



## Factsheet 2

### What did Worthing Pier look like in Victorian times?

The original Pier was a basic iron structure 960 ft (291 m) long and with a 16 ft (4.6m) wide promenade deck with a landing stage at the seaward end. Although very popular from the start, both with locals and visitors, entertainment wasn't considered until 1874 when a 9-piece orchestra was engaged to play for three hours a day 'weather permitting'. Some years later, in 1881, a German band from the Rhine was contracted to play daily and conditions were improved for the audience and band with the construction of two shelters.



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Worthing Pier, Worthing, c1900

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In 1888 further improvements were made to The Pier at a cost of £12,000. The pier was widened from 15ft (4.6m) to 30ft (9.2m) and the Pier Head was increased to 105ft (32m) to allow for the construction of a 650-seater pavilion. Two new kiosks, one for tolls and one a bazaar, replaced the previous central tollgate. The upgraded Pier was re-opened by Viscount Hampden duly on 1st July 1889.

Following these improvements Worthing's popularity grew and soon the resort was playing host to busy steamer traffic as a steam ship began operating between Worthing Pier and the Chain Pier in Brighton 20 kms (12 miles) away.

To add to the amusements the first picture show in Worthing was seen on the Pier on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1896. This event is commemorated today by a Blue Plaque that stands on the site where the original show took place.



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People sit on the pier, Worthing, c1900

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