

# THE WEST SUSSEX GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



## WORTHING STONE TRAIL. TOWN CENTRE and to the WEST

Starting at the War Memorial in Chapel Road, this walk takes about fifty minutes.



The **Memorial** (1) is of Portland Stone, a limestone containing shells of fossil oysters – take a closer look. Portland Stone is a renowned building stone named obviously after the area in Dorset where it is quarried. It is a limestone formed from carbonate sediments which were laid down in a warm sea in the Jurassic period (141 to 142 million years ago). For more details see the glossary [we can put dates in there]. The short pillars surrounding the Memorial are light, a

pale grey granite from S.W. England. Granite is commonly used for kerb stones – you will see these on this trail along many of the roads.



Now walk to the **Town Hall** (2), which was built in 1933. The roof is covered with green Westmoreland slates.

The entrance is oolitic limestone, called Bath Stone, which we believe probably came from the mines near Bath. The four smooth columns at the side of the entrance are, again, of Portland limestone.



If you look at the York Stone (3) paving slabs in front and between the Town Hall and Museum you will notice ripple marks made millions of years ago when this stone was a sandy beach. Imagine the tide going out along our beach and the ripple marks made as it goes out. Then,

upon this ancient beach more sediment is laid until it is compacted and becomes a very hard rock.



The light ochre colour of the Museum (4) entrance is again oolitic limestone (Bath Stone). You will have noticed the elaborate ramp entrance with ornate balustrades – this is artificial cast stone (you can see the join!) but the columns are Portland Stone. The **Post Office** on the opposite side of the road is also built of Portland Stone.

Now walk south and cross **Richmond Road** at the traffic lights, to what was **St. Paul's Church** opened in 1812 but it had not been used for some time because it had become unsafe. It has been refurbished and become **St Paul's Art Centre**. The

front is rendered but the steps are of Portland Stone. The left hand side of the church, in Ambrose Place, is built of local yellow bricks (5) containing cinders and ash. The clay came from local pits, now abandoned, which worked the brickearth of the coastal plain. Brickearth is a fine-grained windblown silt deposit called loess that was laid down in dry, cold phases of the Pleistocene age. Brickearth covers the coastal plain and has left a legacy of very fertile soil where market gardens thrive. Worthing was very famous for tomato growing at one time.



Now, having turned right into **Ambrose Place** you will see a flint wall (6) along the side of **St Paul's Church**. This is a Sussex Cobble wall; you will see many of these around the town. The design is seen in many walls in Worthing. It is built with regular lines of flint beach cobbles, sometimes in a herring-bone [add to glossary, note hyphen] pattern. Cills Sills and mouldings surrounding the windows along this side are of oolitic limestone.



Walk westwards along Ambrose Place noticing the pink granite kerbstones which are of Cobo Granite from the Channel Islands.

You will reach the Parish Church of **Christ Church** at the end of Ambrose Place, opposite, in Portland Road. It was built in 1843 in Gothic Revival style. The whole building is faced with flint, some knapped, with superb galleting (7) (see glossary). Galleting adds strength to the mortar and helps to repel rainwater. There are unusual large terracotta brick quoins (8) in the buttresses and around the window and doors - these were obviously purpose made. Occasionally, the window mouldings are of oolitic limestone. The steps to the main south door are rough cut Purbeck Marble from the Purbeck Beds in Dorset.



In the centre of the bottom step you will see many fossil gastropods (9) (see glossary). Quite a few of the gravestones are of Portland Stone.

Continue south down Portland Road and on the right hand side is a Victorian building with unusual knapped flint

walls. This building was formerly **Christ Church School (1863)** (10), but became much neglected and has now been restored and converted into houses. The ashlar is Caen Stone, a limestone from Normandy, France. Look at the 'half pillars' in the doorway of, they are of polished red granite.



These are known as Warnham Blues, a particularly hard type of brick.

Walk down Portland Road and on the right hand side (west) you will see the **Hare and Hounds Public House**, 77 Portland Road. The house just past the Hare and Hounds is built of blue industrial bricks (11). Notice the way the bricks are laid, this is quite unusual in Worthing.



At the end of **Portland Road** is **Montague Street** and looking up over **Thornton's (12)**, 49 Montague Street, a sweet shop, is an unusual roof line reminiscent of Amsterdam.

Continue west along Montague Street looking at the plinths below shop windows and also fascia. On the right hand side you will see **British Home Stores**, 56 Montague Street, has plinths of a coarse grained, dark gabbro and another shop with white marble fascias and plinths.

Look at the plinths below shop windows and panels as you walk along Montague Street. Vinds has white marble and the Sandwich Bar has Larvikite



Continue west along **Montague Street** until you leave the pedestrian precinct.

