

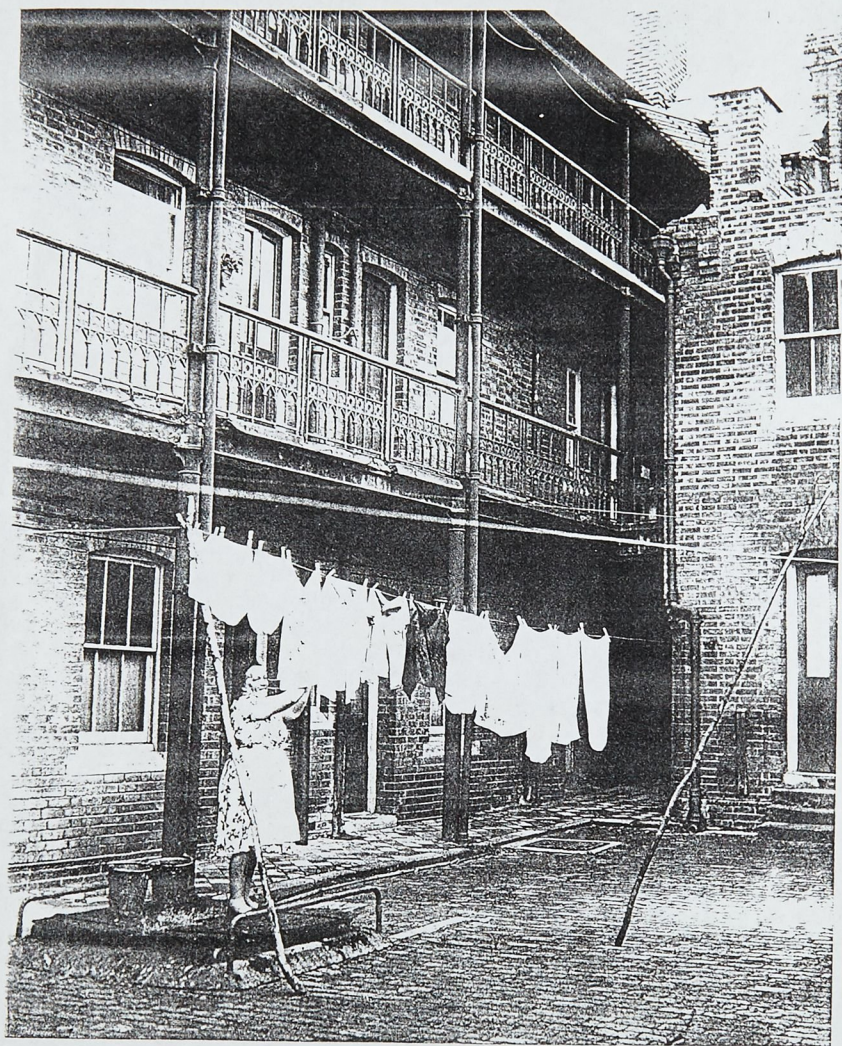
No 51 High Street, Sandgate Library Grade 11 A

'Built in 1884. Custom built as a dual fire station and reading room. Now [1976] Sandgate Library. Late 19c. Two storeys applied timber-framing with pebble-dashed infill. Hipped tiled roof having left side square bellcote surmounted by a fishscale tiled spire. 1st floor has left side Scottish baronial style bartizan with 3-light sash. Band of machicolation between ground and 1st floors. The ground floor has a left side simple doorcase and a right side entrance designed to accommodate fire engine  
Note 'Showing signs of apparent neglect. Requires redecoration... '.

