WORTHING HERITAGE TRAILS 8

GORING TRAIL

Of all the former villages now absorbed into the Borough of Worthing, none has been more changed than Goring. Whereas Tarring still retains its medieval village street, and Durrington and Broadwater still have clusters of old buildings, Goring's architectural heritage must be hunted down amidst the suburban redevelopment built since the village became part of 'Greater Worthing' in 1929. Goring historian, Frank Fox-Wilson, well summed up the sense of loss when he wrote of Goring being 'submerged beneath the tidal wave of flats, bungalows and new businesses.' Was it not, he pondered 'beyond the wit of man' to have renovated and preserved some of the ancient habitations that adorned the old village? Apparently not. However, the unexpected delight in finding and exploring what does remain is well worth the effort, and we feel sure that those walking this Heritage Trail will be surprised and pleased with what they discover of a by-gone age.

Duration: the walkable part of this trail covers a distance of about 2km and will take about one and a half hours to complete.

Terrain: The trail follows pavements, except at Ilex Way and Goring Hall where it passes along a bridle path.

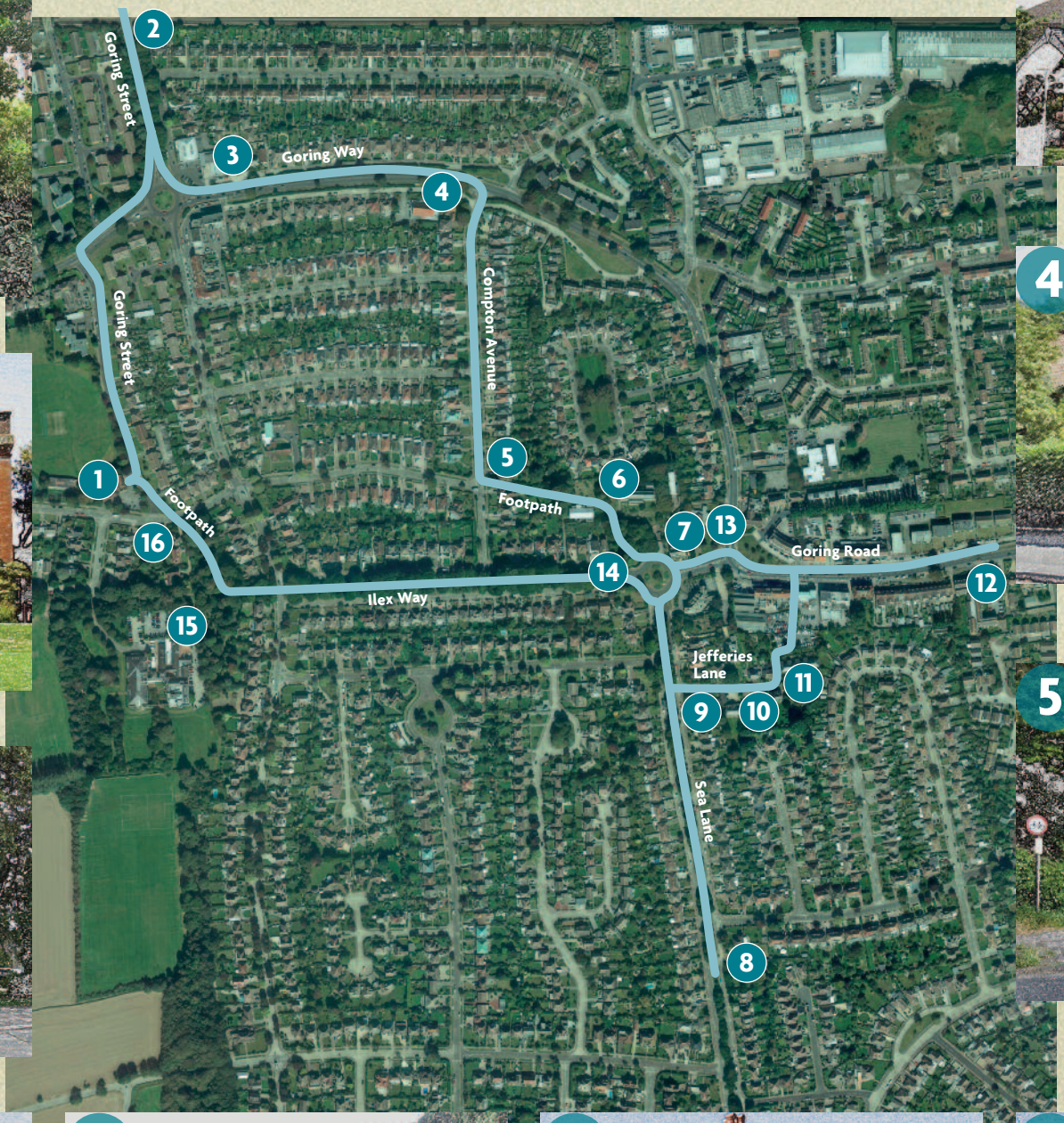
The Worthing Heritage Trail leaflets provide information and visual images relating to local history: those using the leaflets and the website should ensure that they take due care and attention when following the trails.
Please note that this trail may not always follow formal pedestrian routes and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

