



The Regency Society
of Brighton & Hove

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

www.regencysociety.org

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Elaine Evans (*Hove Civic Society representative*)

The Regency Society of Brighton and Hove

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

I have really enjoyed my first year as your chairman. It has been full of interest and challenges and working with my fellow committee members has given me much satisfaction. I should like to acknowledge all the kindness and support that members of the Society have given me.

Sadly, on the planning side, it is hard not to dwell on disappointments and major concerns. The City is beset by a significant number of controversial planning proposals which, if approved, could leave an unfortunate legacy from this era in contrast to the centuries of triumphant civic design which we have inherited. At the Marina we have seen a mass of tall buildings permitted which conflicts with the long-held requirement that the cliff line should be respected. The forty-storey tower might be a very elegant design but the Society felt that it was in the wrong place. This permission has spawned another proposal for high buildings on the adjoining land which might add insult to injury.

The debate on the future of the King Alfred may come to a conclusion between the writing of this piece and the AGM. Throughout we have wanted to give a fair wind to the development of a site with real opportunity. But we believe that any scheme should add to the charm and assets of the sea front and respect its neighbours. We feel very strongly that the brief expects too much from the developer and that critical appraisal should not be suspended because the architect has a world-wide reputation. We are extremely concerned about the advice given by CABE and the way in which its views were prepared about which we have lodged a formal complaint. The politicisation of the debate is very depressing; it is sad that it now appears to be an election issue. At least we were on the same side as the City Council over the Brighton Station tower but we continue to join those who oppose the Falmer stadium on environmental sustainability grounds. During 2007 we expect the Black Rock proposals, about which we have worries, to come a step nearer. Whilst we applaud the redevelopment of the Circus Street area, we are troubled that the winning developer's scheme deviates from the brief and might have a negative impact on the Old Steine/Pavilion Parade.

But there have been brighter moments on the planning front. The i360 tower at the landward end of the West Pier could be a delight and early indications are that a new Open Market could revitalise the area in an agreeable way. The prospects for the Hippodrome are more hopeful. However, we are still concerned about the future of our Anglican churches and we have had no response to our submissions on the Diocesan Review. With plans for the closure of Brighton's parish church, St Peter's, and Holy Trinity, Blatchington Road being announced, perhaps we should fear a slow 'death by a thousand cuts' strategy.

Whilst on church matters, we were pleased to support the restoration of the rood screen in St Nicholas, Brighton. The expenditure to improve New Road is welcome but we wonder whether some of the money could, and should, have been spent on restoring the sea front Band Stand and the Hove sea front shelters.

It was hoped that, with a new Charities Act, we would be able to move forward at this AGM with a review of our constitution and governance but it has taken longer for Parliament to finalise the Act than we had expected. It is now in place and we are in close touch with the Civic Trust to try to obtain a new model constitution for amenity societies. When this is available, we will make progress on refreshing our systems.

Another disappointment was the failure to win a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to digitise the James Gray Collection despite a considerable amount of work and seeking much advice. Our decision to apply followed the placing of Volume One on our web site which has proved very popular. We are now exploring how we can fund work on the remaining thirty nine volumes. Volume Two is now being processed by Duncan McNeill and Lavender Jones. We have improved the condition of our own archive at Regency Square and we expect to add books and documents which were once owned by Antony Dale. We have to thank Yvonne Dale for this gift as we do for once again letting us use her garden for our Summer garden party. This highlight of our year together with the drinks reception at Christmas and the AGM helps us reinforce our fellowship. A successful Summer tour to Worcester was enjoyed by members of the Society.

Our web site has won much well-deserved praise and this is due to our superb web master, Duncan McNeill. David Beevers, who will be stepping down from the Committee at the AGM, has produced an excellent, varied programme of lectures. We will miss him. We have set aside £1000 to fund a new commemorative plaque; the person to be so honoured has not yet been decided.

I end this report by thanking the people who have helped the Society to function and have been of such assistance to me. Although Peter Rose has not always been well, he has been a tower of strength for me. I am grateful to all the Committee members and our unsung heroine, Jackie FitzGerald. Selma Montford was recognised by HM the Queen with a well-earned MBE. Above all, we owe a huge debt to John Small. He puts in many hours of dedication into our activities including attending meetings of the Conservation Advisory Group and Planning Committee. He even sat through five hours of a Policy and Resources Committee. Without him, we would lose much of our effectiveness. Finally I want to thank Dinah Staples for all her sterling work during a long period as our Minutes Secretary. She has been replaced by the excellent Natasha Fielden but we shall really miss Dinah's cheerfulness and efficiency.

