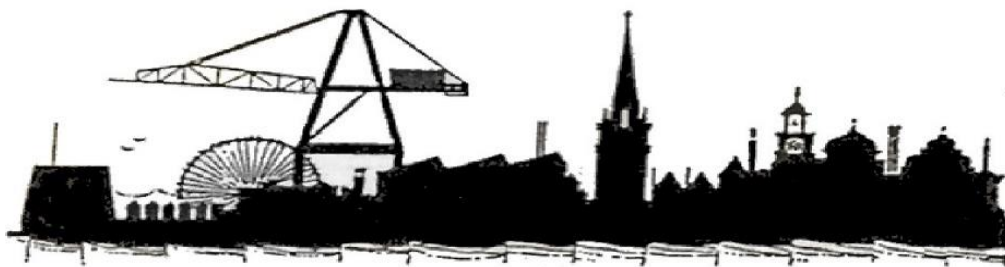


The Felixstowe Society

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 130

September 2022



Registered Charity No. 277442

The Felixstowe Society is established for the public benefit of people who live or work in Felixstowe and Walton. Members are also welcome from The Trimleys and surrounding villages. The Society endeavours to:

- Stimulate public interest in these areas
- Promote high standards of planning and architecture
- Secure the improvement, protection, development and preservation of the local environment.

Cover photograph courtesy of Alan Boyle -  Everything Felixstowe & Beyond

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THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY CONTACTS

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Jan Garfield | Chairman | 01394 210887 |
| Hilary Eaton | Treasurer | 01394 286733 |
| Roy Gray | Joint Vice Chair | 01394 285827 |
| Keith Horn | Joint Vice Chair | 01394 270845 |



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES



Hello Members,

I was just re-reading my May offering, where I started off saying that I was sitting by the French Windows with the sun pouring through and a brilliant blue sky. Forward by a few months and that would be my starting sentence! The only difference is the heat, it is a lot hotter! Hope that you are all coping with the heat and keeping well hydrated. However, by the time you read this in September, the weather may be entirely different!

In May we held our AGM, where we returned a complete Committee and we had a very interesting talk by Jean Macpherson on the 1953 Floods, told from a different angle from usual. On the subject of the Committee, we have since had the resignation of our wonderful Newsletter Editor, Gill Manning. Gill and her husband have now moved to Frinton-on-Sea to a lovely apartment. We sent her off with a gift and our very grateful thanks. We have been very fortunate to have a volunteer to take over the position in the form of Peter Constable. Peter is a very experienced, retired Editor etc., so we are very lucky. We co-opted him onto the Committee at our last Committee Meeting. As to the Committee going forward, we have had a long discussion about future proofing The Society. Many of us are around 80 years old and we really need to encourage younger members to join the Committee, so that they can be prepared to take over the Officer roles when we can no longer carry on. You have until next April to consider this so I do urge you, members, to think about it. I took over the Chairmanship 5 years ago to stop The Society closing for lack of a Chairman. I said that I would give it a year and see how we went!

Those of us who went on the long-awaited holiday to the Winchester area had a wonderful time. Our greatest thanks go to Keith and Elizabeth Horn who have been through hell since it kept having to be cancelled due to Covid. Even after it was confirmed that it was going ahead there were more problems as the hotel near Winchester pulled out three weeks beforehand! Fortunately another hotel was found, on Hayling Island. Then, 24 hours before we were due to travel, the coach driver went down with Covid and another coach and driver had to be found! Poor Keith! Where are we going next year!!!!?

We held a very successful Afternoon Tea Party at the Golf Club, enjoyed by all and on Friday we have the Social Evening at Harvest House with Harbour Lights. In August, the wonderful Archive Exhibition in the Palm Court, Harvest House will take place. We are holding another Heritage Weekend in September and you will all have had the advertising brochure for this. We have to thank County Councillor Graham Newman for providing us with the money, from his Enabling Budget, to pay for the brochure and delivery.

We continue to support the Beach Hut & Chalet Association in their battle with East Suffolk Council regarding the removal of the Beach Huts down near the Spa. I have spoken at meetings and have tried to help them with advice. We have also written to East Suffolk

Council and asked individual members to do so. Just to reassure members, we have not given any monetary help to them. As to The White Horse issue in Old Felixstowe, that seems to have gone away, we hope!

Well folks, I have wittered on enough. Have a lovely Summer and see you at our first Speakers Evening on 27th September with a talk on Windmills.

Jan Garfield,
Chairman

Speakers For 2022

The Speakers' Evenings are held in the Salvation Army Church Hall, Cobbold Road. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the evenings will start promptly at 7.30 p.m.

We would encourage masks to be worn at all times.

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sept 27th | C. Hullcoop | <i>Windmills</i> |
| Oct 25th | Pip Wright | <i>'I read it in the local paper'</i> |
| Nov 22nd | Brian Ansell | <i>Architecture</i> |

Below are the dates for Speakers' evenings next year 2023:

January 24th, February 21st, March 21st, April 25th, May 23rd {AGM also}

September 26th, October 24th, November 21st.

Details of the Speakers will be in the January edition.

Organiser Roy Gray

HERITAGE WEEKEND 2022

Between Friday September 9 and Sunday September 11, The Felixstowe Society will be pleased to present events at over 15 locations across the town. Local history, architecture, vintage games and the hard work of a large number of volunteers all contribute to a fascinating weekend, showcasing some of the best heritage Felixstowe has to offer. A number of Society members have kindly volunteered to steward various events but we do need more help to ensure this weekend is successful, so if you can help please contact Keith Horn on 01394 270845.

The Newsletters are delivered by Roger Baker and his team of volunteers. Our thanks go to Roger for organising the deliveries and, of course, to the volunteers.

I am very sorry to say, that I will be handing over my role as from the next edition of this Newsletter. I have really enjoyed being Editor, but due to unforeseen circumstances my husband and I have moved to a retirement apartment in Frinton on Sea. Luckily, Peter Constable has offered to replace me as Editor. Peter is very experienced in this line of work so I know that the Newsletter will be in very capable hands. I wish you well Peter.



Would you like to write an article for the next Newsletter?

We welcome new contributors. If so, could we please have your contribution by **22nd November**, in Microsoft Word format if possible. The email address is: design.constables@btinternet.com or, if sending by post the address is: 45 Tower Road, Felixstowe IP11 7PR. Telephone 01394 282029. Thank you.

