

Hove Civic Society

Oct 2022 Newsletter



ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Members,

Last year seemed unusually busy. Perhaps because we were driven by the objectives we had set ourselves aiming to help make our City more sustainable. This has meant us devoting considerable time lobbying for change and trying to get a number of parties with us on the journey. While our third sector colleagues across the city showed considerable enthusiasm for the changes we are suggesting, the colleagues at the City Hall are substantially more difficult to persuade. So not all our efforts have achieved the desired result – yet. Having said that we have had many fruitful discussions with Council members and I am particularly grateful for the support we have had from them for our various deputations to the City Council and the ETS committee. I also would like to highlight the positive response we have had in our discussion with Geoff Raw and several of his directors' team, where we were able to agree that we in essence are trying to work together to achieve a more sustainable city in these difficult times. To make this possible I keep making the point that we need a more positive, less bureaucratic, interaction with the council not least so that we in third sector can be persuaded that it is worth devoting our spare time on helping improve the city. As you will see below we have experienced some positive outcomes in this direction already.

I am, as always, tremendously grateful for the work carried out by our committee requiring huge amounts of time to scan and comment on proposed developments in the city, to drive our street tree planting programme and lobby the council for appropriate long term policies, to initiate the development of our first pocket park, to push for the rejuvenation of Church Road into our own Hove Boulevard, to complete the second sculpture on the Hove Plinth, to renovate and improve the Hove Heritage boards, organising lectures and many other activities.

I would also like to thank all our colleagues across the city who have worked with us either through our lecture programme or supported us in the various deputations we have undertaken during the year. Together we are stronger and can achieve more!

Finally a big thank you to our growing membership for your continued support. This is critical to our continued success.

City Planning and new developments

We have continued our regular meetings with Regency Society in our Planning Forum throughout the year, albeit on-line

and keep commenting on new developments. In the last year there have been relatively few large new development proposals, the city catching a breath with a number of earlier permissions now coming out of the ground. As we have seen the pressure is now resuming with significant additional developments being proposed along the Hove seafront (Aldrington basin) and in the Conway Street area.

Our effort to influence the City Plan in terms of requiring a policy that links new developments to street tree planting (one new tree for each flat) and to provide a better framework for investments in conservation areas has not been successful. We were trying to stretch the ambitions of the City Plan, which we believe could do much more to make our city more sustainable – we will keep trying and galvanise the support for our ideas further.

Street Tree Planting

The year has seen the installation of a dozen trees in Glebe Villas, after a long and strenuous effort by local residents. The process, along a new model by the city arborists, leaves much to be desired. Not least the costs of the tree planting, which has trebled since our last planting. We keep making the point that community involvement at this level of cost is likely to fade away and have suggested to the city council that rather than losing voluntary contributions altogether a matched scheme where some moneys by the council are used to leverage in voluntary funds may be a cleverer way of approaching the matter.

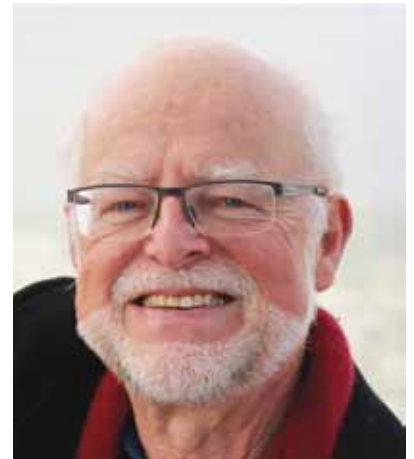
While awaiting a response to our suggestions we are pausing new street tree planting funded by HCS and may be dedicating some of the planting receipts to the proposed St Aubyn's pocket park in the first instance. See further details in the rest of the newsletter.

In the meantime we will be working with the Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum to secure perimeter street tree planting around the MODA development to be funded by developer contributions. Our proposals envisage about 100 street trees.

Environmental improvements

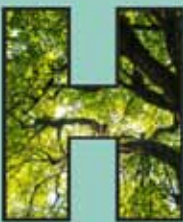
St Aubyns pocket park: Having received considerable help from a number of MSc students from University of Brighton, who prepared a revised scheme, this is currently being detailed and will be subject to planning approval. We are most grateful to the new interim Executive Director, Donna Chisholm for having assigned one contact officer to the project who is working with the Society to help implement the scheme. We are also grateful for the support we received from council members for our deputation to ETS committee seeking support for the proposal.