Michael Ray, *Chairman* March 2007

Lecture Programme

The 2006-7 lectures are being very much enjoyed by a regular audience of members, with a smattering of newcomers at each lecture. David Beevers has encouraged several expert speakers to inform and amuse us with some unusual (and quite surprising) subjects. The two remaining lectures are listed in Regency Review Issue 16.

Committee changes

Dr Elizabeth Darling resigned from the committee on taking up an appointment at Oxford Brookes University. Her specialist expertise and contacts will be missed. Lavender Jones, Professor John McKean, Hazel McKay and Carolyn Oxenbury joined the committee following their election at last year's Annual General Meeting. It has already benefited from the wide experience which each of them has brought to our discussions.

Summer Study Tour

The tour was centred on Worcester in June 2006 and a brief description of its highlights was included in Regency Review Issue 15. Stella and Tony Mercer organised everything with their usual calm thoroughness. The 2007 Study Tour will be based at Salisbury and an excellent programme has been devised.

Summer Party

The summer party, on Sunday 26 June, was another popular success and we are all grateful to Yvonne Dale for ensuring that her garden was at its best and for being such a splendid hostess.

She has once again offered her garden to us for our party this year, which will be on Saturday, 23 June 2007.

City Planning Update

Marlborough House

The building has recently been advertised by the owner's agents as a 16 bed hotel but this seems to be in advance of any planning or listed building consent applications for this change of use being submitted. We shall keep in touch with this interesting proposal. The devil (or even the delight!) is always in the detail!

Stanmer House

The leaseholder has applied for listed building consent and planning approval to fence in parts of the park close to the main rooms of the house, which are now principally used for wedding ceremonies and receptions, as well as for parties, conferences and seminars. Although the function of the proposed fences is clear - to separate the paying guests from the *hoi polloi* - they will surely destroy the essence of the setting of the eighteenth century country house where the lawns are laid out to glide seamlessly into the park beyond. A ha-ha, possibly, but a modern steel fence - possibly not!

Brighton Marina

A revised proposal for a reduced number of flats (but more car parking spaces) was approved in June 2006 (see Regency Review issue 15 for report) and now a separate proposal for a nearby site by a different developer is expected to be submitted shortly. This includes improvements to the internal roads and for flats to be built above and around a new superstore. A slim tower block of flats is also proposed.

King Alfred

An amended proposal is likely to be determined shortly. There are still many questions over details of the proposals which have not been fully answered but it is possible that the scheme will be recommended for approval, subject to a very large number of conditions. CABE has said that it 'does not wish to see this application again' and English Heritage has given only a somewhat qualified approval.

John Small, *Honorary Secretary* March 2007

Membership

*As at 1 March 2007,
there were 291 ordinary
members of the Society,
147 life members and 3
corporate members.
Please notify any omissions
or corrections to the
membership secretary.*

*Members in good standing
are listed below.*

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Mrs. C.Briggs
Mr. D.Brogan
Mr. B.Brooks
Mrs. G.Brooks-Herrington
Ms. J.Brough
Mr. W.Brown
Mrs. W.Brown
Mrs. E.Brunst
Mr. P.Bryant
Mrs.G.Bryson
Mr. M.Buckley
Dr. M.Budleigh

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Mrs. D.Eaton
Mr. R.Edwards
Ms.W.Edwards
Mr. V.Ellis
Ms. K. Eves

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Mrs. G.Afifi
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Mr. P.Andrews
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Mrs. M.Antram
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Mr. P.Berry
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Dr. C.Black
Mrs. D.Black
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Mrs. E.B.Booker
Mr. R.Booth
Mrs. J.Booth
Mr. D.Botibol
Mrs.S.Botibol
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Mr. R.Gasson
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Mrs. Gillet
Ms. B. Goodfellow
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Mr. D.Granger
Mrs.G.Greenwood
Mrs. M. Grimsdell
Mr. J.D.Gwyn

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 Mrs H. Hardy
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 Mr. R.J.Hayes
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 Mr. R.Hedger
 Mr. S.Hedger-Cooper
 Mr. G.Hedger-Cooper
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I

