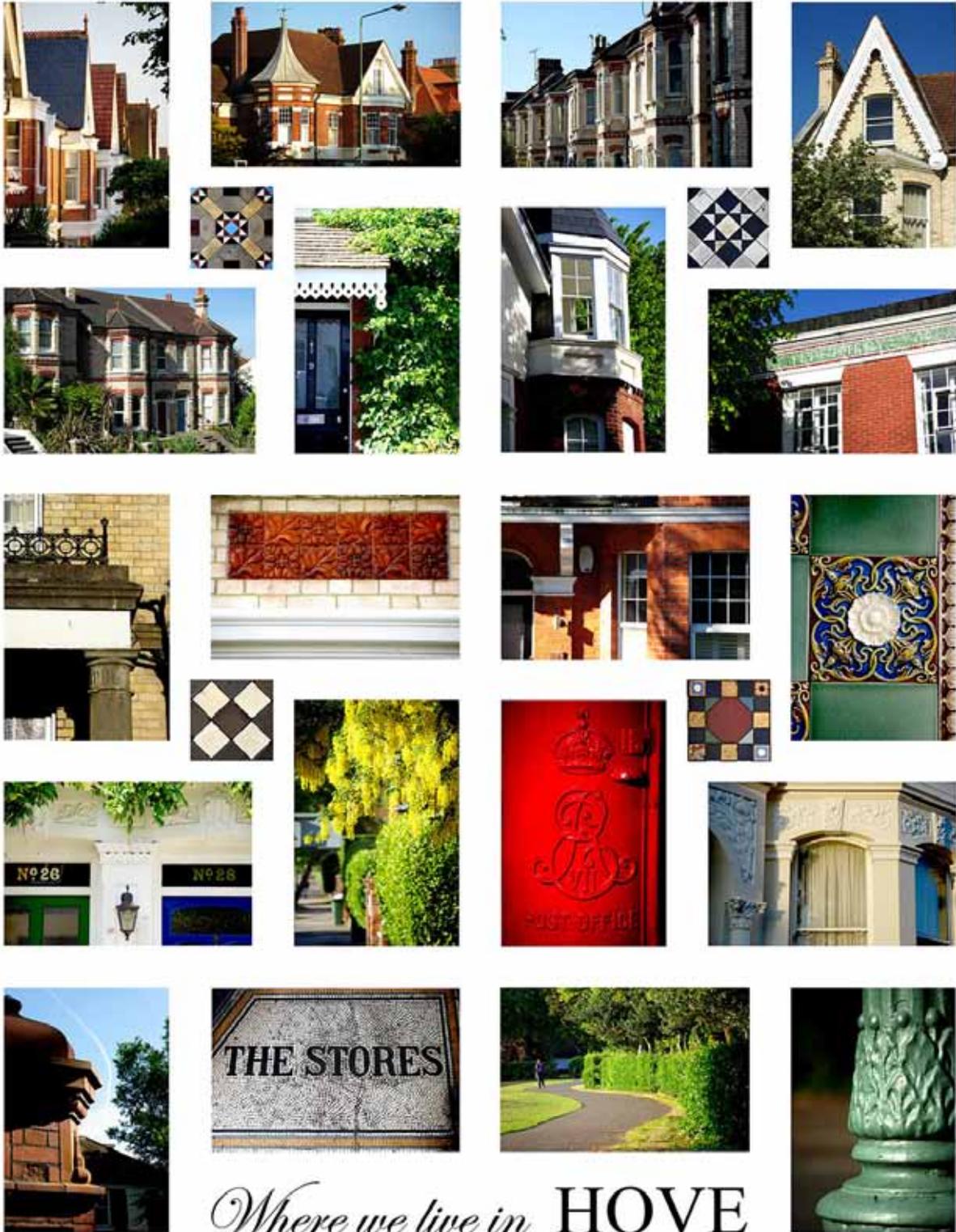


# Hove Civic Society

## January 2018 Newsletter



*Where we live in* **HOVE**

‘The district of Hove Park – or, as Mr Wilson Tickle called it in the “Hove Gazette” recently, Clarkville – has grown with Chicago-like rapidity, and who can wonder at it either. Situated on high ground and near the Hove Park, it is the healthiest spot in the neighbourhood.’

