are causing global warming.

'Climate alarmism' has reached fever pitch. Or 'boiling point' given the recent UN assertion of 'Global Boiling'. These headlines, coupled with relentless climate propaganda, have induced a state of fear in humankind, and it can be difficult to think rationally when fearful. So is there really cause for alarm?

The current level of CO₂ in our atmosphere is measured at approximately 425 ppm - parts per million - or around 0.04% of the atmosphere. However the level of CO₂ has been far higher than it is now. According to RA Berner in the American Journal of Science, levels of CO₂ were

around 4,250 ppm (0.4%) when the ancestors of the plants on which humans rely first evolved. If the level of CO₂ falls below 150 ppm - around 0.02% - plants, and subsequently humans, die. That's right, arguably we need more CO₂ not less!

The Earth's climate has always changed, irrespective of human behaviour. We alternate between ice ages and warm periods. The last 'Little Ice Age' ended around 1850. Before that we enjoyed a 'Warm Period' from around 950-1250 AD when temperatures were *higher* and the level of CO₂ in the atmosphere was *lower* than today. And current temperatures are not 'breaking records'. The hottest officially recorded temperature was 56.7°C at Death Valley in the USA in 1913. This decade records only reached a milder 54.4°C.

In the 1970s, scientists predicted another ice age. That was changed to 'Global Warming' in the 1980s.

However that term also had to be changed as, on average, the planet is not necessarily warming. It depends on an arbitrary starting point. If you take the 'Little Ice Age', as the International Panel on Climate Change does, it has warmed slightly. If you take the Medieval Warm Period, it has cooled slightly.

From the fearmongers' perspective the latest term, 'Climate Change', coined in the mid 2000s, is better as it allows for any unexpected weather event to be cited as evidence ... necessary for climate alarmists since evidence is not on their side.

But hang on, don't 97% of scientists agree that humans are causing global warming? Well, no they don't. That statistic was manipulated. Of the 11,944 papers reviewed, 7,930 took no position on the subject and were arbitrarily excluded. If one were to simply add those papers back in, the 97% figure would fall to 32%. Another review, by David Legates et al, concluded that just 0.3% of the scientists in those papers actually believed that humans cause global warming.

Most people won't have heard of the 'World Climate Declaration' (WCD) as it doesn't conform to the mainstream position of catastrophic climate change and so isn't mentioned in mainstream media. However the WCD has been signed by over 1,600 of the world's leading scientists, including two Nobel Prize winners. And what does the WCD say? Amongst other things it says there is no climate 'emergency'.

Sixteen hundred scientists may not be that many. But bear in mind that signing the WCD is to effectively end your career and reputation as a scientist. That's why most scientists don't speak up. And because funding is often only available if you 'tick the climate box'. Those that do speak out are usually vilified as loonies or far right extremists.

Why shouldn't we question 'the science'? If we didn't, we'd still believe the Earth was flat. Or that we're heading into an ice age! Surely debate is healthy? Why then are people who question 'the climate science' labelled 'deniers'? Does that term remind you of something?

In April 2022, Melissa Fleming, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications, said the UN had teamed up with Google to ensure that no contrary arguments to the mainstream climate 'crisis' narrative could be accessed on the search engine. Why would the UN do that? Why stifle debate? Why stop 'science' from being examined? Isn't that how we learn? Hasn't 'science' and our understanding of the world in which we live over the centuries changed? If the science was settled, why does it fear counter arguments?

I will end on a happier note. Like many people, you may have believed the relentless propaganda that we are running out of polar bears. Well, we aren't. Polar bear numbers declined to around 5,000 by the 1970s. However this was due to hunting, not 'climate change'. So, in 1976, polar bear hunting was banned. And guess what? Polar bears are now estimated to exceed 30,000. Sadly you won't see that fact in the media.

■ visit www.clintel.org to view the World Climate Declaration.



Andreas Weith, Wikimedia Commons

Abandoning Climate Hope

KENT BARKER

Has the UK Government given up on Climate Change? The 2008 Climate Change Act commits the UK government to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. But every pronouncement from Prime Minister Rishi Sunak

seems to counter that aspiration. Last year the country's Carbon emissions actually increased - by 0.9% - compared to 2021. The 2008 Act established the Climate Change Committee to monitor progress. Its latest report this summer criticised the government for a lack of urgency, with the following key findings:

- Policy changes are not happening at the required pace to meet future targets.
- Action is needed in a range of areas to deliver on the Government's emissions commitments.
- Expansion of fossil fuel production is not in line with Net Zero.
- There has been continued airport expansion ... there should be no net airport expansion across the UK.

Critics argue that not only is progress too slow, but a number of

policies actually run counter to the net zero commitment, re-enforcing former minister Zac Goldsmith's assertion that Sunak is "simply uninterested" in environmental politics: The review of ultra-low emission zones and low traffic neighbourhoods; promises of hundreds of new oil and gas licenses for the North Sea; the go-ahead for a massive new coal mine in Cumbria; the rolling back of timetables for replacing old gas boilers and fossil fuel-burning motor vehicles. And as for reducing air travel, Sunak has used RAF jets and helicopters for domestic

travel more frequently than any previous prime minister - every eight days on average. He even took a helicopter on a visit to Norwich recently - a trip of just over 100 miles.

The only good news is that his anti-environmental stance seems extremely unpopular with the public. A recent poll showed that 82% believe that Climate Change was important to them, and almost two-thirds don't believe Sunak is committed to the UK's targets. It's almost as if he doesn't believe people are causing Climate Change in the first place.



OPINION

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Ba Kode



Free at the Point of Delivery

Where should we stand on the creeping privatisation of the NHS? The question is topical because the Hastings Independent recently received a request to run an advertisement for a private GP service in Hastings. The view of the Editorial Management Committee was that this would be contrary to the paper's ethos. But they also felt that the question should be debated. So here are some thoughts garnered from various people connected with this paper – readers, writers and volunteers. They do not represent an editorial line or policy – there is none – but rather seek to open a discussion for readers.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON

The National Health Service was established in 1948 as part of major social reforms following the Second World War. The founding principles were that services should be comprehensive, universal and free at the point of deliv-

ery – a health service based on clinical need, not ability to pay. Right from the start, though, an element of private medicine was incorporated. In order to get consultants to agree to participate in a national service, Health Minister Nye Bevan had to, in his own words, “stuff their mouths with gold”, allowing them to continue to run a private practice alongside their salaried NHS job. Over the past 75 years, private health insurance groups like BUPA have proliferated. Today around 22% of UK adults have private insurance, and one fifth of all health provision in the country is from the private sector. The Thatcher government introduced competitive tendering and outsourced ancillary services such as porters, kitchens and cleaning. John Major introduced an internal market and formed NHS trusts. The Conservative initiative of funding new hospitals via private finance was continued with alacrity by Tony Blair, who also allowed routine surgery to be contracted out to private hospitals.

Arguably it's gone steadily downhill from there, and currently there are around 7.5 million people waiting for NHS treatment; nearly five million patients each month in England wait more than a fortnight for a GP appointment.

CAN PRIVATE HEALTH CARE SPREAD THE LOAD?

The fundamental question arises: does increasing private provision help or hinder a National Health Service free at the point of delivery? For instance, would a private GP service in Hastings free up NHS doctors to see more patients more quickly?

Here are some views of people associated with the Hastings Independent on whether it would be appropriate to run an advertisement for private GP care:

“Treatable mortality was linked to an increase in outsourcing of health services to the private for-profit sector, in a study last year by Oxford Social Policy researchers, published in the *Lancet Public Health*. In other words more deaths occur when you increase private health care at the expense of the NHS.”

“I don't see how a private GP practice in Hastings which very few people would be likely to use could be seen to be undermining the NHS. Do we condemn private dentistry, given that there are not enough NHS dentists around and that NHS dentistry charges are massive anyway?”

“Outsourcing has always had a cost, and the dismantling of combined, comprehensive hospital care into lucrative, atomised pri-

vate provision is more costly and less efficient. Never mind the associated loss of expertise and equipment to the wider organisation. Furthermore, the Royal College of General Practitioners is currently most concerned with costly screening and diagnostic services that are often offered by doctors in these companies with little to no therapeutic benefit, which then have to be followed up, wasting still more NHS resources.”

“If someone needs elective surgery like a hip replacement, is it really detrimental to the NHS if it's done in a private hospital within two months instead of an NHS hospital within two years – but paid for from NHS funds? Doesn't this ‘free-up’ an NHS hospital bed, rather than reducing the capacity of public hospitals? It's almost impossible to discover how much private providers charge the NHS for such an operation, but it's probably comparable to their own costs. The mixture of state and private medical provision works well in France. It could work here.”

“France, like the rest of Europe, has an insurance-based system. It's not free at the point of need. One of the great innovations, and greatest benefit, of the NHS. Ireland for example has a 40 - 65 Euro charge for a GP appointment. France is about 30 Euros. Wait times are not sub-

stantially lower either.

“France runs a statutory health insurance (SHI) system providing universal coverage for its residents. ‘The system is financed through employee and employer contributions, and increasingly by earmarked taxes on a broad range of revenues. Pretty much like national insurance employer/employee payments in the UK. SHI covers about 90% of hospital care and those not on benefits tend to take out private insurance to cover the other 10%. But what does seem to work are the private laboratories and diagnostic centres which are generally available in most towns ... and their charges are covered by SHI.”

“Yes, France does provide universal coverage. But unlike the NHS there is an expectation of payment for the provision of primary care. Which is the big difference. The UK government certainly has the same system in mind (for the time being) and we are seeing the associated increase of private laboratories and diagnostic centres. Where it is different is that France NEVER had what we had.”

“Without considerably increased funding, the NHS will continue to decline and more and more people will vote with their feet and go private if they can possibly afford to. The problem is that the electorate in Britain has shown over and over again they are not prepared to pay higher taxes ... so where's the money going to come from?”

“I think we can all agree, the NHS, and in particular GP services, have been intentionally run down to facilitate further incursions of private finance into UK healthcare. The use of private hospitals/clinics has been deliberately cultivated, to the detriment of NHS hospitals – with them losing experienced staff, materials, research and development. The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) have, for decades, been warning about GP numbers as well as the reliance on older GPs nearing retirement only for successive governments to do nothing. Private GPs are not an addition to UK healthcare but a REDUCTION of the available doctors for the general public. I don't think it is the ethos of this paper to participate in a policy that is injurious to the people of Hastings by assisting in healthcare vandalism.”

■ A number of participants asked to remain anonymous, so we decided not to use any names. We do seek more views on this subject however. Please email your thoughts or letters to info@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk.



Enjoy delicious fish dishes from local businesses and wines from local vineyards, along with a range of the best produce the area has to offer. Fantastic locally made beers, ciders, meat and vegetarian dishes will also be available as well as sweet treats and refreshments.

Saturday 16 September

11am to 6pm on the Stade. Music until 7.30pm on the beach.

11am to 5.30pm – Kids Stuff, Stade Hall

All things arts and crafts for the little ones to enjoy, including face painting! Must be accompanied by a wristband wearing adult.

12 noon to 1pm – The New Blue Shoes, Music Tent

New Shoes Blues is a four-piece blues band featuring the songs of Howlin Wolf, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Willie Dixon, Stevie Ray Vaughan, John Mayall, Buddy Guy, Robert Cray, Jimi Hendrix, BB King, T-Bone Walker, Elmore James, Otis Rush and more.

12 noon – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton.

CJ Jackson runs the cookery school at Billingsgate Market and loves working with Tush and Pat. They've tailored this masterclass especially for children - with an adult. Learn about the local fishery and types of fish landed in Hastings. Play 'Guess the Fish', learn how to prepare fish, and create a fish taco to try! All with wristbands tickets are welcome but places are limited. Classroom on the Coast.

1.30pm to 2.30pm – Kinsella, Music Tent

Heavily influenced by the creative scene in her home town of Hastings and her love of R&B, Soul, hip hop and drum & bass, Kinsella delivers a sound that's melodic and meaningful, songs that promise to get stuck in your head.

1.30pm – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton Repeat of 12 noon session.

3pm to 4pm – The Heartland Roots band, Music Tent

These Brit-Country stars are currently riding the wave of the recent popularity boom in contemporary Country and Americana and were voted 'Group of the Year' at the 2021 and 2022 UK Country Music Awards.

3pm – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton Repeat of 12 noon session.

4.30pm to 5.30pm – The Old Romantics, Music Tent

The band has a wealth of experience having performed with Midge Ure, Sam Brown, One the Juggler and China Drum amongst others. Playing the music of Roxy Music, Bowie, T Rex and many more.

6pm to 7.15pm – The Sam Calver Band, Music Tent

Hastings local, Sam hits our stage with his infectious and incredibly soulful vocal prowess, poignant lyricism and mesmerising melodies.

Sunday 17 September

11am to 6pm on the Stade. Music until 6pm on the beach.



10am (doors open at 9am) Jazz Breakfast: Liane Carroll and Friends, Entertainment Tent

Liane returns for another Jazz Breakfast in her hometown of Hastings. If you haven't experienced this talented performer in person you absolutely should! She always delivers, vocally and musically with a personality and performance that will brighten up your Sunday morning - even if it's raining.

Tickets available from Judges Bakery, High Street, Hastings Old Town. Includes a two hour concert, continental breakfast and wristband for weekend entry to the Seafood and Wine Festival. Adults £22.50, under 18s £12.50

11am to 5.30pm – Kids Stuff, Stade Hall

All things arts and crafts for the little ones to enjoy, including face painting! Must be accompanied by a wristband wearing adult.

12 noon – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton

CJ Jackson runs the cookery school at Billingsgate Market and loves working with Tush and Pat. They've tailored this masterclass especially for children - with an adult. Learn about the local fishery and types of fish landed in Hastings. Play 'Guess the Fish', learn how to prepare fish, and create a fish taco to try! All with wristband tickets are welcome but places are limited. Classroom on the Coast.

12 noon to 1.15pm – Sarah G and the other 3, Music Tent

A superb and tight four-piece local band. Great covers performed with energy and enthusiasm.

1.30pm – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton Repeat of 12 noon session.

