WORTHING HERITAGE TRAILS 5

BROADWATER TRAIL

Broadwater like many old Sussex villages evolved along a winding street which invariably took the name of the village. Broadwater Street stretched from Broadwater Green to the church (now Broadwater Street West), then to the junction of Sompting Road (now Broadwater Street East) and continued on up the now Sompting Road. Many attractive buildings have been lost, especially in the Broadwater Street West part of the old village. The ancient parish of Broadwater contained formerly the separate settlements of Broadwater, Offington, and Worthing. This walk follows the route of the old Broadwater Street from north of The Green, past the church, down to the Quashetts and round to the old manor house. Please see the back panel of this leaflet for further information about the history of Broadwater.

Duration: 90 minutes, 1.5 miles (2.4 km)
Terrain: follows pavements – this trail should be suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

The Worthing Heritage Trail leaflets provide information and visual images relating to local history: those using the leaflets and the website should ensure that they take due care and attention when following the trails. Please note that this trail may not always follow formal pedestrian routes and there may be some roads to cross.

Midsummer Tree

Broadwater Green

Pound House

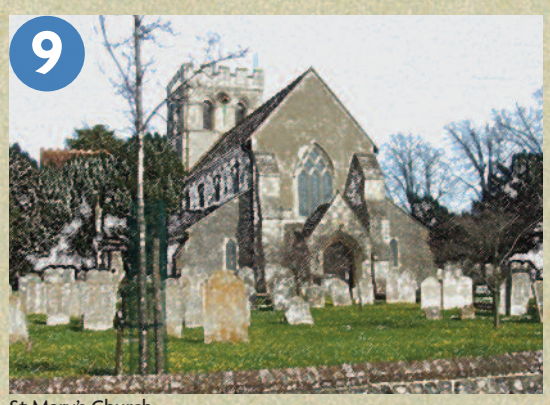
The Parish Rooms

Luff's Sweetshop *c*1890s

The Cricketers

The former Paine Manwaring premises

