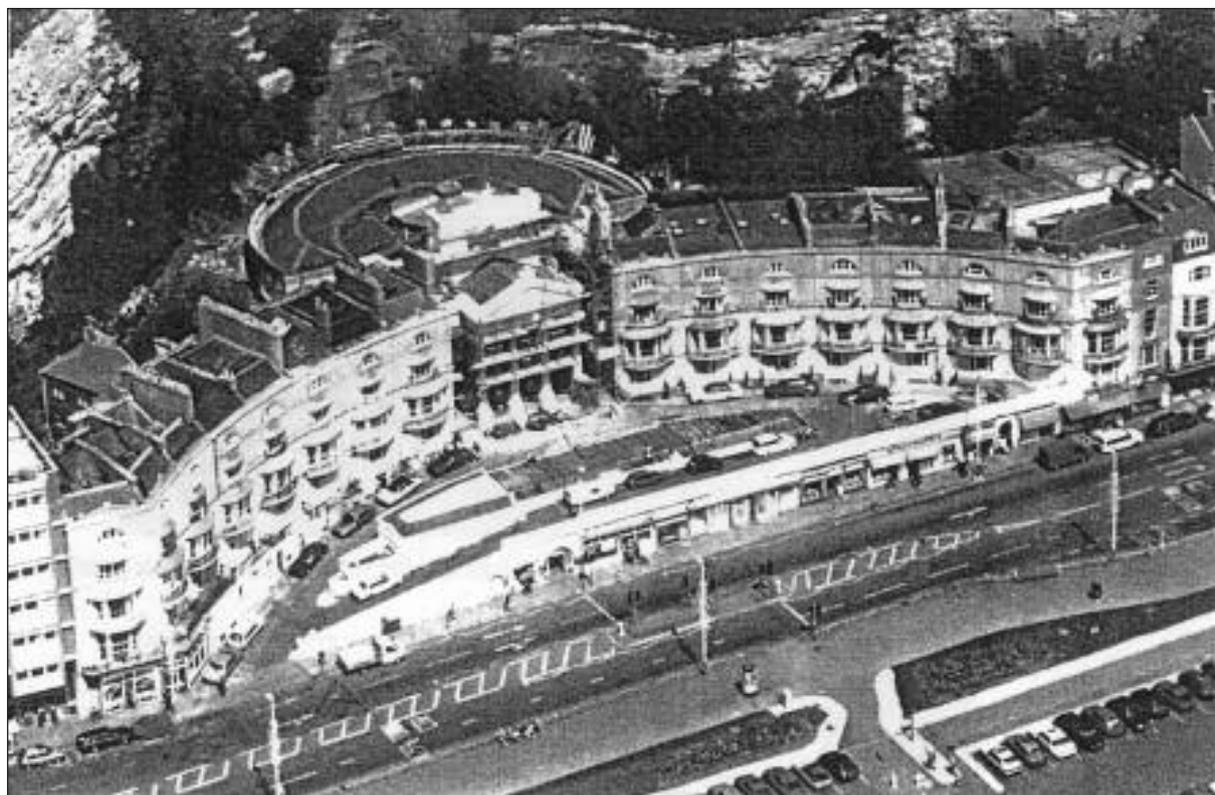


A multipurpose cultural centre for  
HASTINGS

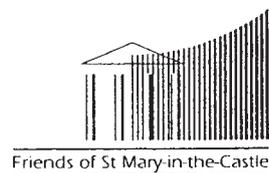
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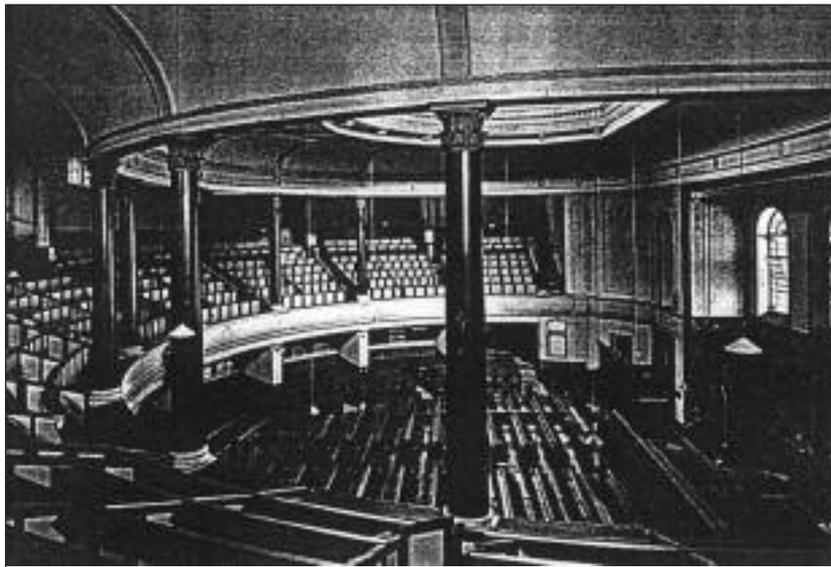
# St Mary-in-the-Castle

*Prospectus*

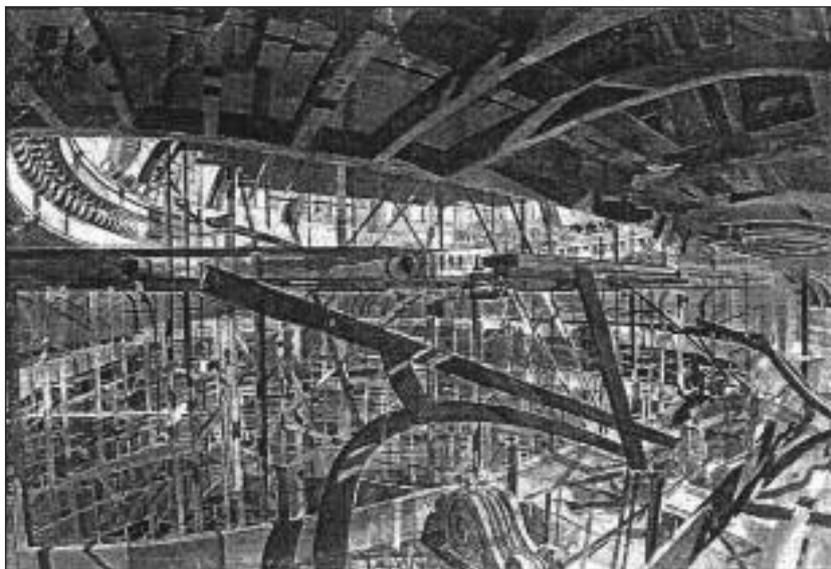


*St Mary-in-the-Castle-Working Party*  
April 1992

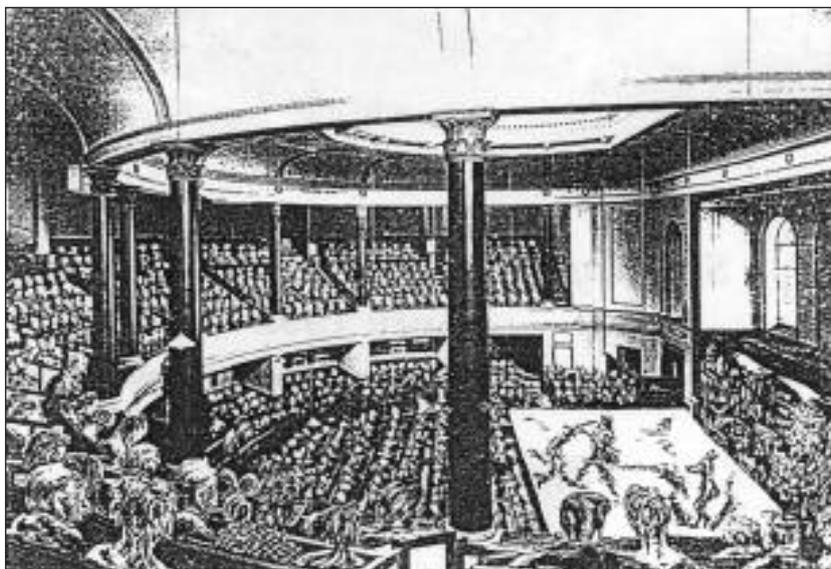




**As it was:** The inside of St Mary-in-the-Castle in 1942



**As it is now:** 'Mothballed' awaiting funding for further conservation work (painting by Gus Cummins)



**As it could be:** Artist's impression of the auditorium in use (drawing by Ian Hunter)

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*A multipurpose cultural centre for Hastings: St Mary-in-the-Castle Prospectus*

Published by the St-Mary-in-the-Castle Working Party.

c/o Hastings Trust, 58a High Street, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3EN

Tel: 01424 446373

April 1992

Edited by Nick Wates.