1.45pm to 2.45pm – The Greg Caulson Band, Music Tent

Multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and gifted performer, Greg was the keyboard player with the legendary two-tone band The Selector. "The Greg Coulson band is so cool, my goosebumps had goosebumps!" Classic Rock Magazine.

3pm – Fish Basics for Kids with Fish Boss CJ Jackson and local legends Tush and Pat Hamilton Repeat of 12 noon session.

3.15pm to 4.15pm – Soul Town, Music Tent

Probably the biggest Soul and Motown Band currently touring the South. Three excellent female vocalists and two males, backed up by amazing musicians. Expect non-stop classic Soul, Motown and a fair splash of Blues for good measure!

4.45pm to 5.45pm – SKA-PER, Music Tent

Eight piece collective with a shared love and enthusiasm for Ska and Two-Tone sounds and rhythms. A great party band to finish this year's Seafood and Wine Festival!

visit1066country.com/fishfestivals





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The HIP List

Your Pull
Out Guide
To What's
Happening
In Hastings

Want your event listed?
Contact us now
Ian Greensmith (music),
Nadine Hayward (art,
cinema, theatre &
performance), Hugh
Sullivan (sport) and Rod
Webb (events, classes)
on listings@yourhip.co.uk

MUSIC

Friday 8 September

McNiff's Folk Sundowner

The Jenny Lind, High St, 5.00pm

Borough Council + Bellza

+ Last Living Cannibal

The Piper, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Sound Syndicate

Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.30pm

Hastings Bass Champions -

Roots & Rhythm x Wheel Up

The Pig, White Rock, 9.00pm

Saturday 9 September

Jo Whiley's 90s Anthems

+ Guest Huey Morgan

De La Warr Pavilion,

Bexhill, 2.00pm

Pier Beats & Bass: Bass Kulture

Hastings Pier, 2.00pm

Seafront Session: Poco Mondo

The Albion, George St, 4.00pm

Cushty

The Jenny Lind, High St, 6.00pm

Aquarius International Club

Downstairs at the White

Rock Hotel, 8.00pm

Murderers Are Optimists

+ Sunday Club

The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm

Wasted Youth

The Piper, Norman Rd, 8.00pm

Loose Change

East Hastings Sea Angling

Association, The Stade, 8.45pm

Punk Night

The Carlisle, Pelham St, 10.00pm

The Time Machine

The Brass, Havelock St, 10.00pm

Sunday 10 September

Los Twangueros

The Jenny Lind, High St, 4.00pm

Dark Waters

The Carlisle, Pelham St, 4.00pm

Tom Cole & Henry Bristow

The Stag, All Saints St, 5.00pm

Vinyl Night

The Jenny Lind, High St, 7.00pm

Monday 11 September

Mick Knight's Acoustic

Blues Club

The Jenny Lind, High St, 7.30pm

Tuesday 12 September

Jazz Hastings: Corrie

Dick's Sun Swells

East Hastings Sea Angling

Association, The Stade, 7.45pm

Albion Skiffle Co

The Albion, George St, 8.30pm

Traditional Folk Session

The Stag, All Saints St, 8.30pm

Wednesday 13 September

Open Mic with James & Jules

Tin Tins, Robertson St, 8.00pm

Medicine Wagon

The Seadog, Station Rd, 7.30pm

Thursday 14 September

Sea Song Sessions with

Seth Lakeman Plus Jon

Boden, Ben Nicholls, Emily

Portman & Jack Rutter

De La Warr Pavilion,

Bexhill, 7.00pm

Berth of the Cool: Jazz DJs Ben

Thompson, Herbie Greensmith

& Guests the Dainty Tudor

Duke and Susan's Leg Policy

Downstairs at the White

Rock Hotel, 7.00pm

Open Mic with James

& Meredith

The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm

Lord Jasper The Reluctant

Hippy Presents the

Blues + Guests

The Royal Standard, East

Beach St, 8.00pm

Live Jazz: The Jazz

Organisation plus Special

Guest Stuart Jackaman (Guitar)

The NUR, Robertson St, 8.00pm

Shanty Night with

Completely Scuppered

The Jenny Lind, High St, 8.30pm

Friday 15 September

McNiff's Folk Sundowner

The Jenny Lind, High St, 5.00pm

Dead Calm

Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.30pm

Saturday 16 September

Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells:

50th Anniversary Celebration

De La Warr Pavilion,

Bexhill, 7.30pm

Seafront Session: Milton Hide

The Albion, George St, 4.00pm

Mister Super Juice

The Jenny Lind, High St, 6.00pm

The Bevis Frond + Eliza Skelton

The Piper, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Freakz: A night of Post-

Punk, Goth & Electronica

with DJs Vinyl Tap, Dave

Reading & Andy T

The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm

Cushty

East Hastings Sea Angling

Association, The Stade, 8.45pm

Maelstrom

The Carlisle, Pelham St, 9.00pm

Mojo Workin': All Vinyl

Soul Extravaganza with

DJ Jody Lee-Hooker

The Piper, Norman Rd, 9.00pm

Silent Disco

The Brass, Havelock St, 10.00pm

Sunday 17 September

Wendy May's Locomotion

presents Sunday Shakedown

Regency Rooms, Crown

House, Marina, 3.00pm

Ska Sunday with Guest

Selectors Andy One Time

1200 Postcards, Queens

Rd, 3.30pm

Stone Junction

The Jenny Lind, High St, 4.00pm

Black River

The Carlisle, Pelham St, 4.00pm

Doctor Savage

The Albion, George St, 7.00pm

Vinyl Night

The Jenny Lind, High St, 7.00pm

Temtris

The Pig, White Rock, 7.00pm

Tuesday 19 September

Irish Music Session

The Albion, George St, 8.30pm

Traditional Folk Session

The Stag, All Saints St, 8.30pm

Wednesday 20 September

Open Mic with James & Jules

Tin Tins, Robertson St, 8.00pm

Jam Night

Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.00pm

Bertie Whuksters:

Ukulele Jam Session

The Seadog, Station Rd, 8.00pm

Thursday 21 September

Benoit Viellefon and

His Hot Club

Crown House, Marina, 8.00pm

Live Jazz: The Jazz

Organisation plus Special

Guest Greg Heath (Sax)

The NUR, Robertson St, 8.00pm

Open Mic with James & Meredith

The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm

Lord Jasper The Reluctant

Hippy Presents the

Blues + Guests

The Royal Standard, East

Beach St, 8.00pm

Shanty Night with

Completely Scuppered

The Jenny Lind, High St, 8.30pm

Rattlebag Sing-a-Round

The Stag, All Saints St, 8.30pm

CINEMA

Friday 8 September

Pretty Red Dress

Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Mission Impossible: Dead

Reckoning Part 1

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd,

3.00pm, 7.30pm

Saturday 9 September

Squaring the Circle: The

Story of Hipgnosis

Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Scraper

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd.

3.00pm, 7.30pm

Sunday 10 September

PhotoHastings: The Light

Will Shine Through Them

Electric Palace, High St, 11.00am

Scraper

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 2.00pm

Wednesday 13 September

The People's Train of Culture

Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Thursday 14 September

The Unlikely Pilgrimage

of Harold Fry

Electric Palace, High St,

11.00am, 7.30pm

Friday 15 September

The Unlikely Pilgrimage

of Harold Fry

Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Saturday 16 September

Stories from the She Punks

Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Animotion – Art &

Music in Motion

(Animated short films by

local creatives + Q&A with

directors and composers)

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 3.00pm

Sunday 17 September

Return to Ghandi Rd

Electric Palace, High St, 11.00am

Tuesday 19 September

Co-Dependent Lesbian

Space Alien Seeks Same

Electric Palace, High St. 7.30pm

Thursday 21 September

The Blue Caftan

Electric Palace, High St,

11.00am, 7.30pm

Empire of Light

Isabel Blackman Centre,

All Saints St, 2.00pm

Sussex Exchange

Queensway – for film listings go to:

cinema.thesussexexchange.co.uk

Odeon Hastings

Queens Rd - for film listings go to:

odeon.co.uk/cinemas/hastings

PERFORMANCE

Friday 8 September

One Night in the Many Deaths

of Sonny Liston (rehearsed

reading, free tickets)

Stables Theatre, The

Bourne, 7.30pm

Saturday 9 September

Vicki Vivacious

Forbidden Fruit, Grand

Parade, 9.30pm

Sunday 10 September

Bicycle Ballet Company –

Blazing Saddles

Heritage Bandstand,

Bexhill, 1.00pm, 3.00pm

Tuesday 12 September

The Serial Killer Next Door

White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm

Friday 15 September

The Caterpillar and the

Blackbird – A Musical

Spectacular

De La Warr Pavilion,

Bexhill, 1.30pm, 6.00pm

Lovinia Belle



LISTINGS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

< Continued from page 13

Forbidden Fruit, Grand Parade, 9.30pm

Lovesong

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 7.30pm

Saturday 16 September**Tanya Hyde**

Forbidden Fruit, Grand Parade, 9.30pm

Poetry Brothel Hastings: Verve (poetry, music, burlesque)

Hair & Hound, Queens Rd, 5.30pm

Flight Feathers Poetry Slam

The Nest, High St, 7.00pm

Lovesong

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 7.30pm

Sunday 17 September**Hastings Chamber Music****Festival: Jane Gordon (violin) & Jan Rautio (piano)**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 11.00am

Lovesong

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 2.30pm

Tuesday 19 September**Lovesong**

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 7.30pm

Wednesday 20 September**Royal Opera House:****Das Rheingold**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.15pm

Lovesong

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 7.30pm

Thursday 21 September**Lovesong**

Stables Theatre, The Bourne, 7.30pm

Swan Lake (by Crown Ballet)

White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm

ART

Coastal Currents Arts Festival runs throughout September – for full events programme go to coastalcurrents.org.uk**Abraham Osorio & The Young Creatives Collective**

Until 30 September 2023

Rooftop Foyer, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill

A Moment in Time

Until 30 September 2023

Stables Theatre Gallery, The Bourne

Artists in Residence:**The Two Ians**

Until 30 September 2023

St Andrews Mews, Waldegrave St

Hastings Arts Forum 20th Anniversary Members' Show

Until 17 September 2023

Hastings Arts Forum,

Marine Court

Kate Delaney – The Hot House

8, 9, 10 September 2023

Alexandra Park Greenhouse

Matthew Radford: Succession

Until 19 October 2023

Kino-Teatr Gallery, Norman Rd

Michelle Mildenhall – KINKY

Until 31 October 2023

Seed, George St

PhotoHastings in Residence

Until 31 October 2023

St Andrews Mews, Waldegrave St

Portraits of the Dove Café

Until 17 September 2023

Hastings Museum and Art

Gallery, Bohemia Rd

Paul Sayers and Helen**Savage - Plastic Confetti**

19 September until

1 October 2023

Hastings Arts Forum,

Marine Court

Re-Imagined – New**Concepts for the De La****Warr Pavilion Bandstand**

Until 30 September 2023

North Staircase, De La

Warr Pavilion, Bexhill

Soutine/Kossof

Until 24 September 2023

Hastings Contemporary, The Stade

Steven Linard – Total**Fashion Victim**

Until 8 October 2023

Rogue Gallery, Norman Rd

Stored Out of Sight

16 September until 16

December 2023

Hastings Museum and Art

Gallery, Bohemia Rd

Tom Hammick – Being Here

Until 9 September 2023

Project 78 Gallery, Norman Rd

Tressels Children Part**II (Installation)**

9-10 September 2023

St Andrews Mews,

Waldegrave St

Tschabalala Self: Seated

Until 29 October 2023

De La Warr Pavilion

Lawn, Bexhill

Yun Hyong-Keun

Until 1 October 2023

Hastings Contemporary, The Stade

SPORT

Friday 8 – Sunday 10**September****BMX: Battle of Hastings****competition**

The Source Park from

6.30pm Friday

Saturday 9 September**Football: Hastings United v****Haringey Borough – Isthmian****League Premier Division**

Pilot Field 3pm

Visitors are without a win in the

first five league games. Hastings

will hope to continue good start.

Saturday 16 September**Rugby: Hastings & Bexhill****v Whitstable – London & SE****Division, Kent League 3**

Ark Alexandra, time tbc

First league match of new

season for H&B – a tier

lower after relegation

Sunday 17 September**Football: Hastings United****Women v Bromley – London &****South East Regional League**

Pilot Field 2pm

EVENTS

Every Monday, Tuesday,**Wednesday, Friday****Health Walks**

Gentle, hour-long walks to boost physical and mental health. Free, no booking required, Times and venues vary, see website for details.

[tcv.org.uk/southeast/](http://tcv.org.uk/southeast/volunteer-south-east/east-sussex-healthy-walks)[volunteer-south-east/east-](http://volunteer-south-east/east-sussex-healthy-walks)sussex-healthy-walks**Every Monday****Al-Anon**

7.30pm-8.30pm

Clifton Community Church

Centre, 1-2 Stainsby

St, St Leonards

Worried about someone's

drinking? Come to Al-Anon

family groups 12-step weekly

meeting. All welcome.

[al-anonuk.org.uk/groups/](http://al-anonuk.org.uk/groups/hastings-monday)hastings-monday**Karaoke Night with John C Live**

Havelock Pub, Robertson St,

7.00pm

Facebook

#generalhavelockhastings

The Seadog Quiz

32, Station Rd, Hastings, 8.00pm

1st place - £50 bar tab

@TheSeaDogHastings

Every Tuesday**OHPS Original Old****Town Guided Walks**

Meet by the café on the West Hill

2.30pm (until 26 Sept)

£6. Prebook online or at

Fisherman's Museum

ohps.org.uk/walks**SIVE Rhythms**

10.00am-11.30am

The Crown House,

Marina, St Leonards

5Rhythms is a dynamic

movement practice that

ignites creativity, connection

and community. Come and

dance with Emma Leech.

emmadance.co.uk**Every Tuesday, Friday, and****Saturday****The Hastings Library of Things**

Tuesday 12.00pm-2.00pm, Friday

and Saturday 12.00pm-4.00pm

The Common Room, 27-

29 Cambridge Rd

A library of things to be

borrowed, used and returned.

Tools, kitchen items, jigsaw

puzzles and lots more.

hastingslibraryofthings.co.uk**Every Wednesday****Let's Do Lunch**

12.30pm-2.00pm

Isabel Blackman Centre,

Winding St, Hastings

Make new friends and

reconnect with old ones over

a lovely and affordable 2

course lunch for under £10.

