

# Ferndown before the Bulldozers

Less than 60 years ago Ferndown was just a village, with gravel roads, a scattering of shops and not even a set of traffic lights. Then the bulldozers arrived and much of Ferndown's history disappeared forever. Part autobiography and part history, these articles are a fascinating glimpse of a village in transition.

## The Dormy Hotel, New Road, Part 2

In 1951 the new 4 star luxury hotel complex became part of the De Vere Group of Hotels and opened on the 16th January. It was managed by the parents of professional golfer Frank McInnes and understandably was very popular with golfers and many old time radio and theatre stars such as Sam Costa, Sophie Tucker, Eric Barber, and Pearl Carr.

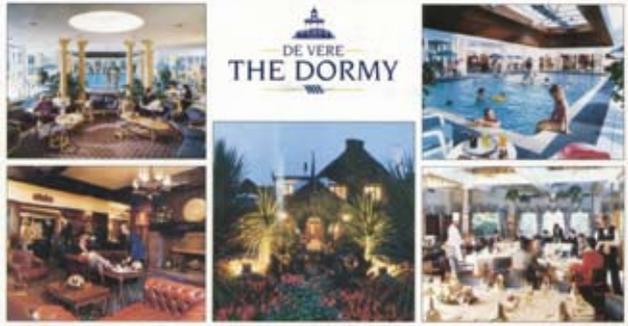
It was one of the largest Country-style conference hotels on the south coast with 12 acres of landscaped grounds, 114 bedrooms and 25 suites, spread across 2 main blocks and several smaller buildings, all linked by glass corridors. It also had conference and banqueting suites, a childrens' play area along with a sizeable leisure centre including indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a gymnasium and squash courts.

The promotional postcard above gives us some idea of how luxurious it was during the 50s and 60s.

It closed in December 2004 after 53 years as a result of weak business results compared with other hotels in the De Vere portfolio and was the subject of several arson attacks once shut with much of it destroyed in a large fire in 2007. It was even reputed to be haunted before it burnt down.

The name Dormy Crescent probably doesn't mean that much to many of the new residents of the new development who may be more than a little surprised by its illustrious past.

Much more information and many old photos can be found on Google and Google Images together with links to various fas-



2014 just prior to demolition



Dormy Crescent entrance - March 2019

inating YouTube videos taken just before demolition. Look at the following sites: [www.derelictplaces.co.uk](http://www.derelictplaces.co.uk) [www.28dayslater.co.uk](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk)