

Agenda Item No:

Report to: Museums Committee

Date of Meeting: 01 March 2010

Report Title: Statues and Memorials

Report By: Virginia Gilbert
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Purpose of Report

This report provides information regarding condition, ownership and extent of our statues and memorials.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. To give advice on priorities and work with the Conservation Team and Environmental Services to identify possible funding opportunities.**
- 2. Work with stakeholders to find a new home for Albert.**

Reasons for Recommendations

The Council has a significant portfolio of artefacts around the town, some in poor condition. Views are sought to identify priorities for maintenance/restoration. Having a strategy based on priorities will help in seeking funding and your support to achieve this will be very helpful.

Introduction

Context

1. This report attempts to identify statues and memorials within the Borough that have significant heritage value, in some cases listed, and/or those with cultural merit/value. Appendix A provides further details and includes a summary of the condition of each.
2. In some cases significant statues have been displaced historically and are left with no home, many still in public view are deteriorating, this is exacerbated because of their inappropriate location and lack of maintenance.
3. The list further attempts to prioritise these statues through their status, importance and condition (the latter being the top priority). The report does not address buildings such as the ruined St. Mary's Church in Bexleigh Avenue.

Conservation and Listed Status

4. A number of structures/statues are rightly conserved through being listed, several of these have been or are being restored (Alexandra Park War Memorial), often supported through external funding. Further restoration work must be focused on these by priority.

War Memorials

5. The Council is responsible for the maintenance of several war memorials in the town, further information can be found on the website <http://www.hastings.gov.uk/parks%5Fopenspaces/>.
6. Despite the passage of time they remain an important focus for the community; they should continue to be looked after long into the future.

Statues in Poor Condition

7. There are a few statues in limestone/marble positioned near to the sea; these may not have been in good condition when first sited there, but they have continued to erode, losing much of their detail. Restoration costs are unsurprisingly quite high and whilst this might slow further damage, the improvement to detail and quality of the statue would be limited.
8. The "Lion and Unicorn" in Robertson Terrace and "Harold and Edith" in West Marina Gardens fall into this category as does "Albert" (not on display) who was displaced when the Memorial Clock was demolished in the town centre.

Albert and Victoria

9. Albert is a life-size limestone statue, sculpted by Edwin Stirling to go into an apse and thus has a flat back. He is currently in the Alexandra Park Depot protected from the elements, but should be restored and remounted on public display.

10. There is a Queen Victoria bust in good condition, sculpted in white marble which is currently at the Museum.
11. The Queen Victoria statue is amply displayed in Warrior Square in bronze on pink marble and is in good condition.

Importance of Our Heritage

12. Hastings enjoys a rich heritage which makes the town unique and gives its community a special sense of place, whilst attracting visitors from far and wide. Clearly the town could make more of its heritage through its many relics (people generally are unaware of so many of them), but their appearance and a lack of interpretation makes this inadvisable.
13. A list of listed buildings is provided as part of Appendix A for information.

Financial Consideration

14. With a few exceptions our statutes and memorials do not have a specific budget to enable restorative maintenance.
15. Our strategy should be one of identifying priorities and working with partners / stakeholders towards attracting external funding to enable restoration of our most important artefacts.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	Yes
Economic/Financial Implications	No
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No

Background Information

Appendix A - Statues and Memorials - Status of Condition
Appendix B - Photographs (provided at the meeting)

Officer to Contact

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Please note:-

Appendix A for this agenda cannot be published because of the complex table that it contains. Appendix B is only available in hard copy. If required a copy of Appendix A and B can be obtained by contacting Emily Horne, Committee Administrator Tel: 01424 451719 or by emailing ehorne@hastings.gov.uk