Grateful thanks to a great many friends of St Mary's who have assisted; particularly Fred Courtney Bennett, Anne Scott, Geraldine Wheeler, Chris Fyfe and Bob Falla.

The friends would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following in developing the proposals: Trinity Theatre and Arts association, Peter Greenhalf, Roger Dennett, Tony Fry, Jim Corrigan, Michael Collins, Bruce Marsden, AJK Architects, Hastings Arts, Hastings Trust, Riviera Gallery Association, Robert Tressell Workshops, Hastings Reference Library, Hastings Museum, Hastings Fire Department and Grand Metropolitan Community Services Trust.

Electronic version produced by Nick Wates Associates, 2006

[www.nickwates.co.uk](http://www.nickwates.co.uk)

*“St Mary-in-the-Castle is a building of national importance, and a unique historic structure. It is important to the future of Hastings as a visitor focal point, a resource for the local economy and major tourism project. A range of uses are possible, but the most appropriate and viable are a combination of an arena for events and exhibitions to develop ‘cultural tourism’, an amphitheatre for conferences and meetings, and a memorable visitor experience... It is rare for major projects of this kind to be viable with just a single use.”*

‘Making St Mary-in-the-Castle Church a Resource for Hastings’ URBED report, September 1991

*“St Mary might be the linchpin’ for raising the profile of Hastings – putting it on the international map as a centre for cultural, trade and events of all kinds – enriching the life of the whole town, and (attracting) an increasing number of visitors and participants from far and near.”*

Gus Cummins, 14th October 1991



Friends outside St Mary-in-the-Castle in 1991

# Introduction and Summary

St Mary-in-the-Castle church forms the centrepiece of one of the finest Regency architectural compositions on the South Coast of England. It has a commanding presence on the Hastings seafront directly below the remains of the castle. It is currently empty and unused.

Our proposal is to develop St Mary's as a multipurpose cultural centre; for civic, sports, arts, business and tourism attractions. We see this as the best way of making the most of the building's unique qualities, safeguarding its long-term future and ensuring its enjoyment by the maximum number of people.

The project could also provide a vital catalyst for the revival of one of the poorest towns in the south east of England. Hastings is one of Britain's most interesting seaside towns but it scores badly on national deprivation scales; with high unemployment, low incomes, a disproportionate demand on social services, poor housing stock and low rateable values. The St Mary's project could act as a magnet for further investment in the town by providing a focus for cultural development, by stimulating improvements in the immediate surroundings and by raising Hastings' profile in the outside world.

The proposal is being promoted by a partnership of public, private and voluntary sector interests. A special St Mary-in-the-Castle Working Party has been established to coordinate fund-raising and project development. The Borough Council, which owns the building, has provided £10,000 to develop the proposal and is planning to grant a 21-year lease to the Hastings Trust charity to manage the centre if fund-raising proves successful. The recently formed Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle is setting up a project base at No 7 Pelham Crescent, next door to the church, and is co-ordinating voluntary effort and assistance.

The strategy now being pursued broadly follows that recommended in 1987 by national regeneration specialists URBED (Urban and Economic Development) Ltd, who were employed as consultants by Hastings Borough Council to provide expert advice on how to use the building. It has wide support, locally and nationally. There is every chance of success providing sufficient funding can now be secured to supplement the £347,000 available from Hastings Borough Council. Total Capital costs are estimated at £1.35 million.

This Prospectus is aimed at all those with an interest in St Mary-in-the-Castle's future with a view to securing their participation in its development, funding and management. All constructive comments and offers of assistance will be welcomed and should be addressed to:

The Secretary, St Mary-in-the-Castle Working Party,  
c/o Hastings Trust, 58a High Street, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3EN  
Tel: 01424 446373 Fax: 01424 434206

# Opportunity

## **Historic Regency development**

St Mary-in-the-Castle represents an important chapter in the history of Hastings. King William I built his castle on the West Hill in 1066 and the remains loom over St Mary's today. By 1800, Hastings was becoming a fashionable watering place. To cater for the increasing amount of visitors, the Castle's owner, Earl of Chichester Thomas Pelham, ordered part of the hill to be cut away to create space for new development between the cliffs and the beach. Joseph Kay was commissioned to design the Crescent for visitors to stay in, the Church to worship in and the Arcade for their shopping and entertainment. The result, built between 1824 and 1828, was a showcase Regency development, an unrivalled example of a 'comprehensive development' and Hastings' most important piece of architecture.

## **Architectural masterpiece**

St Mary-in-the-Castle is one of Britain's most remarkable churches. It is a rare example of a Neo-Classical temple. The interior is a horse-shoe shaped auditorium lit from above by a cupola. Unique features include the dome construction, the balcony with its boxed pews, the natural spring which feeds the font and the catacombs in the crypt. It is dramatically sited: on either side sweep a crescent of stucco houses, in front lies the open shore and the sea. It is Regency planning at its best, a superb evocation of the picturesque. Dr Nikolaus Pevsner described it as one of the "finest buildings of the 1820s" (in 'Buildings of England: Sussex'). The Georgian Society in 1986 said that the Church and Crescent "form an indivisible ensemble which can rival anything at Hastings' better known South Coast neighbours", Sir Hugh Casson wrote in 1987: "I have known this crescent and church all my life and have a high regard for its architectural quality and its key contribution to the sea front." The Church and Crescent are listed Grade 2\* which puts them in the category of a building of major national importance.

## **Rescued but mothballed**

The church was declared redundant in 1982 and fell into disrepair. A campaign in 1987, supported by the Queen Mother, led to it being bought by Hastings Borough Council. Emergency repairs costing over £1 million have been carried out with help from English Heritage. The building is now structurally safe, watertight and free from timber decay. But it has had to be 'mothballed' pending determination of an end use and raising of funds to continue restoration work. Various alternatives have been explored, including leasing the Church to the private sector for a commercial heritage experience. But none have proved successful or popular. In the meantime the Hastings Trust has prepared a masterplan for restoring the entire Crescent and Arcade to its original design and Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle has been formed.

## **Arts centre demand**

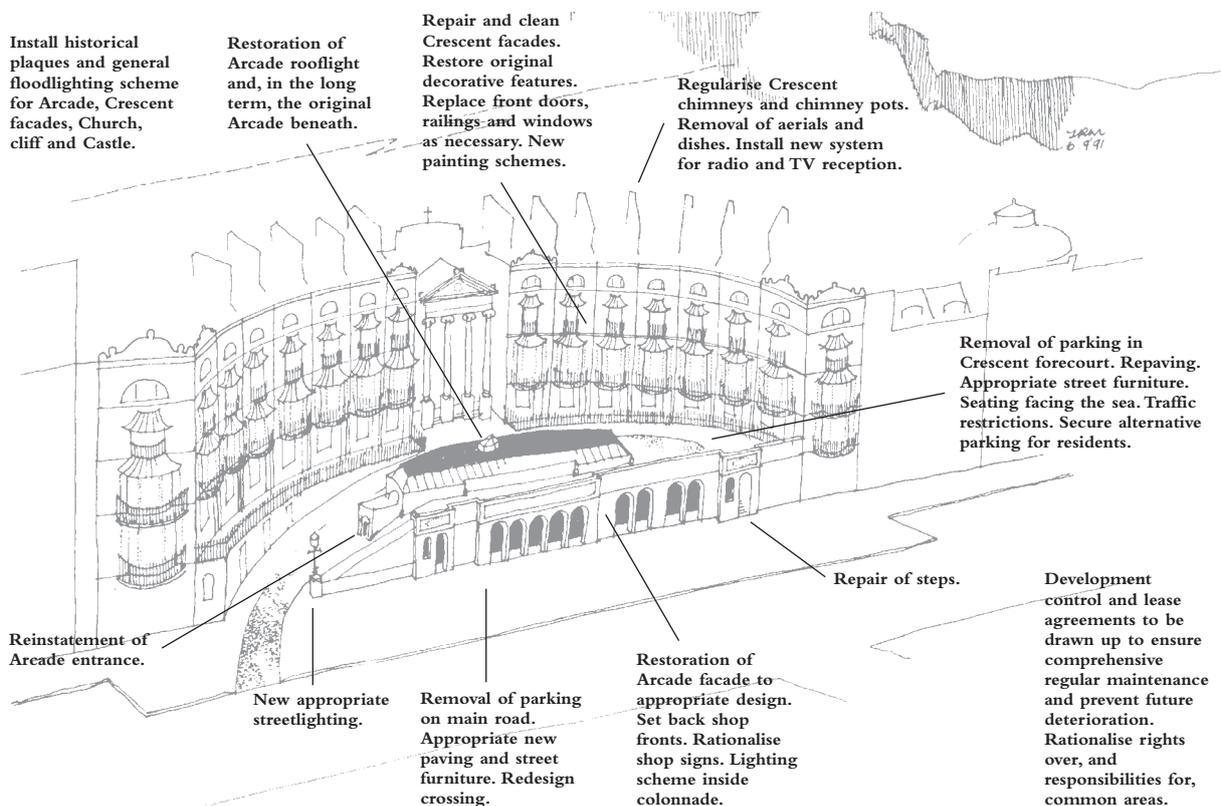
Hastings is widely acknowledged as having one of the most thriving arts communities in the South East of England. For the past five years Hastings Arts has been arguing that an arts centre is needed in the town. A study commissioned in 1989 by the Council entitled 'Hastings; a place for the arts' found a need for a medium sized venue, affordable by all sections of the community and a need for a focal centre for the arts. The need for an Arts Centre is now recognised in Council policy. St Mary's is ideally suited to meeting a large part of any brief for an arts centre. Incorporating business and tourism activities as well should provide an economically viable way of allowing it to do so.