HOVE GAZETTE - Saturday August 13th 1898.

## Chairman's Letter

Dear Members,

A very happy, healthy and successful New Year to all of you!

In the last few months I have again had a chance to see cities in several countries both in Europe and the Middle East and a lasting impression is the enormous investment that goes into the public realm to create spaces for people to enjoy (and spend their money). Great effort is devoted to high quality surfacing materials and the horticultural expertise showing through in the selection of trees and shrubs and dense planting is striking. Most amazing, as a visitor from a city starved of public funding, is the cleanliness, the absence of litter, the lack of graffiti and the profusion of public art works. It is obvious that people care and take pride in their environment. I suspect it is also seen as an essential ingredient in economic development – attracting people to come, stay and visit again.



*A new Beach - LA Mer in Dubai*

I am afraid we have a long way to go to reach those standards here in the city and this is not a criticism of the City Council, who is doing amazing things with the funds available. In Hove we have noticed steam cleaning of pavements, quiet pavement hoovers that clean effectively, intelligent bins that signal when they are full and a more efficient way of collecting recyclables. What deserves criticism is the complacent attitude of people living



*Dense tree planting, Amiens*

and working here. Why, for example, do we tolerate the unbelievable graffiti attacks we have in the centre of Brighton and the associated environmental decline? Read more about this in this newsletter. Your committee believes that enough is enough when it comes to funding reductions for the environment in the city and we fully agree with the comments made by the Council's Deputy leader, Cllr Gill Mitchell, at our AGM in October when she suggested that there will be no more cuts in her environmental budget. That is also the tenor of our representation to the council's budget consultation as we believe that further cuts in the environmental area will actually also seriously damage the economy of the city. Again see later on in this newsletter.

Our own modest contributions for a better environment



*Litter free, Amiens*

here in Hove are continuing and we will hold a planting ceremony in Portland Road on the 8th February at 2 pm to celebrate the planting of 14 Elms, which the Society has funded. We are also again sending a list to the council of items that need to be repaired or maintained along the seafront and hope that we will be able to finally see the first designs for improvements to Church Road – or the new Hove Boulevard as we would like to call it.

Our cooperation with Regency Society in our joint Planning Forum is progressing very well. This method of joint working is already proving more effective than previous arrangements, particularly in focussing our effort on the most significant development proposals across the city, and in working up robust responses to the planning department. Summaries of the positions we have taken on cases in recent months can be seen on the HCS website.

By the time you get the next newsletter, we will have had the inauguration of the Hove Plinth and the first sculpture and you will receive invitations and further details as we progress through construction and installation. We are currently embarking on a number of steps to prepare for the time after the plinth has been completed including plans to set up a webshop to help generate base funds for maintenance and development of our plinth project and you can read more about it in the newsletter. One key issue relates to our constitution where we are currently seeking advice as to whether we need any changes to be able to trade via a webshop. This may result in us needing an Extra General Meeting and, if necessary, you will be contacted on this in the very near future.

Finally we are now embarking on a broad social media campaign and have employed help to support our work on creating a better way of spreading information and to generate wider engagement and support in our campaign for sculpture in our city.

With best wishes

Helmut Lusser



*Vacuum cleaning in the morning, Amiens*

## Full steam ahead for Hove Plinth

It's been a long time coming but all is now set for building the Hove Plinth and for a grand launch on the 21 April (SAVE THE DATE), when the Mayor of Brighton Cllr Mo Marsh will officially inaugurate the Hove Plinth and the first sculpture. From February you will begin to see things happening on the seafront promenade just down from the Queen Victoria statue in Grand Avenue, when some fencing will go up around the construction site. We have a detailed project plan with many partners involved. Firstly the foundation and a core structure will be formed and cabling for power and internet installed. Then the high quality stone cladding will be fitted as well as special stone paving around the plinth and in-ground lighting. A specially designed fixture plate, based on a design used by the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, will be fitted on top of the plinth alongside further lighting. All will then be ready for the installation of our inaugural sculpture - Constellation by Jonathan Wright.

