

Hove Civic Society

May 2022 Newsletter



Chairman's Letter

Dear Members,

It was great to see so many of you at our Annual Forum, which again sought to showcase projects in Hove and Portslade all of which involve local communities and are driven by huge volunteer efforts. I think we have found a model for a once-a-year celebration of community involvement in our physical environment and I am sure we can improve the format further to make it even more attractive. The feedback I have had so far suggests that this is something that is very much needed – not least to spread awareness about all these projects which together will have a considerable impact on our townscape and environment. I also think the event can serve to give some recognition to the efforts and to offer a small thank-you to all the volunteers in the community. They all have a very good reason to be incredibly proud of their contributions to our environment and well-being. If you feel we should showcase a particular project then do let me know in good time so we can build it into the next Forum – space and time permitting.

It was interesting to hear Geoff Raw, the City's Chief Executive, comment on the breadth of projects and involvement – suggesting that we are very lucky to have such a buoyant community spirit with people with sufficient experience and skills able to carry the projects we are undertaking. I am sure he has got a valid point. My concern is that having the experienced volunteers we don't grind them down in unnecessary bureaucracy. And so we have a unique challenge where local, often professional volunteers with extensive experience, should be welcome and their ideas and suggestions received positively and bureaucratic obstacles minimised as far as possible. I see this as one way where local people to a small degree can counter the savage cuts

which we have experienced not least in what is known as neighbourhood services.

This requires clever cooperation with the council at eye level and needs to fully integrate the views and opinions of local elected members who generally are very supportive of, and often engaged in the many local initiatives. A creative challenge for all of us!

I am delighted that Glebe Villas planting has finally taken place, driven by local volunteers and supported all round. Read more about it in the newsletter.

It is also with immense pleasure that I can announce that we have now moved on to the foundry stage for our second sculpture on the Hove Plinth. The four central figures, weighting 160 kg each will be bronze cast from this month onwards. This will take at least 6 months after which the fabrication process starts. It will be all hands to the pumps to raise the final funds so we can instal the work next year.

We are also making progress on St Aubyn's micropark, the Hove Heritage Boards and are lobbying hard for Hove Boulevard.

That should last us over the summer.

Best wishes and thanks for your continued support.

Helmut Lusser
Chairman



Jazz Scene



Our local area has always been a hotbed of talent, and one sector which has blossomed over the last few years has been live performance, and in particular, the number of venues providing first class jazz. This now includes a couple of churches in addition to the traditional pub venue.

We are very fortunate to have a number of nationally acclaimed jazz performers living in the city which has certainly helped drive and promote a wide choice of music, covering the swing era, bebop, and the New Generation sector.

No longer restricted to the traditional late-night venues, jazz can be enjoyed in The Better Half in Hove Place on a Friday afternoon, late Sunday afternoon at The Old Albion in Church Road, and renowned trumpeter Chris Coul has been running an excellent programme at St. Andrews Church on a Friday at 6pm.

Other venues worth checking out include The George Payne on a Monday evening, The Paris House at various times of the week and the Speakeasy above the Wick on a Wednesday evening.

So, quality jazz is available almost 7 days a week in Hove.

Andrew Nichols

Hove's heritage deserves better than this

Way back in 2011 Hove's then MP, Mike Weatherley lobbied the council to restore the 'run down' heritage boards.

When strolling around Hove you may have spotted a few large metal frames holding boards proudly titled 'Heritage of Hove'. There are around ten such boards in strategic locations around Hove, Hangleton and Portslade, erected in the 1990s by the council and sponsored by American Express, but... Weatherley was right when he claimed the physical condition of the boards had deteriorated and some of the information was out of date.

He said: 'The 'Heritage of Hove' boards are a great advertisement for Hove's wonderful history. It has been a great shame that they have not been looked after over the years.'

Sadly, this is still true 11 years later. The paint is peeling and the information is dense and outdated and doesn't reflect the historic and current attractiveness, vibrancy and diversity of Hove. The boards are so unloved that you will probably have walked past them without even noticing them. Hove Civic Society is concerned that the boards are no longer a great advertisement for Hove. Quite the opposite, in fact.

So, we decided to do something about it and turn the boards into an attraction, appealing to locals, visitors, children and schools. In consultation with the council we are seeking to renovate the metal holders and are currently obtaining quotes from local firms after which we intend to seek financial sponsorship. And a local resident has generously offered the services of his London-based company to redesign and redraft the text on the boards pro bono.