Every Friday**Nature Babies, Wellbeing****Walks, Talks, Classes****and lots more**

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

Dates and times vary – see

website for details.

Explore and learn in the natural

environment at Rye Harbour

Nature reserve. Fantastic

tours, events and classes on

offer for adults and children.

[rye.sussexwildlifetrust.org.](http://rye.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/discovery-centre/events)uk/discovery-centre/events**Fixing Friday**

12.00pm-4.00pm

The Common Room, 27-

29 Cambridge Rd

Bring your small items for repair.

If in doubt, bring it along!

[makeandmendbexhillandbeyond.](http://makeandmendbexhillandbeyond.org.uk)org.uk**Thursday to Saturday 7-10****September****Swatch Battle of Hastings**

2.00pm start

Ticketed Saturday/

Sunday starting £30.50

Back for 2023 for its 7th year

at the Source Park! Watch

the World's best BMX riders

compete for a \$22k Pro

purse in the World's largest

underground Skatepark.

sourcebmx.com/boh**Sunday 10 September****Heritage Open Day**

12noon-3.00pm

Bohemia Walled Garden

Association

Visit this hidden gem in the

middle of local nature reserve

and gorgeous wilderness,

Summerfield Woods

bohemiawga.org.uk**Friday 15 September****Hastings Book Festival**

Poetry Open Mic Lottery -

hosted by Henry Normal

7.30

hastingsbookfest.org**Music Quiz Night Fundraiser**

7.00pm, £5 per person,

tables of 4 to 6

Hastings Sierra Leone

Friendship Link

St Paul's School, Horntye

Rd, St Leonards

hastingshastings.org.uk**RSPB talk: Crossing the Andes**

7.00pm for 7.30pm start

3, Upper Maze Hill, St Leonards

Talk by John Lawrence

includes raffle and

refreshments, £5 visitors

group.rspb.org.uk/hastings**Saturday 16 September****Hastings Book Festival**

10.00am-1.00pm:

Christine Harmar-Brown.

Text Art Workshop, See

What You Say with

10.00am-12.40pm: Meet the

Literary Agent – SOLD OUT

2.00pm-5.00pm: Graham

Duff. Writing for Screen

& Radio Workshop

7.30pm. Showcasing Local

Talent hosted by VG Lee

hastingsbookfest.org**Flight of Feathers Poetry Slam**

The Next, Old Town Hall Hastings

We bring together experienced

poets and budding talents to

help develop their creative

wings. Hosted by the

amazing local performer

Lucas The Peaceful Poet.

[entbrite.co.uk search](http://entbrite.co.uk/search)[Flight of feathers](http://Flightoffeathers)**Sunday 17 September****Hastings Book Festival**

10.00am-1.00pm: Andrew

Wille. Tarot for Writers

Workshop, Magicians & Fools

14-17.00 Robyn Drury: The Art

of Life Writing Workshop

7.30pm: Breaking Down

Barriers, with Trix Worrell,

Patrice Lawrence MBE

and Henry Normal

**Crossword Solution No 234:****Across:** 1. Double 3. (L)Imp air(ways) 4. St-ones **Down:** 1. D-rains 2. Extras

HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

LISTINGS

7.30pm
White Rock Hotel, Hastings
Facebook @HastingsHumanists

CLASSES**Mondays****Overeaters Anonymous**

7.30-8.30
Clifton Centre, 1-2 Stainsby
St, St Leonards 31
oagb.org.uk

Slow and Easy Fitness

11.30-12.30pm, £3
Bewellfit, at Clifton Rd
& 9, The Ridge
Exercise for older adults
07817 144812:
bodymoveshastings.com

Drum Club

4.15pm-5.15pm, £6.50
West Hill Community Centre
For 15-16 year olds,
booking essential.
juliansambadrum@gmail.com

Art Classes, including**Life Drawing**

10.00am-12.15pm and
12.45pm-3.00pm
Ore Community Centre, 455 Old
London Rd, Hastings
£10.50 per session
sjflack.art

Darragh Dance

5.30pm-7.00pm, £10,
£5 concessions
Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine
Court, St Leonards
Get your joy on with movement
director and choreographer
Darragh O'Leary.
afri-co-lab.org

Silver Swans Beginners**Ballet Class**

(Closed Bank Holiday)
11.15am-12.15pm
Isabel Blackman Centre
Annie 07704 711772

Silver Swans Ballet Class

4.00pm-5.30pm and
6.30pm-8.00pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772

Art Class for Adults

10am-12.15pm & 12.45-3.00pm
Ore Community Centre
All levels, £10.50 per session
sjflack.art

Choir Practice!

11.00am
The Chapel of Christ
Stillness, Moon Cottage,
Guestling, TN35 4HJ
New singers of all ages welcome.
thechapelofchristsstillness.co.uk

Feel better with**Therapeutic Movements**

2.00pm-3.00pm
Salvation Army Hall, St
Andrew's Square, Hastings
Suitable for all ages.
qigongsigrid@gmail.com
Candlelit Yoga
6.00pm-7.00pm

Hastings Old Town
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Absolute Beginners
Argentine Tango
7.00pm-8.30pm
Upstairs at the Piper,
1 Norman Rd
£40pp or £70 couple
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk

Argentine Tango Improvers**Drop-In Class**

8.30pm-9.30pm, £6
Upstairs at the Piper,
1 Norman Rd
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk

Beginners Vinyasa Flow

9.30am and 6.30pm
Hot Yoga Hastings,
21 St Peter's Rd, Hastings
hotyogahastings.co.uk

Slow Flow Yoga (Open Level)

9.30am-10.30am
Azur Marina Pavilion
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk

Silver Swans Ballet Class

4.00pm-5.30pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772

Beginners Pointe Class

5.30pm-6.30pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772

Alexander Technique

Taster Sessions
1.30pm-5.00pm
Braybrooke Rd
livingtenderly@yahoo.co.uk

Kundalini Yoga &**Meditation with Yeli**

7.30pm-9.00pm
Wellington Centre, Hastings
yeli@happinessholistichealth.uk

Ballet Barre

7.15pm-8.00pm.
Hastings Old Town
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Yoga Over 60 – maintaining
movement

11am-12.30pm
St Leonards Studio @
Azur Marina Pavilion
zowie@stleonards.studio

Hastings Punk Choir

7.00pm-8.30pm
Electric Palace, 39A
High St, Hastings
(And generally a drink or two
in the Jenny Lind afterwards.)

Tuesdays**Ore Youth Club Sessions**

4.30pm-6.00pm
Ore Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800

The Crown Knitters

10.30am
The Crown, 64-66 All
Saints St, Hastings
Fortnightly first and
second week of month
A weekly knitting group who
knit lovely things to sell to raise
money for local charities.

thecrownhastings.co.uk/events

Sew Social with Karen Arthur

7.00pm-9.00pm, £10,
£5 concessions
Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine
Court, St Leonards
A monthly gathering on first
Tuesday of the month for
Global Majority crafters.
afri-co-lab.org

Baby & Toddler Social Meet Up

12.00pm-3.00pm
The Common Room, Eagle House,
27-29 Cambridge Rd, Hastings
A welcome space for people
with small people to meet.
umbrellasussex.org.uk/news

Needle Felt

11.00am-12.00pm and
1.00pm-2.00pm
Isabel Blackman Centre
One of several classes
covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk

Online Chair Yoga

Zoom, 2.00pm-3.00pm
sueyoga1066@gmail.com
Creative Writing at The Crown
10.00am-11.30am
The Crown, Hastings, £8
£15 – lots more classes
available for all levels
Nicky 07938 734871

Life Drawing

10.00am-12.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park.
£15 (concessions available)
info@artsonprescription.org

Classical Guitar Tuition

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays
Bexhill, from £15, free
taster sessions
bexhillclassicalguitar.co.uk

Pilates with Lucy Paffard

St Leonards, 9.30am
lucypaffard@gmail.com
Painting Workshop
1.00pm-3.00pm

Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
£12 (concessions available)
Materials provided.
Info@artsonprescription.org

Photography Workshop

6.00pm-8.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
£12 (concessions available)
Own camera required.
Info@artsonprescription.org

Country Dancing

7.45pm-9.45pm
St Matthew's Church,
London Rd, St Leonards
hastingscountrydanceclub.org.uk

Vinyasa Flow (Levels 1-2)

6.00pm-7.00pm
Horntye Sports Centre, Hastings
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk

Knitting Yarns:

5.00pm-6.30pm
Sugar Pie Honey Buns
235 London Rd, St Leonards
Rachel: 07397794879

Yin Yoga & Relaxation

7.30pm-8.30pm, £7

Azur Marina
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk

Daoist Qi Gong

9.00am-10.00am
The Azur Pavilion, St Leonards
andreacorsoQG@yahoo.com
Pilates: with a roller
with Sally Paffard
9.00am-9.30am, Zoom
sallypaffard@gmail.com

Pilates with Sally Paffard

5.30pm-6.30pm
Small class
Westhill Community Centre
Sally: 07973 530911

Hot Yoga Hastings

21 St Peter's Rd, Hastings
hotyogahastings.co.uk

Yoga at the White Rock

11.00am-12.00pm
White Rock Hotel, Hastings
Healing Breath, Yoga Nidra
& Tibetan Bowls, £10.
myranicol@gmail.com

Silver Swans Ballet Class

6.30pm-8.00pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772

Gary Marriott's Tune

up Tuesdays
5.15pm-6.30pm
Fun Acapella Choir
Hastings Town Centre, £3
Text 07986911083 for more info

Ashtanga Yoga - Assisted

Self Practice
07.30am-09.30am, £15
Wellington Health & Wellbeing
Centre
ashtangayogahastings@gmail.com

Salsa Tuesdays with

Phyre Dance
The Piper, Norman
Rd, St Leonards
Times vary see Facebook page.
From beginners to social
dancing and practice.
@facebook.com/
events/576448847887517

French for Beginners

11.00am-12.00pm
The Cottage, 7 The
Alley TN34 1HB
Also, French Conversation at the
Common Room, Eagle House
Contact George at
07835808318 for details.

Wednesdays**Slow and Easy Fitness**

10.30am-11.30am, £3
Ore Community Centre, 455
Old London Rd TN35 5BH
Exercise for older adults
07817 144812:
bodymoveshastings.com

Hatha Yoga for You

2.00pm-3.00pm
Sunroom, Azur, Marina Pavilion,
44-37 Marina, St Leonards
Louise@stleonards.studio

Mystical Yoga at The

Bale House
5.45-7.00pm, £10

Hastings Country Park, Lower
Coastguard Lane, Fairlight,
Hastings, TN354AD
enchantedmalas@gmail.com
Elemental Yoga with Catherine
10.30am. Class Cost: £7
The Azur Pavilion
catherineburnett12@gmail.com
Laughter Yoga with Bev
6.30pm-7.30pm
Upstairs, Jenny Lind
bevjones@laughyourself
tohealth.com

Wellbeing Wednesday

11.00am-2.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org

Buddhist Meditation and**Dharma Teaching**

7.00pm-9.00pm
In person and via Zoom.
hastingsbuddhistgroup.co.uk
Yoga on the Harbour Arm
(outdoors) 5.30pm-6.30pm
oldtownyoga.co.uk

Kundalini Yoga and**Meditation Class**

7.30pm-8.45pm
The Ballroom, Bank Hotel &
Bistro, St Leonards, £10.
soulpowerkundaliniyoga.co.uk
Relaxation: Zoom class with
Pilates teacher Sally Paffard
8.00pm-9.00pm, £4
sallypaffard@gmail.com

Spanish – Adult Beginners

10.00am-12.00pm
First Floor, 7 Cambridge
Rd, Hastings
£15 – lots more classes
available for all levels
Españoles en Hastings FB page
spanishonseaschool@gmail.com

Argentine Tango Social Dance

8.00pm-11.00pm
White Rock Hotel,
Downstairs Bar
A friendly social tango for those
already dancing tango with
music from tango's golden age.
£5 dancers, £2 non-dancers
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk
Qigong with Sigrid
5.30-6.30pm
Community Hall of Greek
Orthodox Church, St Leonards
Suitable for all ages.
Sigrid: qigongsigrid@gmail.com

Adult Tap Class for Beginners

6.15pm-7.00pm
7 Mercatoria, St Leonards
kimhaviand@gmail.com

Therapeutic Yoga

12.30pm-1.30pm
Hastings Centre, The Ridge,
Hastings TN34 2SA
£7 – All abilities welcome
ninayoga.co.uk

Legs Bums & Tums

1.00pm-2.00pm
Isabel Blackman Centre,
Winding St.

