

Hove Civic Society

Jan 2022 Newsletter



ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Members,

A very Happy and successful New Year to all of you.

This is a time of reflection and I am sitting here at my desk looking out over a grey and wet late December day – on one of the warmest end of year days on record. Another proof of global warming.

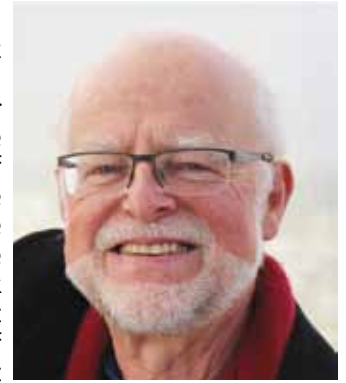
During the year we have been busy trying to pursue our small contribution to the net zero carbon agenda which is sweeping through the city and I thought it might be useful to check how the city fathers are progressing in their ambitious target for net zero by 2030. What better way to start than to look at the draft budget proposals outlined in the reports which were considered by P&R Committee on December 2nd.

I had half expected a significant signal of shifts of resources towards net zero as this is a major task if one goes beyond the council's own carbon emissions, which only make up about 2% of the entire city emissions. A budget with resources to significantly drive the move away from the car, increase renewables, green up our streets and possibly even develop the ideas of heat networks and district heating. A budget where 5-10% at least are devoted to the development agenda, so we can take the net zero target seriously.

Instead we get, unsurprisingly, a creaking maintenance budget, with announcements of further savings, £18M in total, of which only £8.5M have been identified so far. The report quite rightly laments the fact that this follows £10M each in the last two years and £170M savings over the last decade. It warns that the authority is now in a position of potentially having to make considerably more difficult choices including reduction or cessation of non-statutory services.

Far from a route to a new zero carbon world the budget signals a further retrenchment away from non-statutory services, which includes all that you and I appreciate such as a good, healthy and attractive public realm. How much could we not have done to our city if those £170M were still available, year on year. This is not to belittle the efforts the council is making to bring about change towards a zero carbon city, much of which we fully support.

Alas we have to be realistic and inevitably there will have to be many smaller steps to help us achieve carbon reduction instead of fundamental shifts. I think we are going to need a great dose of imagination to achieve that. I also happen to think that we need to be honest in terms of the likelihood of achieving the net zero target – if it is not in the gift of the city council to generate the funds necessary then nobody can blame the city if targets are not achievable.



We have put forward some ideas during the year, which we firmly believe would over time cause a substantial reduction to our carbon emissions as well as improving our townscape and which we believe can be funded. The most important one is our one new street tree per new dwelling policy, which we have now contested at the public hearing into the City Plan Part 2. I still fail to comprehend the stubborn resistance of our city planners to such a policy, which is eminently doable and which will capture carbon year after year. I sincerely hope that the Inspector will rule in our favour.

In our representation to the new sustainable transport plan we made a few additional suggestions, one of which I have to confess I particularly like. We suggested that for each electric charging bay installed the two parking spaces at either side are removed and planted up. This achieves two things. We introduce green into our city townscape and we make the point that the shift towards electric can't mean that we just replace one tin with another but that we see this as a contribution to a new type of city environment, where more space is dedicated to non-car use.

Many cities around the world are looking at ways of dealing with the carbon challenge and we could do worse than learning from solutions such as subsidising drivers to give up their cars altogether. This is no more zany than subsidising drivers to buy electric. The Council, in turn, could be brave and earmark all the CIL contributions coming in the next eight years to help push the net-zero agenda. That would generate a decent starting fund.

You will note that we are continuing to give space in the Newsletter to the many initiatives in Hove that together help maintain and improve our environment and enjoyment of our neighbourhoods. I would particularly like to thank Celia Britton, one of our members, who has volunteered to talk to and write about the many voluntary organisations that help improve our environment. Many thanks also to all those volunteers that help look after our city and Hove in particular. And finally many thanks for your continued support, which is as important as ever to us.