During the autumn a number of workshops were held at Hove and Brighton Museums to generate suggestions from residents for objects that communicate what makes Hove Hove, why people love to live in Hove and why it is a place to be proud of. A final selection of objects to be included within the sculpture has now been made and Jonathan Wright would like to thank everyone who took part:

*"A big thank you to all the people who participated in the discussions about 'What makes Hove Hove'. I was really inspired by the strong sense of identity and pride in Hove and the many ideas and stories brought to the table. We are keeping the final choice of icons under wraps until the unveiling in April - but can promise a delightful celebration of the past and present of Hove."*



*Workshop discussion at Hove Museum Oct 2017*

The next step in the creation of the sculpture is now in progress with scanning of objects generously assisted by Senior Lecturer Karina Rodriguez from the Computer Science Department at University of Brighton. The objects will then be 3D printed and gilded before being put into the sculpture's steel frame. On the 22 March, as part of HCS Lecture programme, Jonathan Wright will bring to life the process of developing the sculpture, from the initial idea to involvement of the community in the design, the use of new technologies and the creative interaction between artist and engineers in bringing the work to fruition (ANOTHER DATE TO SAVE).

Having successfully raised the funds for the plinth and the first sculpture we must now continue to generate both base funding to cover maintenance, publicity, events and the digital developments as well as major funding for the ongoing sculpture programme. For the base funding we have a number of initiatives in the pipeline.

At the time of the launch we are planning to set up a web shop to sell merchandise that have an association with the Hove Plinth and its succession of sculptures and the seaside. This will include for examples small models

of the Constellation icons and the plinth, sculpture maquettes, small ceramic sculpture, seaside paintings, pebble jewellery as well as opportunities for 'experiences' such as walks, talks, studio visits, arts classes. We will also be part of the Hove Arts Artists' Open Houses this year with an exhibition of sculpture at Collectors' Selection where all profit will go to the Hove Plinth fund. One of our members who is a great cook has generously offered to provide charity dinners for people at his house - so look out for this opportunity as we will send you further information soon.

And finally, we will be setting up a Friends Scheme to offer everyone the opportunity to support Hove Plinth on a regular basis.

Thank you for helping this great project to get off the ground and please support our ongoing fundraising in any way you can. We are always looking for practical support so if you have any ideas or talents to offer please don't hesitate to get in touch with [karin@hovecivicsociety.org](mailto:karin@hovecivicsociety.org) And don't forget to follow us on social media.

<https://www.facebook.com/HovePlinth>

Twitter: @HovePlinth

### PLANNING UPDATE

At the time of the last newsletter, we were in the early stages of a new collaborative arrangement with the Regency Society. Representatives from the two societies now meet monthly at a "Joint Planning Forum", where we examine an agreed shortlist of current planning applications and other planning issues. Information on the cases and issues considered - and the points which we have agreed on - can be viewed on our website.

The results of this cooperation over the last few months have been very encouraging. It is helping us to focus our resources more effectively on the most significant development proposals across the City. It's also helping to add extra weight to the comments we feed into the planning system. The two societies submit their own separate representations to the City Council, of course, but where we have reached a common view on a particular matter it means we can have more impact in delivering that message.

As well as making representations about cases where planning applications have formally been made to the Council, we are increasingly involved in trying to influence scheme proposals when they are still at a formative stage. It has become standard practice for developers of larger schemes to exhibit their proposals to the local public, to gauge local reactions and receive comments prior to a planning application. But it's now also more common for developers to engage directly with community and civic groups to discuss a scheme at an earlier stage in the design process, when the options are still being weighed up. We believe we've had a very positive influence by engaging in this way up to now - and it's something we are therefore continuing to do more of.

Among the evolving schemes that we've been involved in, over the last few months, have been potentially large developments at the Peacock industrial estate, the synagogue site in New Church Road, and the Toad's Hole Valley site (all in Hove) and the Edward Street Quarter (in Brighton).