**As it was:** Watercolour from the foreshore by Lady Caroline Lucy Scott, 1843 and lithograph of the inside of Pelham Arcade by C Hullmandel, 1828.



**As it is now:** Church restoration begun but much still to do.



**As it could be:** Masterplan of desirable restoration work proposed by Hastings Trust.

# Proposal

## **A unique seafront amphitheatre for the arts, sports, entertainment, conventions and visitor attractions.**

The proposal is for a multipurpose cultural centre catering for all sections of the community; locals and visitors, professionals and amateurs, young and old.

The arts are likely to be the driving force but it should not be exclusively an 'arts centre'. An imaginative historical visitor attraction and communications facilities would add interest and are likely to be important for generating income. Long-term success is likely to depend on independence which can only be guaranteed by economic viability.

The centre's strength will be its flexibility. The balance of activities will evolve over several years as the project develops momentum and identity. People will discover the possibilities of the building as they begin to use it and to participate in its management. Management arrangements will be devised to allow the centre to be shaped by local people as they respond to society's rapidly changing demands. In turn, the development of the Centre will play a crucial role in the cultural and economic development of Hastings; creating new arts, work, tourism, business and civic opportunities, and attracting year-round publicity.

The main focus of the centre will be the church itself. But there is great potential for incorporating adjacent buildings into the scheme and even for using the beach opposite for open air events. The Borough has already acquired No 7 Pelham Crescent and Nos 6,7 & 8 Pelham Arcade for additional space and access. In the long term there may be scope for persuading the owners of other parts of the Arcade to bring them into use for related activities.

Voluntary initiative will play an important role in many aspects of the centre and has already led to the establishment of the Riviera Gallery in Pelham Arcade. The Gallery's continuation as an independent unit alongside or as part of the new centre is an important objective.

The Church's architectural magnificence and location combined with a dynamic image, enlightened management and the strength of local talent and enthusiasm will ensure that the Centre quickly gains regional, national and even international prominence as a venue. As proved in other towns, it could act as a magnet for further commercial and domestic investment and increase local pride and confidence; thereby assisting the regeneration of the local economy.

## Spaces

- **Amphitheatre** – with moveable seating for 286 in conference layout or for 156 round a stage (7m x 8m) in performance layout on the ground floor and 300 in the gallery.
- **Bar/kitchen** – off amphitheatre (20 sq m).
- **Control room** – in the gallery (20 sq m).
- **Exhibition areas** – of varying sizes in the Arcade (150 sq m), crypt, amphitheatre, gallery and in 7 Pelham Crescent.
- **Seminar/dressing rooms** – two for up to 12 people in the gallery (27 sq m each), two in No 7 Pelham Crescent with showers.
- **Storage space** – in the crypt (72sq m) and round the amphitheatre (7 open bays)
- **Toilets and showers** – male and female.

## Facilities

- **Exhibition stands and lighting** – moveable.
- **Filming equipment** – to broadcast quality.
- **Projection equipment** – film, video, slides.
- **Recording equipment** – to broadcast quality.  
Seating – moveable.
- **Stage** – moveable sections for use in a variety of configurations.  
Stage lighting and lasers
- **Translation facilities** – simultaneous.
- **Link system** - for the deaf.

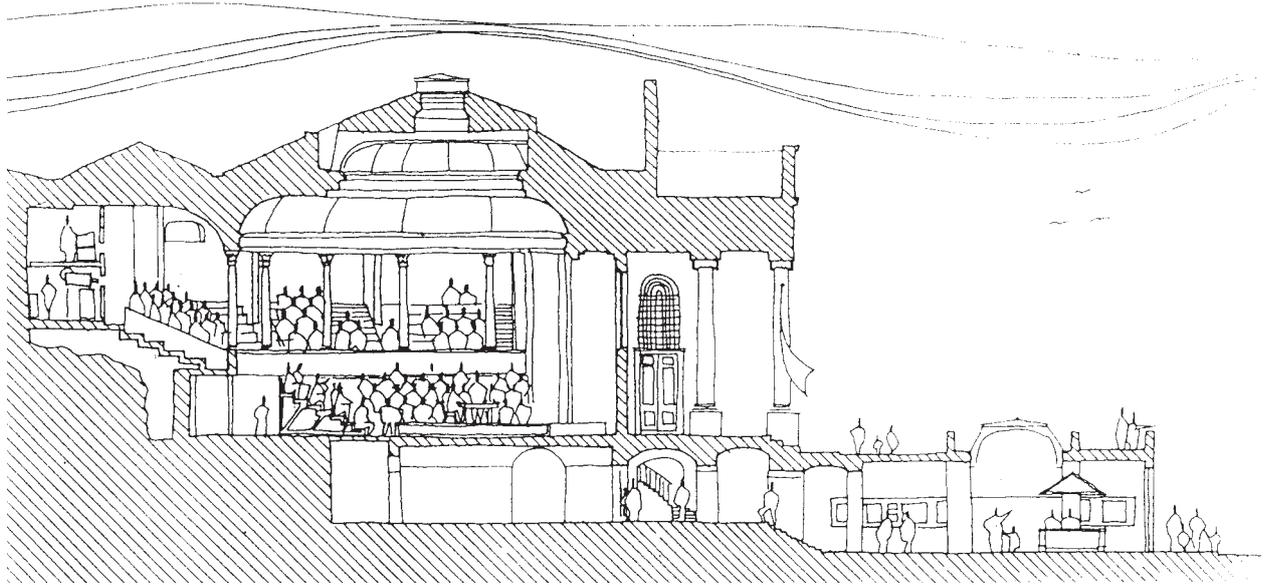
## Permanent Attractions

- **Art gallery**
- **Café/restaurant/bar**
- **Guided tours** – of the church and surrounding areas
- **Historical exhibition** – on the architecture of the church and development of the town.
- **Multimedia show** – regular showing on the history and architecture of Hastings.
- **Shop** – selling merchandise on Hastings and related activities taking place in the centre

