

A CORNER OF SANDGATE SAVED

When Shepway Policy Plans are being ignored or undermined by permissions to over-develop historic areas of Sandgate, both east and west, we are happy indeed to learn that one small corner of Sandgate, just off the Crescent, has been saved at great personal expense by JACK GILL, a nearby resident and retired civil engineer (MICE) who gave vital evidence at the Marina Inquiry and the Select Committee proceedings which followed.

This charming corner comprises the verdant, unstable hillside beneath the Undercliffe Estate and the Georgian cobblestone coachyard at the foot of the former carriageway (now the Crescent) to the original Knoll House where 'Satara' now stands.

This is in a Conservation Area and, equally importantly, a Tree Conservation Area (No 6) and a member of the Society was also forced to draw the attention of ignorant Shepway Planners to the fact that this is in a dormant area of the 1827 Sandgate Landslip. Through bureaucratic incompetence, Jack Gill's precise technical objections failed to reach the Development Control Committee (Spring 1988) At the last moment, his submissions were gutted, read out in a monotone at a trot, to which the assembled Councillors remained impervious.

As a result, of Outline Planning Permission <sup>increased</sup> the site value ~~was~~ <sup>it was</sup> vastly ~~increased~~ and twice put to auction. Before any geo-technical investigations had been carried out, a fine mature tree was readily and unnecessarily condemned to make way for a much larger residence than ever stood before. This tree, as Jack Gill pointed out, was the main agent for drainage behind the impermeable wall to the rear of the yard and, through the process known as evapotranspiration, was a major stabilising factor for the hillside behind.

Now, Jack Gill will cancel out the Planning Permission, and intends to restore the damaged wall and replant the hillside. Offers of trees, he tells us, are already pouring in. Thank you, Jack, for keeping greed/at bay!

*and folly*

L. RENE-MARTIN, 27.6.99

beautifully landscaped Enbrook Park, as the Saga grounds are now officially called - as well as to appreciate the sail-like architecture of the Pavilion.

The Party will start at [?] noon, with an official opening at 12.30, and lunch from ? 1 pm, followed by the Garden Party Draw at 3.30 pm. Tickets for the Garden Party cost ? £10, available from the Society's Fire Station HQ, or from any Committee member. Draw tickets are being sold separately at 50p each. First prize is a choice of a Hot Air Balloon Trip for two or a TV set donated by Saga. Many other attractive prizes are being donated by restaurants, shopkeepers and individuals.

[Last year's winner of the Garden Party Draw, member FERNAND MOULIN, has only just had his balloon flight, accompanied by member GRAHAM TURNILL. At 84, Mr Moulin thoroughly enjoyed both the flight and, as a Frenchman resident in Sandgate, the celebratory champagne that followed.]

Permission to hold this year's Garden Party in Enbrook Park is evidence of the determination of Roger de Haan, chairman of Saga, that as the company moves back into Sandgate it shall become an integral part of the local community, and not just a 9-5 office block. Peter Lapham outlined the company's plans to encourage the public to make use of the park, once the ragstone wall behind the War Memorial has been rebuilt after completion of Southern Water's work on the new sewage system. New entrances in the wall will provide pedestrian and disabled access to two paths - a high level and a low level walk.

There has been yet another delay in transferring Saga's staff from Folkestone into the new office building - this time because the windows have been letting in the rain. Scaffolding has gone up for the work to rectify this - and Mr Lapham assures us that rumours that the building has suffered serious subsidence are quite untrue.

To prove it, Roy was given a VIP tour and was very impressed with the computerised sunblinds and air conditioning. Every floor apart from the executive offices at the top, he says, is "open plan", with a cool, calm atmosphere. Saga aims to ensure that every phone caller will be answered by a human being within about 30 seconds. No robots telling them that "all our agents are busy" for hours at a time!

