



## CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES TO SAVE HASTINGS PIER

Coast magazine and British Tourism Week join forces for the 'Great Pier Promenade' to raise vital restoration funds

**14 February 2011.** **Coast** magazine and British Tourism Week have launched a campaign to save one of Britain's most treasured seaside landmarks: Hastings Pier, which was devastated by fire last year.

The campaign is calling on readers of **Coast** magazine, and anyone in the UK who would like to see the pier restored, to take part in a sponsored Great Pier Promenade, in order to help return Hastings Pier to its former glory. The aim is for people to walk as many British piers as possible over the spring/summer to highlight the campaign and raise money towards restoration work.

The Great Pier Promenade will launch on Saturday 12 March by Hastings Pier, during a 'Party on the Prom', which will include a market, and performances by local poets, musicians and comedians. This event will coincide with VisitBritain's UK-wide celebration of piers, Party on the Pier, at the start of British Tourism Week, when all kinds of activities will take place on piers around the country.

The campaign is also gaining support from celebrities in the form of comic Jo Brand, and *Coast* presenter and Campaign for Rural England vice president, Nicholas Crane:

*'Every seaside should have its pier, that symbol of fun, frivolity and, for me, many nights spent drunkenly dancing at its far end to the popular bands of the time. When I got chucked out of home at 17, I rented a bedsit overlooking Hastings Pier, so it featured in my landscape for a number of years. I'd hate to see it disappear forever.'* Jo Brand, comedian and author

*'Seaside piers symbolise the flowering of a seaside nation. They're one of our most evocative coastal treasures and central to the renaissance of the British seaside. Saving the pier at Hastings is a battle worth fighting. And it'll be one in the eye for the arsonists.'* Nicholas Crane, Campaign for Rural England, vice president ([cpre.org.uk](http://cpre.org.uk)) and *Coast* presenter

The sight of the Grade II-listed pier at Hastings being ravaged by fire last October was heartbreaking for lovers of the British seaside. The brainchild of pier supremo Eugenius Birch, it was on the cusp of regeneration, following a community-led campaign by the Hastings Pier and White Rock Trust (HPWRT). Although the substructure survived, 95 per cent of the buildings on the deck were destroyed in the blaze.

Clare Gogerty, editor, **Coast** magazine, says: *"The outpouring of emotion following the Hastings Pier fire shows how well loved this seaside icon, and others like it, really are. We*

*believe the pier has a bright future and want to do our bit to help the HPWRT turn around its fortunes, by walking as many piers as we can over the spring and summer. Join our Great Pier Promenade, and not only will you have some great days out, but you will be raising money to preserve a crucial part of our seaside heritage."*

Patricia Yates, Co-Chair of British Tourism Weeks, says: "I am delighted that Coast magazine has really got behind this year's British Tourism Week and 'Party on the Pier' which celebrates our much adored Piers in Britain.

"Tourists just love these most precious seaside attractions and we would love to see them preserved to highlight what they can offer the local area. Coast magazine has really led by example with their fantastic campaign to restore Hastings Pier and its tourism legacy."

DRMM Architects has now been selected to re-design Hastings Pier, and HPWRT is optimistic about its prospects. The Trust is currently campaigning to raise money to secure the structure against storms and hit its match-funding target of £800,000 for the renovation.

The Trust will use the money raised by the Great Pier Promenade to restore the Grade II-listed curved building – the only surviving structure on the pier's apron – dating back to 1907. First built as a shelter, the curved building later housed cafés and shops, and is likely to become a restaurant as part of the pier's re-design. Once the restoration work is completed, a plaque will be unveiled in honour of Coast readers and the Great Pier Promenade.

Sponsorship forms for the Great Pier Promenade are available for download at **Coast** magazine's website, [allaboutyou.com/greatpierpromenade](http://allaboutyou.com/greatpierpromenade), and the window for sponsorship and donations will be open until 31 August 2011. Please note: the Great Pier Promenade excludes piers that are currently derelict or closed to the public.

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For more information and interviews, please contact:

Natalie Earl  
PR Manager  
The National Magazine Company Ltd.  
72 Broadwick Street, London, W1F 9EP  
Tel: 020 7439 5218  
Mob: 07809 658146  
natalie.earl@natmags.co.uk  
[www.natmags.co.uk](http://www.natmags.co.uk)

**About Coast magazine:** *Coast* magazine celebrates all that is great about the British coastline, whether it be a coastal walk, a seaside home, the best place to buy a fish supper or to go rock pooling. It has a circulation of 42,593 and is edited by Clare Gogerty.