A small team is now looking at the kind of information that would appeal to give the boards a more contemporary feel

and what is feasible to include so they are accessible to all. We may, for example use a timeline with images, link the boards in a trail and use QR codes to offer additional background information.

It's early days and we don't expect the boards to be completed until well into 2023 but once they are installed, we are confident they will once again be an attractive and informative asset to our community.

Alison Minns



Hangleton and Knoll Project

The Hangleton and Knoll Project (HKP) was set up nearly fifty years ago in 1983 as a centre for the community in Hangleton. The residents raised the funds; and the project has remained true to its grassroots, being run for and by local people from the area. I met with Joanna Martindale, their Chief Officer, at their offices in the Community Centre in St Richards Church in Egmont Road, Hove. She has a long background of working in communities in Brighton and Hove and leads a team of seventeen full and part time staff working with hundreds of community volunteers in dozens of local community groups. They work with all the many different communities in the area with projects that target older people (<https://www.hkproject.org.uk/docs/news/2022-02-07-50+LeafletWinter-SpringEdition2022.pdf>), young people, and those with English as a second language, especially Bengali and Arabic

<https://www.hkproject.org.uk/docs/news/2022-02-14-MulticulturalActivitiesLeafletSpring2022.pdf>

During the pandemic the local connections and networks really came to the fore as HKP set up and ran the emergency food effort from St Richards for the west of the city. They also set up and worked with forty local volunteers doing shopping, doorstep visits and phone befriending for some of the most vulnerable and isolated older people in the area. While young people were off school some volunteered within the emergency food effort allowing the Project to support them with their school work while they helped with

the community. This was important as their parents had to leave the house to work. Youthwork was vital at this time to keep connections between young people while schools were shut and over lockdowns the project worked with groups that gathered outside and with one to one walking and talking with young people experiencing isolation and problems. Online groups were set up to help with their work and manage their feelings. At this time the digital support offer which is usually based from the IT suite at St Richards as an in-person service had to become a phone and zoom helpline. David, their IT tutor spent many hours on the phone helping people set up video conferencing allowing them to link with their friends and other support.

They are a true Community Development organisation working with people to help them grow a better community; the aim is that no one is ever alone in Hangleton and Knoll and that residents are supported to access all the opportunities services and facilities that everyone enjoys in the City.

For more information their website has full details <https://www.hkproject.org.uk/>

Joanna Martindale

Celia Britton

Welcome to Hove Arts Artists Open Houses



It's so great to be back!

Hove Arts award winning artists and makers simply can't wait to welcome you into our homes and workshops again, where we've put together a truly inspiring selection of creative work for our belated 20th Trail. In past years we've picked up awards for 'Best Open House' and had several Runners Up, with our carefully curated shows to delight art lovers of all ages, plus this year we've got six exciting new houses for you to explore too!

At each house look out for our Hove Trotter's Children's Quiz, sponsored by our friends at The Book Nook with lots of prizes on offer!

Most venues are open during weekends 7/8, 14/15, 21/22 and 28/29 May, 11-6pm but please check the venue for details.

For more information go to <https://www.hovearts.com/>

A Land Unfit for Heroes

Soldiers returning from the bloody battlefields of the Great War were promised 'a land fit for heroes' by the British government but instead many returned to face abject poverty.

From that seemingly distant past of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, a cry of disillusion and frustration echoed across the century when we turned on our radios on the morning of 6th January this year. When finally released from the vaults of the National Archives (where census records are kept locked up under the '100-year rule'), one 1921 Census return repeatedly cited in the media was that of James Bartley of Hove. A thirty-three-year-old gasfitter at the Black Rock Gas Works in Brighton, Mr Bartley lived with his wife, May, and three children aged under five at 16 Montgomery Street, Hove. On the bottom of his Census return, he had written:

"Five persons living in one room. Stop talking about your homes for heroes and start building some houses and let them at a rent a working man can afford to pay."

They were not alone – it was not uncommon for several families to share a house, each renting a single room.

The grim post-war depression of 1920-21 was marked by a chronic housing shortage, soaring unemployment and government austerity. Many families faced terrible hardship - living in squalid slum housing with overcrowding, poor sanitation, hunger, and disease (including the devastating Spanish Flu). Two million disabled ex-servicemen were thrown to the dogs to honour their sacrifice: Britain, the only European country to rely entirely on the voluntary sector to employ disabled veterans, had no national plan for housing them. The Ministry of Pensions was established to evade paying war pensions where possible, leaving soldiers, war widows and orphans in dire straits.