Brief from Ira Wakefield  
Groundsman SAGA  
26.11.98

### Sandgate Society Meeting

As we all know, Enbrook Park consists of a diverse range of landscape type. From formal gardens and park land to stream side walks and mixed woodland. Many of the areas have been subject to neglect over the years, this is quite pronounced through the woodland. Now under management from Saga these areas are slowly forming into safer compartments.

There are hazards present on the site, including an ornamental pond, steep banks and inherent dangers of a woodland. It is my responsibility to ensure that as much as possible these dangers are eliminated.

Through discussions with David Kesby of the Sandgate Society it has been possible to draw up some proposals for a footpath network through Enbrook Park. The aim of these paths is to allow maximum access to the Park, the paths are not Public Rights of Way and members of the public are invited into the Park on the understanding that they will respect this. The aim of the path network is to link walks from the East and West of the site, on the West from the Sandgate escarpment and on the East to the Jacob's Ladder.

The Park, although still a construction site, is slowly attracting a greater diversity of wildlife. Apart from an exotic visitor, an escaped parrot, there have been sightings of a kingfisher, tawny owl, kestrel, woodpeckers, jays, slow worms, lizards, foxes and smaller mammals. The appearance of the predatory species would suggest that there is a healthy small mammal and insect population. Throughout the woods there is a great deal of dead wood, providing ideal habitat for the bugs that thrive there. There appears to be a diverse range of fungi which in the future could also be the topic for an informed nature walk, led obviously by an expert.

It will be necessary to have some guide lines drawn up for users of the Park. I have suggested that the control of dogs be of utmost importance. With the provision of a crèche on the site and the possibility of children being in the grounds it must be clear to the dog walker that dogs are to be kept on lead at all times, including through the woodland. Also that their mess be cleared up, litter bins incorporating a dog bin are being installed on the site.

The use of mountain bikes on the site is also to be discouraged, their use through the woods would be detrimental to any wildlife present. It is also because of the wildlife that dogs should be kept on a lead at all times. I believe that education needs to play a large part in the future of the Park, this ideally would lead to youngsters respecting the Park and hopefully encourage less misuse.

The opening of the Park is an issue still to be resolved, it is still a construction site, the landscaping is still incomplete and most areas are still dangerous, I understand the majority

of Sandgate has been patient and would hope this can continue until such time as the Park is safe to open.

THURS. JULY 8<sup>th</sup> 1999

# Fury over bid to flatten wall



COMING DOWN: Geoff Gillett alongside the wall which will be demolished  
20/3139E

**FAMILIES** are furious at plans by the holiday giant Saga to knock down an ancient wall at the site of a war memorial.

Saga wants to make two breaks in a semi-circular wall surrounding Sandgate's war memorial to make a pedestrian access to its landscaped grounds which will be open to the public.

However, residents say the wall is of historical importance and that the area should be left alone. They argue there is already pedestrian access to the site and that the works would be unnecessary.

Sandgate resident and local historian Linda Rene-Martin said: "The character of this area should be protected. The war memorial site is sacred. It is in a Conservation Area which it is Shepway council's duty to preserve and not destroy.

"No one in their right senses would wish to see the alteration and desecration of a site dedicated to the quiet remembrance of Sandgate folk who gave their lives in two world wars."

Geoff Gillett, of the Sandgate Society, said he was also against Saga's plans. He said: "This would be the unnecessary desecration of an area dedicated to soldiers who died in two world wars. This is a sensitive area which should command respect.

by Jane Barlow

## Opinions

"There is an alternative access across the footbridge over Enbrook Stream which would just need slight alterations to make it accessible for pushchairs and the disabled.

"I am canvassing the opinions of other members of the Sandgate Society but I am pretty sure they will not want this wall altered either."

Part of the wall is down while Southern Water carries out sewer installation works. However, residents want to see it rebuilt and then left alone.

A spokesman for the holiday firm, based at Enbrook Park, just off Sandgate High Street, said: "Saga has been landscaping the Enbrook site to restore the grounds to the standard of park land.

"Although the grounds were not formerly open to the public, this policy will change and it is intended that local residents will also be able to enjoy the benefit of the grounds.