Church Road – Hove Boulevard: Following the designs by Stickland Wright for our own Hove Boulevard, a deputation asking for support for the proposal went to Council



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 Plinths SCULPTURE in our City Illustrated talks EVENTS	 Partnership City Council Museums & Arts Sector Community Groups Civic Societies Business
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ANNUAL REPORT cont'd

and then ETS committee where it was agreed that a report would be prepared. The essence of our request was to secure design fees required for the improvements and that designs should be prepared in readiness for funding coming available. The Society sees the improvement of this road as a key project in making Hove more sustainable

Heritage boards: During the year one of our members lamented the poor state of the 10 Hove Heritage Boards sprinkled around Hove and Portslade. Your committee agreed to seek to undertake this improvement and we have set up a small working party with the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust to redesign and remake the boards as well as refurbishing the structures. We have secured pro bono support for the redesign and production of the boards and are currently seeking grants for the refurbishment of the stands.

Hove Plinth and Second Sculpture

The second sculpture, Flight of the Langoustine, entered the foundry stage in May 2022, and will be completed there by the end of October. Then follows the fabrication stage which will last until Spring 2023. The funding for the production of the sculpture is now largely secured, however the costs of installation and artists fee will still need to be raised. To this end the Society has entered a contract with a fund raising agency to help raise the remaining funds.

During the next year a number of steps will need to be undertaken to move the first sculpture and prepare the plinth for Flight of the Langoustine.

Working with others

During the year we have been involved in extensive work with **Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum** – seeking to finalise Neighbourhood Plan procedures and starting to work on the

implementation of the plan. There are a number of projects which need to be prepared for implementation including extensive street tree planting, several pocket parks and a much needed second pedestrian and cycle bridge across the railway

The Society is also one of the stakeholders of the **West Hove Seafront Action Group**, with extensive involvement in the Kingsway to Sea linear park essentially funded by levelling up funds.

Talks and Events Programme

Our lectures this year were all live and in person. The annual Forum was well attended providing an insight into a wide range of activities around Hove. We will retain and improve on this format for next year, whilst trying to develop a talks programme that has more of a social component. See later in the newsletter.

Governance and Committee

First and foremost it is my sad duty to report the death of our Honorary Secretary John Kapp who departed on the 3rd of August. We will all miss him. Please see his obituary in the newsletter.

Our membership is growing and now stands at almost 270 members. Our new direction following us becoming a CIO with an extended range of activities, no doubt is a contributing factor in the society becoming more attractive and relevant.

Many thanks again for supporting Hove Civic Society. Together we can do more!

Helmut Lusser
Chairman

“Burn him in a tub of tar. Burn him like a blazing star” (trad. rhyme)

Two hundred years ago, although Catholicism had been legal in the UK since 1791, Catholics did not enjoy full civil rights. The 1820s saw the question of Catholic Emancipation raging across the land: George IV, many politicians, and literary figures professed fiercely anti-Catholic views whilst “No Popery” mobs rioted against Catholic Emancipation legislation.

Meanwhile, traditional 5th November revelries in Brighthelmston were marked by mischief, mayhem and madness, occasionally spilling over into wanton violence - flaming tar-barrels careering down North Street; the High Constable's house attacked; firing of pistols mingled with the explosion of rockets and yells of the mob; reading of the Riot Act; troops advancing along the Steine, bayonets fixed.

Henry Solly recounted his schoolboy memories of this intense political climate from his time at Dr Morrell's Academy in Hove (south-east of Hove Street, in the area of St Aubyn's today). Dr Morrel - a liberal-minded, non-conformist minister - heartily supported the cause of Catholic Emancipation and so would not let the boys hold their bonfire on Guy Fawkes' Day itself nor allow any ceremonial or effigy. Solly recalls a blissful day spent on the Downs; he imagined himself a cavalry officer in the recently ended Napoleonic Wars as he scampered around under the bright sunshine foraging for gorse for the bonfire. However, their “grand jubilation” around the traditional tar barrel bonfire was curtailed when “a horde of roughs, men as well as boys, from the surrounding districts, before long broke in upon us with irresistible fury, flung the burning brands about, rolled the blazing tar-barrel over the grass” and drove boys and masters pell-mell to the refuge of the school.

Henry Solly became one of the most remarkable social innovators of his age, an activist in almost every radical cause to benefit the working class (Chartism, abolition of slavery, universal suffrage, free education, co-operative movement, teetotalism). Beveridge called him a “constructive spirit, part author of at least three large living movements; charity organisation, working men's clubs, and garden cities”.

Hove Actually Walking Tours are fun, informative & 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 & experience the area.

To receive information, book or go on the mailing list, email: hoveactuallywalks@gmail.com.