#### Brief Chronology

- 1855 -- Sandgate WORKING MEN'S LIBRARY & READING INSTITUTION founded. later known as SANDGATE LITERARY INSTITUTION
- 1859 -- Sandgate FIRE BRIGADE started about this time
- 1877 -- Serious fire at Devonshire Terrace, brigade deemed inefficient
- 1882 -- Feb: Appeal for funds for efficient fire engine and suitable modern appliances. Aug: New Shand and Mason fire engine and new set of ladders arrives in village. Temporary quarters in coach house of Royal Kent Hotel. Oct: VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE established. See Rules and Regulations. Lord Pelham consents to be President
- 1883 -- GREAT BAZAAR at Encombe for the purpose of 'Re-establishing the Sandgate Library and Reading Room and to provide Permanent Quarters for the new FIRE ENGINE (see Handbill July 1883)
- 1884 -- June: Volunteer Fire Brigade parades through town, takes possession of new engine house 'supplied for their use through the munificence of the Misses Reilly of Encombe' who provided the land. Building designed by John Waddell a local builder. Further contributions from the townsfolk needed.  
June 25: LIBRARY AND READING ROOM opened  
Sept: SANDGATE LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH seeks permission from the Trustees of the Literary Institution to hold their monthly meetings in the Reading Room (above fire engine room). Becomes their regular venue.  
Nov 3: Inaugural dinner of Volunteer Fire Brigade. Sir E.W. Watkin MP in the chair
- 1892 -- Sandgate Literary Institution becomes SANDGATE LIBRARY INSTITUTION
- 1893 -- Following Sandgate Landslip disaster, the Misses Reilly agree to build an additional room (now Whitbread's bottle store) at rear of Engine Room for use of the Board's surveyor. Rent £ 10 pa.
- 1897 -- Theodosia Reilly of 'Encombe' dies 2 Sept, leaving entire estate to her sister Jane Hester (about £ 29,000)
- 1903 -- Jan 9: Attorneys for the surviving Miss Reilly sell the building and land running to Granville Parade, to SANDGATE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL for £ 650 The UDC have obtained Whitehall's sanction to a loan. Serves as COUNCIL CHAMBER till 1934
- 1904 -- Feb 15: Jane Hester Reilly dies aged about 84 years. Estate (about £2262) left to her three nieces
- 1934 -- Folkestone Borough Council takes over Sandgate Urban District Council. SANDGATE BRANCH LIBRARY opened in the former Reading Room/Library. Fire station continues service
- 1974 -- Under Local Government Re-organisation Act of 1972, the property is transferred to KENT COUNTY COUNCIL, responsible for Library services. Note Library area occupied less than one third of total property
- 1976 -- SANDGATE SOCIETY becomes tenant-at-will in disused engine room, refurbish it as their Headquarters
- 1982 -- July: SANDGATE BRANCH LIBRARY moves to new premises on site of another Sandgate benefaction known as the James Morris dwellings. In advance, Sandgate Society is given notice to quit prior to Kent County Council's intention to put this 'surplus building' up for sale by closed tender to the highest bidder.  
July: Following an extra-ordinary general meeting, Sandgate Society decides to send a deputation to Kent County Council. County Estates Officer agrees that an offer, if made within one month, will be considered.  
STEERING COMMITTEE buys a 'shelf' company (i.e. not yet trading) as vehicle to acquire the property. SOCIALVIEW LTD offers £ 15,300  
Sept 10: Lands Use Committee (KCC) agrees to accept an increased offer of £ 18,100
- 1983 -- June-August: Socialview Ltd becomes SANDGATE HERITAGE TRUST LTD. Articles and Memorandum of the company approved by Charity Commissioners for charitable status. (Reg.No. 287281)  
Oct 18: Purchase officially completed

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Row of Tenement House Dwellings, 1904





Times Men's Buildings 1904





The new bungalows in Ivy Way. They have been specially designed for the convenience of elderly people.

# Part Of Old Sandgate On Brink Of Demolition

## Elderly Folk Rehoused

LIFE begins anew this week-end for a group of old people who have lived for years in the crumbling James Morris Dwellings at Sandgate.

Yesterday they moved out lock, stock and barrel. Today they woke up in a terrace of 10 brand-new bungalows specially built for them off Ivy Way, Folkestone.

Theirs was a move which covered only two or three miles in space but spanned nearly a century in time.

The James Morris Dwellings, named after the London man who built them, were erected in

continued living there after her marriage, and in turn brought up five children there, one of whom, Miss Rose Suds, still lives with her.

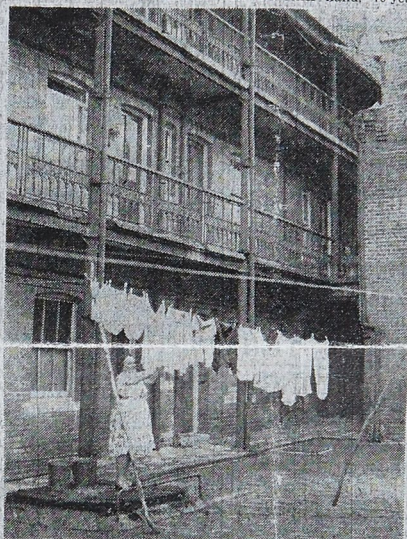
"I didn't really want to move when they first said the place was coming down," Mrs. Suds told the *Folkestone and Hythe Herald* this week.