"The proposal to form an entrance in the perimeter wall behind the war memorial is to give people greater access to the site and it is our policy to liaise with the local community on all such matters."

Next week: Our Last Class schools picture special

## The Sandgate Society

**Inter Mmship Memo to \*\*Linda Rene-Martin.**  
**Subject \*\* SAGA War Memorial Wall**

**From \*\* Roy Brightman**  
**Date: 6 July 1999\***

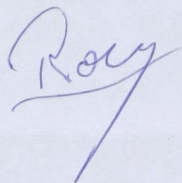
Dear Linda I received your two messages & note to the papers, also had two reports on the row that erupted in the OFS, frankly I am amazed that you are shouting that I have betrayed & let down Sandgate people. If you took a little more time to rationally consider what is being done, rather than launching an emotional campaign that can/may endanger the good working relationship that I am building with SAGA, it would be for the benefit of all in the OFS - you nearly caused two of the committee to resign over your outbursts.

We had a good frank discussion with Brendon Phelan & Caroline, it finished with me agreeing that we would ascertain the opinions of some/cross section of Sandgate residents and would report back to B P. what we would like done as a result -- I do not ever break my word in any negotiations otherwise you cannot negotiate again --Untrustworthy !! Now why do you not trust me? I already knew that at least 75% would not want more holes in the wall, so do you, so what on earth are you ranting on about. I do not like to hear the hard words you use about my alleged lack of support for Sandgate when you know nobody has spent more time/ effort /planning for Sandgate people than I have, and to good visible effect, an apology wouldn't come amiss.

I walked into most of the shops in the High St and explained what their opinions were required for and everybody (16) just wrote BRIDGE in the b. Column, as predicted, I am now in a position to write to SAGA , send them this last sheet and report that over 90% the cross section used do not want holes in wall.

As you know I use and trust you totally, as historian/authorial/planning critique etc. if you leave the negotiatons to me and allow me to conduct The Society's affairs in honourable fashion, with the help of the good committee that we have now, everybody will have a better relationship.

Slightly Dismayed but Unbowed Roy.



Dear Roy,

12 July 1999

Your Memo (6 July) came through my letterbox just before I left for the Frinton International Veteran's tourney where I spent most of the lovely week. Please be assured you have always had my full support.

1) Nobody, in the course of my 37 years membership of the Society has ever resigned because of me. On the contrary, the Committee requested me stand as an Independent candidate (1970) when Folkestone Conservatives were riding rough-shod over Sandgate.

2) I doubt that anyone would have been aware of the proposals, or the presumed go-ahead, if, by chance I had not glimpsed a letter from Peter Lapham (community relations officer since April) to Ann Nevill, at the Millenium Committee Meeting in May. Immediately, I alerted you.

3) I had no idea that you had formulated a Questionnaire. It was quite by chance I dropped by the OFS last Saturday (3 July) and was shown it. The OFS is only open Saturdays and Tuesdays and I wondered how people could know about it.

4) My letter to the Herald which I saw for the first time, today, was in the nature of a protective move, and no criticism of SAGA is implied. One of your male committee members was still 'wavering' and I recalled in no uncertain terms, the Castle debacle.

I have every reason to trust and support you and you have had my constant encouragement. There is now a far better Committee than at the time of the Castle 'meeting' (13 December last) and I hope they will now address serious matters objectively.

Indeed, I have recently had wind of serious matters and would welcome an opportunity to be present at the next Committee Meeting, and at the same time be allowed to defuse the misunderstandings and misquotations which have arisen. The gist of my emphatic remarks was that in my view, 'it would be a betrayal of all that the Society stands for if the above proposals were to be agreed'. I did not and do not suggest there was any betrayal by you. Personally, I am only too happy that we share similar views about the wall.

With my usual best wishes,

Yours sincerely

PS. Concerned to know if your Court case was successful (i.e. the injunction)

Linda R. Martin

SANDGATE SOCIETY

To all Committee members,  
Please see the following memorandum from Roy Brightman about a meeting with the SAGA architect. I should be grateful if you would kindly let me know your views as suggested by the 8 July. Thank you.