## Occasional attractions

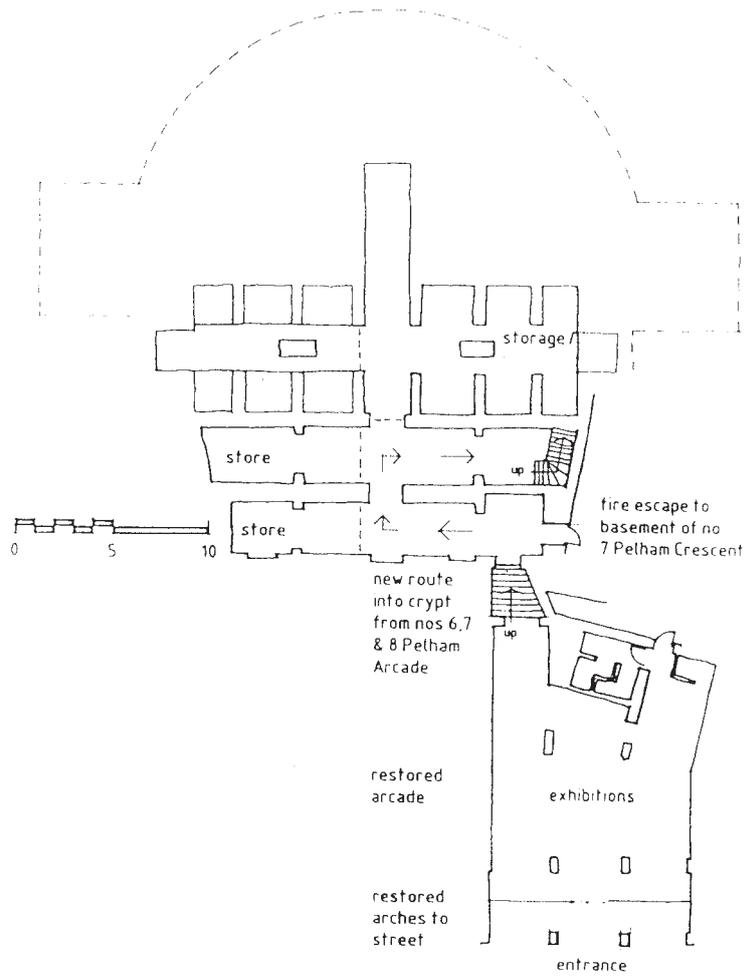
- **Acrobatics**
- **Brass bands** – a new class for the Hastings Music Festival?
- **Chamber music recitals** – winter series with subscription tickets.
- **Chess and Bridge tournaments**
- **Choir performances** – including Rother & District Schools Choir.
- **Civic functions**
- **Conferences** – for up to 586 delegates – with related exhibitions.
- **Dance performances** – including Hastings Contemporary Dance.
- **Exhibitions** – art and trade.
- **Festivals** – the ideal focal point for festivals involving other venues as well.
- **Film and multimedia shows** – especially for foreign students.
- **Folk, jazz and blues music**
- **Gymnastic displays**
- **Laser shows** – perhaps incorporating the Castle and beach
- **Lunchtime recitals/events**
- **Lectures and seminars** – such as those organised by Hastings Arts Literature Section.
- **Martial art and fencing tournaments**
- **Master classes** – drama, opera and circus arts
- **Musical theatre** – performances by Phoenix Theatre and visiting professionals
- **Music and opera performances**
- **Poetry recitals**
- **Short courses** – in association with education institutions and language schools.
- **Theme holidays and weekends** – in co-operation with hotels and Chamber of Commerce.
- **Trade conventions and book fairs** – such as Sci Fi Convention planned for 1992.
- **Workshops** – drama, dance, painting and puppet making as organised by Hastings Arts.

# Sketch scheme drawings



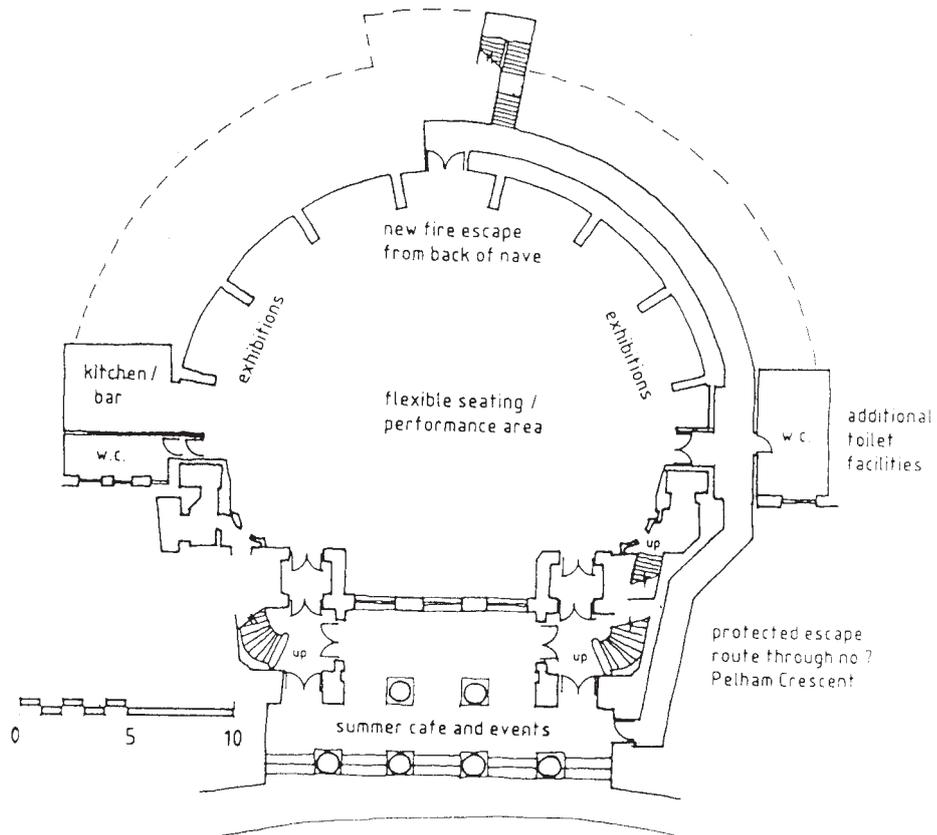
## Section through Church and Arcade

Showing (left to right): control room, gallery, main auditorium in thrust stage layout, portico and crypt with access through to Pelham Arcade entrance area.



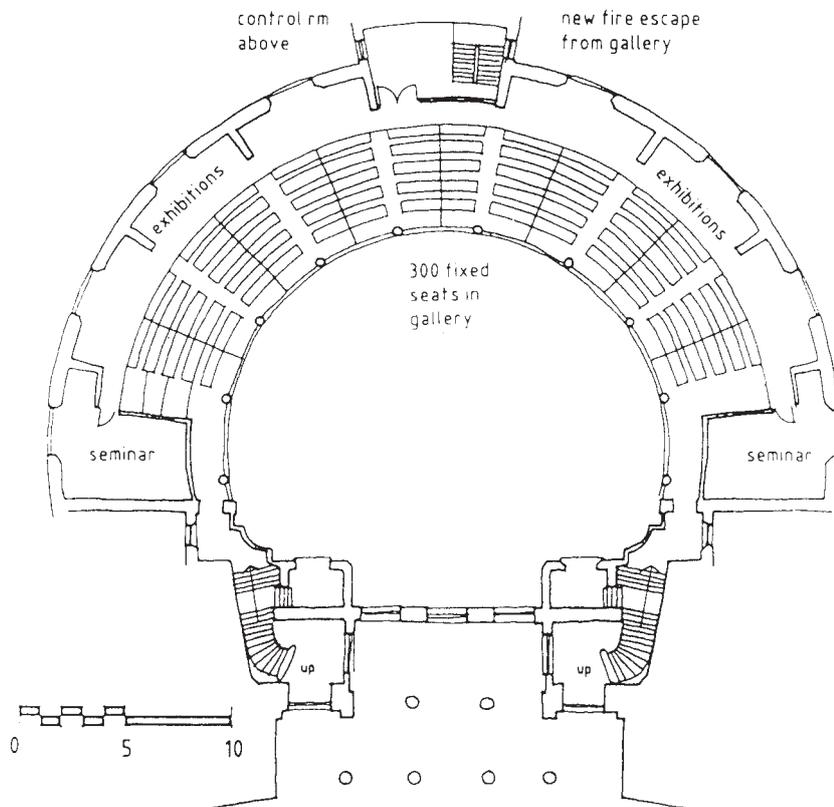
## Basement floor plan

Showing main Arcade entrance area linking through into Church crypt with route up to the amphitheatre and storage areas.



### Ground floor plan

Showing main amphitheatre with performance and exhibition areas, new kitchen and bar, additional toilets, fire escape routes and summertime use of portico.



### Gallery level plan

Showing restored fixed seating, exhibition space, seminar/dressing rooms, escape routes and control room.

# Organisation

In the long term a new organisation will evolve to run the centre. This is likely to be a charitable body capable of drawing on resources from many different sources and representing the various interests involved. Creating this organisation is an important part of the present development work.

In the short term a special Working Party has been set up to progress the centre's development. Convened by Hastings Borough Council (HBC) it comprises:

- 3 representatives of the Council (HBC) (one from each main party);
- 3 representatives of Hastings Trust (HT);
- 3 representatives of Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle (FOSMIC)
- 1 Representative of the Riviera Gallery Association (RGA).