Grateful thanks to all our contributors, to Susanne Barsby for proofreading and to Keith Horn for his help and advice.



Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association

A severe storm at the beginning of April caused carnage to many huts at West End and Manor End. They were picked up and thrown around like dolls houses causing damage and complete disruption. The photographs show just how bad it was.

East Suffolk Council agreed to put them back into their positions (at a cost, of course) however, the contractors engaged to do the work did not do a very good job. Several were placed so close together that it will be impossible to get between them to carry out maintenance.



Some of the Damaged Beach Huts



A Squashed Trevor

A photograph shows me standing between two of the huts – with no room to swing a paint brush!! Some were not level to such a degree that drawers would not close, and items rolled off tables! The Council have said they will rectify the situation, but not until the end of the Summer.

Now for an update on the huts at the Spa Pavilion. The situation remains that only 30 alternative sites have been found for the huts meaning that 14 hut owners will lose their hut altogether. We cannot allow that to happen. The reality is, though, that none of the 44 owners want to move from a position near the Spa Pavilion.

Research by acknowledged experts has been undertaken on the history of huts at the Spa. This shows that some of the huts are over 100 years old so are the original huts that can be seen on old black and white photographs from the archives. Therefore, they are an integral part of the heritage of the town. Eminent historians argue, on our behalf, that beach huts at the Spa are of considerable historic interest and should remain as an integral part of the Spa Gardens scenery.



Displaced Huts

A petition set up online by one of our members attracted more than 4,000 signatures, which meant East Suffolk Council was obliged to debate the matter at a full Council meeting. In truth, it was a meaningless exercise as the Council is being intransigent and is ploughing on with its intention to move the huts at the end of the Summer. This is even though our solicitors have lodged papers with the High Court seeking a Judicial Review of the decision and the relevant papers have been served on East Suffolk Council.

National television has taken an interest in the battle with the Council, to the extent that we were live on ITV's 'This Morning' when the well-known presenter Alice Beer came to Felixstowe to interview hut owners. Philip Schofield and Holly Willoughby say they have every sympathy with our members. Griff Rhys-Jones has taken up the cudgels, on our behalf, through his involvement with the Victorian Society.

Having legal representation comes at a considerable cost, of course, but affected hut owners have dug deep into their pockets in order to fund the legal action. Hut owners in other parts of the town have also contributed to the ever-increasing fund. If the Council believes that the owners will back down, it is seriously mistaken.

This is costing taxpayers money too - your money. The refusal of East Suffolk Council to agree to mediation is protracting the situation at everyone's expense.

The fight goes on!

Trevor Mason

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMENTED ON BY THE SOCIETY
24 APRIL 2022 TO 19 JULY 2022**

| Ref. | Address | Proposal | Felixstowe Society Comments | ESC Decision |
|------------|--|---|---|-------------------|
| DC/22/1376 | 104 Hamilton Road | Replacement increased size windows at ground floor with associated works. New door replacing ATM with associated works. Use as Financial Services | The Felixstowe Society considers that the proposal would cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. | Permitted |
| DC/22/1323 | Felixstowe Ferry | Marine Management Consultation Flood Defence works | No objections. | No objections |
| DC/22/1277 | 29 Springfield Avenue | Erect single-storey dwelling | The Felixstowe Society considers that this proposal represents a too intensive use of a restricted site and results in overdevelopment with inadequate access. | Permitted |
| DC/22/1145 | 5 Red Hall Court | Replacement doors and windows | The Felixstowe Society considers that this proposal is acceptable and will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. | Permitted |
| DC/22/0790 | 2 Talbots, Orwell Road | Demolition of garage | The Felixstowe Society considers that this proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area but is concerned at potential impact of the dislodged car parking space. | Permitted |
| DC/22/0490 | Port Light, Ferry Road, Felixstowe Ferry | Retention of salon and toilet | The Felixstowe Society considers that this proposal is acceptable. The scale and visual impact of the building on the character of Felixstowe Ferry is insignificant in comparison to the adverse impact of the wholly incompatible dwellings recently approved by the LPA in the hamlet. | Awaiting decision |

| | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|-------------------|
| DC/21/5765 | 109 Undercliff Road West | Insertion of velux rooflights | The Felixstowe Society considers that this proposal will have little effect on the significance of the conservation area. | Withdrawn |
| DC/22/1755 | 59 Orwell Road, Felixstowe | Works to tree in conservation area | The Felixstowe Society considers that the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. | No objections |
| DC/22/1698 | 30 Maybush Lane, Felixstowe | Works to tree in conservation area | The Felixstowe Society considers that the tree is an imposing feature in the streetscene and would prefer to see it retained and lopped rather than removed. | No objections |
| DC/22/1675 | St John the Baptist Church, Orwell Road, Felixstowe | Works to tree in conservation area | The Felixstowe Society considers the work acceptable. | Permitted |
| DC/22/1659 | 6 Orford Road, Felixstowe | Erection of extension | The Felixstowe Society considers that the works represent an unsympathetic addition that will upset the symmetry of the terrace. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/1604 | 68 Orwell Road, Felixstowe | Works to tree in conservation area | The Felixstowe Society considers the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. | No objections |
| DC/22/1536 | 11 High Beach, Felixstowe | Replacement garage and works to boundary wall | The Felixstowe Society considers the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. | Permitted |
| DC/22/2489 | 1 College Green, Felixstowe | Works to Tree in Conservation Area | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal, subject to approval by ESC arboricultural officer and provided the works are carried out by a suitable qualified tree surgeon. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/2394 | Day Nursery, Covent of Jesus and Mary, 61-63 Orwell Road, Felixstowe | Works to Tree in Conservation Area | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/1983 | The Triangle, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe | Placement of beach hut for use as tourist information centre | The Felixstowe Society objects to the proposal. The beach hut will appear out of context with the urban setting | Awaiting decision |

| | | | | |
|------------|--|---|---|-------------------|
| | | | and will worsen the appearance of The Triangle. A preferable solution would be a digital information point in the form of a touch-screen display. This would also be more interesting to use for younger people and would be more sustainable than a hut full of leaflets which would inevitably end up as litter. | |
| DC/22/2082 | Moonfleet, The Ferry, Felixstowe | Extensions, alterations and remodelling | The Felixstowe Society considers that the proposal will result in significant improvement to the property. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/2085 | 22-24 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe | Conversion of former offices to flats | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/2004 | Martello Place, Golf Road, Felixstowe | Works to trees | The Felixstowe Society considers that the proposal will have little effect on the conservation area. | No objections |
| DC/22/2002 | Tudor House, Martello Place, Golf Road, Felixstowe | Works to trees | The Felixstowe Society considers the work regrettable but understandable if the trees are diseased. Replacement trees should be provided. | No objections |
| DC/22/1996 | Kiosk Site near Bent Hill, The Promenade, Felixstowe | Replacement Kiosk | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/2011 | 85 Gainsborough Road, Felixstowe | Single Storey extension | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/1955 | 19 Margaret Street, Felixstowe | Erection of two-storey terrace house | The Felixstowe Society considers the proposal to be good use of a brownfield site. | Awaiting decision |
| DC/22/1341 | 55-57 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe | Change of use of restaurant to drinking establishment | The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the proposal. | Awaiting decision |