Cricketers Parade Cricket Match



St Mary's Church

Broadwater Street East

Broadwater Lodge and Broadwater Cottage

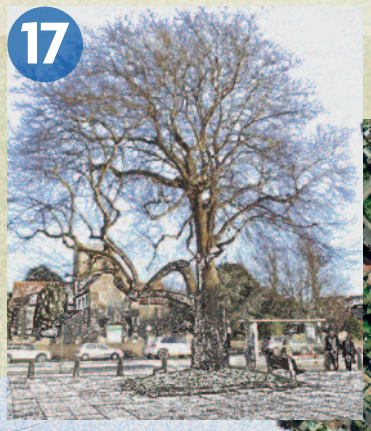
Acorn Cottage

Old House at Home

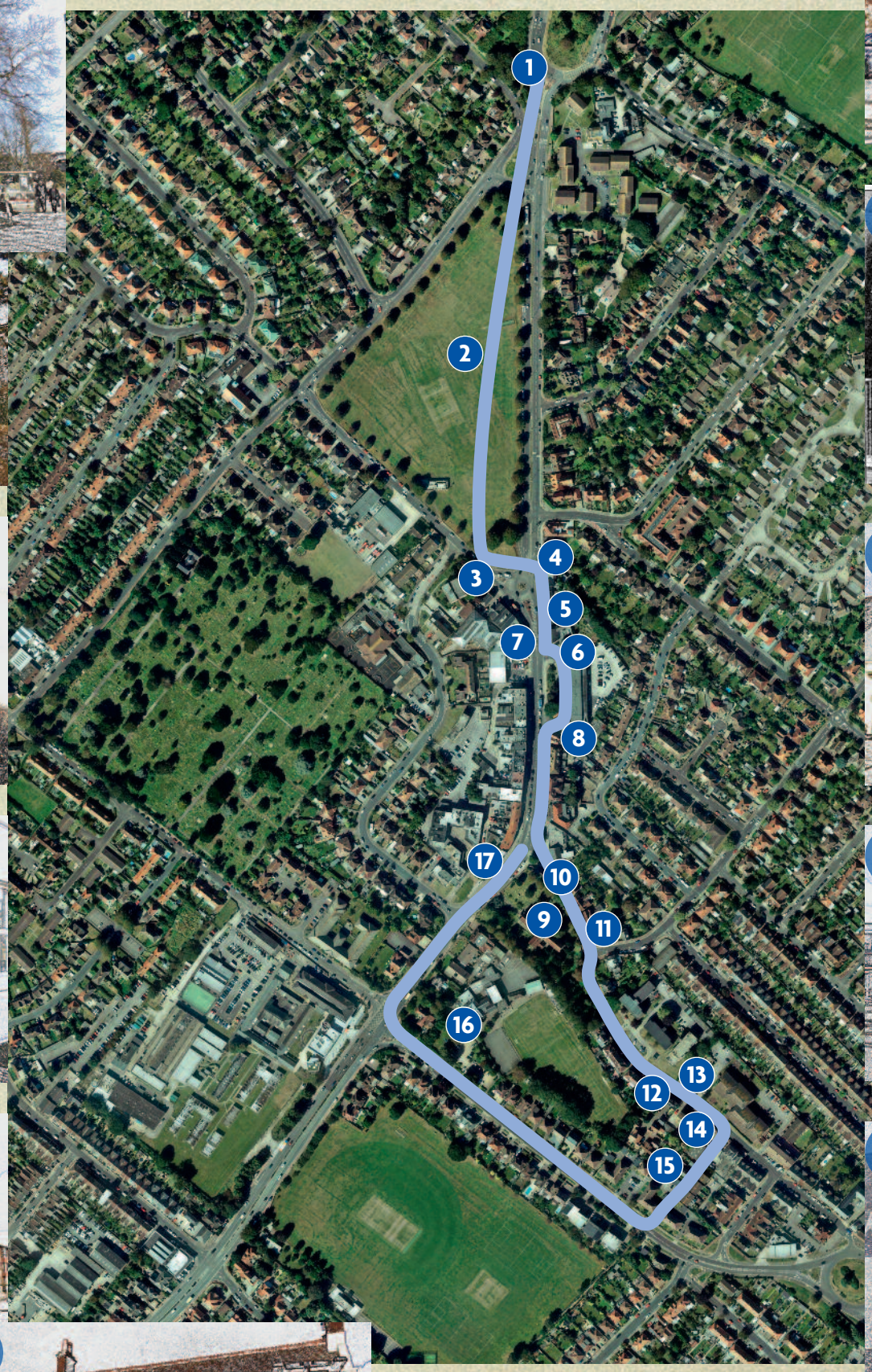
Quashetts

The Square/Bartletts Cottages

Broadwater Manor House



The site of Broadwater rectory



1 Midsummer Tree – This mysterious and ancient oak tree is steeped in folklore. Charlotte Latham, arguably this country's first serious folklorist, worked as a governess in Worthing, when she was a young woman in the 1820s. In 1868 she set about recording the superstitious beliefs of the people of West Sussex, including the legend of the Broadwater Midsummer Tree. She recalled viewing the tree 'with an uncomfortable and suspicious look' in her younger days, having been told how skeletons would rise up from its roots at midnight on Midsummer's Eve and dance round its trunk to 'the rattling of their own bones'. She was introduced to a man who had claimed to have witnessed this spectral dance of the dead and been 'frightened out of his very senses' by the ghostly apparition. A large branch fell off the tree many years ago. In 2006 it was due to be felled by the Highways Agency, which had deemed it unsafe; but a campaign led by local historian, Chris Hare, led to its reprieve. The tree was greatly cut back and reduced in height, but its remaining branch has continued to bear leaf. A plaque, erected by the Highways Agency now records its unusual story.