Provision exists for co-opting additional members as the scheme develops and takes shape. Working Party meetings are open to the public, and many individuals and organisations will be consulted and involved as and when appropriate.

Much of the fund-raising and development work is being carried out by volunteers coordinated by FOSMIC. The Working Party is also serviced by Council and Trust staff and by independent consultants including AJK Architects who supervised the previous phase of emergency repairs. It is anticipated that a full-time Development Manager will be appointed as soon as funds become available.

## **St Mary-in-the-Castle Working Party**

Address for correspondence: c/o Hastings Trust, 58a High Street, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3EB  
Tel: 0424 446373 Fax: 0424 434206

### **Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle**

Gus Cummins  
Anne Scott  
Geraldine Wheeler

### **Hastings Borough Council**

Cllr Pamela Brown (chair) (Lib)  
Cllr Arthur Burgess (vice chair) (Con)  
Cllr Michael Sandaver (Lab)

### **Hastings Trust**

Peter Billington  
Christine Goldschmidt  
Paul Smith

### **Riviera Gallery Association**

Ann Hunter

## **Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle**

c/o Geraldine Wheeler, The Secretary, 11 The Croft, Hastings, East Sussex Tel: 01424 431438

FOSMIC was formed in November 1991 and held its inaugural meeting in March 1992. Charity status is being applied for. The group's aims are:

- To promote the use of St Mary-in-the-Castle and any other associated buildings for a multipurpose centre;
- To ensure that the architectural integrity of the building is respected and assist in the restoration and maintenance of the fabric;
- To promote the facilities of the centre for the benefit and use of the inhabitants of Hastings and Rother and visitors to the town, without distinction of age, sex or political, religious or other opinions.
- To provide facilities in the interests of social and cultural welfare, for recreation and to improve the quality of life for the inhabitants.

Chairman: Roger Sweetman. Vice Chairman: Gus Cummins. Secretary: Geraldine Wheeler. Treasurer: Anne Scott. Committee: Peter Billington, Fred Courtney Bennett, Robert Falla, Mette Fowler, Mollie Gillam, Jill McLeod, Mike Rycroft, Beth Turner, Steven Ward, Carlton Wylie.

## **Hastings Trust**

58a High Street, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3EN Tel: 0424 446373 Fax: 0424 434206

Hastings Trust was formed in March 1991 to continue and extend the work of the Hastings Urban Conservation Project, an urban regeneration initiative funded by Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and English Heritage. Its aims are:

- To enable all those who live in, work in or visit Hastings to protect and enhance their environment;
- To promote and assist the sustainable economic and cultural development of Hastings and its inhabitants;
- To promote and disseminate good practice in conservation and community regeneration regionally and globally.

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee (No 2540333) and a registered charity (No 1007410).

Restoration of Pelham Crescent and Arcade is the Trust's top priority.

Vice chairman: Anne Scott. Board Members: George Adams, Peter Billington, Cllr Pamela Brown, Dennis Collins, Alma Hanson, Cllr. Ossie Hughes, Rachel Lewis, Alan Privet, Don Richardson, James Risbridger, Paul Smith, Mike Stuttle, John Turner. Acting Director: Christine Goldschmidt. Development Advisor: Nick Wates. Administrator: Catherine Griffin. Finance Officer: Robert Firth.

## **Riviera Gallery Association**

6 Pelham Arcade, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3AE Tel: 0424 427088

The Riviera Gallery Association was formed in the Spring of 1991 to foster and promote the understanding and appreciation of and participation in the arts, among people, through the Riviera Gallery. It has a membership of 200. Charitable status has been applied for and a trading company is being set up.

The Association has a license from the Council to use 6 Pelham Arcade until September 1992. The gallery has been operating there since June 1991 and is run by volunteers and workers on employment action. Numerous successful exhibitions of local, national and international artists' work have been held as well as craft fairs and workshops. The Association believes that the eventual use of St Mary-in-the-Castle and the surrounding premises must ensure that this facility continues to exist and is keen to take responsibility for the organisation of visual art exhibitions in the new centre.

Chairperson: Len Shelley. Treasurer: Julia Robinson. Secretary: Denise Franklin. Executive Committee: Lesley Cornish, Ruth Franklin, Richard Granville-Smith, John Harmer, Martin Honeysett, Bill Talbot, Lorna Vahey, Ben White. Administrator: Ann Hunter. Coordinator: Mohan Ratnam.

# Strategy

## Promotion and involvement

To generate imaginative ideas, support and funds for the project, marketing material being prepared explaining the basic concept and inviting participation from sponsors, event organisers and local residents. The aim is to involve the public and corporate interests making it possible to firm up the proposals with definite commitments of support and prepare a detailed business plan by the Autumn of 1992. Marketing material includes:

- A4 leaflet for wide distribution
- Exhibition material
- Prospectus
- Questionnaire

Other activities planned to generate support and interest include:

- A roving exhibition. Starting at the Riviera Gallery in May 1992 and then at the Library in June.
- Regular guided tours of the church.
- A series of workshops when both local people and professional groups will be able to see the church and develop their ideas for its use and management. Starting in April 1992
- Public meetings for relevant organisations at local and national level.

## Building Programme

It would make economic sense and be extremely desirable to undertake all building and fitting out work in one operation under one contract. But if sufficient funding has not been raised by the time tenders are due to go out, the project can be done in two or more phases. The financial estimates in this prospectus show the effect of carrying out the work in 2 phases. After completion of the first phase the centre would be operational except for the balcony, making it possible to generate income and fund-raising momentum for the second phase. More detailed costings and phasing options are being prepared by architects in consultation with relevant experts.

## Project Office

A project office is being set up at No 7 Pelham Crescent, next door to the church. This will provide a physical focus for fund-raising and project development work and eventually for project management. The office will be run by FOSMIC.

## Business Plan

By the Autumn of 1992 this prospectus will have evolved into a business plan determining whether the project is viable and, if so, precisely how it will work. The Plan will include firm financial projections and funding sources. At this point the Borough Council will be in a position to decide how it wishes to proceed.

# Finance

## Funding Strategy

Long term success will depend on developing a facility that is financially independent of any single funding source. This will be achieved through an imaginative range of income generating uses and by packaging funds from a variety of public and private sources, Revenue estimates indicate that the Centre could be profitable once in full operation although the figures assume a high management input from volunteers.

Substantial initial capital investment will be required. The Borough Council has £347,000 set aside for works to the building during 1992-94. Just over twice that amount is required even to complete phase 1 and get the ground floor in operation. Almost as much again is then required to complete the project.

Funding support is therefore being sought from a variety of public and private sources. Hopefully the project will prove ideal for attracting funding support because of its physical prominence, popular objectives, charitable status and planned high profile. Support is likely to be in three main categories:

- Restoring and converting the building;
- Providing equipment and fittings;
- Exhibitions and events.

Sources of funding being pursued initially are listed on page 21.

Seed funding of £10,000 has already been provided by Hastings Borough Council so that the Working Party can develop the proposal and promote it to potential partners and sponsors. The County Council and Arts Council are also being approached to assist with seed funding.

Accurate costings will only be available when detailed design work has been undertaken and programme and management details finalised. The estimates below and in the Appendices are the best currently available. They provide a good general picture of the sums involved and shows the implications of carrying out the work in 2 phases.

## Financial Summary (£)

<b>Capital Cost Estimates (£)</b>	<i>Phase 1 Ground Floor only in use</i>	<i>Phase 2 Full use</i>	<b>Total</b>
Building costs	623,952	640,800	<b>1,264,752</b>
Fixtures and fittings	83,736	21,200	<b>104,936</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>707,688</b>	<b>662,000</b>	<b>1,369,688</b>

<b>Revenue Estimate (£ per annum)</b>	<i>After Phase 1</i>	<i>After Phase 2</i>
Expenditure	123,600	172,320
Income	80,400	221,100
<b>Surplus/Loss</b>	<b>-43,200</b>	<b>48,780</b>

# Press cuttings

A collection of press cuttings is available from Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle on request.

Hastings & St Leonards Observer, Friday, March 6, 1992

## 'Brave' Friends need your help

# Phoenix from the mothballs

AN AMBITIOUS group of people have a dream to throw open the doors of one of Hastings' most remarkable architectural gems and at the same time create an exciting multi-purpose centre.

They are facing a mammoth task and they need your help.

The alternative is no centre, and one of the south's finest Regency churches remains firmly closed.