FELIXSTOWE NEWS QUIZ

All of the following events occurred in Felixstowe and are listed in chronological order - but in which year did each take place?

1. Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club is formed
2. The German Empress stays at South Beach Mansion
3. The Felix Hotel opens
4. Felixstowe Pier is constructed
5. RNAS Felixstowe is formed
6. The War Memorial is opened
7. The Spa Gardens are formally opened
8. Butlin's Amusement Park opens
9. Wallis Simpson stays at Beach House
10. German E boats surrender at HMS Beehive
11. Prince Philip opens the Coronation Sports Ground
12. End of daily passenger service between Felixstowe stations
13. The Playhouse Cinema closes
14. Genesis appear at the Pier Pavilion
15. Zeebrugge ferry service begins
16. The Felixstowe Society is established
17. The Cavendish Hotel is demolished
18. Felixstowe College closes
19. Felixstowe and Walton football teams merge
20. The Grove Medical Centre is officially opened



ANSWERS ON p. 33

HARVEST HOUSE- A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Two months after the opening of a new hotel in Felixstowe, Country Life magazine, published on July 4 1903, gushed enthusiastically about the new Felix Hotel describing it as,

'such a building, invested with the finest domestic features of Tudor and Stuart times. It is a house comparable to any great mansion of those days with fretted brickwork, so appropriate to East Anglia, towers and cupolas, many windowed walls, colonnades and appropriate gardens'

Undoubtedly today the Felix Hotel, renamed as Harvest House in the early 1950s, is still an iconic building in our town. This has led to a number of research articles about the house being published in The Society's newsletters over the last forty years which have focused on its history and architecture.



This article is rather different as it highlights the external areas of the site.

Passing the building on Cobbold Road, it is easy to spot the feature in the main courtyard. The amorini was designed to give access to the basement for deliveries, in the early mornings, of solid fuel for the hot water and warm air heating systems.

The word amorini actually refers to the small figure at the apex of the structure, described in official sources,

as a small, naked, chubby child with wings. A winged, infant child, usually male, was popular in Greek and Roman art. In the Renaissance period they were a decorative part of Christian Art. The figure was revived in the nineteenth century and through the Edwardian period, but its use declined after World War One. Cotman was known to have taken influences from European architecture in his buildings but it is not



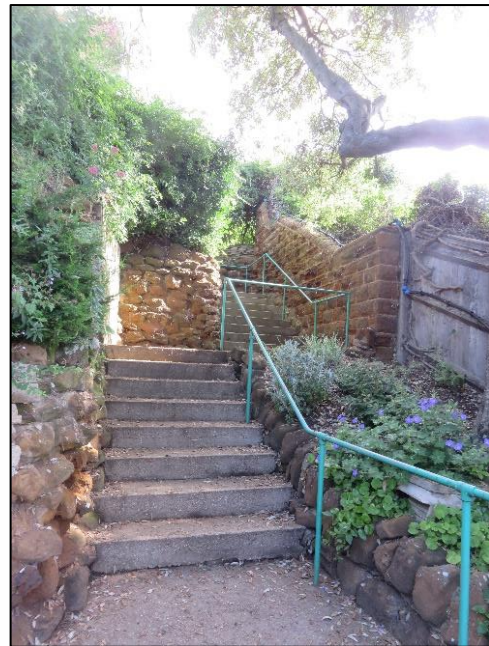


clear who exactly made the decision to use the small, chubby child. No wings are evident in old photos of The Felix Hotel.

Walking round to the right of the building is the residents' car park which also contains one of the most ornate bicycle shelters in Felixstowe.

The garden is private and for the use of the residents only but I was privileged to be given access on a glorious June morning.

I am not a plant expert so I will leave it to others more knowledgeable than me, but I could certainly admire the structure of the planting and various features, such as the steps leading down to the Pump House and the beach.



There is also a delightful gardener's hut, probably designed by Thomas Cotman, with a roofline similar to that of the main building.

Richard Goldsmith, a Director of Harvest House, writes:

Developing and maintaining a garden on a cliff-top overlooking the North Sea presents challenges. On many days there is a brisk onshore wind. Felixstowe is in the driest part of the country. Muntjac deer, foxes and squirrels trample and nibble and disinter planting schemes. In spite of such exactions the garden of Harvest House, which extends to approximately one acre, presents a pleasing prospect.



The main feature is the Rose Garden, 7 beds containing some 500 mainly hybrid tea varieties. There are a number of beds containing a variety of shrubs and perennials, large grassed areas, extensive hedges and clipped ornamental yews. For many years parts of the garden were neglected. Some 5 years ago, the then directors instituted a programme of laying paths and building dry stone walls to give more structure. Many old and overgrown shrubs were removed and a certain amount of re-planting undertaken. Harvest House employs a full-time gardener, but the size and complexity of the garden means that, much beyond routine maintenance is beyond his capacity. Given the age and infirmity of many residents it is left to a very few to assist in the garden.

Should any member who, perhaps, may have moved from a home with a garden and may yearn to provide the odd hour or two to edging, weeding or dead-heading, such help would be gratefully received. Please contact Richard Goldsmith on 01394-271751.



This article was jointly written by Bev Boyce and Richard Goldsmith.

SPEAKER'S CORNER-MARCH

CAPTURE and ESCAPE

Jane Bradburn certainly attracted a number of visitors who obviously had very personal reasons for attending the talk she gave on 'The Capture and Escape in WW2 of the Men of the 67th Medium Regiment'.



