

The seaside and the Regency period and its architecture are the foundation of Brighton's international reputation for elegance and fun.

The Prince Regent, later George IV, was responsible for the heady combination of fashion and decadence which has remained the essence of the town to the present day. Before George, Prince of Wales adopted the former obscure fishing village of Brighthelmston as a trysting place for his amorous liaisons it was already becoming a health spa, exploiting the benefits of bathing in seawater. With the Prince of Wales came a pleasure loving high society which quickly established itself as a royal court second only to London.

A great building boom soon followed inspired by other eighteenth century spa towns such as Bath. The distinctive architectural style which evolved became known as Regency. In Brighton the style itself survived long after the period when the Prince acted as Regent.

Until the mid nineteenth century Brighton architecture retained its Regency flavour and indeed some of the grandest schemes, including Kemp Town (3) and Brunswick Town (12) took many years to complete.

At the very centre of Brighton geographically and architecturally is the Royal Pavilion (1), one of the most outrageous, eccentric and wonderful buildings in the world, built for the Prince Regent by John Nash. Its exotic style is not however typical of Brighton Regency, being too outré for widespread imitation. The grand terraces and squares ranging for several miles along the sea front capture the essence of the style.



1. The Royal Pavilion 1787-1822

Both the Kemp Town and Brunswick Town developments are the work of a local firm, Wilds and Busby, for whom Thomas Cubitt built Kemp Town. These developments are inspired by the grand stone terraces, squares and crescents of Bath and the stucco magnificence of John Nash's London squares and terraces. In consequence, Brighton and Hove possess a splendid array of similar terraces, squares and crescents but, uniquely, opening onto the sea.

Behind the sea front, however, are scores of relatively modest but charming streets with their own terraces and squares, with bow windows and classical pilasters, aping their sea front betters. In their own distinctive way they are also an essential part of

REGENCY BRIGHTON

This chart produced by the Regency Society invites you to explore the architectural glories of Brighton using the map guide below.

WHEN WAS THE REGENCY ?

The severe illness of George III (at the time, considered to be insanity) led to the Regency Act, which caused his eldest son to become de facto sovereign, as Prince Regent, from 5 February 1811.

George III died on 29 January 1820, when the Prince Regent became George IV.

On his death in 1830, the third son of George III became King as William IV. He died on 20 June 1837 following which Queen Victoria was crowned Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

REGENCY BRIGHTON



2. Adelaide Crescent 1830



3. Lewes Crescent 1826



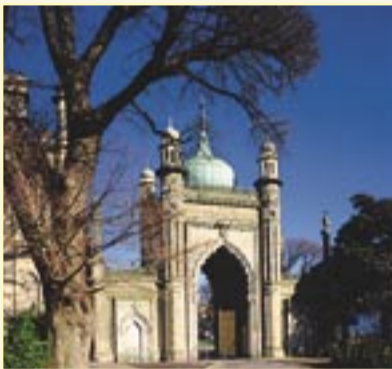
4. Royal Crescent 1800



5. Bedford Square 1818



6. St. Andrew's Church 1827



7. King William IV Gate 1832



8. Western Pavilion 1826



9. Regency Square 1818



10. Western Terrace 1828



11. Camelford Street 1812



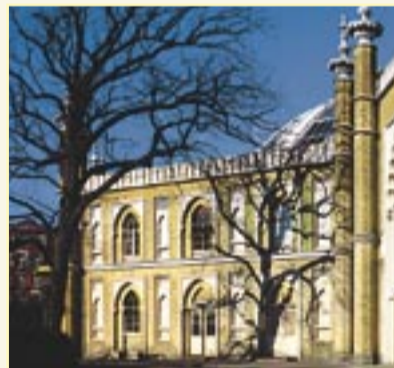
12. Brunswick Square 1823



13. Unitarian Chapel 1820



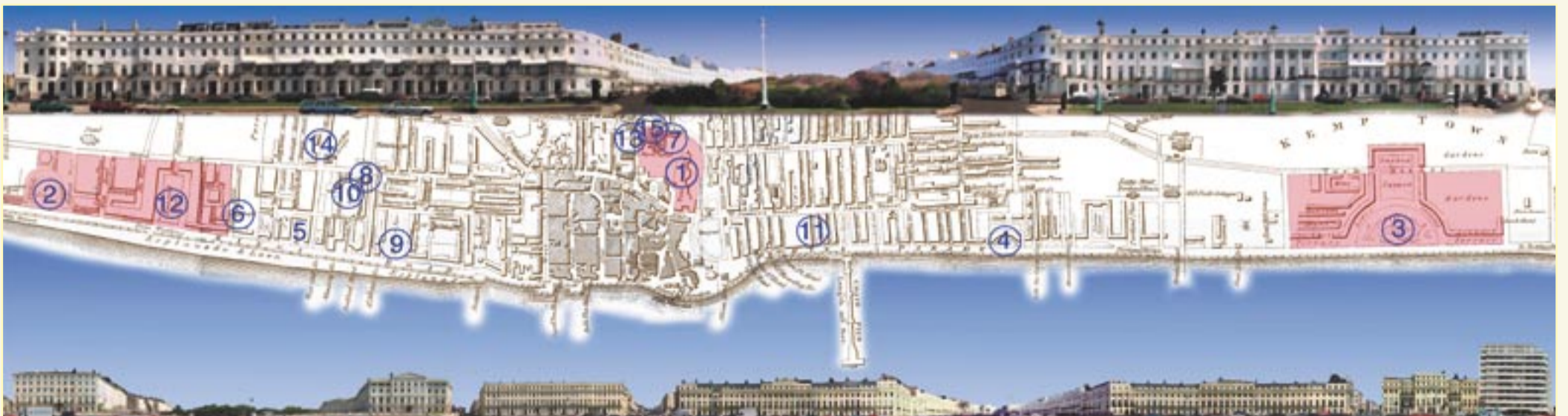
14. Montpelier Road 1825



15. The Dome 1803



16. St. Peter's Church 1828



Kemp Town (top) and Brunswick Town. These developments, together with the Royal Pavilion, are shown in pink on the map of 1836.

TO THE MEMORY OF
THOMAS READ KEMP ESQ
OF KEMPTOWN BRIGHTON
DIED DEC 20th 1844 AT PARIS
BURIED AT PERE LA CHAISE
AGED 61 YEARS.
"HE WARRIED IN 1844"

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