Cross the junction and walk until you reach **Silverthorne's**, the fish shop, 145 Montague Street; on the southern side – below their window you will see green serpentine. Opposite **Silverthorne's** on the northern side, 114 Montague Street (a butchers), and next door



116 Montague Street (a sandwich bar); you will see fascias of red serpentine beneath their windows **(14)**. This is another very popular decorative stone which also clads Hinds the jeweller (noted in Stone Trail two), in the town centre. Serpentine is an ultra-basic rock from the earth's mantle

Continue along Montague Street until you reach West Street on the left which has the Rose and Crown public house on the corner. West Street has a row of fishermen's cottages **(15)** with 'mansard' roofs forming an interesting roof line.



Continue further along Montague Street until you reach **Western Place** turn left towards the promenade and half way down on the



right is a turning into **Western Row** in which are some of the original fisherman's cottages **(16)** in Worthing – a quiet refuge now in a very busy town.

Walk to the far (west) end of **Western Row** where there are more cottages and you will find the remains of old 2" bricks, on edge, being used in the gutters along the road **(17)** and also the use of Purbeck limestone for the kerbstones.

Go to the southern end of Western row and look at the **Sussex Cobble** wall **(18)** where some of the cobbles have been replaced with different types of stone. Turn right (west) at the wall, and you will find a lane



that leads out to Marine Parade and the sea.

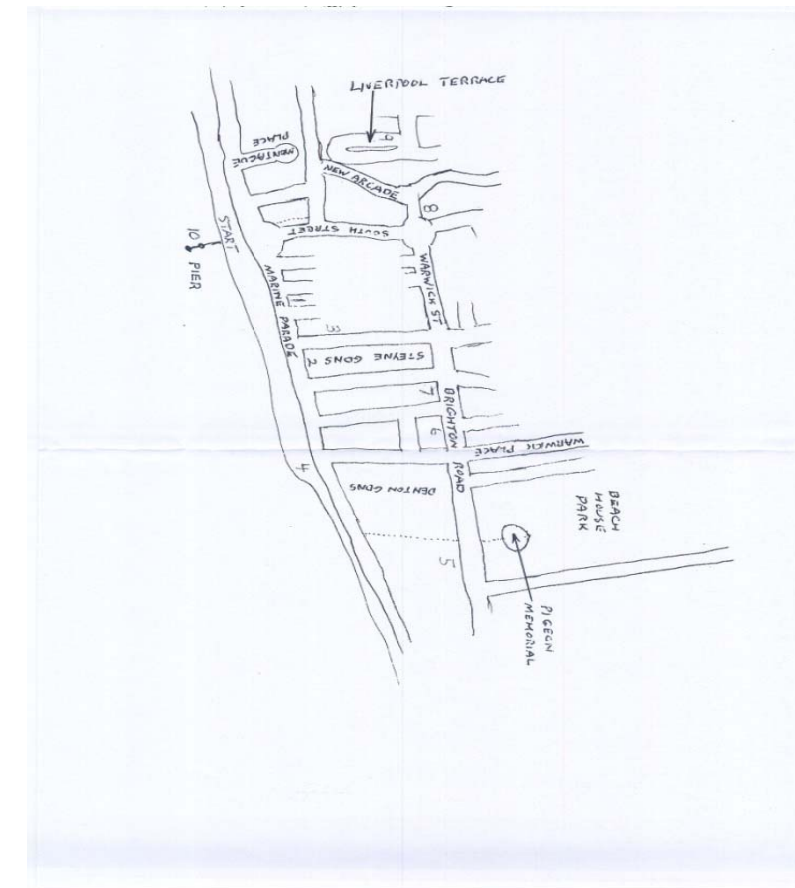
Boat House **(20)**, 107 Marine Parade (with a turret) which is now a house. These are best seen from the Promenade on the other side of this busy road, take care when crossing!!



Turn left along Marine Parade and, on your left, as you walk back towards the Pier, you will pass the Old Coast Guard Cottage **(19)**, 110 Marine Parade and just after this is the old Life



On the beach you will see the flint beach cobbles used on many walls in Worthing. Continue east along Marine Parade until you reach the Arcade opposite the Pier otherwise turn left up South Street then on up Chapel Road until you are back at the Town Hall. Or, if you have time, you may like to stop at the Pier and begin walk number two.



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### The West Sussex Geological Society:

- Founded in 1977 with over eighty members
- For all interested in geology, from beginners to experts
- Welcomes new members
- Issues the Outcrop magazine twice a year

Our Meetings are held on the third Friday of every month, except for July and August, at St. Stephens Church, Angola Road, Worthing BN14 8DU, starting at 7.30 p.m. on the third Friday of the month and are varied and interesting programme given by guest speakers

Our Field Trips are whole or half day, usually at least 6 a year, with a longer residential trip for in the Spring enabling us to go further afield., and include landscapes, rocks fossil and mineral collecting

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