They had fathers or other family members who spent time from July 1941 in North Africa in the Western Desert until the entire regiment was captured on 21st June 1942. Jane showed many photos which explained the events that took place.

My own father was in the Air Force and I have photos of the Armoury Staff in



Aboukir, Egypt 1941

Aboukir in 1941 and Abu Sueir and Ismailia.

He spoke of the times of living in tents and having very little water – hence his love of water melons.

The last survivor of this regiment was born in Ipswich and died in Felixstowe last year aged 102. There is an exhibition at the Felixstowe Museum which celebrates his life as well as some fellow veterans.

Thank you, Jane.



Aboukir, Egypt 1942

By Elizabeth Horn

Part 2;

Of all of the structures discussed in Part 1, however, one remains an enigma. Beyond the road-end at Honeypot Cottage near Falkenham, just off the track towards King’s Fleet, is positioned a ‘forward’ pill-box, which, unlike the others on the west side of the Deben, is on the levels and not on the escarpment. It has a clear field of view over the entire landing zone (see figure 3). As it is in an isolated position it is in remarkable condition and even has internal blast walls to separate the firing positions.



Figure 3; The forward pillbox position on the Falkenham Marshes beyond Honeypot Cottage, off the footpath to Kings Fleet. Note – the drainage ditch (bottom right) may have been used as a more secure entrance / exit trench. It has a clear view over the entire potential landing-zone, although sliced in two by the east-west waterway of King’s Fleet.

However, we now know that pill-boxes were complete death-traps and that the confined personnel inside would soon be overcome by concentrated withering fire from the battlefield. This forward gun-tower would have been very exposed in the event of airborne invasion, particularly via the Falkenham Marshes. However, the concentration of concrete installations on either side of the Grove woodland and south towards Felixstowe Railway Station, perhaps indicate that the strategists thought the main assault would emerge from the levels at Gulpher, then up the Grove stream towards the town.

Why were the commanders of the day so intent on defending the Deben levels with such firepower and – had it come to a battle – such human sacrifice? The answer is, perhaps, in their fear of the consequences of a successful invasion. For it was not the town of Felixstowe that the enemy was so concerned about taking, but other, more attractive, military fare. Just a few kilometres north of Kirton lay Martlesham Heath Airfield, one of the most important RAF bases providing Hurricane and Beaufighter aerial defence for the entire East Coast. Take that objective and the invaders would have had a platform to bring-in airborne reinforcements, particularly armoured units. Worse than that, being poorly defended the route to London and the Midlands would have been relatively easy from that jumping-off point in Suffolk. Perhaps we can now

see why the military planners were not sleeping easily in 1940. August 15th 1940 was a grim day on the peninsula, as some 40 dive-bombers and fighter escorts evaded the defences around this part of the coast and attacked Martlesham Heath Airfield, causing great loss both to the RAF and to the Luftwaffe (ref 4). Over 75 enemy aircraft were downed in the battle. Fortunately, the RAF triumphed overall during the Battle of Britain, action that effectively put Hitler's invasion plans to an end. Although the AA and heavy gun batteries were active, none of the defensive structures mentioned in this report was ever used in anger.

That does not mean, however, that they are not important and unworthy of our careful protection. Under the supervision of the regular Army, the defensive positions surrounding the Deben levels were manned mainly by the Home Guard. I have previously mentioned that if they had had to use these structures in battle, they would certainly have been killed – there is just no escaping that reality and yet, they volunteered probably knowing that fact (see Figure 4).



Figure 4; *Felixstowe's Home Guard ("D" Coy, 6th Suffolk Battalion Home Guard), 1941. (from ref 1, photo number 207). There was also a Trimley Company of about the same size. Note the lack of any weapons – they were still to be issued.*

Back Row L-R; 'Curly' Webster, David Hammond, Mr Richer, G W Bellamy, Mr Clarke, Mr Barber, unknown, George Lines , S. Craighill.

Middle Row; Mr Banham, Bert Saberton, Jimmy Norman, Fred Butcher, Harry Lazell, Mr Rose, Mr Garnham, Jack Warden, Alfred (Tubby) Pendle, Mr H Hunt, (Plucky) Walker.

Seated; Will Clarke, George Salmon, Frank Yallop, Mr Dunnett, Mr Bidd, unknown, unknown, Mr Pilbrough, unknown.

Their unequivocal battle-orders, issued at the time, ended with the chilling words (ref 2);

“There will be no withdrawal.”

The men and women of the Home Guard (yes, there were women, later, too!) were not the befuddled, incompetent, almost irrelevant souls that we see in TVs “Dad’s Army” (although admittedly portrayed for comedic effect). They were extremely brave, committed, local people who volunteered to play an important role in defending their country against what they thought was an inevitable onslaught. The people of Felixstowe should be proud of that heritage. Proud enough indeed to campaign for the preservation of some of the most important historic relics (though not necessarily all), most of which have no official protection and are under severe pressure from housing development on the Felixstowe Peninsula.

[Please note – these structures are often in a poor state of repair and are dangerous to enter or climb on. It is also an offence to interfere with them, even to clear vegetation around them.]

References

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2. Felixstowe PRO WO 166.212 BDE WAR DIARY EXTRACT :
in <http://www.pillbox-study-group.org.uk/old%20site/ukfcdatabasepage.htm>



HEROIC WAAFS AND 12-MILE BOBBINS

The Society's Spring Trip to Hampshire by L McDonald

Planning for this trip started in 2019, and - although it’s customary to *end* such reports by thanking those who organize such events - I think that on this occasion everybody would like me to *begin* by thanking Keith and Elizabeth for overcoming, right up until the last minute, an extraordinary series of problems, (not all of them Covid-related!) in order to provide us with this most enjoyable and informative Spring break.

En route to our hotel on Hayling Island we visited the Biggin Hill Memorial Museum and Chapel of Remembrance.

The personnel based at this airfield during World War II included some 250 WAAFs, four of whom were awarded medals for acts of conspicuous bravery. A prison was provided for any German airmen who might happen to drop in.



Spitfire at Biggin Hill



Biggin Hill Chapel of Remembrance

The Chapel of Remembrance, funded solely by donations from the public, was dedicated in September 1951 and the Museum opened in 2019. We enjoyed a splendid buffet lunch in the Nightingale Café before continuing our journey.