Bob Ryder

# The Scourge of Graffiti in Brighton and Hove



In the last twelve months Brighton and Hove has become the victim of an epidemic of graffiti, artlessly and indiscriminately scrawled across every unguarded wall and render, or so it seems. No building is safe. Even security shutters are not safe. Property owners hardly dare put up scaffolding for fear of enabling access to these talentless vandals.

It is a well known fact that graffiti, if not removed immediately, quickly leads to even more graffiti which in

turn leads to defacement of the whole neighbourhood, like a cancer, bringing the area down both aesthetically and economically as it increasingly resembles a ghetto. Our city already suffers from a large number of empty commercial premises and these are even less likely to be re-let if graffiti is allowed to proliferate.

We at Brighton and Hove Heritage Commission wholly condemn the criminal activity graffiti and suggest Brighton and Hove City Council bring in the following measures as a matter of urgency:

1. Property owners to be compelled to remove or paint over graffiti within 7 working days of it being reported.

2. Compulsory fitting of scaffold alarms to all building works (inexpensive and also recommended for health and safety as well as security reasons).

3. Fines of up to £50,000 (or 5 years imprisonment) for anyone caught in the act of executing graffiti, to bring this into line with the council fines currently imposed for the improper disposal of bulky waste and fly tipping. Any monies collected could then form a fund to help recover council costs and offer compensation to victims of graffiti for costs incurred in its removal.

Brighton and Hove may be known as a liberal city, but this graffiti scourge is a blot on our landscape impinging on the quality of life and the built environment which cannot be tolerated.

Roger Amerena  
*Chairman Brighton and Hove Heritage Commission*



## Street Tree Planting Portland Road

Rarely do we see development proposals in the City. Finally we are getting this scheme off the ground. 14 disease resistant Elms will be planted on the northern side of Portland Road roughly between School Road and St Patricks Road. The planting is funded by Hove Civic Society with support from West Hove Forum and Hove Business Federation. We would have liked many more trees along the road, but the location of services has made that impossible. Perhaps some time in the future this shopping street gets a complete overhaul, which could then include a much better horticultural treatment of the area with much denser planting. However we are where we are and we are pleased to be able to add the planting in this street to all our other street tree plantings. So far we have supported nearly 100 trees (95 in fact) since we started our Restoring our Victorian Street Tree Heritage campaign.

On the 8th February there will be a planting ceremony at 2pm. The Mayor, Cllr Mo Marsh, will plant one tree. The planting area straddles two wards, Wish ward and Westbourne ward and councillors will also plant one tree for each ward. Please do come along. The ceremony will take place close to the Reynolds Road junction with Portland Road (on the northern side).

We have introduced the scheme to all local traders and have asked for volunteers to look after the trees. At the time of writing we are still looking for sufficient volunteers to keep an eye on the trees.

We are now looking ahead to further planting opportunities, primarily in Hove and Portslade. If any members would like to see more street trees in their area, and would like to lead on a local project do let us know and we will do everything we can to support it.

It is worth reminding us of the results of a scrutiny report to the City Council in 2007, which pointed out that our street tree population was getting quite elderly and that it was essential to increase funding to make sure that adequate levels of replacement took place. Unfortunately since that report funding for street trees has virtually evaporated and whereas the council used to replant at an average of 250 trees a year (with peaks of 500) last year saw only 20. The brute consequences of the cuts are that over a 10 year period the council will have planted 2500 trees less than what could be regarded as the minimum requirement – inevitably leading to a gradual erosion of the environmental quality of Hove.

When we set up our street tree campaign in 2012, we emphasized that looking after our tree population had innumerable benefits for comfort as well as for environmental and visual quality in our City. It is probably also the most cost effective environmental intervention that can be undertaken. Our campaign makes a small, very small, contribution trying to deal with an increasing environmental problem.