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LISTINGS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

< Continued from page 15

One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk

The Class Choir

7.00pm-9.00pm
The Unitarian Church, South Terrace, Hastings
Friendly, Fun Uplifting Women's choir
Free taster sessions, no music reading or auditions.
theclasschoir@gmail.com
"Street sketchers" / "plein air" group
First Wednesday of each month
9.00am start: Outside Hastings Contemporary Gallery
11.00am reconvene: Eat@TheStade for refreshments and discussion
meetup.com/south-coast-skyers

Thursdays**Tilekiln Youth Club Sessions**

5.30-7.00pm
Tilekiln Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800

Co-working social media Sessions

10am
The Crown, 64-66 All Saints St, Hastings
Free group working sessions for creative business owners and freelancers designed to help you spend focused, productive time creating and sharing content.
Insta: @brassbeemarketing, catherine@brassbeemarketing.com

Tai Chi for Health and Relaxation

10.30am-11.30am, £5
St John's Parish Hall, Brittany Rd
Stuart 07961 949715

Nature Walks with HESNHS

Times and venues vary.
hastingsnaturalhistory.org

Meditation and Breathwork with Jung-ui

7.30pm-8.30pm, £55
West Hill Community Centre
A four-week course.
jung-ui.co.uk

Teens Art Club

4.00pm-6.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org

Hastings Town Singers

7.00pm-9.00pm
Castledown School, Priory Rd
A friendly non-auditioning community choir.
Free taster sessions.
hastings townsingers.co.uk

Adult Art Club

1.00pm-3.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park, £12 (concessions available).

info@artsonprescription.org

Yoga at Hastings Contemporary

9.50am-10.50am
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Move It or Lose It!
10.00am-11.00am
The Hastings Centre
Friendly, low impact exercise for older adults. Improves strength and balance. Seated or standing. £6 per class. First class free.
lucy.jenner@moveitorloseit.co.uk
Yoga on the Harbour Arm
5.15pm-6.15pm
(outdoors)
oldtownyoga.co.uk

Online Vinyasa Flow with Elena Voce

12.45pm-1.30pm
Classes for all levels.
Pay-what-you-can
yogawithelena voce.co.uk

Vinyasa Flow

9.30am-10.30am
Azur Marina Pavilion
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk

Kundalini Yoga & Meditation with Yeli

6.00pm-7.30pm
Wellington Centre, Hastings
yeli@happinessholistichealth.uk

Mandala Vinyasa

Flow (Advanced)
Hot Yoga Hastings,
21 St Peter's Rd, Hastings, 6.30pm
hotyogahastings.co.uk

Iyengar Yoga for Beginners

8.00pm-9.00pm
Arthur Easton Centre,
St Leonards
Mats, blocks, ropes and barre work. Pay as you are able.
myranicol@gmail.com

Pilates (beginners)

3.00pm-4.00pm
Isabel Blackman Centre,
Winding St.
One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk

Ashtanga Yoga – Assisted Self Practice

07.15am-09.15am, £15
Wellington Health & Wellbeing Centre
ashtangayogahastings@gmail.com
HESNHS Walking Group
Walk 4-6 miles with this friendly natural history walking group. Picnic or pub lunch options.
hastingsnaturalhistory.org
Andrew: *ajw.hesnhs@btinternet.com*, 07597 003407

Fridays**Broomgrove Youth Club Sessions**

4.30-5.30
Broomgrove Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800

Feel better with

Therapeutic Movements
9.30-10.30am

Salvation Army Hall, St Andrew's Square, Hastings
Suitable for all ages.
Sigrid: qigongsigrid@gmail.com
Elements Yoga, Wash Away The Week
5.30-6.30pm, £6.50
Arthur Easton Centre at St Michael's Hospice
hello.elementsyoga@gmail.com
Breathe + Stretch with Karen Arthur
7.30am-8.20am, £10, £5 concessions
Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine Court, St Leonards
Greet the day and start the weekend energised and refreshed.
afri-co-lab.org

Traditional Yoga

Horntye Club Room,
Horntye Sports Centre
9.30am-10.40am, £10
For the yoga enthusiast

Yin Yoga

11.30pm-12.30pm, £7
All abilities.
ninayoga.co.uk

Yoga on the Harbour Arm
(outdoors), 9.00am-10.00am
oldtownyoga.co.uk

Pilates: mixed ability with Sally Paffard

Zoom, 9.00am-10.00am
sallypaffard@gmail.com
Beginners Creative Writing Group

6.15pm-7.15pm
The Clifton Centre (previously Southwater Community Centre)

Mindful Yoga – An introspective practice

10.30am-12.30pm
Chair Yoga – A supported approach
2.30pm-3.30pm
St Leonards Studio @

Azur Marina Pavilion
zowie@stleonards.studio

Gong Bath sessions

11am
Unitarian Church, 7a South Terrace
Text Karen Hayler: 07986 911083

Senior Strength

3.00pm-3.45pm
Isabel Blackman Centre,
Winding St.
One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk

Saturdays**Chess Club**

2.00pm-4.00pm
The Common Room, Eagle House,
27-29 Cambridge Rd, Hastings
An amateur club for amateur players
umbrellasussex.org.uk/news
Zoom Hatha Yoga
9.00am-10.00am (online only)
Pranayama, practice and

relaxation, video available.

Louiselovesyoga@gmail.com

Meditation and Breathwork with Jung-ui

10.45am-11.45am
The Stables Theatre, Hastings
jung-ui.co.uk

Yoga at Hastings

Contemporary
9.50am-10.50am
oldtownyoga.co.uk

Strong Yoga with Lucy

Morning Yoga via Zoom
10.00am-11.15am
lamiles@hotmail.co.uk

Hot Yoga Hastings,

21 St Peter's Rd, Hastings

Book: *hotyogahastings.co.uk*

Gong Bath sessions

Weekly starting 1 April, 2pm
4 Courts Wellbeing Centre
off Sydney Close

Text Karen Hayler: 07986 911083

Antenatal Taster Class

10.00am
64-66 All Saints St, Hastings
First Saturday every month.
Free taster sessions to learn about antenatal and hypnobirthing with Siobhan from The Mothership Antenatal.
themothershipantenatal.co.uk

Sundays**Yin Yoga**

21 St Peter's Rd, Hastings. 3.00pm
hotyogahastings.co.uk

Historical Dance Group

Regency Dance Workshop
2pm-4.45pm, monthly
St Peter and St Paul's Church Hall
dianadancer@btinternet.com

"Street sketchers" /**"plein air" group**

First Wednesday of each month
4.00pm start: South side,
The Stade open space

6.00pm reconvene:

East Hastings Angling Club,
The Stade for refreshments and discussion

meetup.com/south-coast-skyers

Sunday Brunch-time**Kid's Art Club**

10.00am-12.00pm, £5, Drop-in or stay full 2 hours
Outside the Smokeshack,
St Andrew's Mews,
Waldegrave Rd, Hastings
Join Artist and Arts Educator Charlotte CHW for different creative projects every week at the revamped St Andrew's Mews. 5-10 yrs.
c.hwatts.art@gmail.com

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Richard Davis



Henry Normal: Creative Crusader

SERENA FERRARI, a new contributor to HIP, talks to Henry Normal - poet, comedian, father - about poetry and the creative process.

It's a misty morning in Fairlight when I ring Henry Normal's doorbell and, as I do, I notice two peculiar sculptures – each about the size of a shoe box – sitting on a stone bench near the entryway. Wooden, with facial features made out of scrap metal, these sculptures appear friendly yet uncanny, like something out of a Tim Burton film. Once inside, I spot another sculpture of a similar aesthetic, this time with an egg-white strainer for an ear, and marvel at the ingenuity.

The sculptures are made by Johnny Carroll Pell, Henry Normal's son with screenwriter Angela Pell. Johnny is also a painter, his paintings showcased pretty much on every wall in their house. Some are abstract landscapes (symbols of hills and trees); Others are portraits (David Bowie, Nick Cave), but almost all of them are alive with imagination. "He paints every day," Henry tells me as I follow him out to his patio overlooking the valley, a view which, unsurprisingly, is obscured by the mist.

Some of you may know Henry Normal as the former executive director/producer of Baby Cow

Productions (The Mighty Boosh, Gavin & Stacey, Alan Partridge). Others may know him as the author of several poetry collections, plus one non-fiction book co-written with Angela titled: A Normal Family: Everyday Adventures with our Autistic Son (Johnny is autistic). But in his most recent poetry collection, The Fire Hills, he tackles "both the external and internal landscape", using surrounding nature and historic landmarks as an analogy to confront greater themes in his life like aging and death. "I'm 67 next week," Henry informs me. "My brother died before the age of 67, so part of your attention – part of the way you view life – is through the filter of 'I might not see this next year.'"

Which is not to say that the collection is devoid of the humour and wit which has made Henry a household name. On the contrary, the collection is a balance of self-deprecation, lyric playfulness and quiet reflection. The poems range from sending off a stool sample in the post to Henry's weekly commute to his father's deathbed. Seemingly disproportionate in tone, the comedy of one poem off-sets the emotional depth of the next, forging a gap from which the humanity of the overall collection emerges.

It's a precarious balance to strike, but Henry assures me it's a



Art by Johnny Carroll Pell

feeling. "It's all to do with feelings. If there are no feelings involved then what's the point? Why would you even bother to write? There's something in you that observes and thinks 'Oh, I need to communicate that' or 'I need to jot that down', but it's got to start with a feeling and if it doesn't, then you are just going through the motions."

Henry started writing when he was 14, living in a council estate in Nottingham with his widowed father and four siblings. He recalls, "While all the other boys were out playing football and trying to get girlfriends, I sat in my room with a paper and pen." When I ask him why, he tells me that "Writing has always been very cathartic," like listening to music. "I would listen to Led Zeppelin and I wouldn't be in a council estate in Nottingham, I'd be anywhere in the world – I'd be in a different world, a world that didn't actually exist." Similarly with writing, one is transported: "You're in your head and in a world of your making."

But it wasn't until an English teacher assigned Henry's class to write an essay on The Ballad of Hollis Brown, a Bob Dylan song about the dust bowl in America, that he began to relate to "lyrics as a serious form of communication." He then started to read Liverpoolian poets like Adrian Mitchell, and fellow comedian Spike Milligan. At 16, he bought Milligan's Small Dreams of a Scorpion, which made him cry. "I thought 'this man is so incredibly funny and yet so incredibly moving'."

And it's precisely this cathartic friction between humor and depth which Henry hopes to achieve in his own poetry. He describes some "light-verse" as "neither funny nor moving" but something in between with "a sort of afternoon tea party" formality. "It all feels a bit like a parlour game, whereas what

I found with the poems coming mainly from a working-class background is that they were quite sharp in their comedy and in their passion, and I thought those are the poems I want to write. I don't want the middle ground."

When I ask him if he thinks humour helps one endure the burdens of working-class life, he hesitates to agree. "I think it is to do with feeling like an outsider. I think that you could be rich and successful and still feel like an outsider, which is that you can't relate to people or people can't relate to you." But again, he resists putting too much of a label on it. "We're in an age where we are conscious of race and age and gender and really, these are just divisions that we make" – divisions which ultimately aid in feelings of inclusion or exclusion.

As for Henry, art and poetry should be anything but exclusive. He believes that art is first and foremost about self-expression and that no one should have to subject their expression to a preconceived notion of what 'good' art is. He uses his son's work as an example – he had an exhibition at the Phoenix in Brighton a few years back. "A lot of professional artists came, and I was slightly hesitant with them, but they were saying 'it's marvelous how bold he is!' And it's because he is unencumbered by the pressure of living up to the artists of the past. Basically he is expressing himself through art and you can either like it or not like it."

For someone who battles with her own creativity, it's refreshing to hear Henry speak; his words destabilise a hierarchical conditioning which may have, consciously or unconsciously, permeated my own creative process as a writer. "I don't think anything I write is necessarily of any greater



Sculptures by Johnny

value than what anybody else writes," he continues. "But I can only write the things that I write. And whether somebody would look at anything I've written and know the specific place and have the same experience, I don't know, because it is filtered through everything that they've experienced. And it feels like there is something precious about that." He smiles, "Valuable."

It's an ethos commonly shared with the Hastings Book Festival, which Henry is a patron of. And I can't think of a better spokesperson for the Festival than Henry Normal. Describing his poetry as "deliberately accessible," Henry likens himself to a kind of John the Baptist character: "I'm out there bringing people in for the poet yet to come," he laughs. Humbling jokes aside, it's obvious that Henry is making himself aesthetically vulnerable so as to embody this ethos of inclusivity which makes me think less of John the Baptist and more of a knight crusader.



■ You can hear Henry read his poems at the Hastings Book Festival on September 15 at 7.30.

Photos: Henry Normal



FEATURES

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS



David EP Dennis

DAVID EP DENNIS

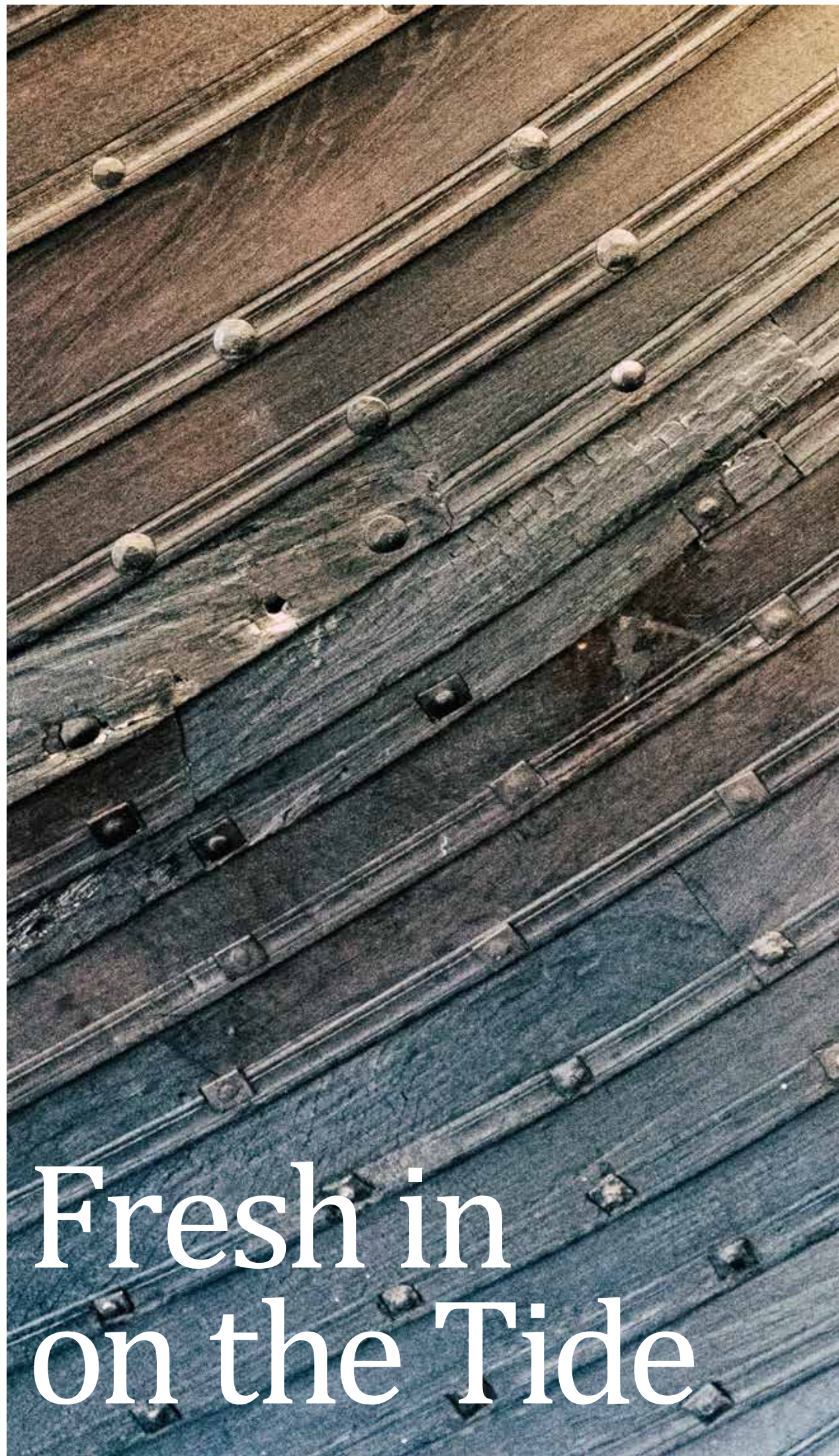
Imagine a cold grey mist, a lamp in the darkness and the crunching sound of wood grinding on the gravel of an English beach. Here comes Mora, the flagship of the Norman fleet, a gift from Matilda of Flanders to her husband, Duke William.