On the morning of day two we were split into smaller groups for guided walks round Winchester, taking in the beautiful riverside walk and the impressive remains of Wolvesey Castle, which stand alongside the current Bishop's Palace. Lunch was followed by a guided tour of the Cathedral, outstanding features of which included William of Wykeham's caged chantry, the wonderful beerstone screen above the high altar and the 14th century choir stalls.



Wolvesey Castle (Old Bishop's Palace)

Sunday found us in Bournemouth where, after being left to our own devices in the morning, we walked up the gentle slope to the Russell Cotes Museum, which was formally opened in 1922 after being gifted to the town by two generous

local residents. It's hard to say which are the more impressive – the rooms or the many paintings and sculptures housed in them. The handbooks provided in each room greatly increased one's appreciation of the latter!

On the way home on Monday morning, we spent some time at the Whitchurch Silk Mill. Although no looms were operating, our extremely well-briefed guide



Whitchurch Silk Mill

took us through the history of the building, which was built between 1813-1815 and the various stages of the silk-production process. At its peak, in the mid-1850s, the workforce numbered 150, before competition from imported silk took its toll. The iron-framed wheel, which was installed in 1890, is currently waiting to be repaired. One (at least to me) extraordinary fact was that each of the countless bobbins, ranged before us, contained 12 miles of thread.

Luckily for us, the heavy rain that had been threatening waited until we were safely back on the coach for the final stage of the journey – which brings me to Irvine, our wonderful last-minute replacement driver (who was in Derby the afternoon before this trip began!). We left him in no doubt as to how much we appreciated everything he did for us – and that also went, of course, for Keith and Elizabeth.

SPEAKER'S CORNER - APRIL

Where Have All the Houses Gone?

Lisa Wall spoke to a well-attended meeting at the Salvation Army Hall on the subject of old houses which have either disappeared altogether, or been changed almost beyond recognition.



One of the more recent examples is that of the Medieval Ballingdon Hall near Sudbury, which in 1972 was moved, complete on a rolling platform, quite a long distance up the hill to give better and less disturbed views.

So many houses in Suffolk have suffered either, fires, death watch beetle, slum clearance and road widening, as well as a complete lack of conservation and planning, which only really began in the 1960's in Ipswich with the formation of The Ipswich Society.

A wonderful Medieval timber framed house, between Cox Street and Carr Street was partially restored in 1891 as a 'one stop shop' selling all manner of goods, but when the Co-op put up their new building near the site, they did not incorporate the Tudor building, which was subsequently demolished. However, an Ipswich antiques company, Gill and Reigate, specialised in removing and selling on old buildings and the house was firstly reconstructed at the Franco-British Exhibition in London, then demolished and sold on. It was eventually incorporated in the Manor House at Ashby St Leger, Northamptonshire, then owned by Viscount Wimborne, where it still stands.

Another old house, High Low House at Thwaite, was also demolished and shipped in 1912 to Connecticut in the USA and a further house was moved from the Splash at Kersey to Bures, where it still stands as Dunstead House.

A local landmark, the Cage at Walton, used to be the Walton Market Cross before Walton shrank as Felixstowe grew and after that became the 'Walton Cage' in which local miscreants were impounded before trial. It was then transported to the Chiswick Polish Company in London (Cherry Blossom polish) where it was a feature in their grounds and in 1957 came back to Walton as the bus shelter.

So many ancient buildings just disappeared, and one wonders how attractive Ipswich could have been as a shopping and tourist destination had at least some of them survived.

by Haley Dossier

THE ROTARY CLUB OF FELIXSTOWE



The Rotary Club was formed in 1926 and our motto is 'Service Above Self'. We are proud of our long history of fellowship and service to the Felixstowe area and the worldwide community.

At the moment we have 36 members. We meet every Thursday for lunch at the Sailing Club where we have a guest speaker most weeks. They may come from other Rotary clubs or any other organisation or charity. Not only do we support local deserving causes, we are involved in Rotary International too.

Once a year we hold an International Night where a representative of a charity, which works in a developing country, comes and informs us of the work they do trying to help local people. It is usually an interesting and informative evening, where we invite friends along to enjoy a meal and to try to raise as much money as we can for the nominated charity. This year we held an Indian evening to raise money for the Jaipur Limb Project. This is an excellent charity which develops artificial limbs for injured people.

We are also involved with Rotary International's scheme to try to eradicate polio in the developing world. For every pound we raise, the Bill Gates Foundation matches it with another two pounds, making this a very worthwhile cause. We have also recently sent funds to Ukraine via the Rotary Club of Kyiv.



Doug Pipe, the incoming 1st Vice President being congratulated by Andrew Rowden the incoming President

We have a number of annual events to raise funds and to raise the profile of Rotary. The Fun Run in May is well attended by entrants of all ages, who pay a small fee to compete, but they also raise funds for their own cause by being sponsored by family and friends. Runners may wear fancy dress if they wish and there is a prize for the best outfit. This year £4400 was raised and £1500 was donated to our main beneficiary, Suffolk Mind. We also hold a Golf Day, a

Gilbert and Sullivan evening especially to raise money for the Polio Eradication Scheme and, of course, the Santa and Rudolph runs which take place on a number of evenings over the Christmas period. These are enjoyed by many children and also adults on a number of different rounds in the Felixstowe area.

This year saw the return of the Boxing event, after a break of three years and it was a sell-out evening. Not only was money raised by ticket sales, but also by an auction of sporting memorabilia and the total income for the evening was nearly £25000. The young boxers came from this area and also from Teesside. They competed for trophies and belts and enjoyed the evening as much as the spectators.

We also involve ourselves in smaller projects around the town, such as helping



Weekly Meeting

to maintain Landguard Common nature reserve, providing lifesaving equipment to the Community First Responders, beach cleaning and many more events around the town. We have supported the Free Lunch programme during school holidays, Causton school library project and the 'dictionary for life' scheme where dictionaries are distributed to school children in Felixstowe.

So, you can see that we are very much involved in giving assistance and help to deserving causes in this area as well as enjoying each other's company on a weekly basis.



By Richard Bugg

Felixstowe Country Park

The idea of establishing a Country Park on the northern fringe of the town has met with encouraging approval from councillors and many members of the public

The suggestion of now involving council officers as a means of moving things forward is particularly welcome, as we have reached a stage when a clearer definition of what is entailed needs to be set out to ensure all those concerned are working towards the same end.