Hilary

**Inter Mmship Memo to \*\*Hilary Tolputt**  
**Subject \*\* Entrances into Enbrook Park**

**From \*\* Roy Brightman**  
**Date\* 1 July 1999**

Linda R-M & myself had a meeting with Brendon Phelan -SAGA architect regarding the proposed TWO new entrances through the wall behind the war memorial, their reasoning for these entrances is --

1. They believed that The Sandgate Soc had approved these gates if not at some point suggested them.
2. They feel they need two entrances to maintain Symmetry around The Memorial & seating.
3. Two entrances of this nature would encourage people to use 'the village green' (not a description we felt should be encouraged) and would be welcoming --it is a point of view to consider.
4. We suggested that 20yds away there is an existing opening via the bridge over the stream which we felt could be enlarged, the bridge made attractive & welcoming sign put up as pedestrian & disabled entrance to Enbrook Park.
5. The current problem then emerged, that the council have not to date completed the transfer of that parcel of land back to SAGA, if you look at it you will see that it is studiously ignored in the landscaping & maintenance of the site, I have subsequently discussed this aspect with Sandgate Clrs. and asked that they push the council solictrs. To effect the transfer so that SAGA could have the option above.

Would you please circulate this memo to ask our **comtee members** which option they would like for Sandgate either

- a. Two entrances around The Memorial or
- b. The bridge entrance re-designed & beautified to become the entrance pedestrian & disabled to Enbrook Park, it is currently a little gloomy.

Please also circulate it to anyone else you feel would like to express an opinion Reg T, Ann N, Ann Edmunds etc. and have it available in the OFS Saturday for all comers to read & to write down their opinion. Everyone with a copy should sign either the a-b option and return to you by July 8th so that we may report to SAGA as promised.

Roy



REGARDING - SAGA WALL.

A MISSING "H."—During the past few days a tablet has been let in the wall enclosing the Star and Garter Home at Sandgate. The inscription sets forth that the building in the grounds is associated with the Star and Garter Home at "Richmond." As the name of this famous riverside town is carved in big type passers by are considerably exercised in regard to the missing letter "H."

Folkestone Herald

15<sup>th</sup> October 1921 p4

THE STAR AND GARTER HOME  
FOR DISABLED SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND ARMEN  
RICHMOND, SURREY

COMMANDANT: COLONEL G. ANDERTON, O.B.E., M.B. B.S. (LOND.)

Telephone: RICHMOND 3314

10th June 1963.

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for your letter of 8th June 1963. We should have no objection whatever to the suggestion to place the commemorative tablet about the visits of Queen Elizabeth the First and Queen Victoria being fixed on the wall near the public seats and War Memorial at the South West corner of the Police Training Centre grounds.

I note that the Council will be carrying out this work.

Yours sincerely,



*Geoffrey Anderton*  
Commandant.

The Deputy Commandant,  
Hon. Secretary, The Sandgate Society,  
No. 6 District Police Training Centre,  
Sandgate,  
Folkestone,  
Kent.

8th, June, 1963.

Dear Sir,

For some years a commemorative stone tablet bearing the inscription " Queen Elizabeth rested at Sandgate Castle 25th, August, 1573 and Queen Victoria with the Prince Consort visited Sandgate on their way to Shorncliffe Camp 9th, August, 1855. " has been affixed to the wall of a cottage at the South end of Military Road, Sandgate. Recently this cottage was demolished and because of it's interesting nature I caused the tablet to be preserved, more or less intact, with a view to it being erected on a suitable site in the same vicinity.

An ideal position would be on the wall near the public seats and War Memorial at the South West corner of the Police Training Centre grounds and almost opposite where it was before.

The Folkestone Borough Council have expressed willingness to fix it neatly to the wall if asked to do so and I am writing this to seek your permission to have this done. There would be no cost to your Home and the tablet would be secured in such a manner to be easily removed at any time, if desired.