Best wishes,
Helmut Lusser



Space for People

HOVE CIVIC SOCIETY

Leading the way in preserving and creating attractive and sustainable Space for People to live, work and enjoy, now and in the future.

Join us Today



Environment
Street Tree Planting
HOVE BOULEVARD Concept
Micro Parks
Neglected Corners
SPACE for PEOPLE



City Plan
Planning Forum
City Plan Consultations
HERITAGE Conservation
HOVE Station Neighbourhood Plan



Arts & Culture
HOVE Plinth
SCULPTURE in our City
Illustrated talks
EVENTS



Partnership
City Council
Museums & Arts Sector
Community Groups
Civic Societies
Businesses

Sign up today at www.hovecivicsociety.org or by posting the form overleaf

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Number 1318102



The Secret Garden

Hidden away behind St Leonards Church in New Church Road, the Secret Garden is certainly well named. You would never know it was there until you are at its gate. Surrounded by elm trees, it is full of beautiful flowers, fruit and vegetables, and also contains quite a large pond with frogs and newts, an apiary from which the volunteers collect honey every year, a pergola with vines and hops, a gazebo for meetings with a 'living roof' of plants, honeysuckle along the walls, a woodland area, a tool shed and four water butts to collect rainwater, a greenhouse with tomatoes and cucumbers, a village pump, an old wheelbarrow with plants growing in it and plenty more. Jane Eleini, who chairs the committee of volunteers that take care of the garden, showed me round, and explained that it had been founded eight years ago, and one of the objectives was to encourage biodiversity. The volunteers meet every Saturday morning to look after the plants and repair any damage that may – incredibly – have been caused by vandals. There is also a clear concern for inclusivity: the signs, for instance, are all in Braille as well as words, and there is a 'sensory garden' with scented plants. Very movingly, there is a bench that commemorates the death of Josh Doherty, a ten-year-old boy.

It strikes me as the perfect place to come if you are seeking some solitary respite from the hustle and bustle of the town – to sit and read a book, perhaps, or just relax and enjoy the peace and quiet. But the garden also plays host



to a large number of communal events – for instance a Halloween party at the end of October – and large numbers of schoolchildren come at the weekend. It is perhaps this combination, this ability to cater for both the solitary individual and groups, that is the most striking aspect of this beautiful place.

Celia Britton

Hove Surf Lifesaving Club



The Hove Surf Lifesaving Club trains children and young people, from eight to sixteen years old, to rescue people who have gone into the sea and find themselves in trouble. They learn how to use boards and also tubes, which can be clipped round the person's body so that they can be towed back to the shore; they are also given lessons in when it is, or is not, safe to go in the sea, depending on tides and currents and how big the waves are; they also learn first aid and how to do CPR. This training will enable them to gain their Beach Lifeguard qualification when they are sixteen.

Currently the club has fifty-five children and young people, divided into two groups corresponding to primary and secondary school pupils, with a fairly even balance between boys and girls. They meet on Saturday mornings at Hove Lagoon, and the sessions last about an hour. On the morning that I went there it was absolutely freezing cold – but there

were still at least twenty children there. In the summer they also hold swimming sessions after school.

The Club has been in existence since June 2019. It is run by a committee of three trainers and two organisers. They also have up to twenty-five beach lifeguard volunteers who are essential, and give up their time freely to assist. This is such a valuable project: young people who grow up on the coast really need to know how to enjoy the sea safely, and how to rescue other bathers who get into trouble in the water. But equally, it gives them a chance to meet and make friends with other people of their age. The club is therefore an extremely important asset to Hove and to the wider community.

For contacts: Louise.hslsc@gmail.com

Celia Britton



What does it mean to be a Friend of St Ann's Well Gardens?

St Ann's Well Gardens is an extraordinary place. Originally a health spa, in the early 1800's its pump house, designed to resemble a classical temple, was reported to enjoy 'a beautiful view of cornfields and meadows to the ocean'

In 1892 the lessee of the gardens, the stage hypnotist George Albert Smith, developed a passion for film-making, turning the pump house into an early editing facility. His iconic 'A kiss in the Tunnel' is believed to be the first ever edited film. George funded his passions by opening our park to the public, charging an entrance fee and beginning the tradition of performances and special events which survives to this day; although then, as now, the park's major attractions are its 'shady walks and refreshing foliage'.