Your committee is now considering how we can boost our activities in this field, which means more funds and more local groups that want planting in their area. I am very grateful to those members who have chosen to become street tree angels (or cherubs) at £250 respectively £125 a year (plus gift aid). This means we have an income stream we can invest in more trees. May I recommend this as an ideal present for somebody close. You can find forms to sign up as an angel or cherub on our website.

Helmut Lusser

## Representation to the Council Regarding the Seafront



Much of the seafront furniture (shelters, railing, lampposts etc.) need regular upkeep and maintenance. There are several major seafront projects in various stages of planning and development, but we think it is essential that small and medium size improvements continue to be carried out. We have written to the Council urging them to ensure that funding for seafront improvements, both minor and major, is given the highest priority.

With regard to funding HCS also stressed that

there should be a guaranteed allocation of funds to improve and maintain the condition of Hove seafront. We have proposed that all income generated by the seafront should be ring-fenced to spend on planned improvements and maintenance, and also on reactive repairs. We also pointed out that we feel that Hove, and in particular West Hove, has suffered from a certain amount of neglect and isolation and should get a proportionate share of funding.

We also made the submission that there should be no more cuts to neighbourhood and environmental services. Any more cuts would be a false economy, undermining the attraction of the city, and by implication its economic base.

### Maintenance Update

Following seafront inspections, we will be submitting a list to the Council of items that we think require urgent attention and of repairs needed in the next financial year. We would be pleased to hear from members about issues they would like to raise regarding Hove Promenade and environs.

Paul Abbott



## Hove Stories: Working in Hove

*Some people come into Hove from outside to work temporarily, as builders, for instance; others, like shopkeepers and Council employees, live here and many of them get to know the residents very well. I expect some of you will recognise Mrs Patel from the Post Office and Harry from the Londis in Church Road – and maybe Finn the window cleaner?*

*Celia Britton*



# Church Road Improvements Our Own Hove Boulevard



*Medina Villas*

Members may remember our proposals for Church Road, which we think is in dire need of improvement. Your committee would like the street to become tree lined and provide more space for pedestrians. We are also recommending that all the access points to the South (The Avenues etc) are better designed and well landscaped in a way that is befitting our conservation areas, which are remarkably homogenous and deserve a better treatment of the public realm.

The Church Road improvement project remains within the council's indicative capital programme for Transport which was approved by the Environment, Transport & Sustainability and Policy, Resources & Growth Committees in March 2017. It was not possible

to propose funding for Church Road in 2017 and a decision on the detailed capital programme for 2018/19 is expected in March 2018.

Your committee believes that time has come for Hove to receive some of the investment that goes into the city overall and feels strongly that design on Church Road should now be given the go ahead.

We have written to all councillors of the Transport & Sustainability and Policy, Resources and Growth committees to make the case for Hove. Your support on this will be appreciated.



*Third Avenue*



# Winter HCS Lecture Programme

All lectures will take place in the Courtlands Hotel and begin at 7pm.

**25th January 2018**

**All over by Christmas by Trevor Povey**

*A tale of preparation, reparation and repatriation, plus the odd mutiny. An examination of the purpose, creation and parts played by the WWI Army camps at Shoreham, Southwick, Portslade including Hove, and their effect on the local communities.*

**22nd February 2018**

**Brighton's Trams by Ian Gledhill**



**22nd March 2018**

**Creating the first sculpture for Hove Plinth - an illustrated talk by Jonathan Wright, Sculptor**

*Jonathan Wright, sculptor of Constellation, will bring to life the process of developing the first sculpture for Hove Plinth, from the initial idea to involvement of the community in the design, the use of new technologies such as 3D printing and the creative interaction between artist and engineers in bringing the work to fruition.*

**26th April 2018**

**Annual Forum: Changing our City:**

*An update on latest developments in the City and a discussion on future needs for development. We hope to hear from the developers of King Alfred, the Sackville Hotel site and the redevelopment of the Texaco site all along Kingsway.*

The front page of our newsletter is made up of images that show some of the late Victorian heritage in Hove.

David Kemp, of DK Architects has created the page.  
Framed versions are available for sale in different sizes.



**Keep in touch...**

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