Eager William, dressed in heavy chain mail, jumps into the surf and trips. As he falls, he grasps the stones in his hands and his bodyguard hails the act as the first taking of English soil. At last he is in England, ruled by the lying traitor Harold Godwinsson, whom he had captured, befriended, honoured and tricked, after Harold sailed from Bosham in Sussex and had been wrecked on the coast of Ponthieu in 1064. The Duke, who happily called himself William the Bastard, looks back to sea, wondering where the rest of his fleet is. Has this been a dreadful mistake? There are no prow lights to be seen. He and his men are alone on the shore of a hated enemy, but he is an exceptionally brave war-

rior. He is hungry for land but also for breakfast!

THE LONG BREAKFAST

The duke, his escort and sailors had started out from Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme on the evening of 27 September 1066 with his fleet of some 700 longships, perhaps 7,000 armed troops and many cavalry horses. The fleet was in proper order, and all vessels had lanterns in their prow so that each ship could see at least two others where possible through the sea mists of La Manche. The Mora, being such a superb longship, was faster than the rest and so, on the morning of 28 September, Duke William breakfasted, sipping a Normandy wine while he waited for the rest of the fleet. In fact he was so hungry that he'd started eating at sea. The food? Probably an onion-flavoured baguette liberally coated with Camembert provided by his logistics expert, Wadard. As the sun rose, so its rays struck the stern of the ship giving a glow to the Golden Child set on its sternpost. The Child holds a lance



Fresh in on the Tide



Patrick Robert Doyle

pointing towards the intended shore. There is also a gleam to the great Golden Lion figurehead on Mora's prow. Harold is in the north at Stamford Bridge, killing his brother Tostig and the King of Norway and Denmark, Harald Hardrada on 25 September. Now is the time to consolidate and lay waste to the Godwinsson properties at Upper Wilting and Whatlington, perhaps to burn out Harold's wife Edith Swanneshals and their children.

A DISTRIBUTED ATTACK

At least one longship landed at so-called Norman's Bay near Pevensey's Anderida Roman fort. At least one ship entered the Stordisdale valley (eventually called the Asten and now the Combe Haven) at Bulverhythe and at least one ship landed at Old Romney where the crew were massacred. Within weeks of his coronation on 31 December in Edward the Confessor's Westminster Abbey, King William had despatched troops to massacre the people of Old Romney in reprisal.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE MORA

Now the people of France are to build a perfect replica of the Mora fleet flagship, thirty-four metres long (112 feet), and sail it to Pevensey, then along the coast past Hastings Pier and on up the coast past Romney Marsh and Dungeness. They will travel past the dangerous Goodwin Sands, named after Earl Godwin, Harold's father, and finally conquer the River Thames, the very heart of London. Maybe they will anchor by King William's White Tower of London. What will the people of England do then? Hopefully they will enter into the spirit of things and cheer the vessel. Hastings Pier will be packed with spectators, Camber Sands car parks will be overflowing, the beaches of Dungeness will glow with the ruddy faces of spec-

tators rather than any blue flux of neutron radiation, and the banks of the Thames will be lined with mobile phone-waving tourists from all over the world.

The Mora will have 150 square feet of sail and no doubt display a replica of the Papal banner shown in the Bayeux Tapestry. It will be rowed by 60 oarsmen and commanded by a captain and nine senior crew but is unlikely to have horses on board. The longship is being built at a cost of around £11,000,000 in Honfleur, France in cooperation with museum experts from Roskilde, Denmark because the original design of this type of ship was Viking, and the Normans were Viking descendants. The longship's design is based on the image in the Tapestry since no documented plans still exist in French archives. A visitor's centre and exhibition are being built in Honfleur and it is hoped that the new Mora will be ready to sail the Channel in 2027 to mark the 1,000th anniversary of William's birth. The project manager says that this will not be a triumphalist sailing but instead a way to bring "Britain and France closer together after the upheaval of Brexit".

SECOND TIME LUCKY

The famous invasion during the Michaelmas period of 1066 was the second attempt to take England by the Normans. Its tribulations must have helped Duke William to be deeply 'weather-aware' and indeed he did postpone the second invasion from the planned date in August. Around 1034-1035, Duke William's father, known now as Robert the Magnificent and also Robert the Devil, built a huge fleet, but a storm scattered it, and Duke Robert was thrown up half-drowned on a beach in Guernsey. Back then, he was acting on behalf of poor Edward the Confessor who was in exile, hiding from King Cnut,



and trying to get his throne back.

The story of the Battle of Hastings is well known but some new theories and speculations have been proposed and some documented material is coming to light.

SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH

The central problem of the battle is that no artefacts: weapons, horse trappings, swords, shield bosses, helms, or any other relevant and scientifically proven archaeological material, has ever been found at Senlac. The great field nominated by English Heritage as the 'true site of the battle', on the south-facing slope at the back of Battle Abbey shows no trace of the 15,000-16,000 combatants or their horses, overnight cooking fires and supplies. Not even a single chain mail link, despite the Bayeux Tapestry showing the stripping of the dead.

It is uncontested that the Normans defeated the Saxons and that England was forever changed by that fact. What is not certain in the minds of all researchers, is: where did the fleet land and where did the battle take place? Landing places have been proposed at Pevensey, Normans Bay, Bulverhythe, Old Winchelsea, Appledore, and in the upper reaches of the Brede Valley. Battle sites have been suggested at Battle, Crowhurst, Wilting, Hurst Lane in Sedlescombe, Icklesham, Beechdown Wood and Greenstreet ridge. Those historians proposing landing sites have not always been able to indicate likely battle sites and vice versa.

The gentlemanly but still furious controversy means that the jury is out, but here are a few items that might keep you interested in this battle more than 950 years ago. In 2016, historian Kathleen Tyson wrote an academic paper, *Quedam Exceptiones de Historia Normannorum et Anglorum: The Battle of Hastings as First Viewed from Battle Abbey* in which her fascinating Latin translation revealed that Duke William was still on the

battlefield at midnight – a hard day's fighting indeed. As to a landing, the historian Mark Anthony Lower is quoted on page 6 of Behrens, L. B. (1937) book *Battle Abbey Under Thirty-Nine Kings*: "One of the ships of the Conqueror may yet be seen on the beach near Pevensey. There, in the middle of the 19th Century, was found the remains of the vessel, which was so embedded in the gravel that it could not be excavated."

Then of course we have our own longship reburied in the Combe Valley marshes by Charles Somerville. Before WWII, Sir Alan Cobham wished to build an airfield at the Pebsham interface with Bulverhythe. A letter exists in which Hastings Council rejoices that they have enough uncontrolled leachate rubbish to be able to strew it over the ground to enable Sir Alan's air project. In order to speed up the building of the aerodrome, Hastings Council employed a digger driver called Charles Somerville, and while he was working away moving the 'Tip' soil and digging a ditch, he uncovered what he could immediately see was a Norman longboat with a 'dragon head' prow. His manager, realising the fuss that would ensue if the longboat were to be raised and preserved, ordered him to re-bury the boat quickly, otherwise Sir Alan Cobham would be upset. East Sussex County Council archivist at the Keep, Lewes received Charles Somerville's statement and logged it in the county archives. I have a copy.

In conclusion, I would say that we have been put to shame by the French once more and by the Dutch also because they are about to remove the Amsterdam from Bridge Way beach, St Leonards to a beautiful new museum in Holland. I wonder why it is that we do not care for our own heritage. Heyho. The Pevensey longship has probably long gone, the Bulverhythe longship rots in the marshes and we, the defeated, rely on the French for our next spectacle – the arrival of La Mora II.



David F Barrero



ARTS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Music for Justice

GARETH STEVENS meets Suman Joshi, the mastermind behind Eparapo's stunning new album.

Suman Joshi, whose bass playing is very much in demand by a number of African and Latin bands in London, has truly surpassed himself with the recent album release *Take to the Streets* with his band Eparapo. In Yoruba, the word Eparapo means 'to come together' or 'to join forces'. As well as playing bass, keyboards and guitars, Joshi composed, arranged and produced the whole album.

A St Leonards resident, Joshi is a humble man with a quiet intelligence that belies the fierce defiance and indignation running through all of his music. Eparapo have been described as an 'Afrobeat supergroup'. Many of the musicians have a strong pedigree: Dele Sosimi, who sings and plays Fender Rhodes on the album, was Fela Kuti's musical director during Kuti's Egypt 80 phase. In 1986, Sosimi co-founded Positive Force with Femi Kuti, which enjoyed musical success for over eight years. Joshi has been an integral musical partner of Sosimi's for over fifteen years. Kishon Khan,

who founded Lokkhi Terra - a band that combines the Bangladeshi musical tradition with that of Africa and Latin America - is a jazz pianist and composer and makes a solid contribution to this stellar project.

Afrobeat was born out of resistance and is at its core political, confronting those in power with the truth. It is a blend of Yoruban Jùjú music, highlife and funk, but really only found its political identity after Fela visited the US. In 1969 he stayed with Sandra Smith, a singer and former Black Panther. She introduced Kuti to the writings of activists such as Martin Luther King Jr., Angela Davis, Jesse Jackson, and his biggest influence of all, Malcolm X. It was then that Kuti and his newly formed Africa 70 began to sing about the corruption and oppressive policies of the postcolonial military juntas in Nigeria.

Joshi tells me that he vividly remembers the life changing first time he heard Fela Kuti's tune *Water No Get Enemy* in his mid-teens. In many ways that moment was the first step to realising this fine new album.

He goes on to say that *Follow the Money*, the opening tune on the album, seeks to ask the questions "Who are the shady donors, lobbyists and think tanks that wield the real power in this country? Who are the puppet masters behind the 'shapeshifting creeps' in government, engineering catastrophic



Suman Joshi

policy decisions, wreaking havoc on social cohesion and syphoning off public money? There's a shadow world of insider trading that's hidden from our view, we need to follow the money to uncover it."

Who Invented Black and White? points to the encouragement of racial division is a tool of governance that aims to secure power and justify oppression. 'From London To Lagos' was inspired by a talk given by the author Roberto Saviano in 2016 in which he described the UK as the most corrupt country in the world. "To me, It was a stark reminder of how corruption and political dysfunction is associated with African or Asian countries but brushed under the carpet in our own." says Joshi "Meanwhile, organised crime syndicates, military juntas and dodgy multinationals across the globe



funnel funds through financial centres like London, while refugees and benefit claimants take the blame for society's ills."

Joshi says that the album's title track *Take To The Streets* is "the rallying cry". "Despite being an instrumental, it is infused with resistance and hope." Its introduction is a furious interplay between Afla Sackey's Djembe and Tamar Osborn's seismic Baritone sax. It's a white hot cut. Before long, Joshi's

irresistibly infectious rhythm guitar and intricately interwoven horn lines leave you no option but to move.

This is a world class release full of beautiful music, at the same time being a heartfelt plea for justice.

■ *'Take to the Streets' by Eparapo is on the Wah Wah 45s label and can be purchased from bandcamp or Dark Circles, Marine Court, St Leonards.*

Skinny Sunday: Hastings Local Youth Talent is on Fire

ROD WEBB is entranced by young bands of Hastings

I first became aware of the Skinny Sunday music festival while watching the Fat Tuesday Second Line Youth Band at the Sanctuary Festival in June. I bumped into Sally Lampitt, one of the directors of Fat Tuesday, and she explained that they would be taking part in the one-day August festival being organised by the HFT (Hastings Fat Tuesday) Youth Curatorial Panel. Before this I was vaguely aware of the work HFT were doing with young musicians in the town but was not at all clear about what exactly this was or where it was going. So I was intrigued.

It was a revelatory experience. The usual crowd that turns up for

live music at the Stade was there, a mixture of people between 30 and 85 with some children thrown in. But this time there was also a sizable gathering of Hastings youth, there to watch their mates or just enjoy music they could relate to.

Arriving to interlude music, I was soon blown away by the first performance by Borough Council and the two bands that followed, Chimer and Monakis (from Brighton). A lot goes into a memorable musical experience, and it was interesting to examine why this was such an enjoyable one.

THE HASTINGS SOUND

Part of it was the almost arrogant nonchalance in the way the bands appeared, immediately owning the stage. You had a real sense that



Chimer at the Stade

they knew what they were doing before opening up. And when they did, you were hit by their sheer energy. But not just raw energy. This was energy honed through practice, but that had still not lost its edge. And the first two bands were quite different from anything I'd heard before.

I talked to a group of young girls (and one guy). One of them explained how a 'Hastings sound' was beginning to evolve. They were

there because they knew the bands and some of the band members, but one of them pointed out how more people were coming from 'outside' and discovering this 'new sound'.

Since arriving in Hastings, I've got used to the huge pool of talented older musicians. But apart from scattered encounters with younger ones, I hadn't really come across the burgeoning youth music scene. Jay Toole, someone who knows that scene – and beyond – greeted

me with "The local talent is on fire at the moment!" He pointed out how bands had come and gone in the past but that now they knew they weren't confined to Hastings, and that there was an international playground out there.

On searching out more young people, one man gave me two more pointers for what was happening. On a national scale, he suggested there had been a resurgence of indie bands, and on a local level, he highlighted the big influence of Bexhill sixth form college, which has an excellent range of music courses in their Department of Performing Arts. It's important to get them early! As one of those I spoke to remarked: "I've known the drummer in Borough Council since he was sixteen."

