

Conservation Areas re-appraisal



Hurstpierpoint Society decided a few years ago to produce a guide to the village's three conservation areas, after one of the elegant shop fronts in our historic High Street was ripped out and replaced with modern materials. Our intention was to assist owners who were planning to make changes to their property and encourage them to renovate, extend or repair properties in keeping with their original architectural styles, using sympathetic building materials.

The conservation guide we were writing was well under way, when we received a request from Mid Sussex District Council, who has a statutory duty to re-appraise conservation areas on a regular basis. They asked us to undertake a thorough re-appraisal of our conservation areas, and produce a liberally illustrated report. Our remit was to clearly identify the qualities that make the three conservation areas special, with suggestions for preservation and enhancement of the conservation areas, as well as possible boundary changes.



This effectively meant walking through the areas on a regular basis, taking copious notes and plenty of photographs. We feel the character of the village depends on many everyday features which are important components of our historic street scene, such as street furniture,

signage, brick pavements, and even drain covers – which feature manufacturer's names, and provide a social history of Hurst's commercial and industrial past.



We felt a joint publication with the Planning Department would have authority and could

impact on the planning process, as well as promote the ethos and aims of Hurst Society.



All of this had to be written up – although Alma Howell of MSDC has standard formats to follow and will take the raw material and produce the glossy finished document.

As a by-product this project, a complete photographic record of all the properties in the conservation areas has been compiled, to be catalogued and retained by the Society. This digital archive could ultimately become a reference tool of historical importance.



We have also started an annual Conservation & Design Awards presentation, which helps promote the Society's aims.

Maxine Tyler