

Listing Horsham's character - society's report is out soon



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done by the local authority. It is more flexible than the statutory Grades but it does recognise the local importance of the listed buildings and flags up their importance for the locality.

Horsham has not had a local list in the past but plenty of other towns do and find it very useful.

When we suggested it a couple of years ago, Horsham District Council said that they did not have the resources to go round and identify buildings suitable for a local list.

On the basis that, if you want a job done, do it yourself, the Horsham Society has put some effort over the past few months in identifying buildings which are special in some way or another or

add to the character of an area.

These are mostly not in the town centre, which already has its own Conservation Area.

The initial idea was to identify a dozen or so individual properties and put them forward for local listing in a way that the council could adopt them easily.

Once we started, however, it became clear that many buildings look good because of their neighbours. The context is as important as the building itself.

A good example of this is the north side of St Leonards Road, near The Foresters Arms.

Individually the buildings are nice but together they are quite special, giving the road its own individual character; a street scene

which it would be a pity to lose.

So, although it was not our original intention, we have landed up with some proposals for new Conservation Areas as well as individual listings. All being well, our document with all these proposals will be available in the next few days.

The occupiers of the individual local list buildings have all been notified and some have replied to us enthusiastically, often with additional historical information or expressing their approval of the recognition of the special characteristics of their building.

Members of the Horsham Society will get a copy of the proposals with the January issue of the society's newsletter.

Now we will be asking the district council to take this forward.

Council officers and councillors for the town will get copies of our proposals.

Having done the legwork, we hope that they will complete the task by preparing the local list and implementing the additional conservation areas.

This will be very useful for residents, planners and even developers. We believe that by doing this, the character of Horsham town can be enjoyed for years to come.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of our town. If you would like to join us, visit www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 261905.

WE HAVE mentioned before in this column about the value of listing buildings as one step towards maintaining the character of Horsham.

The statutory listing process with its familiar Grade I, Grade II and Grade II* categories is quite a tortuous process.

What is less familiar is the facility for 'local listing', which is