Rachel Bridgeman
f **Hove Actually Walking Tours**



Satirical cartoon concerning
Catholic Emancipation 1829

<http://www.historyhome.co.uk/peel/ireland/cartoons.htm>

Friends of Hove Park



The Friends of Hove Park are a group of about twelve volunteers who help look after Hove's largest park and their Chair for the past five years has been Alan Moon. The park is owned by the local council, and the volunteers work with them and the parks gardening team. It is a Green Flag Park – this is a prestigious annual national award given out by Keep Britain Tidy. Much of the work of the volunteers involves working with the gardeners litter picking, weeding and other park projects. The group is also involved in planting a large number of wild flowers, mainly along the bank that runs beside the Goldstone Crescent and cultivating and a purpose-built wildflower mound. The playground has recently been refurbished by the Council working with the FOHP who are also involved in raising money to completely refurbish the basketball and netball court in the park and provide them with floodlights.

The park contains several tennis courts; which used to be run rather unsuccessfully by the council, but two of the local clubs have now taken them over and have done a great job not only running them so efficiently but completely updating them. The FOHP are now in the process of raising money for a brand new clubhouse which will be the final piece of the jigsaw as they are about to resurface the courts and install floodlights. The Friends annual Easter egg trail and Bonnet Parade was the most successful ever with over 130 children taking part. One of the biggest events this year, on the 17th July, arranged together with the Friends of Brighton and Hove hospitals, was a Tennis A thon and Family Fun Day to raise money for their charity.



Celia Britton



Local communities and developer contributions

One of the great mysteries of planning in our city is how developer contributions are negotiated, decided and spent. Currently there appear to be some £21M waiting to be spent. These funds arose from a system where funds are required by developers to help 'mitigate' the impact of the new development. This is now being replaced by a new regime of CIL payments, which are more of a property tax. The receipts of CIL can be spent city wide but 15% can be determined by local communities (25% where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place).

While the new CIL regime is cranking up there are still many developments coming out of the ground where S106 funds have been negotiated and where funds still will flow for a number of years according to the payment schedules in the agreements. For example in the Hove Station Quarter area three new developments will generate over £4M in funds to become available over the next two to four years. These agreements have been negotiated in a very opaque way and as far as I can see there has been no detailed member scrutiny, nor any community involvement prior to signing off the agreements. From a community point of view the process has been completely lacking in transparency. A very positive break in this tradition is the initiative by

MODA to set up a Community Liaison Group to influence how the S106 funds for their large development should be spent – with a focus on spending it locally for the benefit of local communities. The group includes local ward councillors and local organisations, including Hove Civic Society, and presents a good model for local democracy. I note the positive reaction of city council officers to the model.

In the first meetings a number of projects were proposed, including improvements to Hove Park, extensive street tree planting around the perimeter of the development and two new micro parks. Such projects will be of immediate benefit to people who already live in the area.

The challenge will now be to design these proposals in sufficient detail that they can be implemented in the next few years and for that we need to crank up our capabilities so we can propose sound, well designed schemes. So **I am looking for people with design skills, surveying, project management and other skills who would like to join us in this quest.** Pro bono of course!

Contact me on info@hovecivicsociety.org

Helmut Lusser



The making of the sculpture “Flight of Langoustine”



Waxes, Figure A



Waxes, Figure B



Waxes, Figure C



Waxes encased in ceramic shells, Fig C

You would be forgiven to think that you have entered the set of a horror movie. Body parts everywhere, figures hanging from heavy chains, boiling cauldrons. But this is just another day of work at the Milwyn Fine Art Foundry, where the next step of producing Hove Plinth's next sculpture has been taking place over the summer, including the creation of exact hollow wax copies of the original models, encasing of the wax sections in ceramic heatproof moulds that can take the heat and pressure of the burnout and casting, which is when the wax is melted out and the molten bronze is poured in to cast the final figures. It's a brutal process and it has been particularly challenging this blistering summer as the foundry had to close for a couple of days due to excessive heat with temperatures unsafe to work in, along with the challenge of keeping the waxes cool. But the foundry and the artist have done a fantastic job and we are virtually there now, with three out of four figures cast in sections and in the process of assembly, and the fourth figure ready for casting. The foundry work will be completed in October. The next stage will be the fabrication of the steel grid and assembly of all parts into the final sculpture, for which we believe funding is largely secured. We want to get ahead with this as soon as possible as the market for materials and production costs is very volatile and we want to avoid additional cost if at all possible. We hope this process to be complete by March 2023 and, if all goes to plan, to install the sculpture on Hove Plinth by early summer. But we still need to raise the funds for installation costs and the artists fees.