But there has been a great deal of work done by HFT 'behind the scenes' over the year, mentoring young musicians. A festival curated by the youth of the town is, to some extent, a culmination of that work. As Sally Lampitt modestly commented, "We just gave them the support they needed and let them get on with it."



Jude Montague's Interpretation

A Hundred Years Ago in Hastings – the Invention of Television

JUDE MONTAGUE delves into the Logie Baird archives at Hastings Museum

It's a hundred years since John Logie Baird first transmitted images, transferring the outline of shapes from one site to another. The first successful experiment took place right in the centre of Hastings. Baird was born in 1888 at Helensburgh in Scotland and was educated at the Royal Technical College in Glasgow, but having for many years suffered from ill-health he thought the sea-air of England's South Coast would help. In 1922 he moved to Hastings but continued to put his own well-being secondary to that of his passion for inventing.

As far back as his schooldays, Baird was interested in electricity and engineering and created a homemade generator to supply the lodge building with electric light. One of his inventions was to help soldiers combat trench foot with medicated stockings, marketed as 'The Baird Undersock'. Others included an inadvertently corrosive soap and a glass razor. He tried other opportunities in interna-

tional trade, dabbling in Australian honey and Trinidadian jam.

In 1923 he created the first successful experience of 'seeing by wireless'. The televised image was of outlines only. Though it is hard to pinpoint an exact date (and therefore hard to commemorate) it was probably in June, as Baird took out a patent for his 'Televisor' machine in July. At this point he concentrated on simple shapes and the first recorded image broadcast was of the Maltese Cross, an eight-pointed heraldic symbol of medieval bands of knights.

Following Baird's footsteps, the town criss-crosses several different locations. He first set up his laboratory somewhere near Hastings Station, presumably in a building that no longer exists. When those premises were required for a shop, he moved to a large room at 21 Linton Crescent, according to H.T. Elgar of 59 Linton Road, who wrote to a newspaper to tell how Baird often came into his shop. Elgar would cut out pieces of tin and sheet brass for him and the customer told the shopkeeper that he was carrying out

experiments in television in his own room. One morning Baird came in full of excitement, having successfully broadcast a blurred object! He asserted that he would keep on trying until he got a picture. Soon after this Baird moved his workshop and Elgar lost touch with the inventor.

V. R. Mills, of 227 St Helen's Road, was interviewed for a fascinating article 'How Television Began' in which he described how he first met Baird when he came to his house to consult about selenium cells. By this time Baird had moved into a new lab at the Queen's Arcade (Avenue), number 8, where he took a room over a flower shop with a friend, Guy Robertson. Mills describes their set up vividly: "There was junk everywhere and I trod on old bits of wire, newspaper, plywood, etc." The transmitter never actually produced results at the Arcade. To produce an effective current, Baird wired up 100 pocket lamp batteries in series to produce a 2,000 volt power supply. In reckless disregard for his own safety he did not wear insulating gloves and gave himself a shock which

hurt his hands. This was reported in the local paper in July 1924 in an article 'Serious Explosion in Hastings Lab', whereon his landlord, Mr Twigg, gave him notice to quit.

Baird moved his Televisor back to Linton Crescent where, according to Mills, it produced flickering on a screen on the opposite end of the room – images of squares, triangles and other simple figures. The Televisor was made out of an old tea-chest which formed the base to carry the motor which rotated the Nipkow discs that allowed the selection of visual waves that would then be amplified to carry to image from one location to another. The apparatus was assembled on a washstand which stood in for a laboratory bench. Other materials mentioned were hat boxes, string, sealing wax, darning needles and scrapwood. Louise Leighton, looking back, remembered Baird buying lots of 7lb biscuit tins, not just for the biscuits. He would cut them up and use the metal to construct the machine. "We often gave Mr Baird and his friend a cup of tea, and I have often wondered what happened to the friend who used to walk about the Avenue in his sandals and without socks, a rare thing in 1924." Mills in turn recollected many people staring and pointing at them both as they both went around town in the full character of absent-minded inventors. Mills is later recorded as living at 35 Ghyllside Drive.

As Baird's apparatus became more involved and more expensive

plied, writing to the established film entrepreneur Mr Will Day for financial backing. In the early 1920s, the regular newsreel that would play alongside a fiction feature film was a staple of the cinema experience. But news footage was recorded on film and then shipped at great speed through the distribution networks. If Baird's television technology could broadcast moving pictures as they happened live in cinema it would replace those news films and make going to the cinema more immediate and exciting. In July 1924 he told the Hastings press that "It is now only a question of time . . . until we can sit in a cinema hundreds of miles away and witness the finish of the Derby transmitted by wireless onto the screen."

In late 1924, when some money finally arrived, Baird left Hastings to go to London. On 25 March 1925 he gave the first public demonstration of televised silhouette images in motion at Selfridges department store in London. He used cut-outs in order to step up the contrast beyond that of a human face, to make sure they showed up on his system. He painted a ventriloquist's dummy to highlight the contrast of its features and named it 'Stooky Bill'. On October 2 1925 Stooky Bill's head appeared clearly on the screen. On January 26, 1926, real human faces were transmitted in image at the Royal Institution, and this has been widely accepted as the world's first public television demonstration.

Thank you to the Hastings Museum for allowing me access to the



Courtesy of Hastings Museum

he started going without food to save money. He was prepared to put all he had into the development of the Televisor and he had a strong idea of how it could be ap-

plied, writing to the established film entrepreneur Mr Will Day for financial backing. In the early 1920s, the regular newsreel that would play alongside a fiction feature film was a staple of the cinema experience. But news footage was recorded on film and then shipped at great speed through the distribution networks. If Baird's television technology could broadcast moving pictures as they happened live in cinema it would replace those news films and make going to the cinema more immediate and exciting. In July 1924 he told the Hastings press that "It is now only a question of time . . . until we can sit in a cinema hundreds of miles away and witness the finish of the Derby transmitted by wireless onto the screen."



ARTS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Drawing by Robin Holtom

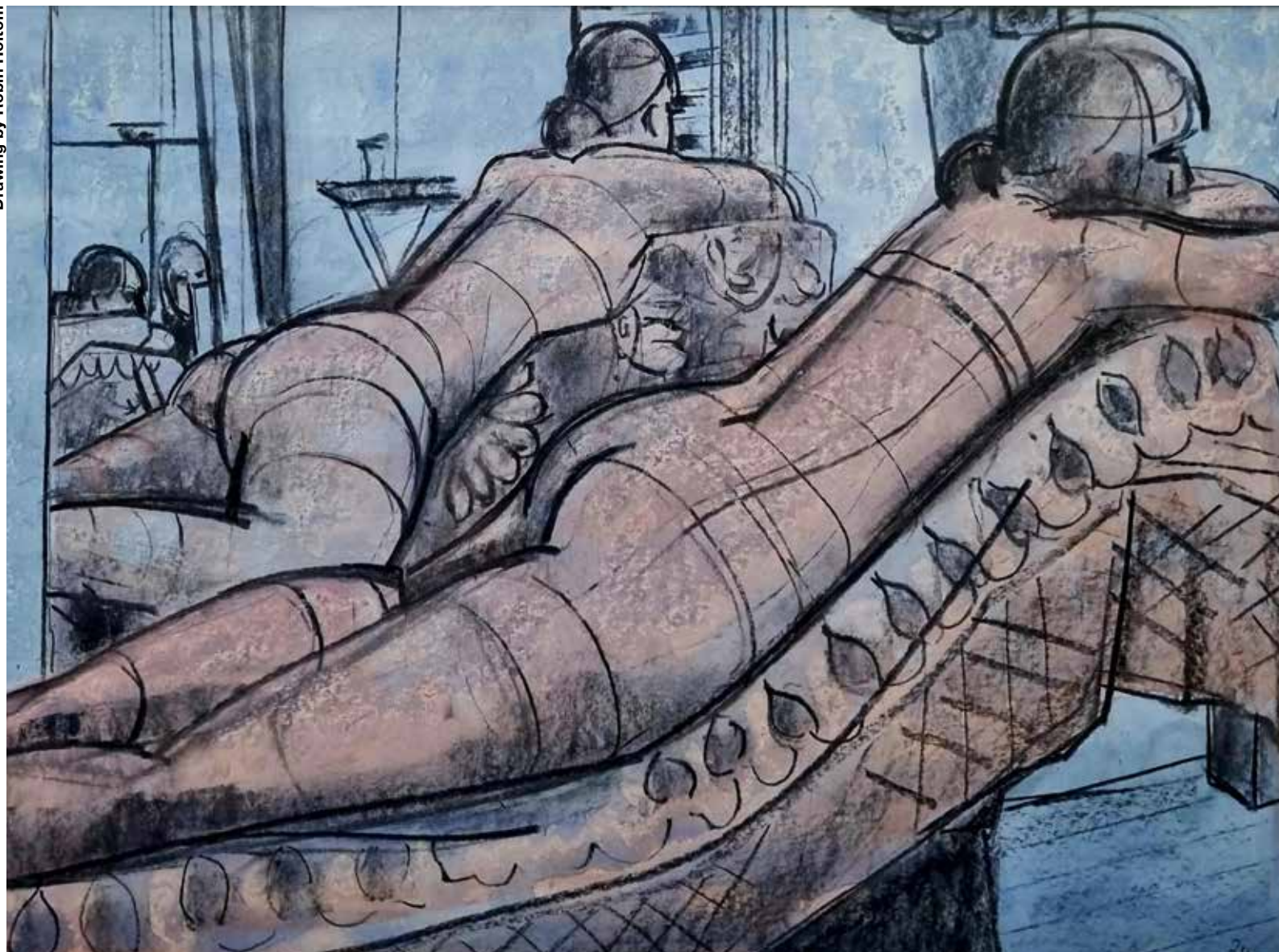


Figure on a Couch

The Studio Couch

ROBIN HOLTOM on Freud's couch and the Art of Life drawing

Some time ago I acquired a couch for my studio. My elegant couch is quite narrow and scarcely has room for one person to recline upon it. It may induce relaxation but probably not sleep. It's not used much, but I feel it is a reassuring presence. The painter Lucien Freud had old couches in his studios, and it occurred to me that there may be a connection between that artist's studio couch and the therapeutic one made famous by his grandfather, Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis.

One connection is the fact that the model who may sit passively on an artist's couch is consenting to be exposed to the attention of the artist in a way not entirely unlike the exposure of the patient on the therapy couch to the attention of the psychotherapist. If you follow the money, there is, however, an interesting difference – a reversal

even. The artist pays the model and, by contrast, the patient pays the psychotherapist. Surprisingly, in both situations the real work is done by the person who pays.

RESPECTIVE ROLES

The celebrated artist's model, Quentin Crisp, said that all he had to do was to try and look like the students' drawings. To a certain extent, this resonates with the role of the therapist. The person being paid, that is the model or the therapist, is taking an essentially passive role in the encounter. The word 'therapist' derives originally from a Greek word meaning 'attendant'. Therapists do not set the agenda but use their time and attention to enable the other person to do the work. Both therapist and model will need to keep their attention on the work, but it is the other, the artist or the patient, who has to make really creative and transformative efforts.

When a patient pays a psycho-

therapist for treatment there is an assumption that a certain kind of relationship will develop over time into confidence and trust. This will enable hitherto unspeakable feelings to be expressed within the secure, yet intimate, boundaries of the therapeutic relationship. The boundaries are therefore carefully prescribed. Grandfather Freud, for example, scarcely looked his patients in the eye and did not shake their hands. He would sit out of sight from the patient and always adhered to a strict time limit. The etiquette surrounding the artist's model, like that in the psychotherapeutic encounter, also involves strict boundaries. Usually an artist's model stays motionless for long periods and does not speak. Similar practices are typical behaviour of certain classical therapists. Many psychotherapists report the occasional entirely silent 50-minute session.

Grandfather Freud's profound breakthrough was that he recognised that it was not possible to be 'objective' about human psychology, but it required the ex-

amination of a relationship to reveal psychological truths. At this time, around 1900, it was also becoming no longer possible to make observations in physics without including the observer in the observation. Artistic revolutions in 1900 were also dismantling the idea of 'objective' art, and painters began exploring ways of portraying their own distinctive visual viewpoints as the content of their paintings.

PROJECTIONS

A patient projects feelings on to the therapist in the therapeutic relationship and the artist projects feelings onto the model in the studio relationship. A person seeks therapy for various reasons, but the treatment always results in an examination of their projections as a step to liberation from their confusion. An artist may paint another person for various reasons, but sooner or later they will examine their projections, their expectation and the way in which they anticipate what they see in front of them. Painting or drawing is a constant exercise in seeing

past the artist's own set of received ways of seeing. These amount, it might even be said, to a set of delusions from which he is trying to liberate himself. I am obviously not proposing an exact analogy, but there is certainly a meaningful similarity between the two activities. Rigorous self-examination is a common feature to both the artist who works from life and the work of a patient in therapy.

Mike Leigh, the film director, said recently that he trained in acting and filmmaking, but he found that drawing in a life drawing class was a more creative experience. This may be a reason why the tradition of drawing from life is still thriving in the age of abstract and conceptual art and digital reproduction.

LIKENESS, LIVELINESS, LIFE

Lucian Freud said he thought that he painted in order to make the painting of his subject 'come alive'. This is not, of course, the simplistic notion of 'getting a likeness'. The search for a likeness may easily be quite the opposite of coming alive. In fact the very word "like" is derived from the word "lych" meaning "corpse" in Old German. The word survives in our word "lychgate" where a corpse rested before a funeral. A 'likeness' in a waxwork is notoriously disconcerting. Madame-Tussaud, it may be remembered, began her career making casts of the heads of people who had been guillotined during the French Revolution. Making a painting really 'come alive' involves something very different from merely making a mechanical replica.

Mike Leigh's recognition of the superior value of life drawing may be connected with this paradox. In a room with other people drawing the same person in completely different ways, the particularities of one's own way of seeing can become clearer. One's own particular prejudices, projections and facile ways of overlooking are intensified and examined. The time limit creates a particular pressure not unlike the 50-minute therapeutic hour. Life drawing, like therapy, is a route to self-knowledge.