The gardens remain hugely popular and many local residents are keen to declare themselves our Friends. Individual membership is still only £3.00 a year - an added incentive!

So what does it mean to be a Friend? Whilst a warm sensation of 'belonging' is intrinsically a 'good thing'; we want our Friends to feel that they are part of a park which, whilst celebrating the past, looks to future opportunities with open eyes and heart. So what do we offer?

Guided walks: throughout the year to learn more about our birds and bats, trees, shrubs and flowers. In spring this includes the legendary (4.30am) 'Dawn Chorus' walk.

Gatherings in the Café: Special events featuring guest artists, quizzes and raffles and the legendary Garden Cafe food.....all shared over a glass or two in an atmosphere conducive to meeting new people.

Sensory Garden: Owing to a successful fundraising campaign the Friend's Committee has entered into a partnership with Brighton and Hove Council. The results can be seen in recent changes to the Sensory Garden, all designed to increase its appeal to more vulnerable groups in the community and to reduce the anti-social behaviour which blights many public parks.

Embracing the Arts: From the legendary Spring Festival to visiting theatre companies, to pop up music and dance events and Artists' Open Houses, the Gardens continue to host entertainment throughout the year.

Our Friends are invited to not only appreciate the Gardens but also to contribute their time and money! Our Wildlife Group/Bird Club; Events Team; and Gardening Group are all in their infancy but we believe that they will flourish with the support of our hard working committee members.

We dream of a working pond pump, a functioning municipal clock, and permanent art works from sculptures to fountains and we would love people to think beyond the Bench when commemorating loved ones!

Most of all, as in the days of George Albert Smith, we want you to enjoy all aspects of the gardens and to have a 'Jolly Time'.

Pippa Smith, Chair, Friends of St Ann's Well Gardens Hove. pippa@fosawg.org

An illustrated history of St Ann's Well Gardens can be purchased from the Garden Cafe for £5.00

Public Art Strategy - where next for public art in our city?

Following a process of consultation Brighton & Hove Council has now approved a new Public Art Strategy. We are pleased to see that the purpose of the strategy chimes with Hove Civic Society's own objectives such as enhancing the quality of the public realm, enabling residents to experience high quality public art with year-round attractions, supporting the city's creative talents and promoting sustainability. We are entirely behind the strategy's stated vision "to highlight the city's existing amazing natural assets, combine these with the creative talent of residents and create something extraordinary..". Indeed, this is something we feel we are already achieving with Hove Plinth showcasing inspiring sculpture on our wonderful seafront promenade against the backdrop of the sea.

The strategy is big on principles, values and bold ambitions but less clear on how these will be practically taken forward. A key theme is 'sustainability', reflecting the broader climate change agenda and residents' wish for a 'green city'.

"Our mission is to become the UK's leading city for beautiful sustainable public art & public realm, with inclusivity at the heart of our work. Brighton and Hove can become recognised for its sustainable public art."

Full marks for aspiration but what does it mean in practice for public art?



*Pierre Diamantopoulos,
Kandi Sky, Middlesbrough*



Public Art Strategy - cont'd



Yinka Shonibare CBE,
Yorkshire Sculpture Park



Jaco Sieberhagen,
Sculpture on the Cliff, Capetown

The ambition sits uneasily with the lamentable state of much of the council's current public art 'collection', which has been allowed to deteriorate over time. So it is good to see that this has been recognised and that one of the recommendation is to undertake a long overdue audit of artworks and consider long-term management issues. But 'sustainability' is also used in a much broader sense. The strategy sets out ten wide ranging 'guiding principles' which address sustainability in different ways, covering the whole policy field of environmental, cultural, economic and social sustainability. Quite a tall order for visual artists who may wonder if a great work of art, that gives interest, delight and inspiration to many people over a long period of time, will be considered sustainable enough. The strategy sets out four criteria, which all new public art will aim to meet. Along with sustainability, these are quality, access, inclusion. All good ambitions, but how will they be assessed and by whom? Let's hope that this will not be a test that rules out the extraordinary or unexpected. Great art does not necessarily fit neatly into boxes and the best public art inspires the imagination of passers-by to create their own stories.

