

# THE WEST SUSSEX GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



## A LOOK AT BUILDING STONES IN WORTHING TOWN CENTRE AND TO THE EAST.

Opposite the pier on the corner of **South Street** at the entrance to an arcade, you will see two grey, micaceous granite pillars. Walk through the Arcade (**Royal Arcade (1925)**) and look at the black and white marble tiles on the floor. The term "marble" is a trade name for the black tiles as they are actually a dark, fine-grained limestone which is hard enough to take a polish. If you look carefully you will see fossils in some of the black tiles. When you reach the other end of the Arcade you will find **Smiths** on the opposite side of the road. Cross over and stand with your back to **Smiths** and look up above the entrance to the **Royal Arcade**, where you will see five windows with stained glass depicting scenes of the Downs.



Cross **South Street to the east side** and go back to the sea front past the 'Iceland' store to the **Marine Parade** noting, as you go, the granite kerbstones.

Continue left

along Marine Parade until you arrive at the **Dome cinema** on your left (1). It was once called the Kursaal and built in 1909 and has now been restored by the Dome Restoration Trust.

Walk past the **Stagecoach bus office** until you see **Steyne Gardens**. Cross the road but beware of the traffic as it all turns left at this corner. In front of Steyne Gardens you will see a **War Memorial (2)** which is surrounded by a sandstone (York Stone) wall. The memorial is made of red



granite was intruded. They are called xenoliths. The memorial honours those who lost their lives in the South African war 1899-1902 and was erected in 1903.

With your back to the sea look left at the **Chatsworth Hotel (3)**, built with locally made yellow bricks. These bricks were fired in Worthing and made of clay extracted from pits which were lost to the sea by about 1830.

Leave **Steyne Gardens** and cross the road to continue your walk along the promenade. The beach consists of flint cobbles which have been used extensively in the past for flint and brick walls. You will soon come to some large blocks of carboniferous limestone from the Mendips which have been placed on the beach for sea defences. Carboniferous limestone is a marine sediment deposited 360-286 million years ago. If you look carefully, you will see fossil shells and corals in these limestone blocks. This part of the promenade is called **Splash Point (4)**. Splash Point has been redesigned recently. You can see some slate blocks and tiles and other man-made materials. Just beyond the large blocks there are two areas which have been planted with suitable plants to make shingle gardens in a sea habitat.

Continue along the promenade and here you will begin to see flint and brick walls. The beach cobbles are distinctive by their well-rounded appearance and cover of 'chatter' marks where they have been knocked against each other in the sea. On your left is a flint cobble Café and



and grey granite with a base of darker gabbro. If you look closely you will see pieces of rock in the granite which are obviously not granite. These are pieces of the rock into which the

Ice Cream stall with 1930's beach chalets set back behind columns decorated with beach cobbles. Go through the archway by the café.

Behind the café there has, also, been recent updating. You will see a Beach Volley Ball Court and a child's climbing area. Turn right along the path past these attractions and you will come to some parkland, framing a fine classical building. The classical building ahead is **Beach House (5)**. It has been renovated and converted into

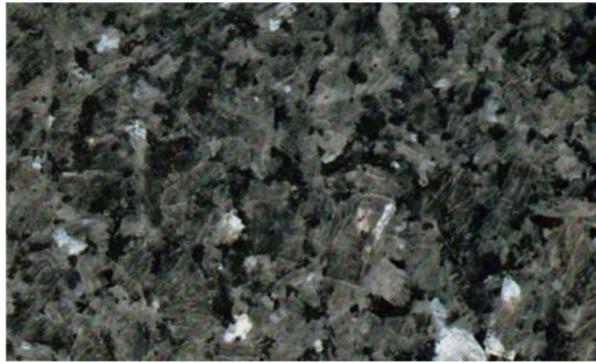


flats. Either cross the grass diagonally or walk along the path by the new swimming pool up to the main road.

Alternatively, on your left there are several brick and flint archways leading through to **Denton Gardens**. Walk through these to Denton Gardens and when you reach the main road, **Brighton Road**, go and look at the north side of Beach House. You will see that there are 3 blue plaques on the wall. One tells you that King Edward 7<sup>th</sup> stayed in Beach House, another states that Edward Knoblock once lived there; he was the playwright who wrote *Kismet*.

Cross the road to **Beach House Park** using the pedestrian crossing. Walk to the round feature surrounded by flower beds. In the centre of this feature, reached on the north side by some rockery type steps, there is a memorial to the carrier pigeons that were used to carry secret messages in wartime. The inscription on the sandstone block says "In memory of warrior birds who gave their lives on active service 1939-45 and for the use and pleasure of living birds". A second stone, donated by members of the People Theatre, London, reads "For a bird of the air shall carry the voice and that which hath wings shall tell the matter." Unfortunately, this rockery feature is now fenced off for health and safety reasons. The rockery stones used for this feature show excellent karst weathering.

Go back to the park gates and turn right, back towards the main shopping area along **Brighton Road**. Turn up the 2nd road on the right. (**Warwick Place**) It has an antique shop on the corner. Notice 'The Cobble House' cottage, number 3b, and the beach cobbles used to build it. A little further on, look at the porches which have roofs like upturned boats. The buildings were probably fishermen's cottages.