I should appreciate an early reply please as Council workmen are at present engaged on re-pointing the wall and could carry out this work whilst so engaged.

Deputy Commandant.

Hon. Secretary, The Sandgate Society.

Colonel G. Anderton, O.B.E., M.B., B.S.(Lond.),  
Commandant,  
Star & Garter Home for Disabled

ENBROOK HOUSE (SAGA PROPERTIES)

"PUTTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT"

STATEMENT by ROGER JOYCE, Dip.Arch.RIBA, Chairman of Planning Committee, Sandgate Society, which appeared in the 'Herald' on 4th December 1987.

THIS is intended to "put the record straight", as far as the Society's view is concerned, and to fully inform the public of the current situation regarding the planning applications which have been made on the site of the old Saga Holidays offices.

When the site was vacated, we asked the planning office if we could be informed of any negotiations with would-be developers interested in acquiring the site.

Reaction was a little guarded, but we knew that a lot of discussion was being held, which we were obviously not to be party to.

This initial contact was in July, 1986 - when drilling rigs appeared in the land behind the houses in Sandgate Hill, and when rumours started flying about.

Uncertainty about the future of the Saga social club, and the public car park to the south of that, also led us to become more and more nervous about what was to become of the Saga properties.

A public meeting was held in Enbrook House, in June of this year, when no less than 14 applications were presented to the Society, and to unsuspecting residents who were suddenly faced with the most insensitive and massive development, which was to tower over the High Street, and over their houses.

Within a very short time, those details were submitted to the council, and with almost indecent haste, were considered by a planning committee in September.

The confusion shown by the committee, and the disregard for the planning officers' advice and recommendations filled those present in the public gallery with dismay.

Fortunately, the proposal for 177 flats in blocks up to eight storeys in height was refused, but other parts of the application were granted consent.

Almost immediately, a further amended application was deposited, on October 1 and, despite the very high feelings which were beginning to mount, the matter was considered at a planning meeting on November 3.

Less than five weeks for a hugely contentious scheme, involving 144 flats in the same blocks, but now five storeys high, but still with their lowest floors at roof level of the houses on Sandgate Hill. It also involves conversion of the Listed Enbrook House, demolition of other buildings, including the lodge on Sandgate Hill, and formation of a new entrance which would mean the removal and rebuilding of over 200 feet of the ragstone walls fronting Sandgate High Street.

Incredibly, despite enormous objections from the Society, and hundreds of angry residents, and against argued and logically set out recommendations of the professional planning officers, recommending refusal, the scheme was approved almost without dissent from our councillors.

We want to make it clear that the Society is not opposed to development in Sandgate, indeed we work hard to encourage positive and meaningful contributions to the Conservation Areas, nor are we opposed to sensitive development of the Enbrook House site.

It is for this reason that we requested the intervention of the Secretary of State for the Environment, and asked him to call in the application.

The Secretary of State has intervened, and has issued an Article 10 direction which directs Shepway Council not to grant permission without special authorisation.

Shepway have made it clear that, if the minister decides against calling in the application, the decision made on November 3 will stand, but we are disturbed that the planning system is working in this way here in Shepway.

Why ignore the recommendations of officers on such an important site? Why deal with the matter in such a hasty way?

Why ignore the studies which the officers have carried out, which led them to suggest to the applicants in the pre-submission discussions, that a low-rise development, "appropriate to the surrounding development", would be more acceptable?

And why have the contents of those studies not been made available to councillors and the public alike?

/continued overleaf

Are we, the amenity societies, and the residents of Shepway to be led along by commercial interests, with blatant disregard for our heritage, the environment and the character of our town and village centres, or are we going to speak out?

For those who care about our environment, it is so frustrating to see the developers of the tunnel, the marina, Enbrook House, and countless other commercially-inspired schemes get their way, with little or no gain for us, the residents of Shepway.