So what can we expect to happen? The strategy sets out a list of short, medium and long term recommendations addressing four main objectives centred on commissioning, collaboration, funding and management/maintenance.

Short term (within three years) recommendations focus on managing existing public art (as mentioned above) and also improving the process of commissioning new public art by developing a Public Art & Development Planning Advice Note and Public Art Toolkit for developers and commissioners. There is also an intention to "support artists and the development of vibrant places in neighbourhoods with collaborative projects" and to engage with council departments, landowners, developers and businesses for discussions on temporary activities and interventions.

Medium term (within five years) recommendations include guidance on Art Hoardings and Street Art; a policy for major developments to produce strategies for public art; appointment of staff to support public art commissioning; and exploration of alternative funding opportunities such as Local Enterprise Partnership funding and options to create an arts, culture and heritage fund through the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy), including a budget for public art and maintenance.. It is also recommended to encourage collaborative research projects with Universities with focus

on ecology, art and sustainability

Finally there is a long-term (within ten years) recommendation to encourage collaboration between academia, the cultural sector and local community organisations to deliver training to support arts and cultural organisations and the wider community.

It is not easy to visualise what material changes will come from the strategy at this stage. The proof will be in the pudding, or rather in the public spaces around us. In his Foreword, the Leader of the Council highlights the importance of collaboration between the city and its residents and the need for community engagement is referred to throughout the strategy. It is therefore disappointing that there is no recognition given to existing successful local initiatives for public art, as these can offer models for how to make things happen at a time when resources for public services are under severe pressure. Community organisations such as Hove Civic Society are well placed to harness community involvement, attract funding not available to the council and take a lead on projects that benefit the community. We are proud to already be contributing great art to the city and look forward to positive partnerships to support the city in improving its public realm and engaging residents and visitors with extraordinary public art.

Karin Janzon



Jonathan Wright,
Constellation, Hove seafront

Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust at Hove



As many of you will know in October 2020 the care of the Royal Pavilion and Brighton & Hove museums, including Hove Museum passed from Brighton & Hove City Council to an independent charitable trust (The Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust). This will hopefully see the beginning of an exciting future for Brighton & Hove's important museums and their collections. The timing was not perfect, and we have spent a lot of time since October with our venues closed and most of our staff on furlough. But as lockdown restrictions have eased, we have gradually reopened our museums and brought our staff back to work and since the summer been able to welcome visitors back, including to Hove Museum.

We have also been carrying out some essential work on the exterior of Hove Museum. This has included repairs to doors and windows and repairs to the stonework to stop leaks. It is unfortunate that this could not have been done when we were closed but it is now complete, and the museum is again looking at its best.

We are aware that during the prolonged lockdown the gardens also got pretty untidy. I am very pleased to report that we now have a new head gardener for the Trust and an assistant gardener, and they will be looking after all our open spaces (Royal Pavilion, Preston Manor and Hove) and we will now make sure the Hove open space is kept in good condition.

Our first exhibition at Hove Museum after reopening is Mantlepiece Observations by renowned ceramicist Richard Slee where the archives of the Mass Observation project have provided the inspiration for Slee's interpretation of everyday life objects. The exhibition runs until 1 February. The next temporary exhibition will be Tatty Devine – telling the story of the innovative jewellery designer. All the permanent exhibition galleries are also open.

We recognise that Hove Museum is an important local community resource, and we want to make it as welcoming as possible for local residents and in particular somewhere for families. It has traditionally been particularly linked to children – we have our toy displays on show. Hove has also been linked to craft, making, and creativity. We want very much to continue this tradition and make Hove our museum where people can make the most of their individual creativity.