The Bull's Head

Goring-by-Sea railway station

90 Goring Way

Goring Hall Lodge House



Jupp's Barn and English Martyrs Church

Goring Hall

The Bury footpath

Ilex Way

The library

Jefferies House

Beach House

St Mary's

203 Goring Road

Malthouse Cottages

Sea Court

The Court House

1 The Bull's Head (BN12 5AR) The Bull's Head Inn is one of the oldest buildings to survive in Goring. It dates back to at least 1770 and is almost certainly older. Fox-Wilson wrote that 'tudor windows' were discovered during renovation works in the 1980s. He also reported on the extraordinary 'sound proofing' between the bar ceiling and first floor, packed with chalk rubble. Enormous oak support beams hold up this ceiling and are only partially visible in the bar. Dances used to be held on the first floor and it was felt necessary to insert temporary posts between the floor and ceiling of the bar to ensure that the combined exuberance of the dancers and the weight of the dance floor were fully supported! The southern extension, originally a butcher's shop was built in 1888.

The original 'Bull's Head' inn sign was a striking image. A journalist in 1927 wrote of 'a hefty ferocious beast glaring down at you, his head inclined slightly to one side as though watching your movements with suspicion.' The pub was the heart of village life. As well as the celebrated dances, the Goring Cricket Club met here from 1877. Inquests were held here too, as the cellar of the pub was the coolest place to keep the deceased. In 1907 the inquest into two young farm labourers killed by lightning took place in the pub.

2 Goring-by-Sea Railway Station (optional) The 1846 railway station, once accompanied by a weather-boarded signal box (demolished in 1988) was very picturesque, situated amongst fields, with Highdown beyond. The well maintained iron footbridge and goods yard were added in the later Victorian period. For many years the station won first prize for being the best kept station, the last occasion being in 1961. The following year the goods yard closed and the pristine condition of the station slowly faded.

Originally 'Goring' Station, the 'by-sea' was added in 1908 in avoid confusion with Goring ('on-Thames') in Oxfordshire.

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormon) to the north of the station was built in 1984 on the site of an old flint and mortar barn, which in its final days was a popular haunt for local children.

3 90 Goring Way How incongruous this eighteenth century cottage with its thatched roof appears amongst its 1960s neighbours! Up until 1966 the Old Goring Forge stood to the west, for decades run by the redoubtable Haffenden family. The building was some three hundred years old and local residents fought to preserve it, but sadly they failed. The garage and petrol station you see today was its replacement.