Meanwhile we are very pleased that the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust has agreed, when the time comes, to give the current sculpture 'Constellation' a new home in the grounds of Hove Museum.

Don't forget that you can help bring this fantastic project to fruition by donating through the Hove Plinth website

<https://hoveplinth.org.uk/support-us/>

Karin Janzon



Figure C cast and assembled

MODA perimeter Planting and pocket park

I have earlier reported about the Community Liaison Group set up by MODA to help direct S106 funds (developer contributions) to projects in the vicinity of the Sackville Road development. This is a most welcome initiative involving local councillors from all the 3 affected wards and local groups of which our Society is one.

As part of this process of 'repatriating' some of the developer contributions to the immediate surroundings of the development, we have proposed extensive street tree planting around the perimeter of the development site together with a pocket park in Leighton Road.

Our proposal includes planting up of the roads in the artists quarter (Frith Road, Poynter Road, Landseer Road, Prinsep Road and Leighton Road) to the west of the site. In addition we propose essentially replacement planting for Ranelagh Villas, Hartington Villas, Newtown Road and Fonthill Road. Moreover we would like to see new planting along Newtown Road from the junction with Fonthill Road westwards.

In addition to the Street Tree Planting proposal the local residents of artists quarter have suggested that the dead end of Leighton Road is turned into a pocket park possibly with links to the small green area in the adjacent lands of Homebase.

All local councillors are firmly supporting our proposal as is the CLG as a whole and we have set up a small working group with residents from the artists quarter area and Hove Civic Society (also representing the Neighbourhood Forum) to see this proposal through. Our impression is that the proposal is well supported by council officers.

During the autumn we will need to explore exactly where the planting can take place, and no doubt have extended discussions yet again with council officers about the minimum widths of pavements to allow planting. We will also wish to explore the details of the proposed pocket park and potential restrictions for planting in that area as well as a long-term strategy for maintenance of such a facility.

Helmut Lusser

Does Hove Town Hall environment need to look as it does?



Copenhagen Town Hall – surrounded by a riot of colour



The disadvantage with travelling is that it can give you an insight into how things could be made better and therefore starts to drag you out of your comfort zone.

Having been out and about a fair amount this summer I now regularly cringe when we walk past Hove Town Hall. Dreary, weedy, unattractive, sad. Acres of unloved paving, neglected planters. Is this the way our green council wants to portray what we can do with our environment? I know 'we' haven't got the money and other resources but why miss out on a major opportunity to turn an acreage of concrete and paving into the

most amazing pocket park in the city. A demonstrator to show what can be done and what a council can do with a bit of centrally located real estate. Our proposals for the improvements to Church Road – our own Hove Boulevard - started doing this. Below are some images from other town halls. Copenhagen surrounds its early 20th century Town Hall with a riot of different yellows, all beautifully maintained, while the Town Hall in the German village of Kisslegg demonstrates to the local citizens the importance of a well cared-for municipality. Both send out messages of confidence, civic pride and provide good examples of how to manage the public realm.

Could we possibly learn from this?



Kisslegg town hall – beautifully kept



Hove Town Hall – Church Road frontage



Hove Town Hall – Norton Road



The Battle for Street Trees in Hove



Felling a stately but, sadly, diseased elm on Highdown Road (E), near the Dyke Road junction

We have noticed that as part of pavement resurfacing in a number of places around Hove, tree stumps are being removed and, rather than replanting, the resulting voids are paved over. There seems to be a view that in a number of cases pavements are 'too narrow' for tree replacements. Cumulatively this is a disaster for our townscape, ecology and city health and doesn't seem to reflect the councils' net zero ambitions (which requires carbon absorption, done very well by trees, not so well by tarmac).

We seem to see one part of the city council administration doing their bit and in the process unwittingly unravel what others are seeking to achieve. I can't overemphasize the danger of this approach to the future of our townscape as a very large proportion of our street trees are on pavements 'not wide enough' and their removal would fundamentally alter the visual character of Hove as well as undermining attempts to green up the city. We have to hold the policy holders for our environment in the current administration to account for this and I would like them to explain how this practice of gradually removing space for street trees fits in with the city council's net zero policy. I also call on Hove Councillors of all parties to protest against this utter non-sensical and destructive practice.

Just before the summer recess your committee made detailed comments on the council's draft Tree Planting Plan. Our key concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. The establishment of a standard tree pit size of 1x1 metre will mean that a huge number of trees will not be able to be replaced as pavements will be too narrow for this. As the council in the foreseeable future is unlikely to be able to move towards large-scale planting in the roads for cost and other reasons, there is a strong argument to scale back the demanded size for tree pits to ensure that trees can still be planted where pavements

are narrower. This proposed standard will cause untold damage to our heritage and chances of becoming a more sustainable city.