"I suppose I've got used to the idea by now. But it will mean a big break."

On the other hand, 70-year-



Mrs. S. E. Suds, 90, with her daughter.



The drab back view of the old buildings.

1874. And they look their age. A large, indigestible mixture of barrack-block architecture and Victorian piety, they were considered in their day to be the very latest thing in housing for the respectable poor.

Their imposing structure was such that the first residents, it is said, were often informed by the less respectable poor outside that the place looked like a hotel.

### LIKE A WORKHOUSE

Times have changed. Despite the sea views from the flats in favoured positions the dingy block presents to 20th-century eyes the appearance of a workhouse.

The flats are small, dark and poky. There is no electricity or hot running water. Lavatories are external and shared. There is a communal and primitive wash-house.

A fire in 1962 severely damaged part of the building, and the trustees of the charity which controls it found it impracticable to attempt to keep up with the already mounting lists of necessary repairs.

Negotiations have been going on for some time with Folkestone Town Council, who plan to acquire it, demolish it and redevelop the site.

### OLDEST TENANT

It is expected that the negotiations will end successfully soon, and when they do the breakers will move in. Not many people will feel inclined to shed tears over its downfall.

But a home's a home for all that, and the James Morris Dwellings certainly hold nearly a lifetime of happy memories for the oldest inhabitant, 90-year-old Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Suds.

She moved in at the age of three, her father being a well-known local fisherman who was coxswain of the old Folkestone lifeboat.

She was brought up there,

smile and a cup of tea for any visitors, despite the losing battle she has been waging to try to keep the flat comfortable.

Her husband, Mr. Ernest Idenden, aged 74, is also glad to go.

A professional gardener before his retirement, he has always regretted not having a patch of ground to work over at the dwellings.

### FLOWERS FOR TWO

The Council have specially allocated a corner bungalow to the couple so that he can have a better sized garden to tend than most of his neighbours, many of whom, of course, will not be able to do much digging at all.

It was also a deliberate decision on the Council's part to keep the old people together as much as possible when the move took place.

Mrs. Marie Dyball, the Corporation's Chief Housing Assistant, who has been their main link with the Council on the personal level, has come to know them all very well.

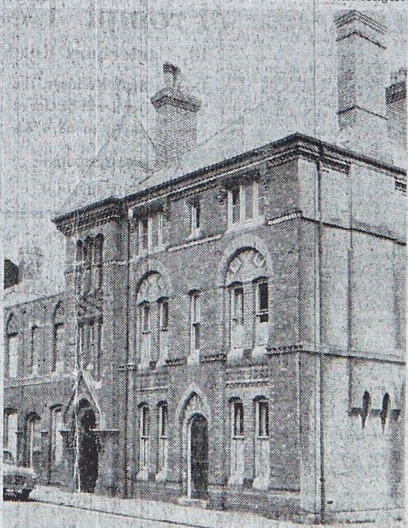
### GOOD NEIGHBOURS

"They are very good neighbours," she said, "always helping each other out. We have tried to make sure that they can stick together."

Even the few who cannot move into the 10 bungalows will be found suitable homes as near to the main group as possible.

So today as the old people feel their way around their new homes and try out the electric switches, the hot water system, the fitted cupboards, the modern sink unit and the bath, remind yourself to go to Sandgate soon for a last look at the dwellings of James Morris, deceased.

They will not be troubling our consciences much longer.



The James Morris Dwellings have a front elevation of Victorian character.



KM 56/62

**EAST KENT**

# New homes for Folkestone old

## JOINT MOVE FROM CONDEMNED HOMES TO MODERN ESTATE

TEN Folkestone pensioners will make a collection among themselves this weekend to buy a present for an official of the town council. Explained 73-year-old Mrs. Deborah Idenden: "It will be our small way of saying 'thank you' to someone who has been so kind and considerate to us, and who has helped us to start a new life."

Mrs. Idenden, her husband Ernest, and eight other old folk, aged between 70 and 90, were moved yesterday by Folkestone Corporation from their condemned homes in Sandgate to new homes on a specially designed old people's estate at Ivy Way, Folkestone.