Natural England has published a useful summary:

More than 400 Country Parks exist. They are public green spaces often at the edge of urban areas which provide places to enjoy the outdoors and experience nature in an informal semi-rural park setting. Country Parks normally have some facilities such as a car park, toilets, perhaps a cafe or kiosk, paths and trails and visitor information. There is not necessarily public right of access, although most are publicly accessible; some charge entry fees others do not. Most are owned and managed by Local Authorities. Many Country Parks were designated in the 1970s by the then Countryside Commission under the Countryside Act 1968. More recently Country Parks have been created under less formal arrangement and Natural England is working with partners to encourage a renaissance and accreditation of parks which meet certain criteria.

Demand

Felixstowe is now well in deficit on informal green space and it is somewhat worrying that the Area Plan appears to pay no heed to this. However, there is an opportunity on our doorstep to go some way to rectify the situation. Eastward Ho!, along with the Grove and Abbey Grove, offer an exceptional opportunity as the nucleus for a Country Park. It is no exaggeration to say that 100s of people already use the area for informal recreation every day and there is a need for improved management resources to counter the degrading that inevitably comes with this very popular demand.

Access

There is already an excellent car park by the Grove which allows people easy access by foot or road from Felixstowe, Walton and the Trimleys.



Facilities

The existing (and low utilised) council owned building nearby could be extended or modified to provide facilities (interpretation, wardening, storage, toilets, etc.) as necessary.

Existing Woodland and Open Space

With so many visitors there is a need and scope for extending the woodlands and encouraging walkers to take new routes with better waymarking and advertised trails. The open space of Eastward Ho! itself should not be underestimated as a facility in its own right and very much part of the landscape character.

AONB

There is the exciting prospect of being able to encourage visitors to explore the delights of the AONB that abuts the area to the north. There are footpaths extending to Falkenham and the Deben



estuary, but under the auspices of a Country Park some rationalisation and link sections, along with good waymarking, could improve managed access. The Felixstowe Country Park Group are local people who know the area well and are already working on ideas to improve access and encourage people to explore and enjoy this special landscape area.

Tours

Our group will continue to offer tours of the Grove and Eastward Ho! to acquaint interested parties with the terrain, threats and opportunities.

History

The area, particularly the Grove, has been claimed since the 1800s as a tranquil attraction for the town. There was a fine golf course and thriving club at Eastward Ho! between the wars. Both feature in Felixstowe guide books. An attempt to establish a Country Park was made in 1997 and received press coverage. Surely the time has come to ensure this precious area is once again safeguarded and cherished in the interests of Felixstowe residents and visitors.



The Holt Country Park in Norfolk has many similarities and can be seen as a successful example of what could be achieved and what would be of great benefit in meeting the current and increasing demand for green space.

Progress

Since this summary was written in February 2020 there has been some modest progress, but not as much as we would have wished for.

1. There appears to be a fair degree of support from councillors (town and district) and tours have been undertaken for various officials, including local and HQ representatives from The Woodland Trust who offered their assistance in protecting, improving and extending the Grove and Abbey Grove. However, it is proving very difficult to get any commitment from East Suffolk Council (ESC), presumably in the light of developing plans for the Garden Neighbourhood project.
2. Draft maps showing the possible extent of the Country Park, together with ideas for improved access (walkers and cyclists) have been produced, but without any constructive response from ESC it is difficult to take things further.
3. A useful meeting with Persimmon Homes (PH) was held at the Town Hall in January 2020 at which we were introduced to plans for Trelawny Place in general and Phase 1, in particular. It was suggested by PH that we adopted a name for our group and so the Felixstowe Country Park Group (FCPG) was born. PH welcomed our input which would be very relevant when Phase 2 was being planned in detail. A further meeting therefore, took place in the Town Hall with PH 's Planner Beth Deakon-Bates, in June 2022. Our particular concerns about the need for a buffer zone between the development and the Groves was a priority along with reducing the number of access points and the insistence that there should be pedestrians only within the woodlands (no cycling). Beth toured the area with Bob Stoner (leader of Abbey Grove volunteers) and minuted our recommendations. See the map of Phase 2 provided by PH and which we understand has received approval from ESC with some modifications.

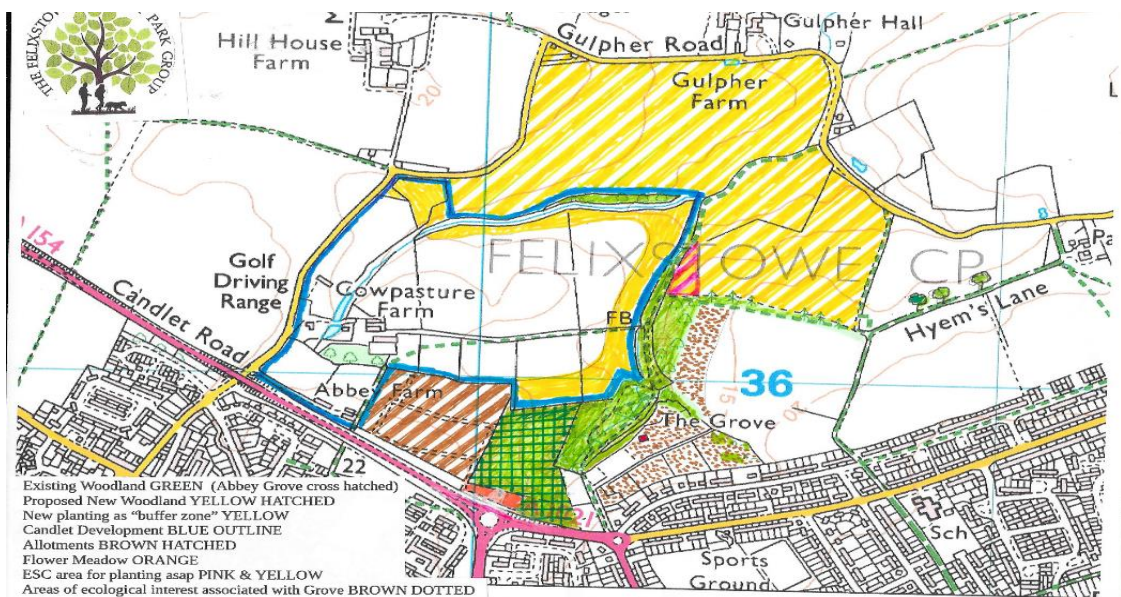
KEY:
 Existing Block on Phase 1
 Proposed Block on Phase 1



Site-Felixstowe Phase 2 Candlet Road
 Number of Plots: 305
 Drawing-Illustrative Layout
 Date: May'22
 Drawn by- AH
 Rev.