We look to our council leaders to set down policies, and to act on them with determination and vision, but there is so little sign of it happening, especially on the evidence of the Enbrook House affair!

SH/87/772 Enbrook House, Sandgate Hill, Folkestone.

Conversion of Enbrook House to 31 flats, including means of access and siting together with the demolition of Kent House and the erection of a 3 storey building containing 18 flats on the site of Kent House (as amplified by drawing no: 86.109.115).

Saga Holidays PLC  
Bouverie House  
Middelburg Square  
Folkestone, Kent

c/o Linklaters and Paines  
Barrington House  
59-67 Gresham Street  
London EC2V 7JA

Please refer to report SH/87/776 for consultations, representations, and the site description, amplification of the proposal and comments.

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CONCLUSION

APPROVE

Conditions:

- 1.)
- 2.) Standard outline, excluding means of access and siting.
- 3.)
4. Parking space details 0101
5. Submission of landscaping proposals 0201
6. Submission of screening proposals 0204
7. Latchgate condition 0301
8. Cable ducts 0604
9. The use shall not be commenced until the proposed improved access arrangements have been completed to the satisfaction of the District Planning Authority  
1105
10. Details submitted in pursuance of condition 1. above shall provide for the disposal of surface water separate from the foul water sewerage system. No surface water shall be discharged to Enbrook Stream until the down-stream culvert has been improved to the satisfaction of the District Planning Authority.
11. Details of any external alterations to Enbrook House shall be submitted to and approved by the District Planning Authority before the commencement of any works to the Building.
12. Prior to commencement of the development, full details of proposed arrangements for the drying of washing, storage of refuse and sound-proofing between the floors shall be submitted and approved by the D.P.A., the approved arrangements shall be installed prior to occupation of the units.

Grounds:

4. Development without adequate accommodation for the parking of vehicles is likely to lead to car parking inconvenience to other road users and to be detrimental to amenity.
5. In the interests of visual amenity.
6. In the interests of visual amenity.
7. To ensure the best specialist advice is secured in respect of the soil conditions existing on the land as to the possibility of movement of the adjoining land, the suitability of the land for the development proposed and the precautions necessary to ensure stability of the land, the proposed buildings, forecourt and services and the adjoining land and buildings, if the land is suitable for such development.
8. In the interests of visual amenity.
9. In the interests of road safety and convenience.
10. To ensure that the drainage arrangements are satisfactory
11. No details for external alterations have been submitted and the Authority would wish to consider any changes in the light of the importance of the external appearance of the Listed Building.
12. In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of the flats.

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Decision of Committee:

# Rebuilding fences over wall dispute

by Jane Barlow

A DISPUTE between holiday giants Saga and residents of Sandgate has been resolved.

A row erupted when Saga suggested making two breaks in an ancient wall which surrounds a war memorial in Sandgate High Street. The idea was to install two gates to make a public entrance to Saga's newly landscaped grounds at its Enbrook Park offices.

Residents, however, said the wall should be left alone as it was of historical importance.

After consultations with them Saga agreed.

The wall was recently dismantled as Southern Water was carrying out flood improvement works in the area.

Saga offered to get the wall rebuilt and it is due to be completed this week.

