

# Creating a Photography Exhibition

Alan D Horn ARPS

This paper is written based on the experience of my own exhibition that took place at the Anteros gallery in Norwich over two weeks in January 2022. As it was my first solo exhibition, it was a real learning curve and may help others going through the same process.

## The Elements

- The Theme
- Web Site
- The Location
- Timing
- The Images
- Catalogues and Publicity Materials
- Costs & Funding
- Layout
- The Artist's Statement
- Press Releases
- The Launch
- Attendance, Footfall and visitor book
- Sales
- Permanent Display
- Lessons

## The Theme

The theme for my exhibition was to document both the personal and ecological tragedy of the village of Happisburgh in Norfolk that is literally falling into the sea due to rapid coastal erosion. I had spent about 3 years regularly visiting the location and meeting a number of the affected residents with whom I developed a strong and friendly relationship.

## Web Site

My own web site needed to be current with the images I was intending to display as well as a selection of other projects so potential galleries could judge my work.

## The Location

To attract the best audience, the exhibition needed to be in relatively close proximity to Happisburgh and after a long and at times, arduous search over more than two months I was accepted by the Anteros Gallery in Norwich. To qualify with them I needed to submit images for examination and provide a clear modus operandi.



### **Timing**

The negotiations with Anteros were finalised in August 2021 leaving me under 5 months to prepare and manage the logistics from photo files through to the physical display. The timing was acceptable and focussed the mind on all elements and logistics.

### **The Images**

The images had to be of the highest quality, ensuring they are presented under mounts and in high quality frames. A4 images are too small and A2 is preferable. This work was managed by a local (to me) framer who not only did a first-class job but shared views on the quality of the prints as we moved to A2 which necessitated a couple of reworked images. We agreed that we would use their logo and web link in all our materials and we obtained a valuable discount for this. The strong relationship meant that timings were under control.

### **Catalogues and Publicity Materials**

The “anchor” image of destroyed sea defences was used for all publicity whether printed or digital, covering the catalogue, A4 leaflets, press releases, the Anteros web site and postcard handouts.



These were all produced locally (to me) and like the framer, the printer worked closely with me on effectiveness of layout. Once again timings were kept under tight control and a discount received for his logo on all items.

<https://alandhorn.co.uk/docs/HappisburghBrochure.pdf>

<https://alandhorn.co.uk/docs/HappisburghLeaflet.pdf>

## **Costs and funding**

I set out recognising that my first exhibition was going to cost me but unsure just how much. Therefore, it was necessary to evaluate the costs and where income could be derived. Selling catalogues and images was a fairly obvious route but clearly without any guarantees. However, I was able to raise other funding from Norfolk County Council, the university where I studied for my Hons Degree in Photography and a GoFundMe account which between them raised £800.

Added to the catalogue and image sales, I raised £1240 (about £200 below my estimates) leaving me £760 to find. I considered this to be an investment rather than a cost.

***See Appendix 1***

## **Layout**

Anteros Gallery is a listed building with Grade I features including a Tudor ceiling. This clearly has advantages in its attractiveness to visitors but gives the exhibitors a few challenges regarding layout.

The images and storyboards were divided into two rooms of the gallery. The main room – The Tudor Room – was where I hung the images that focused on the destruction. The Front Room was where I hung the images of the affected residents and their stories. This room was also at the front of the building on the main street, allowing a striking image to be placed in the window.



## The Artist's Statement

The opportunity to focus on what my interests are and how they led to the exhibition

**See Appendix 2**

## Press Releases

We produced two versions of the press release. The Long Version was produced by Anteros and circulated both physically and digitally to circa 4000 contacts. The Short Version was produced to be easily emailed to all my contacts - **See Appendix 3**

Further exposure came from the **Norfolk Passport**, the on-line guide to events in the area. The exhibition was rated No.2 event in Norfolk behind no other than Grayson Perry! -**See Appendix 4**

**The Royal Photographic Society** was of great help, publishing the event through the Regional Organiser of East Anglia and the **North Norfolk News** gave me a full page spread.

## The Launch

A formal launch took place on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January at the gallery to a full house of 50 guests (Covid Restricted) – A PowerPoint presentation focussing on the dramatic receding of the coast and its effect on the local community and loss of almost 30 properties in just 15 years, followed by Q&A and refreshments at the adjoining linked café.



### **Attendance, Footfall and Visitors Book**

The gallery was open 4 days per week, Tuesday to Saturday. I felt it necessary to be on site throughout the whole two-week period although staff at the gallery were helpful during breaks. The overall footfall was in excess of 200 plus an unexpected school visit that created many questions (and a great deal of noise).

The gallery provided a visitors' book and overall feedback was very positive.

### **Sales**

With most of the catalogues and three images being sold the outcome was (for me) most satisfactory. I had estimated higher sales but images of coastal destruction are not for everyone's wall!

The Hill House Inn in Happisburgh was a great help in publicising the event and also bought two images. The images of the residents (see Catalogue) and their stories were donated to them and were well received.

### **Permanent Display**

The exhibition is now on permanent display at the Happisburgh Community Centre. I offered it to the chair of the Parish Council as a gift for all the help given to me by members of the community.