Phase 2

4. A welcome approach was made to our group in June this year by Rupert Masefield of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Rupert is the Planning and Advocacy Manager and applauds the work we are doing to safeguard green spaces and wildlife. He has made contact with ESC planning department and, hopefully, will be a significant influence on green issues in the planning of the Garden Neighbourhood scheme.



A summary of FCPG current aspirations for the immediate area.

M.V.Thomas.

SPEAKER'S CORNER – MAY

“1953 Floods – Memorials and Memories”

Jean Macpherson reminded us of the awful events following the floods in January 1953, which still remain the greatest disaster in terms of lives lost during peacetime in the UK. 311 people died in the UK, of which 41 were in Felixstowe and 58 on Canvey Island. By contrast 1800 lives were lost in the Netherlands.



They all occurred due to exceptionally high tides coinciding with strong winds funnelling the North Sea southwards into the constrictions of the Thames estuary and the Channel. As well as the lives lost, over 24,000 homes were damaged, and 1,000 miles of coastline inundated.

Jean has done a great deal of research into how these events have been commemorated. In South Benfleet churchyard 24 people were buried from nearby Canvey Island, where from 2014 a mural on the seawall explains what happened. Nearby are benches dedicated to each family which lost lives. In Harwich 8 people died and there is an attractive memorial, which is currently being refurbished by The Harwich Society. In Hunstanton there is a very evocative memorial, erected in 2013, commemorating the 15 who died, as well as 16 US airmen lost in the War.

In Felixstowe, a plaque was placed in the Cavendish Hotel, (now demolished) dedicated to those who were cared for in that hotel during the disaster. Fortunately, the plaque was rescued from the hotel and is now in safekeeping.

The Revd Rod Corke, Minister in 2002 at St Mary's Walton, erected a remembrance to the 10 people from that Parish who died. In the Church archive is a vase remembering Margaret Johnson, a 5 year old who drowned when she fell into the water from the roof of a flooded prefab. Her younger brother Tim was saved and worked on the 2002/3 50th Anniversary committee.

There was some difficulty in finding a suitable location on Langer Road for a memorial. After hard work by the Council and others, some ground was given by the Primary School, where Clare Curtis and Rosemary Humphries created a design, incorporating a sculpture by Boris Cooper and mosaics made by pupils at the school.

Jean recommended her audience to visit as many of these memorials as they could and to ask to see the Flood Book in the Town Library. They should also see the memorial plaque in the Ferry Boat Inn to Vera Broom, who lost her life nearby.

by Haley Dossor

The Felixstowe Society Beach Cleans



The Felixstowe Society has been organising Beach cleans for over 30 years and since 1999 we have been taking part in the Marine Conservation Society Annual Beachwatch Events.

We (Elizabeth and I) have been arranging Beach Clean-ups for The Felixstowe Society every March, June, September and December for at least the last 12 years, having adopted the area of beach from Cobbolds Point to The Spa Pavilion.

We now feel that the time is right for us to hang up our litter sticks and hand over to someone else. Our last clean-up was carried out on Wednesday 1st June and this was followed up by coffee at The Kiosk.

I would like to thank the band of Felixstowe Society members who have helped us along the way and also our friends from The Beach Hut and Chalet Association for their help over the years.

As you may all know, our beaches are being regularly cleaned up by hundreds of volunteers from individuals, families, schools and groups throughout the year and I am sure that our members will be more than welcome to join a group such as Debbie Bartlett's Litter Free Felixstowe, who do such a fantastic job in Felixstowe.

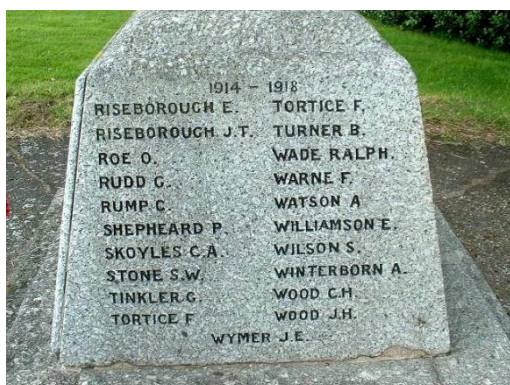
May I suggest that you visit litterfreefelixstowe@gmail.com

Keith Horn

P.S. One final thought – You may like to take over the organising of this event. If so please email me at kjandehorn@btinternet.com or telephone me on 01394 270845.

There it was – close to the top of the column – Pier and Face 11A and 11D - Fred (presumably christened Frederick) Tortice, my great-uncle.

We'd found his name, with the help of our tour manager, on the Thiepval Memorial, which we were visiting as part of our 'battlefields tour'. This set me off on a journey during which I discovered many things about my family's history which, for various reasons, had not only been kept from me in particular but also, I came to realize, had apparently not been discussed at all.



When writing this article, I discovered that Fred is also named on a memorial in the graveyard of St Michael's Church, Aylsham, together with others from that town who died in action and have no known grave.

In December 1915 Fred sent his twin brother a postcard which read as follows:

Arthur

I thought I would just let you know this is your twenty (sic) birthday and mine too. I wish you many happy returns for the day. I should think you think yourself lucky not to want to worry about soldiering. I have passed last Friday and am not going to worry myself about it. I should like this war to end soon what say you, my lad.

Frederick had just enlisted, in Norwich – (I think he was probably living in Buxton or Aylsham at the time) - in the 6th battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment. He was killed on the 26th of October 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, in the vicinity of the Regina Trench.



The Path to the Regina Trench

My grandfather subsequently enlisted (possibly spurred on by his mother who, possibly still grief-ridden, told him 'it should have been you') in the Royal Sussex Regiment. He was wounded in action and transferred to a labour battalion, which may well have saved his life. Like many of his generation, he rarely spoke about his wartime experiences.

He married Leonora Payne-Waller in Norwich 1922 and my mother Peggy was born in the following year. After working as a domestic gardener he became a groundsman. During the 2nd World War he was employed in that capacity at Riddlesworth Hall Preparatory School in Norfolk, which fed into Felixstowe College.