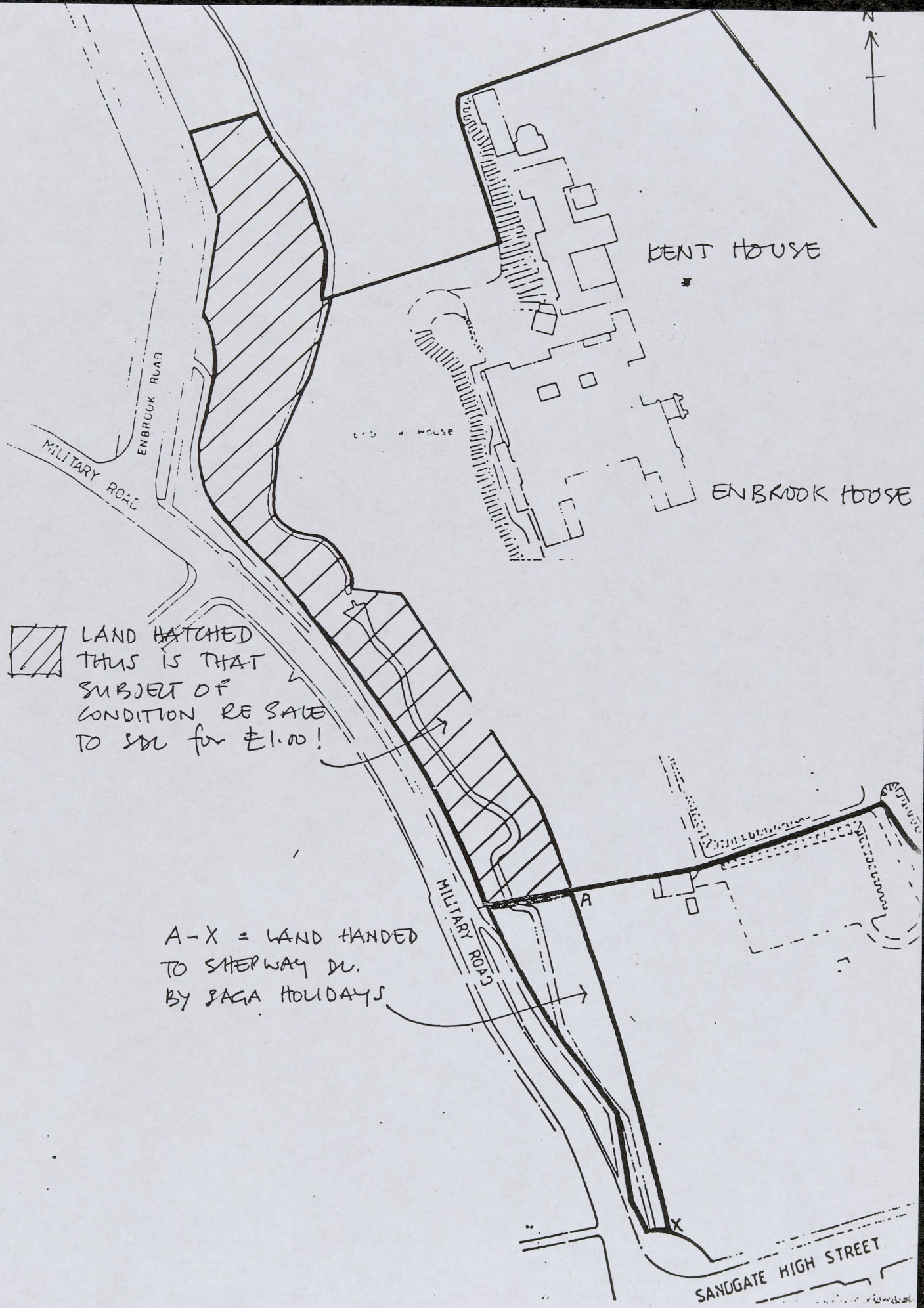
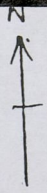
A spokesman for the firm said: "We were going to put two openings in the wall for two gates, to provide a welcome to the residents of Sandgate to Enbrook Park, which we are opening up to the public for the first time.

"However, we didn't realise this was going to be such a contentious issue.

"After speaking with residents we have decided to just rebuild the wall as it was."

The public will still have access to Saga's grounds but will enter through the main entrance off Sandgate High Street, or through Military Road.





KENT HOUSE

ENBROOK HOUSE

ENBROOK HOUSE



LAND HATCHED  
THIS IS THAT  
SUBJECT OF  
CONDITION RE SALE  
TO SDL for £1.00!

A-X = LAND HANDED  
TO SHERWAY DL.  
BY SAGA HOLIDAYS

SANDGATE HIGH STREET

ENBROOK ROAD

MILITARY ROAD

MILITARY ROAD

A

X