■ Robin Holtom is showing portraits and figure drawings in his Open Studio at 41 Marina, St Leonards, as part of the Coastal Currents Arts Festival. Opening hours: Every day 2-10 September 10am-6pm. Further details of his work at www.robinholtom.art.



Radford in Mid-Flow



I Have Been Looking At The Machine



Red Succession Series (Land of Chalk)

All photos: Helen Pelling

News from the Front of Beyond

NICK PELLING & HELEN MURPHY review the exhibition, *Succession*, at the Kino Teatr in Norman Road

Have you ever felt like you were sort of fading away? Like Paul Simon: slip sliding away. Not just the fade of yesterday's youthful bloom, but the shrivelling of individuality under the digital all-seeing eye. The current exhibition of works by the acclaimed artist Matthew Radford seems, at least in part, to be particularly and powerfully concerned with the way our identities are being dissolved just at the very same point that technology is monitoring every whim we breathe.

We met up with Radford on a lively opening night at the Kino – amid a suitably shapeshifting soundscape from Simon and the Pope. Radford has the look of an erudite art professor with hard-won knowledge from beyond. Beyond what? Hard to say. He will lazily be called 'old school,' in that he learned the painter's art at Camberwell Art College in the seventies, in the days when people still cared about learning to draw the figure. However, he admits, it was a chance opportunity to work in New York in the later seventies that really opened up a new way of seeing.

PAINTING DIES EVERY OTHER WEEK

"It wasn't part of a plan," he says. "It was meant to be a week but it became 14 years." New York in the later seventies and early eighties was both an exhilarating and alienating experience. Dangerous in many ways, but the art scene was shifting weirdly fast. Painters like

Julian Schnabel were finding ways of slamming together the pop and the profound, injecting a little postmodern visual sarcasm onto canvas. Or even onto cheap velvet. Street art was busting through. To such an extent that critics kept pronouncing traditional painting to be dead. But, as Radford says, "it was dying every other week." In fact, Radford played an important part in its resurrection, tapping into and shaping the extraordinary zeitgeist.

Part of the magnetism of Radford's work lies in the way it invites so many modes of interpretation. At one level, large-scale entanglements of sketched-out human forms in his *Land of Chalk* series, for example, suggest urban crowds and perhaps the loss of identity the individual experiences in such a mass. Peter Ackroyd, friend and fellow Londonophile, thought that Radford was concerned with the strange "solitariness and mystery of the individu-

al", lost in the thronging aggregate. But it also feels like we, the viewers, are just mindlessly observing people. Viewer becomes surveillance camera. And here Radford's work seems oddly prophetic, hinting at our present age of digital spies in every doorbell, laptop and dash-cam. It feels a bit like it somehow anticipates works such as Shoshana Zuboff's *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, with its thesis that Big Tech is tracking very human desire and endlessly mulching it into consumer data. Radford's big whited-out blurry painting, *I Have Been Looking at the Machine*, certainly has that dystopic twitch to it.

FILLING SPACE FOR A LIVING

But there is also something very painterly about his work. Something about pattern and design that doesn't entirely need all the freight of profundity. The singular lino-cut version of *Land of Chalk* is

a piece of black-and-white design perfection. Radford is a proper artist: someone who knows how to fill space in an interesting way. The very definition of an artist, after all.

At a time when there is almost a glut of art exhibitions in this town, Kino is succeeding in distinguishing itself as a gallery seeking to push beyond a circuit of local artists and weekenders. Certainly, Russell Baker and Olga Mamonova deserve great credit for curating such a brilliant exhibition. Radford is acclaimed on the international level but the paradox here is that this artist who had his epiphany in New York is now a citizen of St Leonards. "Sounds absurd, but not as different as you might think," he muses. Nothing is as you might think with Radford.

■ The exhibition is on until 19 October. It is, to our way of thinking, something special, but go and see for yourself.

SALTY DOGS

JOHN COLE on his new book *Sea Dogs: Hastings Fishermen and Their Companions*

When I first began laying out the photos for the book *Generations: Hastings Fishing Families*, my wife Sally noticed that there were many dogs in the photos, and suggested that I do a separate book on fishermen and their dogs. My immediate reaction was, "Photos of dogs! Please, I'm a serious photojournal-



ist. I don't do pet photography!" Then she reminded me that one of my early photographic heroes, Elliot Erwitt, had throughout his long

career taken photos of dogs all over the world, quirky photos laced with wit and eccentricity. I quickly dumped my pomposity and got on with it.

The result is *Sea Dogs: Hastings fishermen and their companions*, a collection of photographs of Hastings fishermen with their beloved dogs, from boxers to labradors, collies to pugs, and a full pack of breeds in between. I think that the owners' own words about their affection for, and devotion to, their loyal companions provide a touching complement to the photos.

One of the biggest challenges in producing *Sea Dogs* was getting the dogs to sit still for me to get a close-up shot. When all else failed, I'd

gently bark at the dogs, who would then – if only for a few seconds – move closer and look intently at the barking mad photographer.

I have been photographing Hastings fishermen and women since 1991, finally publishing the collection as *Generations*, in 2001, after building up exceptional rapport over thirty years. I also photographed the building of the Jerwood Gallery (now Hastings Contemporary), and of the pier and the Observer building, showcasing the workers. Along with actor/producer David Westhead I founded, in 2010, a world-wide charity for young disadvantaged people interested in improving their lives through learning photographic

skills, and have taught on this course all over the world.

The *Sea Dogs* book launch was a huge success, attended by many of its subjects, who brought their fishermen along with them.

■ *Sea Dogs* is now available at Hastings Contemporary Gallery, The Hastings Bookshop on Trinity Street, Endlings Shop on Court-house Street, Hastings Waterstones, Rye Art Gallery and at the upcoming Hastings Seafood and Wine Festival on September 16-17. If you love Hastings and love dogs, please buy a copy. Profits from the sale of *Sea Dogs* will go to the Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society. wembleytosoweto.com



ARTS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE...  HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Keep Your Tenant in Mind

MERLIN BETTS on a new production at *The Stables*

Imagine for a moment. Your art, your creativity, flushed down the drain. All your hopes of appreciation and success lost in the whirlpool waste of time that you call an artistic output, or even career.

Struggling to pay the rent, landlord breathing down your neck, or kindly patronising: “go on then, you can have another week – and maybe you should think about saving, get another job, stop going to the pub. It’s not good for you.”

Dreams of the future you once believed in coming alive in your mind’s eye to mock you while you sit on your tattered sofa, everything but praying for a better month, better year, better life.

Francis Saunders’ latest production, *The Tenant*, explores an all too realistic appreciation of the modern



Liam Rowley as The Tenant

tortured artist. It played at the Stables from 17 to 19 August, achieved heart-felt applause each night, and critical comments like: “harrowing; hard to watch; pulls no punches; addresses mental health with humour and compassion”.

I went to watch it on the last night. Panting in a desperate jog along the seafront from Priory Meadow, I knew I wasn’t going to make it to the Stables in time. Probably wouldn’t be let in. As I stum-

bled up to the door, it turned out a false fire alarm had delayed the start, and I’d barely missed a thing.

The gracious Stables staff showed me to a seat at the back and I dropped straight into the performance. Our protagonist, Steve – played by Liam Rowley – was confronting the glitzy, Hollywood personification of all his dreams: Ronnie. A younger, good-looking Trump of a character. Both meaningless and omnipotent. Arrogance

made manifest. Brought to life by Dylan Reeves-Fellows.

I’d seen the Barbie movie that afternoon and was still daydreaming, so it took a few moments to adjust. Was this a Ken that wasn’t stupid? Iago Ken? Was this unreality? Ronnie seemed more like an apparition than a human being. Was this a man having a detailed debate with a fragment of himself, gone out of control?

Steve is a playwright/screenwriter, with a marriage behind him and two sons he rarely sees. Stuck in a bedsit, barely able to keep himself afloat, drip fed brandy. He opens his flat door in an ill-fated attempt to depart and leave his demon behind, but this only serves to allow more – increasingly nightmarish – characters in, each wildly fluctuating between friend and saboteur. His agent Tina (Lisa Harmer), dancing in like a capitalist fairy, his neighbour Marie (Lucy Pappas), a sex-obsessed mental health worker, and his conspiracy-addled friend Jess (Bianca Eichler), each obliviously plotting his downfall, and Ronnie wrestling control of the narrative as Steve plunges deeper and deeper into his past and his innermost contemplation.

The collapse of his world is

book-ended by visits from landlord Mr Shah (Jamie De Ath), who both announces his impending socio-economic execution, and not-so-graciously extends a stay of the executioner’s hand. In between, Steve reveals his honest self to us, the tangled mess of influences that brought him to this place, that tear at his mind. For the initiated or the innocent, this is a raw and honest exploration of trauma and mental health, told through a perhaps scarily human narrative. I can’t do Liam’s performance justice here. If you get the chance to see *The Tenant* elsewhere, please take it.

Francis reflects: “I would like to say a massive thanks to the cast for believing in my play and me. Also my dear friend Bill Fellows for adjusting it to make the second and third nights’ performance so smooth, and the timing work, so that we brought the house down. And amazing stage manager Jane Reid. We have had offers to take it to other venues in different parts of the country. I’m speechless to be honest.”

■ *Get in touch with Francis Saunders on Facebook to find out more about his various ongoing projects.*

Beethoven and Brahms! The Crocodile and the Mouse!

VICTORIA KINGHAM at another extraordinary concert from *St. Leonards Music*

If you think you don’t like classical music, if you think it’s boring, difficult, too long, can’t dance to it, only for old people, go to a St. Leonards Music concert and you are guaranteed to change your mind. Max Baillie is a violinist of extraordinary gift, and an engaging impresario. His lucid introductions to his concerts make them not only intelligible but fun. He prefaced this concert – Beethoven’s Trio No. 3 and Brahms’ Piano Quartet No. 25 – with two short readings from *The Lexicon of Musical Invective*, a collection of horrid things critics and composers have said about composers. Beethoven “first fills the soul with sweet melancholy, and then shatters it by a mass of barbarous chords. He seems to harbour together doves and croc-

odiles,” wrote one critic in 1810. Of Brahms, in 1886, Hugo Wolf wrote that he had perfected “the art of composing without ideas”, and of his “mousy obsequiousness”. Tchaikovsky pulled no punches however and wrote in his 1886 diary that Brahms was “a giftless bastard!” [1886].

Baillie’s trio (Alasdair Beatson on piano, Alexander Baillie on cello) proceeded to the Beethoven Trio with the brilliance and effervescence of three musicians with complete mastery over their material. I have rarely seen a more spirited, intelligent, or enjoyable performance. To say they played it correctly, faultlessly, would be to understate their achievement. Under their hands, Beethoven’s music had grace, shape, voice, dialogue, beautiful cohesion – endless qualities over and above mere notes. They made evident the astonishing variety within its four movements, a question-and-answer first move-

ment with some crazy pizzicato strings and a glittering waterfall of notes from the piano, then a (very brisk!) lullaby, a minuet and trio and a last movement of fiendish speed and difficulty, ending with an elegant little flourish, pause, and stop.

Popular musicians strive on stage to mimic the highly-produced sound of a recording. To a lesser extent, recorded jazz sometimes seems more fluent (though perhaps less exhilarating) than live jazz. But hearing a classical quartet of this quality play live, at close quarters, in a space with an acoustic designed specifically to sound Heavenly, watching them move through rhythmic patterns, effervescing, thoroughly enjoying their interconnecting phrases, and above all sounding loud, transcends the quality of any recording.

The enthusiasm of the audience is always apparent in Christ Church, not least because most people know one another and everyone greets everyone – in the interval there was quite a party atmosphere. People settled, however, and the trio were joined by Anne Beilby, a notable viola player, for the Brahms. The contrast between the two compositions, (pointed out by Baillie in his introduction) became particularly apparent. Brahms’ melodies are



Max Baillie and Guests

stately, more marked, less surprising than Beethoven’s. The drama of this piece is in the dynamics, the build, the depth, the song-like development, the fortes and the pianos, the emphasis on the lower register and the melodic swell and ebb. In the first movement, the piano talks to the strings (in contrast to the Beethoven Trio where the strings talk among themselves and have an independent conversation with the piano). In the second, the cello forms a shelf of dizzy triplets underpinning the other strings and piano in a lyrical melody which rises in intensity then fades twinkling away. There’s a

beautifully elegant third movement with a kind of dance in the middle in a slow virtue, and a breathtakingly fast, virtuoso-difficult fourth movement.

These four are indeed rare musicians of the highest order. Hearing these compositions played at this level of expertise with this level of commitment and sheer pleasure in the exposition, it is hard to imagine any music less reptilian, or less mousy.

■ *Details of the St Leonards Concerts Series can be obtained at stlconcerts.co.uk, where you can join their mailing list.*

Bookbuster Review

Leftfield Horror Film Fanzines

THE LAST CLOSET ON THE LEFT, VOL 1
Published by the Nottingham Horror Collective, 2023 rrp £9.99

IT CAME FROM THE CLOSET
Edited by Joe Vallese
Published by Saraband, 2023 rrp £14.99

REVIEW BY TIM BARTON

Both these great new books investigate queerness in horror films, and in the queer communities' interpretations of horror tropes. 'Queer' in this context includes a panoply of affinity groups, sometimes overlapping, and usually defined by gender and sexuality. A fascination with such readings of horror tropes is not limited to these communities, but the 'queerest' interpretations are usually birthed amongst them.

The Last Closet on The Left is a new zine, coming from lesbian, gay, and trans perspectives, and exploring, in this first 'Pride' edition, film. Herein you will find vampires explored through several lenses, the homoerotic undercurrents in *The Lighthouse*, the liberation of the id amongst the women in *Yellowjackets*, and a multi-genre path through the movie *Songs of the Standing Dead*. The zine's byline 'presents horror through an LGBTQ+ lens'. The recommended films in this

issue are Jennifer's Body, Huesera: The Bone Woman, The Hunger, Fright Night, Sleepaway Camp, and Mulholland Drive, though several others are addressed. The several writers vary in style, but all take a 'this is fun' tone, rather than a dull overly-serious academic approach. *It Came from The Closet* is sub-

see a follow-up with a broader, international, appeal, but the films covered transcend the US, as do the LGBTQ+ communities the writers represent.