Where is this wonderful building? The answer is right on our doorstep. Standing above the cafes, ice-cream parlours and amusements at Pelham Arcade you will find St Mary-in-the-Castle.

by

SANDRA DANIELS

The decaying church has been saved by the council which has spent a staggering £1.2 million on restoration works, making it weather-proof and rot-free.

But the on-going question has been whether this grand building will at long last be put to good use or be "mothballed"?

Last November the aptly named Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle stepped in.

The group was initially formed because of concern over proposals for the church to be used as a "1066 and all that" tourist attraction.

However, fate stepped in and lent a hand and the company involved pulled out.

The Friends are now front-runners in a one-horse race.

They want the building to be used as a multi-purpose cultural centre - for civic, sports, arts and business activities as well as tourist attractions.

A Friends' report states: "St Mary-in-the-Castle is Hastings' most magnificent building. It is vital to use it in a way which respects its unique qualities and in which the town's citizens can feel involved and take pride."

pride."

They say the centre will have something for everyone - locals and visitors, professionals and amateurs, young and old.

It is not just pie-in-the-sky talk. Already the scheme is being thoroughly looked into to see if it can be pulled

off. The council is setting up a working party, which includes representatives of the Friends and Hastings Trust, to carry out a full investigation and a sum of £10,000 is being allowed to cover costs.

That brings us to the crux of the matter - hard cash.

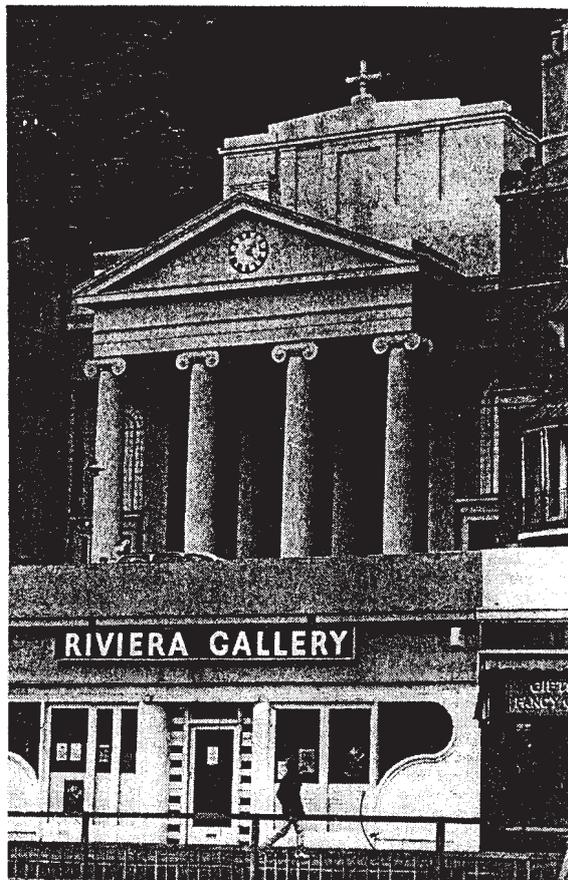
According to borough planner Tony Fry a cool million is needed to refurbish the building. Funding will therefore be the major hurdle to be crossed and applications for aid will be sent out by the working party.

Anne Scott, of the Friends, feels that if they can raise the money to restore the rest of the building they will have won the main part of the battle.

"You won't know if it can work: as a centre until you have actually tried it," she said.

But if it didn't work out at least it would be easier then for the building to be switched to some other use.

On the positive side though Mrs Scott felt the idea would grow and grow. She pointed out: that the Trinity Arts Centre at Tunbridge Wells, which was



▲ St Mary-in-the-Castle, designed by Joseph Kay for the Earl of Chichester, Thomas Pelham, and built between 1824-8

set up in a grade 1 listed church in 1982, was an excellent model for the Friends to follow.

But they need everyone's help and support if they are to succeed. Although the centre would have to be managed professionally they hope a lot of work would be carried out by volunteers, so saving on running costs.

For the present they want local organisations and individuals to let them know what they would like to see the centre used for. They are also thinking of running a competition to find a suitable name.

There is no doubt The Friends have got a long way in a short time. Mr Fry himself admires them for taking up such a daunting challenge.

"I think it's very brave of them to even consider it and I wish them well," he said.

For more information about The Friends and to find out how you can help contact Geraldine Wheeler on Hastings 431438. Or go along to their inaugural meeting on Thursday at The Riviera Gallery, Pelham Arcade, starting at 7.30pm.

# Potted History

## The Rise, Decline and Rise again of Pelham Crescent and St Mary-in-the-Castle

1824-1828	Construction by First Earl of Chichester. Architect: Joseph Kay.
Early 1900s	Terraces flanking Crescent demolished. Arcade divided up, façade altered, architectural unity lost.
1951	Listing of Pelham Crescent and church: Grade II*.
1960	Old Hastings Preservation Society undertakes restoration of Crescent facades.
1970	Church made redundant as place of worship. Other uses tried by private owners but fail. Decay sets in.
1986	Church on the brink of being declared a dangerous structure with risk of demolition. Hastings Urban Conservation Project (HUCP) convenes St Mary's Working Party to bring together all those with an interest in its future. Publicity campaign mounted.  Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, as patron of the Georgian Society, writes to the Mayor of Hastings asking him to use his influence to ensure that St Mary-in-the-Castle Church is saved for future generations to enjoy.
1987	Working Party commissions feasibility study (funded by Borough Council) from URBED. Borough Council buys Church with help from English Heritage and embarks on renovation programme.
1987	Hastings Arts submits proposal to the Council for using Church for an Arts Centre.
1988	Listing of Arcade: Grade II.
1989	Council decides to explore leasing the Church to the private sector for a heritage attraction. Living Images start developing proposal.
1988-91	Town Scheme administered by HUCP and Hastings Trust, and jointly funded by English Heritage, provides restoration grants to 7 properties in the Arcade and Crescent totalling over £15,000.
April 1991	First phase of the church restoration completed by Borough at cost of £1.1 million. Teamwork Creative Leisure start developing proposal for a heritage attraction on the theme '1066 and all that' following withdrawal of Living Images.
June 1991	Newly formed Riviera Gallery Association licenses No 6,7&8 Pelham Arcade from the Council and launches the Riviera Gallery.
June 1991	Project team assembled by Hastings Trust prepares Masterplan for restoration of entire Crescent and Arcade.
Nov 1991	Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle formed and protests against proposal for the Council to lease the Church to Teamwork Creative Leisure exclusively for a heritage experience.
Jan 1992	Teamwork Creative Leisure withdraws. Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle present proposal to use the church for a multi-purpose cultural centre, Council gives all party-support and agrees to convene a Working Party with a budget of £10,000 to develop proposal further.
Mar 1992	Inaugural meeting of Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle.

## Appendix

# Statements of Support

*"St Mary-in-the-Castle is a truly amazing building and, having seen it, I can now fully appreciate the Friends' enthusiasm for preserving it, not just as a monument, but as a place which can be used to enhance the life of Hastings and its people. You have set yourselves an enormous task on raising the necessary funds, but you certainly deserve to succeed. If I can help by supporting your application to the Foundation for Sport and the Arts or similar trusts, please let me know and I will do my best."*

**Charmian Stowell, Local Authority Planning Manager, South East Arts, 16.4.1992**

*"We sincerely hope you manage to persuade Hastings Borough Council to re-think the plans for this splendid church."*

**Nicholas Allott, Trustee, Mackintosh Foundation, 18.12.1991**

*"I have for many years, since I came to Hastings, been concerned about St Mary-in-the-Castle, built by Joseph Kaye who lived in my house...It is a fine building – neo, neo classical – and should be used for cultural purposes...For many reasons it should be treasured and not made a mockery of. It could be the focus of Hastings."*

**John Bratby RA, Chief Editor of Art Quarterly, 13.11.1991**

*"I was most interested to hear of the proposal for an Arts Centre to be housed in this great Regency church. If you do decide to submit an application to the Foundation for Sports and Arts, I am sure my fellow Trustees would give it careful consideration...I can think of no more fitting purpose for this wonderful building, which is so important to Hastings as a whole, and wish you every success."*

**The Rt Hon Christopher Chataway, 6.1.1992**

*"The more facilities there are, the greater participation there will be."*

**Geoff Cooper, General Secretary, Hastings YMCA, 9.1.1992**

*"I am staggered by the beauty of Pelham Crescent...You say you need my signature – if that is all you need you have got it, but I would do anything else I could to save it. Please let me know."*