Perhaps the most important collection we have on display at Hove is that linked to the early years of cinematography, this is an internationally important collection of objects and recognises the importance of Brighton & Hove to the early years of this science that has now become so important. Many of us now realise our creativity through the cameras on our mobile phones – the evolutionary successors of those early experiments in cinema and something that gives us a direct link between our collections and contemporary



creativity. We want to make the most of this in future projects.

We are beginning to plan for the future of Hove Museum in more detail. To do this we want to work closely with the local community and our neighbours. We have renewed a memorandum of understanding with the Hove Civic Society to work with them. We would also love to share our thinking with everyone in the community and we held a meeting for local residents at Hove Museum in October that I hope will be the start of an ongoing discussion.

I am confident that the Royal Pavilion and our museums will prosper and continue to offer an important resource for residents and visitors. But the COVID pandemic has taken a serious toll on our finances and for a while at least we are not expecting foreign tourists to return in the numbers we need. Please do consider becoming a member or making a donation to help us (details are on our website Hove Museum – Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove (brightonmuseums.org.uk) if you feel able, but most importantly do visit your museums and let us know how you would like to see them develop in the future.

Hedley Swain, CEO, Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust

Hedley.swain@rpmt.org.uk

Blue Plaques

Because of Covid, meetings of the Panel and unveiling of Plaques were put on hold. We have now managed two unveilings in 2021: the first was Sister Jane Borradaile at St John's College, Walpole Road, Brighton in July. A kind lady, Sister Jane brought sickly children from the unhealthy East End to convalesce in Brighton's clean sea air in rented houses. She then raised enough money to build St John's College in 1885. By the time of her death in 1918, Sister Jane had transformed countless young lives, something that St John's continues to do, for those with different needs, to this day. The view from the College down across Brighton to the sea is quite spectacular – what a contrast with the East End for those children!

The second unveiling was for Rabindranath Tagore in October 2021, also spectacular. Many members of the Bangladeshi community came to support Her Excellency the High Commissioner for Bangladesh, wearing colourful Asian clothes. Tagore was a polymath and Nobel Laureate, whose first journey outside India in 1878 was to study at Brighton

Proprietary School for Boys, a public school at 7 Ship Street, when he was 17. He combined humanism and universalism with a commitment to local roots, where urban and rural cultures would learn from each other.

In March 2018 we had attended the unveiling of a Plaque for Ernest Beal. He had been awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery in 1917. Recently an edition of the Antiques Road Show on BBC TV included a very interesting interview with one of his descendants.

Finally I would like to include very best wishes to Roger Amerena, the hardworking Chairman of the Commemorative Plaques Panel. In December he was taken into hospital with a perforated appendix, which necessitated a lengthy operation. Roger survived thank goodness but is having a long period of rest and convalescence at home. We owe him so much, so please join me in sending Roger our very best thanks and good wishes. We love you, Roger.

Elaine Evans

Icy Times in Hove

*"Hokey-pokey, penny a lump,
Hokey-pokey, sweet and cold;
For a penny, new or old"*

The "hokey pokey man" peddling ice cream from his handcart was a common sight in Hove from the 1880s. Invariably Italians who had fled poverty at home, it is said that the name came from their cry of Gelati, ecco un poco! ("Ice cream, here's a little!") or O che poco! ("Oh, how cheap!").

Children and adults alike clamoured for this cheap treat. Made in the slums, served in a shallow bowl, the hawkers sold a "lick" or "penny wipe". No spoon provided; lick out the dish, hand it back for a wipe before it's passed to next customer. Unsurprisingly, the lack of hygiene meant this simple pleasure could prove dangerous – it spread diphtheria, scarlet fever, diarrhoea and enteric fever. In 1901, Brighton imposed fines on street vendors selling contaminated ice cream.

But without ice, there could be no ice cream.

In the 18th century, ice was a rare commodity gathered from freezing ponds or lakes locally and stored in ice houses, where it would keep for months. The ice houses in the Royal Pavilion gardens enabled the Prince Regent to feast on his favourite ice cream at whim.

During the 19th century, ice was brought from Norway to Aldrington

Basin by sailing ships and, until the 1920s, stored underground in huge ice-wells on the quay.