In 1919, Hove's Housing Committee referred to a couple with 3 girls and 3 boys residing in "3 rooms over stables. The roof is bad, in wet weather they are only able to use 1 bedroom for the 8 persons."

Hove's first social housing scheme, the Ingram Crescent Estate along Portland Road, was built between 1921 and 1924. However, not everyone was happy. There was opposition from some middle-class residents in the New Church Road area, and a motion was put to Hove Council in 1922 for "no more houses to be built for the working classes" but was defeated. The houses were demolished in the 1970s and replaced with blocks of flats.

The Knoll Estate was developed 1926-28.

There would have to be another world war before the British government would set up a comprehensive welfare state.

To learn more about the history of Hove, join a Hove Actually Walking Tour. To go on the mailing list, email: hoveactuallywalks@gmail.com.

By Rachel Bridgeman

Hove Actually Walking Tours

*The James Gray Collection::Volume 16::Hove:North West
(regencysociety-jamesgray.com)*



Ingram Crescent, the first ever social housing estate in Hove.

Flight of the Langoustine goes to the Foundry



Casting - bronze is melted to a temperature 1100°C and poured into the mould cavity

Great news - we have now raised sufficient funds to commission the bronze casting of the four figures that make up the central part of the next sculpture for Hove Plinth. The casting will be done at Milwyn Casting, where the process will start in May and is likely to take until October.

The foundry will be following the traditional "lost wax" method used by the ancient Greeks and Romans. The moulds of the figures are used to create exact, hollow wax copies of the original models. The wax copy is coated in several layers of ceramic shell. Then wax is melted out of

the shell and eventually molten bronze is poured into the space created, replacing the wax and forming the bronze sculpture. It is a truly mind boggling process, which you can see described at <https://milwyn.co.uk/resources/>

Following the casting we need to commission the fabrication of the sculpture, which is likely to take another six months. This is the stage where the steel ring and grid is produced and the figures are fitted into position. To prepare for this we have already had a thorough engineering assessment to ensure that the finished sculpture will be structurally sound and brace all the weathers on the seafront.

We still have funds to raise but are hopeful that Flight of the Langoustine can be installed spring/summer 2023.

You can help to make this happen by donating at <https://hoveplinth.org.uk/support-us/>



Burnout - removing the wax

Glebe Villas Tree Project



At last, after many years of lobbying and negotiating with BHCC we finally have 14 trees in the ground in Glebe Villas.

Varieties include Hawthorn, Magnolia, Nettle and Beech which should enhance the road for many years to come.

Huge thanks must go to local resident Lara Rix-Paradinas who instigated the programme many years ago and who has worked tirelessly to make it happen.

Thanks also go to local ward councillors Robert Nemeth and Gary Peltzer-Dunn, Penny Hudd from Plant Your Postcode and CPRE.

This project is a perfect example of what community involvement can achieve and we hope that we can encourage support for our proposal "One new street tree for every new dwelling being built in the city".



Hove Civic Society Gift Aid Declaration

Registered charity 1187602

We can now claim gift aid on all membership fees.
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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

St Aubyns Pocket Park

We are delighted to share with you the new designs for this community led project to create a Pocket Park at the south eastern corner of St Aubyns.

Pocket Parks, so called because of their small size, can transform unloved, neglected or derelict areas into new green spaces for people to enjoy. The south eastern corner of St Aubyns, adjacent to the Kingsway is such a space and in much need of improvement.

The new proposals have been developed by students studying for their MA in Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Brighton. Hove Civic Society and local residents worked closely with the students who took on board all our aspirations, including our ambition 'Space for People'.

The new designs reflect the heritage of this part of Hove and include re-siting the waste and recycling bins onto the highway to maximise space for greening. The bins will be screened by a sculptural wall and the tarmac will be replaced with attractive paving and the introduction of sustainable planting. The cycle racks will be retained and a small amount of seating provided.

We are very impressed by the plans, which we believe will significantly enhance this entrance to the Old Hove Conservation Area.

We would love to hear your views and a new Facebook page has been created, just search for St Aubyns Pocket Park or get in touch with me at heathermjames@btinternet.com, especially if you can offer any help.