2 Broadwater Green. Broadwater Green once covered a significantly larger area and originally had a pond. During the second half of the 19th century stone and gravel was excavated from part of the Green for repairing roads, though this pit was declared exhausted by 1865. The Green was home to Broadwater Fair for many years. It was also a well renowned cricket ground described in *The Sussex Advertiser* on the 10th September 1827 as follows 'Broadwater Green is considered by competent judges to be the best ground in England, and where the play can be seen to the utmost advantage'. The Green was granted in perpetuity to the people of Worthing, following a campaign in 1863 to restore it as a pleasure green, free from gravel and rubbish pits.

3 Pound House. This house was built in 1789 on a parcel of land that was originally part of Broadwater Green. At some time prior to 1848 a section at the end of the rear garden was used as the parish pound, where stray animals were kept until their owners claimed them, usually on payment of a small fine. At one time the property became the *Temperance Laundry* and laundry was hung to dry on the greensward in front of what is now the fire station.

4 The Parish Rooms. Erected in 1889 as a reading room, paid for by public subscription. In the disastrous typhoid epidemic of 1893 the room was used to house 22 patients. By 1900 it was run by the parish council continuing as a Parish Room and Reading Room. Many organisations have used the Parish Rooms over the years notably the Worthing Girl Guides and Worthing Scouts. It is now run by Broadwater Community Association.

5 Luff's. The confectionery shop was established during the early 20th century and became very well-known. Visitors to Broadwater would always take back Luff's sweets and the shop was a real favourite with the children attending Broadwater School (which stood on the Green very close by). Apparently at Christmas time Luff's sweets were in such demand that mail vans queued to take away sacks and tins of sweets going to all parts of the country.

6 The Cricketers. Originally built as a private residence but used as a brewhouse and beershop from 1853 onwards under the ownership of Thomas Luff. At that time it was known as *The Brewer's Arms* and was only renamed *The Cricketers Arms* around 1878. The public house was run by three generations of the same family beginning in 1888 for over 100 years and not surprisingly given its proximity to the Green it became the 'home' of the local cricket club.

7 Paine Manwaring (and Lephard). From the 18th century until 2012, one of the core businesses of Broadwater has been Paine Manwaring. A very extensive ironmongery business had followed quite naturally into the 20th century after the arrival of William Paine, blacksmith in the early 1700s. The business once owned a forge and workshop until 1938, that stood where the current roundabout is today.

8 Cricketers Parade Cricket Match. Many grand matches have graced the turf on Broadwater Green including one renowned for its 500 guineas a side prize money. It took place in 1805 between 11 gentlemen of London and 12 of Worthing, Shoreham and Brighton. The local gentlemen lost! However the match commemorated here was between Sussex and an all-England side said to have taken place circa 1837.

9 St Mary's Church, Broadwater. A church is thought to have existed here back in Saxon times and certainly a church is recorded at Broadwater in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The present church was commenced sometime after 1100. It is one of the outstanding examples of a cruciform church in Sussex. Inside are the impressive tombs of the 8th and 9th Lords de la Warr who lived at Offington as well as some wonderful brasses including one over the tomb of John Mapleton, priest at Broadwater in 1433. Between 1797 and 1925 Broadwater Church had the unusual distinction of only three rectors all of a related family (Peter Wood, his nephew, Edward King Elliott, and his son, Edward James Elliott). Jane Austen worshipped here while staying in Worthing. It is believed that 'Old Sanditon' in her novel 'Sanditon' was based on Broadwater.

10 Broadwater Street East. Broadwater Street East, westernmost section was originally part of the old Broadwater Street. It now forms a major part of the Broadwater Conservation Area. At this western end a group of 18th and 19th century buildings remain, indicating the traditional street pattern and a generally regular roofscape. Much of the attractive character and appearance of Broadwater Street East derives from the intimacy of the buildings, the irregular winding street pattern, and the narrow road which retains the feel of a village street.

11 Broadwater Lodge and Broadwater Cottage. These two fine Georgian houses were built quite separately but around the same time, 1820. Broadwater Lodge has now acquired the name Broadwater House a name taken from a former house demolished when Broadwater Street West was widened. Broadwater Cottage now merely languishes with the address 2, Forest Road however as you can see it was built from cream coloured bricks probably made from the blue clay found on Worthing Beach.

