Conservation Areas

50 years since:

- Civic Amenities 1967 Act
- First conservation area designation

There are now approx. 10,000 conservation areas in England.
Conservation Areas

What is a conservation area?

“.. an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

(Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
Conservation Areas

Statutory duties:

- Determine parts that are of special interest
- Designate as conservation areas
- Review ‘from time to time’
- Submit to a public meeting
- Pay special attention … in exercising powers

These are Requirements not options.
Conservation Areas

Statutory duties:

Section 72(1)

‘Great importance and weight’ (Barnwell)

Conservation Area Appraisals are a means to discharge duties
Conservation Areas

Effect of designation:

- Demolition controlled
- Trees are protected
- Development has to take account of the special character
- Reduced ‘permitted development’ allowances
Conservation Area Appraisals

NPPF

Paragraph 127:

“….. ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or interest ..’

Inappropriate designations can devalue the concept of conservation if designating areas that lack special interest.
Conservation Area Appraisals

- Location and context
- Historical development
- Spatial analysis
- Character analysis
- Issues
Historic England Guidance

- Guidance - not prescription
- Can be taken too literally
- Does not apply to every conservation area
- Common requirement to be ‘in accordance with Historic England’
Comparing approaches

• Wide variation even within guidance

• Who are they for?

• How will they be used?
Why are appraisals needed?

- To define the ‘special interest’
- To provide the evidence base for LDF policy
- To raise awareness
- To identify management issues
- To inform development control
- To justify investment
- To fulfil statutory duties
- To support regeneration strategies
Analysis

- Character and significance hard to define
- Appraisal is not description
- What are the principal features?
- How do they relate?
- Do they matter?
- Use bullet point summaries
Assessment techniques

• Documentary research
• Landscape characterisation
• Historic map progression
• Site survey
• Other evidence:
  – Historic photos
  – Oral recall
• Other guidance
Sources of information

• Publications:
  – Local histories
  – Pevsner
  – Victoria County History

• Historic Environment Record

• Historic maps

• Library, County Records, NMR

• Online resources
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

- 12 conservation areas
- No appraisals published yet ...
- The Eastbourne Townscape Guide is out-of-date
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

This is largest of Eastbourne’s conservation areas.
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

- Designated in 1969
- Extended 1992
- Covers 84 Hectares
- Includes most of the town, railway station and a large proportion of the seafront
- Mostly a mid-to-late 19th century planned resort
- Has earlier origins
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

1841 Tithe Map
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

1879
A major part of the conservation area is an outstanding example of 19th century urban planning with wide boulevards, squares and tree-lined avenues surrounded by terraces or groups of detached Italianate villas.
Surprisingly, not an extensive amount of Listed Buildings
Surprisingly, not an extensive amount of Listed Buildings

Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

A high percentage of Locally Listed and Positive Buildings
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

A high percentage of Locally Listed and Positive Buildings
A wealth of Key Landmarks and Key Views / Vistas

Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area
Town Centre and Seaside Conservation Area

Because of the extent of the conservation area, sub areas have been identified:

- Area 1: Eastbourne seafront and Redoubt For Area
- Area 2: Seaside Road, Sea Houses and the Pier
- Area 3: Devonshire Place and Trinity Trees
- Area 4: Grand Parade and Wish Tower
- Area 5: South Street to Eastbourne Station
Character Areas

Key:
1. Eastern seafront & Redoubt Fort Area
2. Seaside Road, Sea Houses & the pier
3. Devonshire Place & Trinity Trees
4. Grand Parade & Wish Tower
5. South Street to Eastbourne Station
Area 1: Eastbourne Seafront and Redoubt Fort Area

This is the most easterly part of the Conservation Area:

Key characteristics:
- Origins pre C19th planned town
- Historic road network – Seaside remains
- Surviving ‘Sea Houses’
- Redoubt Fort listed and a SAM
- Tea Gardens with the Colonades
Area 1: Eastbourne Seafront and Redoubt Fort Area
Area 2: Seaside Road, Sea Houses and the Pier

Complex area:
• evidence of early 19th century vernacular town
• planned overlays of mid-late C19th
• high density of listed and locally listed buildings
• early street pattern, pre-dating Currey’s plan of 1859
• Unified terraces such as Marine Parade
Area 2: Seaside Road, Sea Houses and the Pier
Area 3: Devonshire Place and Trinity Trees

Lies geographically in the centre of Eastbourne:

- Tree lined Boulevards
- Wide pavements
- The War Memorial at the north end
- Statue of the 7th Duke at the seafront end
- Formal private gardens
- Bandstand a key landmark
Area 3: Devonshire Place and Trinity Trees
Area 4: Grand Parade and Wish Tower

Contains the most important public open space in Eastbourne:
- small, specialised shopping areas
- spacious public promenades
- Wish Tower and gardens
- Stucco fronted C19th terraces
- Edwardian set-pieces
Area 4: Grand Parade and Wish Tower
Area 5: South Street to Eastbourne Station

Mixed area of civic and commercial buildings:

• Medieval road evident
• Grouping at the end of South Street/Grove Road
• Survival of character of South Street
• Key landmarks
• Later infilling of farmlands with C19th terraces
Area 5: South Street to Eastbourne Station
General Negative Features:
• Parking and traffic congestion
• Mixture of pavement surfaces and street furniture
• Poorly maintained buildings
• Poorly maintained open spaces
• Underuse of key buildings (Redoubt and Colonnades)
• Upvc windows and doors
• Loss of front boundaries and railings
• Loss of historic features/details
• Large roof dormers
• Intrusive C20th blocks of flats e.g. Merlynn and Tavistock
• Retail/Commercial signage
• Satellite dishes
Delivering Management

Suggested Key Actions:
• Consider the recommendations including boundary review
• Adopt CAA as an SPD
• Formulate appropriate policies
• Heritage Audit - Record the base-line
• Article 4s
• Heritage Action Zone – investigate options
• Identify short, medium and long term projects/goals
• Assignment of responsibilities
• Timescales
• Performance indicators

…but check resource implications first!
Boundary Review Suggestions
Boundary Review Suggestions

Include for example:

• 1-12 Hampden Terrace
• 2–17 Cambridge Road
• Terminus Road to junction with Seaside Road
• Lower end of Hampton Place
• Grove Road between Town Hall and Train Station
• Part of Station Parade and across to No. 2 Old Orchard Road
• ‘Little Chelsea’
• Wish Road and Hardwick Road
Monitoring and review

- Set targets
- Measure performance
- Ownership – Who reviews?
- Best practice suggests a 5-year cycle
- Informal interim review
- Note that Article 4 directions relate to four year cut-off for enforcement
I am holding my own at Eastbourne