The Sandgate homes—the James Morris Dwellings built in 1876—were damp, overcrowded and declared as slums. But for some of the old folk they had been their homes for half-a-century, and the oldest, Mrs. Sarah Sudds, had lived there since she was three!

Folkestone's chief housing assistant, Mrs. Marie Dyball, was given the task of re-housing them. She spent hours with the old folk talking to them and finding out their likes and dislikes.

She discovered that, above all, they did not want to be parted from one another. So after discussion with the borough engineer, Mr. Norman Castle, and the chief architect, Mr. Len Clarke, it was decided to build them their own estate.

### MAKE LIFE EASY

The bungalows have been specially designed to make life easy and comfortable for the old folk. The kitchens are large and airy, with fitted sink units, cupboards, and power points, all within easy reach and no bending or craning needed. Marley tiles are fitted throughout, and there are automatic gas cookers and gas heaters. The bedrooms are specially heated, and there are no steps inside or out.

Each bungalow has a small garden—an extra big one for Mr. Idenden because he is a keen gardener—and there are laid out gardens with seats to the entrance of the estate. "We were very worried about moving at first," Mrs. Idenden told the KENT MESSENGER. "But Mrs. Dyball has been so good to us that she has made it all very pleasant, and of course when we saw our new homes we were delighted. They're wonderful. It's the best thing that's ever happened to us."

**"SO LOVELY"**  
Eighty-six-year-old Mrs. Mary Memphis admitted: "I'm a very stubborn person, and I wouldn't hear of being moved at first. But the homes are so lovely, and it has all been done so nicely, I'm looking forward to starting a new life."

Caretaker at the James Morris Dwellings, Mrs. Elizabeth Evans, said: "It was a most difficult business to get these old people to give up their roots. The Council have done a marvellous job, and everyone is looking forward to going. They will be living in luxury."

Added Mrs. Idenden: "Our present homes are damp, and we only have two rooms and a kitchen no bigger than a cupboard. We're on a second floor and have to climb steps, there's only gas lighting, no baths, and we have to share a toilet."

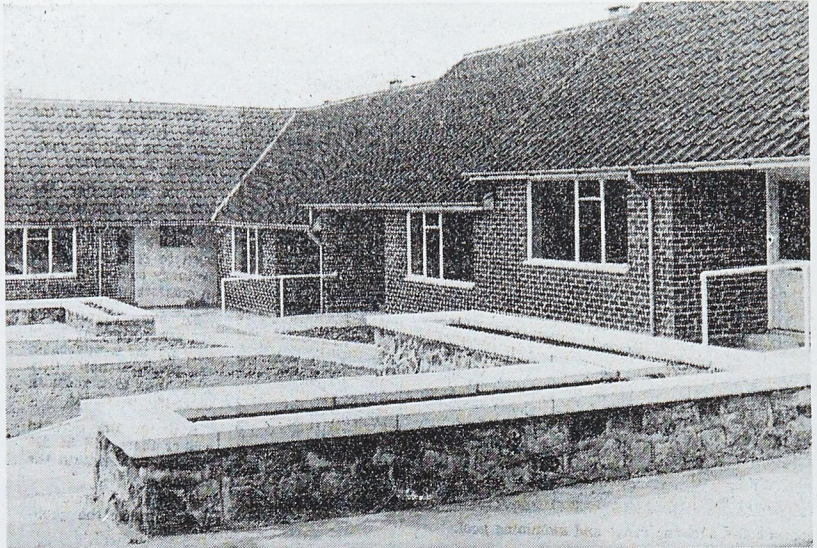
The rent of their present

next-door neighbours. They should be very comfortable and happy."

Of the intended gift from the old folk she said: "I'm very touched, but it was all part of my job. I don't think I would be allowed to accept it anyway. Council officials are not allowed to receive any sort of gift from the public."

The scheme has cost the Council £19,695. It was tried as an experiment, and is now expected to be extended to rehouse other old people in the town.

**NOTE:** The James Morris Dwellings were under trust until last year. The money ran out, and the houses were in such a bad state they were taken over by the Council.



SOME OF THE NEW HOMES



EIGHTY-SIX-YEAR-OLD Mrs. Mary Memphis in the yard outside her home.



MR. ERNEST IDENDEN lights the gas in their flat while Mrs. Idenden pours out tea.