4 English Martyrs Church and Jupp's Barn The eighteenth century Jupps Barn was converted into the English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church in 1934, before becoming a church hall when the current church was built in in 1970. The barn still retains many original features, including the central gabled cart porch, now filled with flint cobble. Inside many of the original beams can be seen, including one upright that records the apparent date of the barn's erection – 1771.

The new church was designed by the then priest, Father Desmond McCarthy and was considered very 'new and modern' at the time. In 1988, Gary Bevans began the extraordinary feat of replicating the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel on the ceiling of English Martyrs. It took Bevans many years to complete the task. He began the work when he was 33, the same age Michelangelo was when he started painting the Sistine Chapel.

We now turn into Compton Avenue and walk until we get to Bury Drive on the right, opposite Bury Drive you will see a footpath leading down to the church.

5 The Bury Footpath This footpath was once known as 'The Bury,' and linked the churches of Ferring and Goring.

It was one gloomy autumn evening in the 1890s, that writer and naturalist, W H Hudson claimed to have met with the 'ghost' of Richard Jefferies (see 'Jefferies House' stop), which actually turned out to be a tramp who bore a remarkable resemblance to the deceased Jefferies.

6 St. Mary's was completely rebuilt in 1837/ 38 at the expense of the local landowner, David Lyon. Architectural historian, Ian Nairn thought Goring church 'disappointingly limp,' which hardly seems a fair assessment. It is actually a very light and inviting church and far less heavy and sombre than many of the gothic revival churches that were built in and around Worthing during the course of the nineteenth century. The church, which was designed by Decimus Burton, does retain aspects of the previous, medieval church, including the lower parts of the chancel arch and some fine brasses. The dramatic mural of Christ in heaven by Hans Feibusch was completed in 1954, and shows a saviour without the traditional beard or halo. The font cover was presented to the church by the late Enoch Powell MP, in memory of his parents, who retired to Goring.

7 The Court House The Court House, despite local legend, is unlikely ever to have been a judicial court, although it may have been a manorial one. The present building probably dates from around the time the church was rebuilt, although parts of the structure, including the back wall and the cellar are probably much older. In 1587 a John Barnard 'of Courte' was baptised at St. Mary's. There is evidence of an external staircase, something found typically in buildings built in the seventeenth century or earlier.

We now come to **Sea Lane**, an imposing dual lane residential road with a line of trees down the central reservation. These trees once marked the eastern boundary of the Goring Hall estate. Until the estate was sold-off and the first houses built in the 1930s, Sea Lane was an earth and flint trackway leading to the sea. The sickly Richard Jefferies was unable to negotiate the muddy and rutted lane during the winter of 1886/87, but his son, Harold, alone in an unfamiliar village, often took himself down the lane to the sea –

For me it was the highway to the great, mysterious sea, Harold wrote. *When at liberty I never failed to head for the lonesome beach and commune with the sun, the shingle and the sea. Many hours I spent, alone, longing for the storm which would pile up the big breakers, and conversing with old Hunniset, the fisherman, and his two sons.*

Optional detour to the sea

8 Beach House, a pleasant Victorian villa, was once the home of the Green family, who were Victorian market gardeners. The pumping house close by, was built to look like a private residence in the 1930s, and was essential to the suburban development of this part of Goring, as the fields used to frequently flood. A small stream flowed down to the south of what is now Jefferies Lane, where there was also a pond. Old maps indicate that the land here was once known as The Ruins and Little Ruins, although there is neither archaeological nor written evidence of buildings on this site in ancient times.

Jefferies Lane Known as 'Bottom of the Sack,' before being renamed Jefferies Lane in honour of its resident writer, the name is the literal English translation of the French 'cul-de-sac', and all who lived here were affectionately known as 'sackers'. A friendly rivalry existed between sackers and the residents of Goring Street, who were known as 'streeters.'

9 Sea Court was built in 1780 as the vicarage for the then incumbent, the Rev. Penfold. It remained a vicarage until 1935, when it becamea hotel and then a nursing home, before becoming a private residence. There is a legend of the house being haunted by a 'grey lady.'