**Sir Roger de Grey, President, Royal Academy of Arts, 28.11.1991**

*"I support your campaign – it would cater for the cultural needs of the residents and encourage active participation as opposed to passive reception."*

**Adrian Heath, Painter, 5.12.1991**

*"I certainly support the idea of turning the church into an arts centre. If, as I understand, Pelham Crescent is to be restored, such a project would be most timely and would probably be the only rival to the achievements of St George's in Bristol, an arts centre of enviable qualities in an ideal setting."*

**Peter Katin, pianist, 3.1.1992**

*"Thank you so much for showing me around the church...I was most impressed with the interior and had no idea it would be so spacious and potentially so adaptable...I would certainly feel thrilled to be involved in this project in any way possible."*

**Peter Katin, pianist, 15.4.1992**

*"Your cause deserves support"*

**A G Peto, Trustee, Szeben Peto Foundation, 26.12.1991**

*"I fully support the aims of the Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle."*

**Phillip Prowse, Drama and opera producer, 29.11.1991**

*"St Mary's would be a superb venue for any chess event be it local, top level international or even a lighthearted display event. It would be a particularly attractive venue for televised chess which we are constantly trying to encourage."*

**Pam Thomas, Press Officer, Hastings Chess Congress, 16.4.1992**

*"As a theatre company based in Battle we would like to express our support for the campaign to use St Mary-in-the-Castle as an Arts Centre. Such a centre in Hastings has long been needed by the local community, and by many of us who live in surrounding districts. We are responsible for dramatic productions using professional and amateur actors and technicians, but it does not unfortunately appear that Hastings has a centre for the visual and performing arts – unlike Eastbourne, Brighton or Tunbridge Wells – and, in consequence, companies such as ourselves must always seek alternative venues. Surely your local authority must conclude that a good local Arts Centre, especially in such a splendid setting as St Mary-in-the-Castle, would inevitably be beneficial to the local tourist industry, improve the whole image of the community, and thus eventually be an exciting and promising public investment."*

**Senlac Theatre, Battle, 5.1.1992**

*"There's nowhere with better acoustics in the south east of England. I've played in the Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room and they're not as good."*

**Trevor Watts, saxophonist and composer, 2.4.1992**

## Appendix

# Bibliography – Key documents

In date order.

*St Mary-in-the-Castle: Outline Proposal,*

Hastings Arts

July 1987

*Making St Mary-in-the-Castle Church a Resource for Hastings,*

a report by URBED (Urban and Economic Development Group), commissioned by the St Mary-in-the-Castle Working Party.

September 1987

*Hastings: A Place for the Arts,*

Pam Jarvis, a report commissioned by Hastings Borough Council,

1989.

*St Mary-in-the-Castle – End use,*

Report of the Director of Tourism and Leisure, Policy & Finance Committee,

24th August 1989

*Feasibility Study: Conversion of derelict flats at 7 Pelham Crescent,*

Hastings Urban Conservation Project,

December 1990.

*Turning the Tide,*

Hastings Trust Prospectus and Review 1991, Hastings Trust,

November 1991

*St Mary-in-the-Castle,*

Report by the Borough Planner to the Policy and Finance Committee,

18th November 1991

*Arts Development 1991,*

Report of the Director of Tourism and Leisure,

December 1991.

*St Mary-in-the-Castle: The Next Steps*

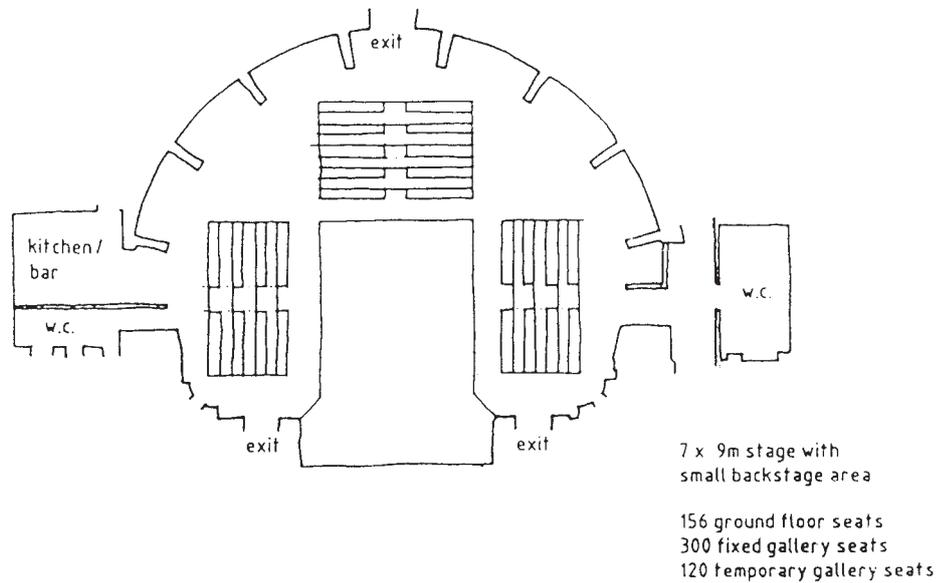
A proposal by Friends of St Mary-in-the-Castle

January 1992

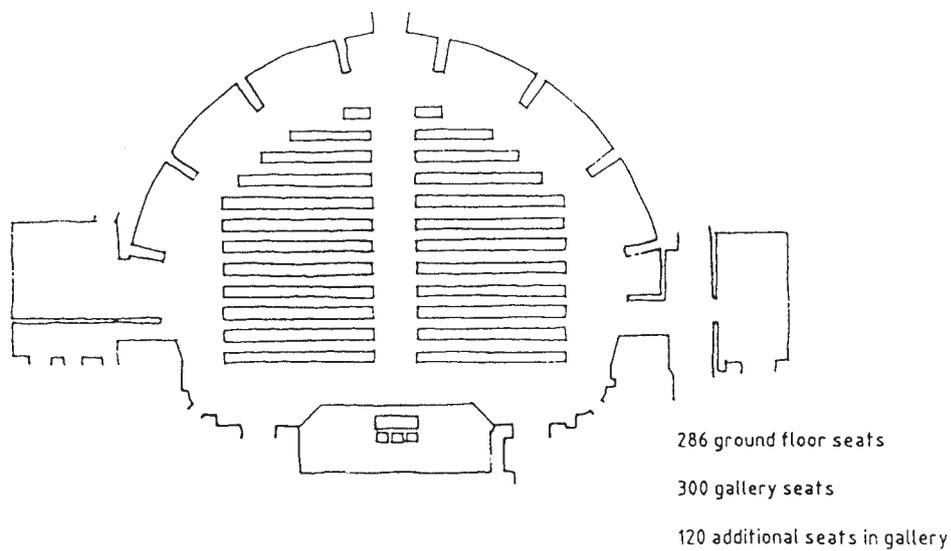
Appendix

# Auditorium layouts

Alternative ways of using the auditorium using flexible seating and staging.



## Ground floor layout with large stage



## Ground floor layout with small stage

# Funding Sources

The following potential sources have so far been identified and are being approached. There will also be considerable scope for organising fund-raising events, particularly when the building is in use.

## **Association for the Business Sponsorship of the Arts**

Government funds match business sponsorship. £4.5 million available for allocation this year.

## **Building companies and manufacturers of building products and equipment**

There is scope for securing sponsorship from builders and manufacturers for capital works once a high profile scheme for advertising such sponsorship is drawn up.

## **Brewery**

An interest free loan could be sought from a local brewery or viculturist to establish the bar. A 'Celebration of Sussex Produce' has been proposed as part of the Centre's launch.

## **East Sussex County Council**

The County has continually expressed interest in supporting the restoration of St Mary's. In 1988 the Council offered to fund half the cost of a project manager and this offer could be pursued. Funds may also be available for tourism and education related programmes.

## **EEC**

Application for up to £105,000 submitted in January 1992 by Hastings Trust under 'Support of pilot projects to conserve the European architectural heritage, 1992' scheme.

## **English Heritage**

English Heritage has said it will consider funding between 25 and 40 per cent of the costs of certain restoration works (see items starred in budget estimates). This could amount to £150,000 to £250,000.

## **Foundation for Sports and the Arts**

Supports innovative new initiatives in the fields of sports and arts (encouraging response from one of the Trustees – see Appendix 'Statements of Support')

## **Hastings Borough Council**

£347,000 is set aside for restoration work to St Mary-in-the-Castle between 1992-94.

## **Local and national charities**

May well wish to assist, particularly with facilities for the disabled and educational aspects of the scheme. Some have already expressed interest.