Heather James



St. Aubyns Today



Sustainable Planting to Green the Space



Enhancing the Old Hove Conservation Area

Annual Forum

Community initiative - a vital force for improving Hove's environment

There was a good turnout for the Forum held on 20 April at the Ralli Hall. We were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Brighton and Hove, Councillor Alan Robins, who introduced the event - and the Chief Executive, Geoff Raw, who gave the final presentation of the evening.

The theme of the event was to show how community initiatives in Hove have been very effective in delivering a better environment for local people. There were five presentations, which gave us a remarkable range of examples, from a localised street level to the regeneration of whole neighbourhoods.

Glebe Villas tree planting. Lara Rix-Paradinas described the transformation taking shape in the street, with planting now finally under way. The process had been challenging, but there are lessons which can be carried across to future schemes where a local initiative can be facilitated by the council.

Hove Surf Life Saving. Louise Everington introduced us to the achievements of volunteers in contributing to public safety in Hove, through sea training and lifesaving, as well as rescue services for the public at large. Not only is this initiative performing a public service, it has also



The area covered by the Kingsway to the Sea project



Annual Forum - continued



Some images from the Hove Station Quarter presentation

helped to build up a sense of community responsibility and commitment to other local initiatives.

Hove Plinth and the second sculpture for the city. Karin Janzon updated us on progress in getting the second sculpture, the marvellous Flight of the Langoustine, completed and installed on the Plinth. The whole initiative is already making a major cultural contribution to the quality of our public realm. And there are still many practical ways in which the Council is potentially able to help the project flourish.

Kingsway to the Sea. Rose Hetherton outlined progress on the collaboration between the West Hove Seafront Action Group and the Council. A bid for central government funding for a £10m improvement scheme was approved. This initiative, which sprang from the work of several groups at community level, has the potential to transform a large and significant area of public space - stretching nearly a mile from Hove Street to Hove Lagoon.

The Hove Station Quarter. Mike Gibson described how the Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum has seized the initiative to shape the direction of major construction in the large area of Hove covered by the Council's "Development Area 6". Big building projects are already starting to shoot up, but through the neighbourhood plan - which will be put to a local referendum in the coming year - the aim is to

ensure that local communities will actually benefit directly from the way the regeneration work is carried through.

For the Council, Geoff Raw confirmed its wish to encourage and engage with initiatives from the community and voluntary sector. He did however describe the financial pressures that local authorities are under, with councils' statutory duties consuming more and more of the shrinking resources available.

In the questions and discussions prompted by all the speakers, there was a definite pattern that emerged.

- The five examples covered in the Forum all demonstrated the value of initiative and creativity that comes from community and voluntary organisations.

Community initiative is a powerful resource for helping to improve the places we live in.

- The examples also showed that where the Council felt able to support or foster or facilitate the initiative, the potential result was a "win-win" for the city as a whole.

Resources in the public sector are certainly under pressure, but that also means there are benefits all round from the Council finding smart ways to capitalise on big "win-win" opportunities that community groups are offering.

Bob Ryder

HELP NEEDED!

Last year your committee focussed on how we could improve our activities to contribute to the national and local net zero carbon objectives and you have seen some of the results already such as our campaign for *one new street tree per new dwelling*, for *micro parks* and our Hove Boulevard initiative. These projects are of course on-going. This year we also focus on improving our operations so that we can attract new members, more funds and hence do more to help improve the environment and townscape in Hove and Portslade.

We have come to the conclusion that we need more help in a number of areas as set out below. If you feel you would like to help in any of these areas then please contact us at info@hovecivicsociety.org

We now need help in:

- Developing our sponsorship and fund-raising programme – including contacts with local businesses and legacies;
- Developing a varied events and talks programme;
- Developing a summer visit and walk and talk programme including outdoor activities such as Jazz at the Plinth;
- Developing more ways of communicating what we do to local people;
- Boosting our input to the planning forum we run jointly with Regency Society

We can promise no fees but eternal gratitude by the burghers of Hove and Portslade.

HCS Commitee



*Helmut Lusser, Chair
01273 884877*



*Elaine Evans
Lead on Local History*



*Bob Ryder, Vice Chair
Lead on Planning*



*Heather James
Environmental Projects*



*John Kapp
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*Karin Janson,
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*Andrew Nichols
Street trees and Environment*



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*Patrick Lowe
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*Penny Hudd
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Nicole Urbanski - Webshop



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