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 Mrs. S.Lobo
 Ms. A.Lobo
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 Mrs. R.Lynch-White
 Mr. D.Lyon
 Mr. T.Lyttelton

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 Mrs. S.Mathews
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 Mrs. F.Mercer
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 Mr. R.Minton
 Mr. N.Mitchell
 Ms. S.Mockford
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 Mrs. B.G.Moffat
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 Mrs. S.Montford MBE
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 Mrs. R.Morfield
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 Mr. A.Mower

N

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 Mr. C.Noonan
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 Ms. S.Peckham
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 Mrs. R.Perry
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 Mr. M.Pierson
 Mrs. M.Pierson
 Mr. N.Porter
 Mrs. N.Porter

R

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 Mr. J.Ray
 Ms. V.Raynar-Smith
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 Mrs. R.Rees
 Mrs. K.Reeves
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 Mrs. P.Remers
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 Mrs. M.Ridler
 Mr. D.Rignell
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 Mr. N.Robinson
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 Ms S.Rockall
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 Mr. P.Seddon
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 Dr. S.Weir
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 Mr. I.Williamson
 Mrs. H.Williamson
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Subscriptions

Members are notified that subscriptions are due for renewal on the anniversary of the date of joining. Subscriptions are currently £12.50 for one individual; £20.00 for two people living at the same address; student £5.00; life £100.00 or £175 for two; corporate £100.00 per company.

Cheques should be made payable to
The Regency Society and sent to:
The Membership Secretary, The Regency Society,
19, BelleVue Gardens, Brighton BN2 0AA

Please would members who have not yet returned a Gift Aid certificate, which allows the Society to reclaim 28p. in the £1.00 tax, do so as soon as possible.

The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st December 2006

		2006		2005	
Fixed Assets (at cost)					
Office Computer (value written off)	0.00		885.00		
Furniture on loan to the Royal Pavillion	1,715.00		1,715.00		
James Gray Photographic Collection	10,000.00	11,715.00	10,000.00	12,600.00	
Current Assets:					
Investments:					
Portman Building Society	40,483.04		38,939.00		
Gilt Edge Stock	68,180.00		68,180.00		
Less provision for the refurbishment of Storage Office	-1500.00				
National Savings (Account Closed 8/11/06)	0.00	107,163.04	1,950.00	107,495.00	
Bank Accounts	10,847.17	10,847.17	6,789.00	6,789.00	
(includes National Savings Account)					
Less Current Liabilities:	Nil		0.00	0.00	
Total Assets less Current Liabilities:		129,725.21		128,458.00	
Long Term Liabilities:	Nil				
Total Assets less Total Liabilities		129,725.21		128,458.00	
Capital and Reserves					
Bank and Society Accounts	0.00		0.00		
Reserves	128,458.00		130,359.00		
Surplus Carried Forward	1267.21	129,725.21	-1,901.00	128,458.00	

Approved by Management Committee on 18 January 2007

Stephen E. Neiman
Hon. Treasurer

John Small
Hon. Secretary

The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2006

			2005	
INCOME				
Subscriptions	4465.94		2981.00	
60th Dinner	0.00		6075.00	
Study Tour	9723.35		15015.00	
Garden Party	1230.00		1147.00	
Dividend Income	5075.63		4330.00	
Interest Received	1773.32	22268.24	1675.00	31223.00
Less Direct Expenditure				
60th Dinner	0.00		5415.00	
Study Tour	9245.00		14980.00	
Lecture Fees, Expenses and Venue Hire	2919.78		3082.00	
Garden Party	1072.50	13237.28	895.00	24372.00
Grants and Donations				
Royal Pavilion	1083.33		2167.00	
Brighton Youth Orchestra Trust	0.00	1083.33	250.00	2417.00
Cost of Expert Witness (Falmer Enquiry)	0.00	0.00	2000.00	2000.00
Administration Costs				
Subscriptions	333.00			
Membership Secretary Honorarium	1000.00		1000.00	
Minute Secretary's Expenses	141.49		0.00	
Committee Meeting Costs	350.00		354.00	
Internet Registration and Service Costs	223.25		0.00	
Refurbishment Costs of Storage Venue	1500.00		12.00	
Insurance	441.00		420.00	
Printing and Postage	1791.68		2533.00	
Bank Charges	15.00		16.00	
Depreciation of Computer	885.00	6680.42		4335.00
Total Expenses		21001.03		33124.00
Surplus		1267.21		-1901.00