2. One key element missing in the strategy is the need for corporate action affecting several sections of the council that would allow the council to maximise opportunities for planting. This includes Housing, Planning and Regeneration and Highways. Actions by the latter two could add substantial number of trees over the years. As we have seen if there is no corporate sign up to policy then one part of the council can easily rip through the policies of another. It is time for highways to be part of a vigorous street tree planting effort.

3. The council is still missing major opportunities to get trees into the ground. Our suggestion to adopt a planning policy of one new street tree for each new dwelling being built in the city would secure long term funding beyond the life time of the current administration AND would create a direct link between development and mitigating carbon reduction measures.

4. We believe community involvement needs a firm structure and an element of matched funding from the council to be successful. It would be appropriate to announce a matched funding scheme – where the city council offers say a 1 for 1 match for every tree funded by the local community. In addition a standard fee needs to be applied to street trees, where new trees and pits are envisaged. The costs should be reasonable and at a level where it will attract public contributions. A level of no more than £5-600 seems just about bearable for communities to engage with. Above that people and potential contributions will drift away.

We realise that some distinction needs to be made between new planting (such as Glebe Villas) and replacement planting and we will seek to engage with the council on a conversation on this.



A recently removed elm stump and potential tree pit asphalted over at the junction of Chanctonbury and Highdown Road

John Kapp



It is with great sadness that we report the death of John Kapp who was the Honorary Secretary of Hove Civic Society for the last 10 years. John was a lively and imaginative contributor to many of the Society's initiatives and always sought to push the boundaries of what we thought we could achieve. Early on he led on the effort to get district heating

to the city, highlighting the potential of Shoreham power station to become a hub for district heating for the entire city. Many long evenings we spent on pushing our ideas via the Renewable Energy Group of the Society. He led our work supporting the

Rampion Windfarm but then challenged the way energy was to be transferred onshore arguing that rather than feeding it into the national grid at Bolney it should be distributed directly to the city via the local distribution network, a position he vigorously defended at the local hearing. Whilst very supportive of our sculpture and Hove Plinth work he grabbed the opportunity to try to convince us that we should very quickly develop an arts trail in Hove, a suggestion we agreed with in principle but only to be introduced after we had a sufficient number of high-quality sculptures located around Hove for it to be worthwhile for people to come and visit. Of course John wanted the sun-dial at the i360 to become part of that trail. A great idea which so far has fallen on stony ground. He was a visionary and his ideas to improve the public transport system with a Brighton 'cross-rail' may seem odd to many, but I am sure it won't be many years before a similar idea will need to be discussed seriously not least in view of the ambitions to make the city more sustainable. If there is one thing we have all learned from John is that you need to think outside the box to start dealing with the many challenges facing our city and our environment.

We will all miss you!

Winter/Spring Talks and Events Programme

Thursday 20th October 2022, 6.30 pm, Platf9rm, Hove Town Hall
Annual General Meeting. Guest speaker: Peter Kyle MP

Wednesday 23rd November 2022, 7pm, Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas

“From Trams, Horse-buses, Steam-railcars and Goat-carts to Cycles, Scooters, Skateboards, Electric Cars and Shanks’s Pony: What Does the Future Hold for Transport in Hove?”

This event will focus on the future transport options and lifestyle choices for Hove residents and will outline the key features of the proposed Mini-Holland Approach, 20 Minute Neighbourhoods, Low-Traffic Zones and the modal shift away from cars.

Wednesday 18th January 2023, 7pm, Hove Museum
New Year Reception

Come and join us at this special Reception to celebrate recent successes of Hove Civic Society and hear about exciting plans for 2023 and beyond. Existing and new members are invited to attend - and bring a guest or two! - as well as corporate supporters, politicians, the media, the business sector and community groups.

Wednesday 15 February 2023, 7pm Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas

“Pocket Parks -What are they? How do we get one? What is happening locally?”

This event will explore the development of pocket parks in Hove and Brighton, including the development of the HCS-led St Aubyn’s Pocket Park.

Wednesday 22 March 2023, 7pm Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas
“Social Customs, Class and Culture in 20th Century Hove”

Programme to be confirmed

Wednesday 19 April 2023, 6.30pm Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas
Annual Forum

We will again focus on how local communities in Hove are improving our public realm and what more we can do. Presentations from local organisations.



Keep in touch...

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