## **Local and national businesses**

Could provide sponsorship both for equipment and for events once a comprehensive sponsorship package is drawn up.

## **Meridian Television**

The proposed centre has considerable potential for televised events and a television company may well be prepared to assist with equipping it for such use. The development of the scheme could also be of interest for a documentary.

## **The Visiting Arts Office**

Sponsors exhibitions from abroad.

# Appendix

## Cost Estimates

### Building cost estimates (£)

	Phase 1 1st qtr	Phase 1 2nd qtr	Phase 1 3rd qtr	Phase 1 4th qtr	Phase 2	Total
<b>1.0 St Mary-in-the-Castle Church</b>						
1.1 Crypt: Form opening and steps down into Arcade, improve existing stairs, removal of boiler and redundant piping.	27,500	-	-	-	-	<b>27,500</b>
1.2 Fire precaution work to nave including lobbies and doors	-	12,700	-	-	-	<b>12,700</b>
1.3 Drainage: rerouting roof drainage*	11,000	-	-	-	-	<b>11,000</b>
1.4 Nave flooring*	-	-	-	5,250	25,000	<b>30,250</b>
1.5 Fire escape from crypt	-	1,500	-	-	-	<b>1,500</b>
1.6 Clearing nave, removal of scaffolding*	21,000	-	-	-	-	<b>21,000</b>
1.7 Lighting and electrical	-	-	10,000	10,000	30,000	<b>50,000</b>
1.8 Upgrading existing toilets and new	-	-	20,000	-	10,000	<b>30,000</b>
1.9 Upgrade water, gas and electrical services	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	<b>30,000</b>
1.10 Plaster to timber stud wall at south-west corner to provide fire break*	-	6,000	6,100	-	-	<b>12,100</b>
1.11 Crypt shoring*	5,000	-	-	-	-	<b>5,000</b>
1.12 Reinstate alter ceiling*	-	-	6,000	-	-	<b>6,000</b>
1.13 Disabled access ramp under portico	5,500	-	-	-	-	<b>5,500</b>
1.14 Balcony floor*	-	-	-	-	130,000	<b>130,000</b>
1.15 Repair balcony front including replacing column casings*	-	-	33,000	-	-	<b>33,000</b>
1.16 Plaster rear balcony*	-	-	-	-	50,000	<b>50,000</b>
1.17 Disabled access to balcony	-	-	-	-	120,000	<b>120,000</b>
1.18 Plaster nave rear wall, replace memorials*	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	<b>40,000</b>
1.19 Finishes*	-	-	-	25,000	-	<b>25,000</b>
1.20 Provision of heating and ventilation	-	-	20,000	25,000	-	<b>45,000</b>
1.21 Renovation of pews*	-	-	-	-	10,000	<b>10,000</b>
1.22 Fire escape	-	-	-	-	40,000	<b>40,000</b>
1.23 Contingency (20%)	14,000	10,040	25,020	13,050	85,000	<b>147,110</b>
1.24 Professional fees (20%)*	16,800	12,048	30,024	15,660	102,000	<b>176,532</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>100,800</b>	<b>72,288</b>	<b>180,144</b>	<b>93,960</b>	<b>612,000</b>	<b>1,059,192</b>
<b>2.0 Pelham Arcade (Nos 6,7&amp;8)</b>						
2.1 Repairs to road where part of roof of Arcade: including damp proof membrane, new road surfacing and tanking rear walls.	40,250	-	-	-	-	<b>40,250</b>
2.2 Removal of felt roof and parapet walls, new zinc roof covering, rebuild parapet wall, render and paint	-	16,750	-	-	-	<b>16,750</b>
2.3 New shop front to original design*	-	-	20,000	-	-	<b>20,000</b>
2.4 Improve fire escape door opening.	1,000	-	-	-	-	<b>1,000</b>
2.5 Flooring	-	-	-	4,750	-	<b>4,750</b>
2.6 Contingency (20%)	8,250	3,350	4,000	950	-	<b>16,550</b>
2.7 Professional fees (20%)*	9,900	4,020	4,800	1,140	-	<b>19,860</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>59,400</b>	<b>24,120</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>6,840</b>	-	<b>119,160</b>
<b>3.0 Pelham Crescent (No 7)</b>						
3.1 Refurbishment	15,000	-	25,000	-	20,000	<b>60,000</b>
3.2 Contingency (20%)	3,000	-	5,000	-	4,000	<b>12,000</b>
3.3 Professional fees (20%)	3,600	-	6,000	-	4,800	<b>14,400</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>21,600</b>	-	<b>36,000</b>	-	<b>28,800</b>	<b>86,400</b>
<b>4.0 TOTALS</b>	<b>181,800</b>	<b>96,408</b>	<b>244,944</b>	<b>100,800</b>	<b>640,800</b>	<b>1,264,752</b>

Note: Building cost estimates supplied by Fred Courtney Bennett Architect and AJK Architects. All figures should be regarded as budget estimates for discussion purposes only. Full and accurate figures will only be available after detailed planning and design work has been completed.

\* Items likely to be considered by English Heritage for grant aid.

## Fixtures and fittings cost estimates (£)

		<i>Phase 1</i>	<i>Phase 2</i>	<b>Total</b>
5.1	Exhibition stands with lighting.	5,300	12,000	<b>17,300</b>
5.2	Seating	4,500	1,000	<b>5,500</b>
5.3	Staging	1,380	2,668	<b>4,048</b>
5.4	Sound system	20,000	0	<b>20,000</b>
5.5	Shop fittings	10,000	0	<b>10,000</b>
5.6	Restaurant/bar fittings/equipment	25,000	0	<b>25,000</b>
5.7	Office equipment	1,500	1,000	<b>2,500</b>
5.8	Office furniture	2,100	1,000	<b>3,100</b>
5.9	Contingencies (20%)	<u>13,956</u>	<u>3,532</u>	<b>17,488</b>
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>83,736</b>	<b>21,200</b>	<b>104,936</b>

Note: Costs based on commercial rates. Costings have yet to be obtained for recording, filming, projection and translation equipment and for preparing multimedia show.

## Revenue cost estimates (£ annual)

		<i>After Phase 1</i>	<i>After Phase 2</i>
6.1	Salaries.	25,000	35,000
6.2	Volunteer costs	500	1,000
6.3	Events	35,000	45,000
6.4	Water.	500	600
6.5	Electricity and gas	6,000	12,000
6.6	Telephones	2,000	3,000
6.7	Advertising and promotion	6,000	10,000
6.8	Printing and stationery	6,000	10,000
6.9	Cleaning	2,000	5,000
6.10	Insurance	3,000	5,000
6.11	Building repairs and maintenance	17,000	17,000
6.12	Contingencies (20%)	<u>20,600</u>	<u>28,720</u>
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>123,600</b>	<b>172,320</b>

Note: Estimates based on Trinity Arts Centre, Tunbridge Wells and Stables Theatre, Hastings. Salaries based on full-time manager @ £20,000 and part-time, increasing to full-time technician @ £15,000..

## Revenue income estimates (£ annual)

		<i>After Phase 1</i>	<i>After Phase 2</i>
7.1	Membership fees	2,500	4,000
7.2	Membership covenants	1,000	2,000
7.3	Tax refunds	300	600
7.4	Ticket sales (performance)	15,000	30,000
7.5	Entrance fees/tours	35,000	120,000
7.6	Special events	1,000	1,500
7.7	Exhibition sales	1,000	2,000
7.8	Hire charges	800	1,500
7.9	Conferences	1,000	3,000
7.10	Cafe/bar profit	6,000	15,000
7.11	Catering profit	3,000	9,000
7.12	Special appeals	3,000	5,000
7.13	Fundraising events	3,000	6,000
7.14	Theatre sponsorship	3,000	10,000
7.15	Exhibition sponsorship	300	500
7.16	Education grants	2,000	3,000
7.17	Sales profits	<u>2,500</u>	<u>8,000</u>
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>80,400</b>	<b>221,100</b>

Note: Estimates based on Trinity Arts Centre, Tunbridge Wells and Stables Theatre, Hastings. Average membership figure of 800 @ £5 assumed (7.1) and average ticket sales and other arts based income assumed (7.4 and 7.6 – 7.16). Entrance fees (7.7) based on 120,000 people @ £1. Hastings Borough Council's 'Marketing Moves' found that 120,000 visited The Smugglers Adventure in nearby St Clements Caves in 1990/91 which is off the beaten track. Over 250,000 people per year visit the nearby Sea Life Centre.

