



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024

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### Future events

**Compton Place, Eastbourne BN21 IEH, Putting Fabric First:** How temporary works can be used to facilitate essential structural repairs whilst retaining historic assets, 6th February, 9am - 12 midday

**Next IHBC SE Branch Committee Meeting online, 13<sup>th</sup> February**  
18.00-19.30

**SE Day School, Canterbury Christ Church University,** Augustine House & Hall, Canterbury CT1 2YA, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 9.30am - 4pm

**East Sussex College Training Hub, Eastbourne, Retrofit.** September 2024 – *Specific date to be confirmed*

### Recent events

**IHBC Day Visit to Romney Marsh, Sound Mirrors, Dungeness Old Lighthouse and Martello Tower No 24, Dymchurch**  
Sunday 17th September 2023, 9.30am - 4.30pm

**St John's Seminary, Wonersh,** Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 10.30am – 2pm including refreshments or Saturday 11th Nov 2023 10.30am - 2pm

**Late Christmas Bash, The George, Tunbridge Wells,** 19th January 2024, 6pm

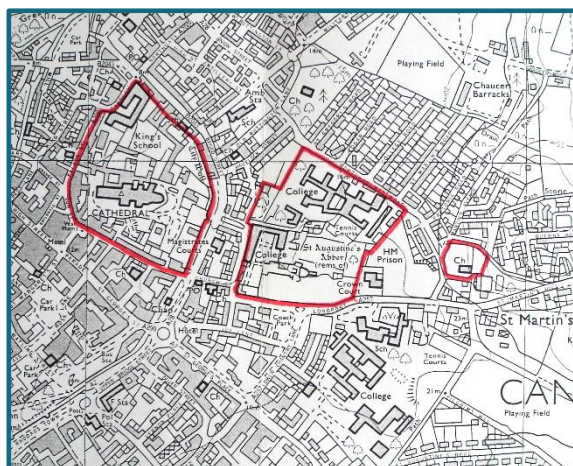
## Word from our chair

It's hard to believe that a whole year has already passed, and as I write, we are already in the latter part of January. For me, the highlight of the year was visiting the House of Lords to hear our first APPG report with the other members of the IHBC Board of Trustees.



I was sad to learn that the second APPG event was postponed, due to the Chair MP Steve Grundy being called to the whip, as the subject we were going to discuss: "Heat on Heritage: Next Steps on Energy efficiency and the Historic Environment. Exploring challenges surrounding efforts to upgrade the UK's historic environment for a net zero carbon emission world" is a huge issue in our current climate. It's good to see that the IHBC have been strongly taking this on board. We all know of course that conservation is key to build and occupant health, 25% of any budget should be spent on getting a building retrofit ready!

In SE Branch News, we've had numerous events and have plenty more planned for this year. I am very excited about our AGM in April, which is going to be in Canterbury. A city which I have never actually met but which is in part, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

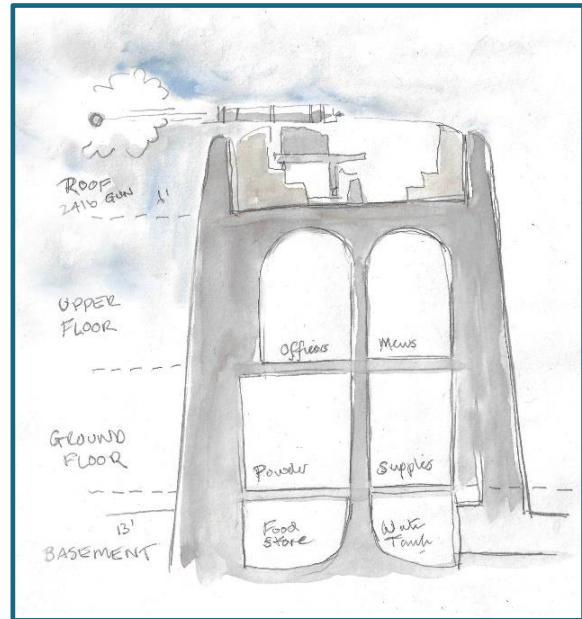


As always, I am very thankful for the help I get from the committee, I really enjoyed our postponed Christmas bash this month!

### Day visit to Romney Marsh

An excellent outing organised by Alan Dickinson about Coastal defence and the Protection at Romney Marsh.

First of all, we visited the old lighthouse at Dungeness, with its great lens and the sector light which was used previously to provide visible warning to nearby ships. Next the amazing sound mirrors at Romney Marsh, coinciding with an RSPB Open day. Situated on an island at Lade Pitts in Dungeness. The three spectacular relics, scheduled monuments no less, of a pre-WW2 acoustic aerial defence system were intended to sound the alarm against any planes crossing the channel.



*Sketch by Sarah Sullivan*

After the visit to the sound mirrors we went to the New Romney Old School, a rare treat to a historic school house, before relocating to visit Martello Towers and then we were treated to a talk by Tom Bosence about the conservation and repair of Dymchurch, one of 74 Martello Towers to have survived in England.



*Sketch by Sarah Sullivan*

Built to defend our shoreline from Napoleon's advances, and never used, the name Martello is actually a misspelling based on the coastal defense tower at Mortella point in Corsica (Torra di Mortella).



*Photos by Sarah Sullivan*



## St John's Seminary Talk and Tour



*Presentation at St John's Seminary: A unique heritage building*

Jo Saady gave a talk on the history of the building, detailing what a day in the life of a seminarian might have been and showcasing the plans of the existing and proposed scheme.

Currently in planning, the conversion of Saint John's Catholic Seminary will be a positive conservation outcome, ensuring the building is maintained for years to come. Designed by the eminent Catholic architect Frederick Walters, it still remains very much in its original state, even though it has been extended and in part renovated, for example, the old water closets, have long been replaced with proper toilets!

### St John's Seminary - Wonersh



French Renaissance – Dutch Jacobean 1891

### St John's Seminary - CGI of Proposed Scheme



ecotecture  
ARCHITECTS - PLANNERS

There was also the opportunity to look at the public exhibition, which was still available following an earlier public consultation including a film on the proposals, which was exhibited in the chapel.

## IHBC Post Christmas get together

Getting a day where we could all get together before Christmas turned out to be too difficult, but we eventually had a splendid turn out this January, gathering at The George in Turnbridge Wells. It's always hard finding a venue for our large South East Area, so it was great to see so many faces of those who could attend.



One point to note, chatting to fellow members, it is clear that Local Authorities are outsourcing Conservation officer posts, as it is hard to find and keep permanent staff when you don't support them properly it seems!

*IHBC Christmas Bash at The George in Turnbridge Wells*



We are a lively committee, as we hope the photos show. We very much welcome current and new members to get involved with our events and our online meetings.

As shown in Future events, please note the next IHBC SE Branch Committee Meeting online is on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 18.00 - 19.30