### **Lessons**

- Essential that images are highest quality
- Finding a suitable gallery can take time
- Once dates are fixed, the timings and logistics must be put in place and adhered to
- Quality framing is essential – preferably known and local providers
- Catalogue and other publicity materials - ditto
- Detailed layout plans agreed with the gallery
- Ensuring the gallery has all facilities and equipment required\*
- Ensuring that framed images can be safely transported
- Hanging needs time and help. The gallery should have the experience.
- Personal attendance during the whole of the exhibition is recommended
- A visitor book with comments is helpful for feedback

\*The gallery's projector was incompatible with my laptop putting the talk at the launch at risk. A 20-mile round trip to locate a suitable replacement was needed on the day before!

## Appendix 1

### Income & Expenditure account Norwich Exhibition

#### Income

|                        | Estimate | Actual |
|------------------------|----------|--------|
| Sale of catalogues     | 300      | 270    |
| sale of images         | 350      | 170    |
| University donation    | 100      | 100    |
| Norfolk County Council | 250      | 250    |
| GoFundMe               | 450      | 450    |
| Total                  | 1450     | 1240   |

#### Expenditure

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Framing and Prints | 982  |
| Hire of Anteros    | 450  |
| catalogues         | 420  |
| Material           | 50   |
| Hire of projector  | 100  |
| Total              | 2000 |
| Shortfall          | 760  |



## Appendix 2

**Alan D Horn**

**Documentary Photographer**



### **Artist's Statement**

From rapidly melting glaciers in southern Chile and Argentina, unprecedented storms in the Atacama Desert, deforestation in Brazil to the accelerating coastal erosion in the UK, I am increasingly seeing ecological disasters unfold. I have an avid interest in highlighting the effects of both local and national governments' neglect of our environments and their disregard for the people who are directly affected. I am forever questioning why authorities fail to undertake and deliver on promises and my research exposes the hypocrisy of those faceless organisations who promise much but have little or no intention to deliver. I am primarily interested in highlighting how our environments are being destroyed by deliberate neglect. What is apparent is that pressure in every form must be brought on those in authority to act and the photographic image is a powerful format.

### **Academic and Photographic Qualifications**

MBA, BSc International Marketing, BA (Hons)Photography, LRPS

### **My Current Focus**

Coastal erosion in Norfolk is well documented but analysis suggests that fundamental changes to the landscape and communities are inevitable and dramatic. The real conundrum is what can be done and over what period of time to protect communities or develop strategies to manage the upheaval and changes needed. These issues also need to take into account the oft quoted measure of cost-benefit analysis that controls Government spending on coastal erosion. My focus is on the area around Happisburgh (pronounced hayz-br-ugh) a small village with a population of around 1400 where erosion of its cliff face has been and continues to be dramatic leading to the loss of many properties with many more at risk and with no real solution in sight to help those losing what may be their only significant asset.

An Exhibition of my work takes place at the Anteros Gallery in Norwich from January 4th-15th 2022, entitled *Happisburgh, the village falling into the sea.*

### **Contact me**

Contact Phone: 07768 961783

Web Site: [www.alandhorn.co.uk](http://www.alandhorn.co.uk)

Email: [alan.horn1@outlook.com](mailto:alan.horn1@outlook.com)

Twitter: @alanhor04168431

Facebook

## Short Press Release

### Press Release

## The Village Falling into the Sea – A Photographic Exhibition

The village of Happisburgh in North Norfolk is the most “at risk” community in the UK\* where coastal erosion has claimed almost 30 homes in the last 15 years and many more will also succumb to the sea in the next 15 years as the destruction of the cliffs is predicted to claim a further 100m by 2035 although global warming and the predicted increase in sea levels and the severity of storms will undoubtedly accelerate the process.

Many inhabitants of Happisburgh are at risk of losing their homes which in many cases are their only real asset - with little or no help from government.

Photographer Alan D Horn has been capturing images of the neglected sea defences and dramatic cliff falls over the last 30 months but has also spent time with a number of the village community whose stories make uncomfortable reading.

A photo documentary illustrating the plight of Happisburgh takes place at the Anteros Gallery in Norwich between January 4<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Alan will also be giving a talk on his work at the gallery from 10.00 am on Saturday January 8<sup>th</sup>.

*Lens Culture*, the influential international photography magazine commented on Alan’s work on Happisburgh – *“Across your photographs, you display a strong intent to capture scenes with intense visual qualities that target to stimulate the eye before imparting the message”*

\*Confused.com November 2019

Anteros Arts Foundation  
7-15 Fye Bridge Street, Norwich NR3 1LJ 01603 766129 [www.aterosfoundation.com](http://www.aterosfoundation.com)



## Appendix 4

NORFOLK  
PASSPORT

### This week's top 5 things to do

No.2

The Village Falling into The Sea

*On until Sunday 30 January*



Join photographer Alan Horn for his latest exhibition at Anteros in Norwich. He has been capturing images of the neglected sea defences and dramatic cliff-falls over the last 30 months and has also spent time with a number of the village community.

The village of Happisburgh is the most at-risk community in the UK. Alan aims to raise awareness to help develop strategies to manage the upheaval.