Increased demand and innovation led to mechanical ice machines. From 1879, ice was manufactured locally by the Kent and Sussex Pure Ice Company on Portland Road (on the site of the Portland Road Trading Estate) and from 1916 at the Lightfoot Refrigeration Company in Holland Road. In the days before fridges, they ran daily ice delivery services to families who stored their perishable foods in zinc-lined ice boxes.

To learn more about the history of West Hove, why not join a guided walking tour led by a local historian. Hove Actually Walking Tours are fun, informative, informal and best suited to the incurably curious. Whether it's your first visit or you have lived here your whole life, the tours are a great way to discover, uncover and experience the area.

Hove Actually Walking Tours will commence again in Spring 2022. To join the mailing list, email hoveactuallywalks@gmail.com. Facebook: Hove Actually Walking Tours

By Rachel Bridgeman

WINNER! Hazel Reeves wins Excellence in Public Sculpture Award

Huge congratulations to Brighton sculptor Hazel Reeves who has won the 2021 Marsh Award for Excellence in Public Sculpture with her inspiring statue of suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst. 'Our Emmeline' installed in St Peter's Square in Manchester to commemorate the 100 years since women in the UK first voted in a general election. The statue had a marked impact on the local community when it was unveiled and has continued to attract a great deal of public engagement.

Hazel has been our sculpture advisor on the Hove Plinth working group from the beginning and we have hugely benefited from her experience and passion for engaging people through sculpture. Well done Hazel. We are so happy for you !



Hazel Reeves at the unveiling of
'Our Emmeline Rise up Women'

Hove Civic Society Gift Aid Declaration

Registered charity 1187602

We can now claim gift aid on all membership fees.
Please sign the form below to allow us to claim

My details

Title First Name Surname
Address
..... Post Code
Email

giftaid it

Your signature Date

I want the charity to treat all donations I make from the date on this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

Please send this form to: Andrew Haicalis, Treasurer Hove Civic Society, Flat 6, 32 St Aubyn's, Hove, BN3 2TD

Winter Lecture Programme 2022

Our Second Lecture 26th January 2022, 7pm, Ralli Hall “Portslade Old Village- Lost Jewel in the Crown”

Trevor Povey will piece together the events that shaped one of our more important villages. Little appreciated, almost invisible, and next to one of our earliest super highways



Our Third Lecture 16th February 2022, 7pm, Ralli Hall “ Hove Museum- The RPMT Film Collection”

Alexia Lazou from the Hove Museum will be going into some depth about film making with their RPMT Collection. A large part stems from the Barnes Brothers, twin film historians, a cine camera owned by Hove resident Ernest Wimble pioneer of the Workers' Travel Association and other delights of film making.



Our Final Lecture 22nd March 2022, 7pm, Ralli Hall “An Artists perspective on rewilding at Knepp Wildland”

Hazel Reeves, Hove Plinth's sculpture adviser, is artist-in-residence at Knepp Wildland and has been documenting the ecological value and sculptural beauty of the Knepp scrubland.

Hazel will talk about her time at Knepp.



Our Annual Forum 20th April 2022, 7pm, Ralli Hall

Taking our cue from the success of the 2021 Forum, we will again focus on how local communities in Hove are improving our public realm and what more we can do.

Membership fees

Membership fees are due at the beginning of the year. We are very grateful for all those members who pay by standing order. For those of you who don't we now have an on-line facility where you can pay easily. <https://hovecivicsociety.org/get-involved/> Paying this way helps us keep down our administrative costs.

The site also offers opportunities to directly support our street tree and sculpture and Hove Plinth efforts. Thanks to member support we have been able to co-fund over 100 new street trees in Hove so far. Work with us to invest in the future of our city!



Keep in touch...

Join our mailing list: info@hovecivicsociety.org
Visit our website: www.hovecivicsociety.org
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/HovePlinth
Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/hoveplinth
Follow us on Instagram: instagram.com/hoveplinth/

Printed by:

The Printhouse,
26-28 St John s Road
Hove, East Sussex
BN3 2FB

Tel: 01273 325667