10 Jefferies House was built by the local schoolmaster, George Buster, who must have had an independent income to have been able to afford such a fine house. In 1886, the countryside writer and mystic, Richard Jefferies came here with his wife and children. Jefferies was a very sick man by this time and died in August 1887, aged only 39. He is buried at Broadwater Cemetery (see Trail 6)but he had wished for a very different send off, one where he would have been 'burned on a pyre of pine wood, open to the air, and placed on the summit of the hills.' Jefferies' great admirer and imitator, W H Hudson, came to stay at Sea View in later years, and here wrote 'Nature in Downland,' which he dedicated to Jefferies.

11 Malthouse Cottages were converted from an eighteenth century malthouse in 1882. Local newspapers in the 1950s and 60s published stories about the old inhabitants of the cottages, who remembered that before the First World War they all had to share one water pump and the men worked either at the market gardens or for the Goring Hall estate. Arthur Baker remembered the stream that used to flow into a pond at the bottom of his garden, 'where withies were grown for binding up asparagus which was grown all round here.'

Follow the footpath to your left which takes you to the shops in Goring Road. Most of the shops on the south side were built in the 1930s, those on the north side in the 1960s. The last glasshouses in Goring stood on the site of **Mulberry Gardens** which was built in 1967. Old buildings from the former village were demolished between the 1930s and 1960s and today the only surviving example is the old timber-framed cottage,

12 203 Goring Road, which is believed to be over 400 years old and the oldest building in Goring. It was once thatched and local legend links it to the smugglers who operated in the parish during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Within living memory it was the village sweet shop.

Tracing our steps back to the west, we pass **The Mulberry** public house on our left, which was built in the 1930s on the site of Peacock Hall, where Richard Jefferies first stayed when he arrived in Goring.

13 The library, on the right, built in 1956, is a pleasing red brick building that was considered a great innovation in library architecture at the time.

14 Ilex Avenue We now come to Ilex Way, which like Sea Lane has two carriageways, but unlike Sea Lane, the carriageways are open to traffic in both directions. The fine avenue of Ilex 'holm oaks' continues westwards for a mile to Ferring and were planted in *c.*1840 by David Lyon. The avenue formed the centrepiece of the Goring Hall estate and once had large and ornate wrought-iron gates at either end. In 1982, the trees were deemed by the local council to be diseased and in need of felling, but local residents raised vocal opposition to these plans, and all but a handful of the trees were saved.

15 Goring Hall Today Goring Hall is a private hospital, but it had been the home of the Lyon and later the Molson families. In 1927 it became a girls school and from 1937 to 1988 it was a day and boarding school for boys. The Hall, originally built in 1840 was severely damaged by fire in 1888 and was substantially rebuilt. The stable block is a remnant from the earlier house. A modern west wing was built in 1992 as part of the redevelopment into a hospital. A balustraded tower was removed in 1941.

16 The Lodge House of the Goring Hall Estate can be found in Fernhurst Drive and is now a private house.

We now return to **The Bull's Head**. The Recreation Ground was once a field known as the Bull Field, and it was here that the annual village fair was held, where young men would vie with each other to 'climb the greasy pole.' Cricket matches also took place on the field, and still do today.

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

Project Manager: Chris Hare – sussexhistory.hare@gmail.com

Main text by Chris Hare. Additional research by Martin Snow and Billy Holt
Original photographs taken by Martin Snow.

For details of local train and bus timetables and routes see **www.westsussex.gov.uk/travelinfo**

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

© 2014 Worthing Heritage Alliance • Design: Blacker Design • Maps: Getmapping plc.

WORTHING HERITAGE TRAILS 8

GORING TRAIL

In search of the old village

www.worthingheritagetrails.org.uk

Scan to open the guided walk on your smartphone

powered by iwalk