12 Acorn Cottage. Visually attractive large flint stone building dating back to the 1870s, replaced an older property built in 1720. The small flint pebbles in lime mortar, visible at the rear of the property are characteristic of the older buildings in the village. It was not until the later nineteenth century that bricks, rather than flints were used in the construction of poorer people's houses. Once owned by the Lord of Broadwater Manor it does not seem to have acquired its *Acorn Cottage* name until the 20th century.

13 Old House at Home. The current public house was built in 1925 on the site of a much earlier beer-house and, at one time, bakery. As the name suggests a beer house sold beer (and cider), just beer no spirits – and this was one of the distinguishing features between it and a public house. The 'Old House' once had its own song, which promised plenty of cheer and female company to those frequenting the premises. Adjoining the beer house to the west was the Broadwater Fire Brigade's garage where they kept their hand drawn 'fire-engine'.

14 Quashetts. Currently the northernmost part of what was probably a very ancient route connecting Cissbury with the coast at Worthing. What remains of the footpath or twitten now runs from the old Broadwater Street (now Broadwater Street East) running under the railway where once it would have crossed the old Teville Stream and emerging close to the Swan Public House.

15 The Square/Bartletts Cottages. On through the beginning of the Quashetts on the right is The Square and Bartletts Cottages, The first house on this site may have been as early as 1752 but certainly Land Tax records confirm a house in 1789. These small terrace houses were originally used mainly to accommodate the poor people of the parish.

16 Broadwater Manor House. A manor house in Broadwater was first mentioned in 1256 together with a private chapel. The current building shows many alterations over time with the oldest part being the north wing with rubble walls and a late medieval roof. The house and associated buildings now form part of a successful preparatory school recently acquired by Lancing College. Former Lords of the Manor of Broadwater included the Misses Newland, who donated Broadwater Green to the people of Worthing, and William Foard Tribe, the irascible Victorian magistrate, notorious for his hostility towards the Salvation Army during the riots of 1884.

17 Site of old Rectory. The old Broadwater rectory stood on the land now occupied by Broadwater Boulevard. Although earlier rectory houses had stood on this plot dating back until 1554, the last house was probably built by Reverend Peter Wood in 1797. The house continued to be used by the church until 1924 and then it was given for use by private residents. During the Second World War is was used as a headquarters by the local Home Guard. Eventually it was demolished in 1959 but there is one single remnant of the old garden, the rather fine tree in the Boulevard.

Learn more about Broadwater

The Worthing Heritage Trails Project is grateful to Barrie Keech for supplying most of the information that appears in this leaflet. Barrie has done a great deal of research into the history of Broadwater and is a member of the Broadwater Research Group. He can be contacted at queries@barriesgenealogy.co.uk and his website address is www.barriesgenealogy.co.uk
Copies of Ron Kerridge and Mike Standing's Georgian and Victorian Broadwater are available from local libraries. The book is out of print, but copies may be available from Kim's Bookshop in Chatsworth Road or Badger Books in Gratwick Road.

The Worthing Heritage Trails are created by the Worthing Heritage Alliance (**www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk**) and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

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Special thanks go to the following for information they have supplied for these trail leaflets and for proof reading: Barbara Shaw, Debra Hillman, Dot Watson, Janet Clarke, Jean White, Martin Snow, Pete Stafford, and Rosemary Pearson.
Thanks to Nigel Bird for developing *iwalks*. For details of local train and bus timetables and routes see **www.www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/travel-and-public-transport**

More information about Worthing can be found at
www.visitworthing.co.uk
www.worthingarch.co.uk
www.worthingsociety.org.uk

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

Adur & Worthing councils

Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

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BROADWATER TRAIL

Broadwater Village – the historic parish

Find out more about Broadwater at –
www.worthingheritagetrails.org.uk

Scan to open the guided walk on your smartphone

powered by iwalk