MANY VAMPIRE STORIES ARE SEXUALISED AND VERY QUEER

Many will agree, on average and certainly historically, with Kirsty Logan (the sole non-American herein) when she says in her forward to *Last Closet*, 'I've never felt that horror gives us LG-BTQIA+ people ac-

the killer/monster is trans, or very camp, etc. These tropes are as often played for comedy as pathos, and they invariably are stereotypic. They are also all too often a reflection of a vicious and bullying strand of mainstream culture – as a character in *Sleepaway Camp*, quoted by Vallese in his introduction to *From the Closet*, has 'spat at her' by another girl "What are you, queer or something?" this is a film Vallese describes as both 'deeply transphobic and effusively homoerotic'.

Such stereotypes are, eventually, a dead-end, so more recent cinema has more frequently turned some of these on their head, or satirised them in extremis. The *Scream* movies are a mainstream source for this approach, as perhaps *Evil Dead 2* is. However, much older examples in the genre have encoded queer tropes. Many vampire stories are sexualised and, in a broad sense, very queer, even if the latter aspect went uncelebrated. More recent cinema has engaged much more consciously with queerness, in the victims, the monsters, or both.

PEEK BEHIND THE MONSTER MASKS AND SEE THE CODED MESSAGES

One of the beauties of interpretation, though, is

its tendency to co-opt and redefine, regardless of an author's presumed intent. Some queer writers, seeing themselves represented as perpetual victims and all too often experiencing prejudice on a daily basis, can free themselves, psychologically, from this movie-stereotype trap, not just by writing new scripts that allow a little pay-back and fresher representation in new movies, but also by taking a hoary old chestnut, such as *Dracula*, and queering its interpretation, often embracing the 'monster' as a liberation and perhaps act vengeance on the 'straight' community. In these publications, the most enjoyment is to be found in these moments, reading encoded, subliminal, or even actually missing messages into these movies. *Last Closet* argues that 'the horror genre [...] has been [...] inviting us to read between the lines, to peek behind the monster masks and see the coded messages, the transgressive identities, the struggles of acceptance and the beauty of being unique in a world that is relentlessly monochrome'.

Although from a different genre, an exchange between the android, Roy Batty, a different kind of 'monster', and the head of the Tyrell Corporation, came to mind: Batty: "I've done... questionable things"; Tyrell: "Also extraordinary things! Revel in your time!"

■ Both of these books are available from Bookbuster, 39 Queens Road, Hastings TN34 1RE



titled 'queer reflections on horror', and has essays based around 26 different films. Only Jennifer's Body and *Sleepaway Camp* overlap with TNHC's zine, and anyway it takes a different approach to the material, so I enthusiastically recommend reading both these publications, and look forward to volume 2 of the zine! Unlike *Last Closet*, which comes from the British Midlands with its writers, so far as I can tell, all UK based, contributors to *From the Closet* are all based in North America. I'd like to

curate representation'. Frequently, a horror movie runs through a predictable sequence of deaths and disappearances. The caricatured version would for example be, first to die: black or bimbo; second prep-py girl; third gay and/or lesbian couple. Or, a serial killer that only hunts transvestites. Or sometimes,

CROSSWORD CORNER

Across

- Lookalike to make one two (6)
- Weaken limp airways a bit (6)
- Saint with singles is part of famous band name (6)

Down

- Delta monsoons give rise to water channelling solution (6)
- Additions for special editions? (6)

Crossword Solution: Answers on page 15

1					2
3					
4					

POETRY CORNER

THERE IS THE SEA
VERNON KEITH FOWLER

There is the sea, the ever-changing sea,
And there is the castle, standing on the hill.
There is the sea, the sea which is never still,
And there is the castle, on the promontory.

There were the Normans, the men who came and won,
And there is the castle they built to firm their reign.
There is the sea, the ever moving main,
And there is the castle, by William the First begun.

There is the sky, the vast and endless sky
Over the castle – at least, what we can see,
The half that did not fall into the sea,
The half that meets the present watcher's eye.

There is the sea, where mighty ships still sail,
And there is the castle, standing on the hill.
There is the castle, stony-faced and still.
And there is the sea, echoing its tale.



FOOD

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS



Eat Write Love

NICKY AND SONJA OF
CREATIVE CONCOCTIONS

Creative Concoctions is a social enterprise, boosting creative health. Welcome to our first Eat Write Love column – sharing beneficial ways to enhance your wellbeing.

We use food, nutrition, journaling and walking as potent tools for bringing about better mood and emotional regulation. We share recipes, nutritional facts and journaling exercises. Journaling is simply free flow writing, no rules here! Just a pen, a notebook and we're away. Nicky uses the stages of write-reflect-act to make the most of what flies onto the page!

We love seasonal food, and September is the time to hit the hedgerows to pick those juicy freebies we all love – blackberries. Other than crumbles and smoothies, did you know they can be used in savoury dishes? Prepare to salivate as we share Blackberry Autumn Salad. Bring on Autumn!

If you're reading this and have some blackberries to hand, that'll make the journaling even more insightful!

JOURNALING #1:
MINDFUL EATING TO
CONJURE BLACKBERRY
MEMORIES

Step One

- Smell, touch, eat a blackberry more slowly than you usually would. Let the taste and its textures tickle your tongue. (Or stare at the picture if no blackberries to hand)

Step Two: 5 mins

- What fond memory comes to mind? Picking on a windy autumn day? Stirring a simmering pot, watching them soften? A fond mealtime memory?
- Write a few lines, without thinking or planning, just keep the words coming, bring it alive. What was delightful?

Reflect: 1 min

- What one word captures this memory?
- What does your blackberry memory awaken in you now?
- What might you want to revive?

RECIPE: BLACKBERRY
AUTUMN SALAD

(adapted from *The Natural Cook*, Tom Hunt)

Serves 4 as a main dish

Ingredients:

- 3 kale leaves, stalks removed and sliced very finely
- 400g tin green lentils, drained and rinsed
- 1 large carrot, peeled and grated
- Handful of fresh parsley, stalks and leaves chopped
- 1 medium beetroot, peeled and grated (I wear gloves and an apron as this can be messy!)
- 200g blackberries, larger ones sliced
- Juice and zest of ½ a lemon
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Sea salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp sunflower seeds
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds

Method:

1. Put the finely sliced Kale into a bowl and drizzle some of the lemon juice over it to soften the leaves. Leave to one side whilst you assemble the rest of the ingredients.

2. Put your lentils, carrots and fresh herbs into a large bowl.
3. Drizzle the rest of the lemon juice, the olive oil and add the salt and pepper over the lentils etc... and mix in thoroughly.
4. Add the kale.
5. Add the beetroot and blackberries as well as your seeds, or nuts if using, and mix in together. (save a few seeds/nuts to sprinkle over the top).
6. Mix together and serve.

Substitutes

You can mix and match your ingredients too, depending on what you like and what you have in the fridge, for example, swap the Kale for chard, or spinach, or the traditional cabbage. Chop up walnuts or cashews instead of, or as well as, the seeds.

The dressing is simple, but if you don't have a lemon, you can as easily use bottled lemon juice, or white wine vinegar.

Other fresh herbs are also good; throw in some coriander, mint or chives – there are loads of lovely herbs in season in September so have a play with the flavours you enjoy.

JOURNALING #2:
HEART-TO-HEART

- Imagine you're inviting anyone you want – known/real/fictional – to a blackberry-inspired dinner or picnic.
- What would you make and for who? What might they bring to the encounter? Where would it be? Go wild!

Reflect

- How do you feel letting your imagination loose on the page?
- What if there's a tip hidden in this encounter for you on how to look after your heart, your wellbeing? What's that tip?

JOURNALING #3:
ACTION!

- What are you eager to cook, to try?
- What's the first step?

■ For information on our Concoct Your Life workshops and our individual workshops:

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Sonja: insta: @ryenutritional-health, ryenutritionalhealth.co.uk



BLACKBERRIES: FUN FACTS

- Found on hedgerows now.
- Can be eaten raw.
- Complement many dishes or the main star!

Nutrition

- Low GI – supporting metabolic health
- Vitamin C – protects against cancer and supports immunity
- Manganese – supports bone and skin health
- High in Fibre – supporting digestion, gut and heart health

Dave Young



Priory champions - from left to right: Harry Scowen, Satchi Mahendran, Dylan Woolley, Adam Page

CRICKET

Stuttering Priory Seal Division 2 Title

26 AUGUST:
WORTHING 132 FOR 9;
HASTINGS PRIORY 135 FOR 3

2 SEPTEMBER:
BRIGHTON & HOVE 98;
HASTINGS PRIORY 99 FOR 8

HUGH SULLIVAN

The cricketers of Hastings & St Leonards Priory were celebrating last weekend after winning Division 2 of the Sussex Cricket League by the narrowest of margins. Victories in their last two matches raised their points total for the season to 283, the same number as

Worthing. Both teams have been promoted to the Premier Division for next summer – in Priory’s case, after just one season in the lower league, reversing relegation in 2022 – but a better head-to-head tally put the Hastings side in pole position. West Chiltington & Thakeham, who maintained second position behind Worthing for much of the season, also won their last two games, but finished third, nine points behind. The crucial match was contested at Worthing on 26 August, when visiting Priory captain Tom Gillespie won the toss yet again (see adjacent box), inserted the home team to bat first on a damp pitch and saw his bowlers limit them to a score of 132 for nine off a reduced maximum of 37 overs. Even that score represented a recovery after the first seven wickets had gone down for 69. As has often been the case throughout the summer, Priory’s bowlers shared wickets between them, Adam Barton, Seaver Cowley and Adam Page taking two apiece, with others falling to John Morgan and Iden McCleave, plus a final run-out.

Priory’s batsmen were able to address their target without any undue run-rate pressure, a situation ideal for opener Dylan Woolley who batted composedly throughout the innings to finish with 44 not out off 84 balls. Harry Scowen was bowled for 15, but Cowley (31) shared a second wicket partnership of 57 and, although McCleave departed quickly, Woolley and Greg Devlin quickly rattled off the remaining runs, Devlin scoring 32 not out off just 24 balls, including two sixes. That victory took the Hastings side to the top of the Division 2 table, with the knowledge that a win last Saturday at their home ground at Claremont School over visitors Brighton & Hove (bottom of the league and already relegated) would be enough to secure the championship and promotion. They knew too, on the other hand, that defeat would be likely to leave them adrift of both Worthing – playing just up the road at Crowhurst Park – and West Chiltington, also away at Buxted. Worthing and West Chiltington each won their games with some ease. For most of Priory’s final match, the outcome also seemed

THE LUCK OF THE TOSS

An extraordinary sequence of luck assisted Hastings & St Leonards Priory over the course of the season. In 14 of the 16 league matches played, including each of the last ten, Priory won the toss (whether it was captain Tom Gillespie or his deputy Harry Scowen calling it) and almost invariably required their opposition to bat first. In a drier and warmer summer, that might not have been the best choice. But with most pitches since the beginning of July giving favourable conditions to seam bowlers early on, Priory were able to limit the targets they had to chase when batting second.

in little doubt. The pitch was again damp (“low and slow”, Morgan described it), again Gillespie won the toss, again inserted the visiting batsmen, and rotated his array of bowlers to pick them off. They reached 64 for 2 at a slow rate, but the later order was skittled, McCleave taking four wickets for ten runs, with others shared between Morgan, Satchi Mahendran, Page and Alex Osborne. The visitors’ total of 98 was hardly daunting, and although Woolley, Cowley and McCleave all went cheaply, Scowen (41) was in commanding form. His fourth wicket partnership with Devlin (21 off 20 balls) left only another 29 runs to get; then he and Gillespie hit off another 19. The win was surely a formality now, even allowing for Priory’s notorious stutters

HOW THE CHAMPIONSHIP WAS DECIDED

Despite having lost five games over the course of the season compared to two lost by Worthing, Priory’s higher tally of bonus points raised them to the same points total as their West Sussex rivals, 283. The championship title was in this circumstance to be settled by the head-to-head record between the two teams. Each had scored a victory against the other, but Priory’s loss by 46 runs in June earned them 12 bonus points whilst Worthing scored only seven when Priory beat them by seven wickets on 26 August.

in such situations. The ending was not for the nervous. Gillespie attempted an injudicious reverse sweep and was adjudged lbw. Scowen was caught superbly at slip; Harvey Faulkner skied a drive to deep mid-on. Morgan, batting at number nine with seven wickets now down, scooped his first ball to leg just over the heads of two fielders to bring the scores level, but was then run out by half the length of the pitch in a mix-up with Osborne, rooted at the striker’s end. One run was still required with just two wickets left. The surviving Osborne, who has been a mainstay of the team throughout the summer, scored it with a well-placed cover drive. Priory were champions, and the champagne duly flowed.

FOOTBALL

Unbeaten Run Continues

Hastings United were held to a 0-0 draw in the first qualifying round of the FA Cup last Sunday by Erith and Belvedere, a side newly promoted to the South East Division of the Isthmian League – a tier below the ‘U’s. The match will have been replayed this Wednesday (6 September) at the Pilot Field. It follows two excellent league 3-0 victories there over the Au-

gust Bank Holiday weekend: against Concord Rangers, visitors from Canvey Island, on the Saturday, followed by an equally impressive win over Cray Wanderers two days later. Twin strikers Femi Akinwande and Davide Rodari shared five of the six goals – three for Rodari, two for Akinwande, while John Ufuah also scored against Cray. Defensively, though, Hastings have also looked solid, with Craig Stone reprising his central role of recent seasons amidst an otherwise wholly new line-up. Adam Lovatt has also been prominent in his previous role as midfield enforcer. Only two goals have been conceded in the ‘U’s’ opening six league and cup games. The crowd for the Monday holiday game topped 1,000 for the first time this season.

SUSSEX CRICKET LEAGUE STANDINGS – FINAL TABLE (TOP THREE)

TEAM	P	W	D	L	T	A/C	BAT	BOWL	POINTS
HASTINGS PRIORY	18	10	0	5	0	3	20	33	383
WORTHING	18	10	2	2	1	3	9	22	383
W.CHILTINGTON	18	9	1	3	2	3	32	12	374



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