Return and continue along Brighton Road and cross over at the pedestrian crossing. Near the crossing is a shop that used to be 'Blacks' (6), 22 Brighton Road. The stone

at the bottom of the windows is larvikite. This is a pretty stone and is often seen on shop fronts. It is named after the town of Larvik in Norway where it is extensively quarried. The large feldspar crystals exhibit a striking blue sheen when seen from certain directions. Carry on until you reach the Methodist Church (1901) now called **Cornerstone Methodists Church (7)**. This church is built of Kentish Ragstone from the Lower Greensand Formation and the ashlar is of Jurassic Oolite (Bath Stone).



Cross the road and continue past Steyne Gardens to **Warwick Street** which is pedestrianised. Whibley the jeweller is on the corner and opposite, on the right, is a shop with red granite pillars. On your left, past Whibley is Johnson's, number 24a

which has black stone below the windows maybe a dolerite. Warwick Street has a variety of small shops. Both to the right and left there are courtyard type areas with small shops in some of the older buildings. About half-way along Warwick Street on the right-hand side, above the shop fronts, there is a blue plaque indicating that Percy Bysshe Shelley had some of his works printed there.

Continue along **Warwick Street** until you come to the main shopping area with the modern Guildbourne Centre on the right. **H.S.B.C. Bank** on the right-hand corner is built of Portland Stone which is a limestone containing shell fragments and ooliths. Ooliths are small rounded grains of limestone looking a bit like fish roe.



Cross over the square to the New Arcade (Liverpool Road), passing on your right **Hinds, the jewellers (8)** looking resplendent in eye-catching slabs of serpentinite on your right. These rocks come from deep in the earth and have been altered and fragmented by major earth movements. Before leaving Hinds Corner have a look at **Lloyds TSB** on the opposite corner. There you will see more tall pillars of red granite between the windows.

Follow Liverpool Road to the pedestrian area to the left and through the **New Arcade**. Notice the black gabbro fascias of Beales department store. Bear right after McDonalds and climb the steps to **Liverpool Terrace (9)**, where you will see a row of Italianate style bow-fronted buildings, from the Regency period. Spare time to look at the sandstone flags used for the steps. The irregular surfaces

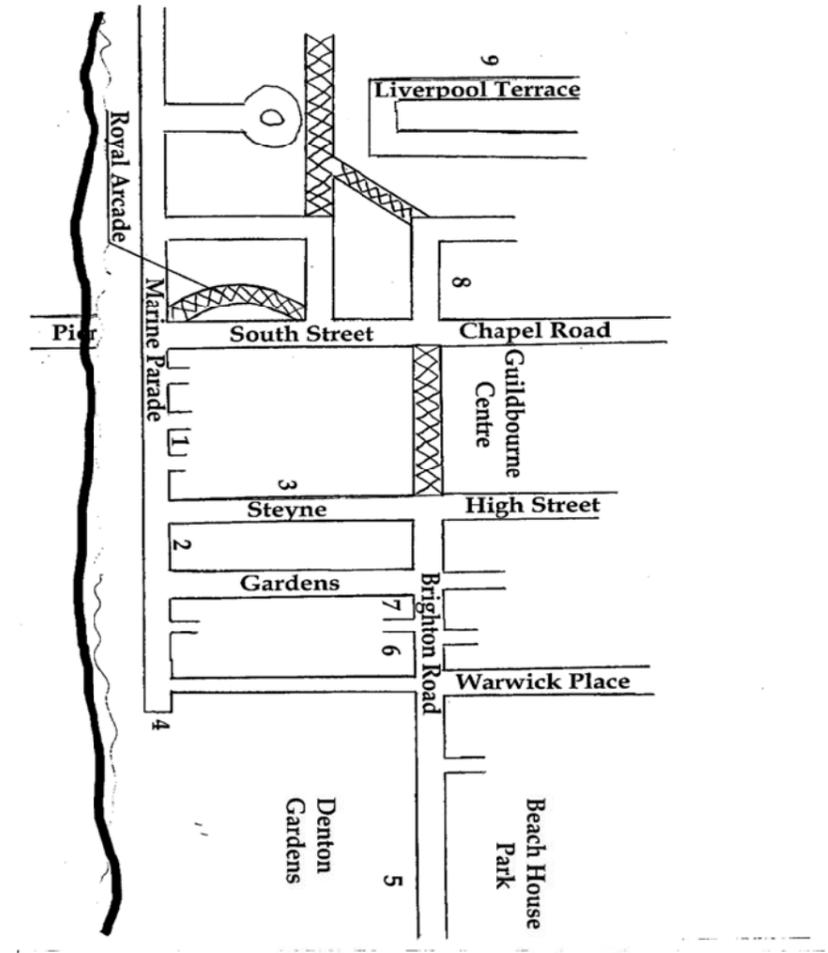


reveal the original layering of the sand deposits.

You have come to the end of this short walk; head towards the sea and Montague Street and walk down **Montague Place** to the promenade. From here you can return to **the Pier and the Pier Pavilion (10)**. But why not stop for refreshments in the Denton Lounge by the Pier.



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- 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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