Arthur is on the Left

Their daughter Peggy was living with a relative in East Dereham and working in the buffet at the railway station when she met Walter, an acting LNER footplateman. Unlike the couple in 'Brief Encounter', they were both still single and free to marry, which they did in Ipswich in January 1943. I arrived that November.

In 1950 my mother and I came to live in Felixstowe with her parents. My grandfather was now head groundsman at Felixstowe College.

I spent one summer school holiday working with him at the College. He arranged for me to be interviewed by the Bursar. When the subject of how much I would be paid arose, I was to suggest, if asked, £3 pounds and 10 shillings a week, but I'm pleased to say the Bursar saved me the bother by saying 'How does £5 a week sound?'



Arthur and the Author

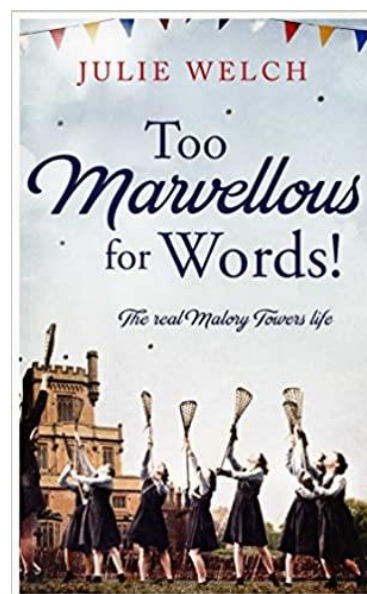
During the Summer holidays the College was taken over by a group of children from London ('the let') who never failed to annoy my grandfather, who regularly commented on the difference between their behaviour and that of the girls who lived and learned there in term-time.

One particular job that I didn't enjoy that much, but which probably did wonders for my physical health, involved dragging heavy mats up, down or across the tennis courts, the playing surface of which was of the same material as that which is still in use at Stade Roland Garros in Paris. I also

seem to remember spending a lot of time pushing heavy wheelbarrows full of garden refuse from one part of the College grounds to another!

Although I never set eyes on her, I was left in no doubt of the stature of the Headmistress, the redoubtable Miss Ruth Jones, who was known as 'Jonah'. The College slogan was *Fide Constantia* ('Faith and determination to learn'). Princess Anne was a regular visitor and on one occasion I happened to be in our front garden as her red helicopter landed on the playing field.

Sports journalist, author and screenwriter Julie Welch writes in her memoir 'Too Marvellous For Words' of her time at the College in the 1960s. One Riddlesworth Hall pupil who was turned down when she applied to transfer to the College was a certain Diana Spencer.



My grandfather retired in the mid-1960s and died in 1988, having survived his twin brother by over 70 years. The College, which was founded in 1929, closed in 1994 following a steep decline in the number of pupils.

I left Felixstowe in 1963 and lived and worked in Southampton and then in and around London. In 1986 I and my family decided to move to Felixstowe – back in my case, of course – a decision that we have never regretted. I'm certainly not the only person to realize that it's a great place in which to be brought up and an even greater place to which to return!

In total, I have lived in Felixstowe for nearly 50 years and it is now, I would suggest, a much more cosmopolitan, more self-confident and less insular place than it used to be. As has been pointed out elsewhere, nobody need be alone in our friendly town!

One thing for which I shall always be grateful is that I've been given the chance to honour the memory of my great uncle Frederick. I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to Wilfred Owen, whose poetry led me to book that battlefields tour.

FELIXSTOWE NEWS QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 1880
2. 1891
3. 1903
4. 1905
5. 1914
6. 1920
7. 1928
8. 1933
9. 1936
10. 1945
11. 1956
12. 1959
13. 1970
14. 1972
15. 1974
16. 1978
17. 1988
18. 1994
19. 2000
20. 2014

Listed Buildings by M Sharman

Ancient monuments, such as Landguard Fort and Scheduled monuments, such as the Walton Old Hall site in Dellwood Avenue sportsground are the oldest forms of heritage protection in England, but they only apply to sites of national importance.

Listing, marks and celebrates that a building has special architectural and historic interest and brings the building under consideration of the local council's planning department, so that it can be protected in the future.

The older the building is, then the more likelihood that it will be Listed. So, as a general rule, all buildings before 1700 which are in anything like their original condition, are likely to be Listed. Buildings less than thirty years old are not normally regarded as being of sufficient architectural interest because they have not yet lasted the test of time.

Anyone can nominate a building to be Listed. Additionally, Historic England has its own strategic programme of listing priorities. Whatever the method of identification, Historic England makes a recommendation to the Secretary of State for the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport based on principles of selection for Listed buildings. If the Department then decides that a submitted building is indeed of enough architectural and historic interest, it is then added to a list compiled under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and contained in the National Heritage List for England, which is maintained by Historic England.

Some Listed Buildings in Felixstowe

Grade I

Landguard Fort

Grade II*

Walton Hall, High Street
Church of St Andrew
Church of St Mary, Walton
Bartlet Hospital
Martello Tower R

Grade II

Harvest House
Reade House, 108 Queens Road
Lavender Cottage, Grange Road
Peewit Cottage, Grange Road
Felixstowe War Memorial
Martello Tower Q, South Hill
The Feathers Inn, Walton
The Vicarage, Grange Road
Laurel Farmhouse, Marsh Lane
Smock Mill, Walton

This List is the only official and current register of all protected historic buildings and sites in England, to include Listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, as well as battlefields.

Listed buildings are shown in 3 categories:

Grade I buildings:

are of exceptional interest and represent only 2.5% of Listed buildings.

Grade II* buildings:

are particularly important buildings of more than special interest and represent 5.8% of all Listed.

Grade II buildings:

are of special interest and form 91.7% of all Listed buildings and, accordingly, the most likely grade of listing for a house owner.

Amazingly, the total number of Listed buildings is not known because a single entry on the National Heritage List can cover a number of individual units such as a row of terraced houses or one house only. However, it is estimated by Historic England that there are around 500,000 listed buildings in the English National Heritage List.

It is important to emphasise that Listing is not a preservation order that prevents change and so is not intended to freeze a building in time. However, it does mean that prior written Listed building consent must be applied for to make any change to the building which might affect its special interest. Such consent is needed for anything to do with the whole building, including the interior, unless parts of it are specifically excluded in the list description and is given by the local planning authority.



