

## ***Friends Meeting House, Broadstairs***

*9 St Peters Park Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 2BL*

*National Grid Reference: TR 38998 68053*



### ***Statement of Significance***

***A building of the 1920s, converted to use as a meeting house in 1997. Its primary significance is as a picturesque design by local architect Edgar Ranger, well placed in the local townscape. Overall, the building and site are of medium significance.***

### ***Evidential value***

***The building has only been a meeting house since 1997, and as such its evidential value is low.***

### ***Historical value***

***The building is of local historical value as an architectural design by Edgar Ranger, who lived in Broadstairs; its historical significance as a meeting house is low.***

### ***Aesthetic value***

***The building is an attractive design combining neo-Tudor and Arts and Crafts elements. It responds to its prominent corner site well and with its boundary wall makes a strong contribution to the local townscape. The rear extension at the rear is not unsympathetic in character. The building is of high aesthetic value.***

**Communal value**

***The meeting house is used by local groups but its small size restricts major use. The building contributes to the attractiveness of the local scene. It is of medium communal value.***

**Part 1: Core data**

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *East Kent*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0007420*
- 1.3 Owner: *Friends Trusts Ltd*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Thanet District Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *South East*
- 1.6 Civil parish: *Broadstairs and St Peters*
- 1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*
- 1.8 NHLE: *N/a*
- 1.9 Conservation Area: *No*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *1925 (meeting house since 1997)*
- 1.13 Architect(s): *Edgar Ranger*
- 1.14 Date of visit: *1 December 2015*
- 1.15 Name of report author: *Andrew Derrick*
- 1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Rosemary Kirk*
- 1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *None*
- 1.18 Attached burial ground: *No*
- 1.19 Information sources:

Brittain-Caitlin, T., 'Picturesque, Modern, Tudor-Style: Edgar Ranger in Thanet', *Twentieth Century Architecture 12, Houses: Regional Practice and Local Character*, Twentieth Century Society, 2015

Assorted title deeds and other papers held at the meeting house  
Local Meeting survey by Rosemary Kirk, December 2015

## **Part 2: The Meeting House & Burial Ground: history, contents, use, setting and designation**

### 2.1. Historical background

This is a relatively new Meeting, established in 1997, when the current property was purchased. The property was built in 1925 as a flower shop from designs by Edgar Ranger, a prolific architect who set up in practice in Thanet after the First World War and who specialised in neo-Tudor and Arts and Crafts designs. It later became a house, and a large addition at the rear (the present meeting room) was most probably built in the 1950s. Minor internal adaptations were made for use as a meeting house.

### 2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

This is a small building, with the character of a historic lodge or toll house, built in 1925 from designs by Edgar Ranger. A later addition at the rear gives an overall L-shaped plan form, comprising a small square room at the front (now a library and small meeting room, photo bottom left), a central section with hallway, kitchen and WCs, and a (later) rear section with two interconnected rooms (now the main meeting room, photo bottom right). Both the frontage building and the rear range are under steep hipped tile roofs swept up at the overhanging eaves, the ridge of the later addition being slightly higher. A brick chimney stack serves the kitchen and library. The frontage building is in a picturesque neo-Tudor style, with rectangular bay windows on red brick and sandstone plinths. The bays contain triple casement windows with leaded upper lights, and a (disused) boarded door with elaborate hinges is recessed at the centre. Flanking this entrance, the high brick boundary wall is set back on either side, with half round sections scooped out. The main entrance is reached from the side, via a gateway in the side boundary wall. Here there are leaded lights to the kitchen, and later windows and doors to the main entrance alongside. The rear range is a contextual addition, faced in red brick with a hipped tile roof. It has large picture windows, metal framed.

Inside, the front room is fitted out with neo-Tudor half-timbering. There is an arched brick fireplace in the kitchen. The meeting room is plainly fitted out, the original two rooms now conjoined with a folding partition in the opening.

### 2.3 Loose furnishings

There are no loose furnishings requiring particular mention.

### 2.4. Attached burial ground

None.

### 2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

The meeting house is placed on a corner site in a residential area close to the centre of Broadstairs. It is bordered by a high brick wall which encloses a small rear garden.

### 2.6. Listed status

Not listed. The building is an attractive design by Edgar Ranger (1888-1971), an interwar specialist in Arts and Crafts and Tudor designs, including the nearby Long Barn, built in 1925 for his own occupation and now listed Grade II. The meeting house is a modest and altered design, but in spite of (because of?) its diminutive scale it makes a positive contribution to the local scene. It would be worthy of inclusion in any local list.

## 2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

Low. Title deeds show the site as yet undeveloped in 1884.

## **Part 3: Current use and management**

*See completed volunteer survey*

### 3.1. Condition

- i) Meeting House: Fair
- ii) Attached burial ground (if any): n/a

### 3.2. Maintenance

The building appears to be reasonably well-maintained, although some of the internal finishes are now looking a little shabby. The last QI appears to have taken place in 2011 (no copy was available during the visit) and did not reveal any major problems.

### 3.3. Sustainability

The Meeting uses the Sustainability Toolkit. Measures to reduce environmental impact and to save energy have included the provision of secondary glazing in the large meeting room. The building is well placed for local transport (nearby bus stop and railway station).

### 3.4. Amenities

The Meeting considers that it has the amenities that it needs, with adequate meeting space, kitchen and WCs. There is no resident warden or Friend.

### 3.5. Access

The meeting house is accessible for people with disabilities, including step-free access and circulation, accessible WC and a hearing loop.

### 3.6 Community Use

In addition to use by Friends for about three hours per week, the facilities are used for about eight hours a week out of a possible 40. There is no lettings policy as such, but hirers have to meet certain conditions and sign an agreement form. Users cite the quiet, calm atmosphere and convenience for public transport.

### 3.7. Vulnerability to crime

There are no reported instances of crime or antisocial behaviour. The area is considered to be well cared-for, with low levels of crime and social deprivation.

### 3.8. Plans for change

None.

## **Part 4: Impact of Change**

4.1. To what extent is the building amenable or vulnerable to change?

*i) As a Meeting House used only by the local Meeting:* The building is stated to meet the needs of the Meeting. It is on a constrained site, with no scope for expansion without loss of garden space. Internally there is scope for adaptation, but the character of the library (front room) should be preserved if possible.

*ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use:* The building is already put to wider community use, and the same considerations apply.

*iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House:* The building is of local value and a suitable new use would need to be found. It would easily revert to residential use.

## **Part 5: Category: 3**