



The Regency Society
of Brighton & Hove

Registered charity No: 210194

2002
Annual Report

The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

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The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

Annual Report 2002

This has been a particularly testing year in terms of planning and conservation for the City of Brighton & Hove.

Three highly sensitive schemes have come to the boil: the “enabling development” for the West Pier, the station car park site and the new sports stadium proposed for Falmer.

So, too, are there challenges to face in terms of scale and height, given focus with plans now before us for both the King Alfred site and the Endeavour garage site at Preston Park.

In all of these, as in so many issues, we are indebted to our secretary John Small for his careful scrutiny and committed attendance at the various consultation sessions and committee meetings. Such matters prompt debate about the quality of the future heritage, as much as concern for protection of the past.

Brighton & Hove possess some bold architectural achievements; sweeping estates such as Brunswick and Kemp Town were bold and dynamic in their day.

The Royal Pavilion was about as contentious a design as could be imagined – especially when John Nash’s orientalism obliterated Henry Holland’s elegant but sedate seaside lodge. The massive slab of brickwork that is our much revered St Bartholomew’s Church today was a much criticised high rise development, which cast the neighbouring cottages into shadow.

The creation of Madeira Drive, the total cover of the cliff face and construction of the middle prom destroyed a swathe of natural beauty in a manner that would defy all laws of conservation today.

Nonetheless, we are proud of what such visionary development has brought to the townscape.

Our concern must be to ensure that first-rate design, in the spirit of a living culture, sustains such a tradition of imaginative architecture and planning. There is real danger in hiding contentious issues behind a pastiche façade. Too much of the city’s new building has been a concretion of indifferent construction – ultimately offensive to the context of the fine aesthetic it sits beside.

The West Pier development must count as a shameful sell out; some still feel that no development at all, and the loss of the Pier, would have been preferred. But the Society’s considered view was to attract a really important structure to complement the strength of the Pier itself – not something whose only merit was to be judged on how unobtrusive the result might be.

Anthony Seldon’s book, *Brave New City*, threw down the gauntlet to those now making the future. It was a personal view, with which few have found comprehensive accord, but it has given a serious prod to the complacency and

indifference that has pervaded all too much of the city's development in the recent past.

Now, at last, we have private developers seeking to work with exciting contemporary architects. Certainly their schemes will encourage rigorous debate; and major issues, such as high-rise policy, need to be resolved. I hope that the Regency Society will increasingly become a forum for such debate.

The Season's lectures and discussions have ranged across many periods, styles and topics – loosely linked by a theme of performance and music, and a rolling interest in patronage.

We are grateful to Peter Bareham in taking on responsibility for these activities from David Robson. The study tour to France, based on Dieppe, was an undoubted success, and though I say it myself, so too was the study day to Trinity College of Music and LABAN at Greenwich. It was a pleasure to play host to members of the Society, and of Hove Civic Society, at the Old Royal Naval College.

We still have much to look forward to; the great treat of our visit to Yvonne Dale's now not so secret garden is on 21 June, at which the Brighton Youth Orchestra Wind Ensemble will serenade, and the next study tour, to the North East, with some very special visits in store will run from 8-13 June inclusive. Spaces are still available.

We are also sponsoring the major exhibition at Brighton Museum which coincides with the Festival, drawn from Philippe Garner's remarkable collection of Brighton & Hove photographs. Members will have a private viewing on 17 June.

The charitable aspect of the Society's work is important. That we are able to give financial support to a variety of causes is due to the generosity of a few members in times past.

Be it through support for exhibitions, contribution to restoration costs of various monuments and artefacts, help with the costs of fighting a significant campaign for protection of an important site or building, in promoting publication and research, taking ownership of specialist collections, or possibly in helping with student scholarships – the need for well-managed assistance is at times quite desperate.

We hope that members, their families and friends, may be moved to make provision in their wills, or by way of immediate gift aid, to help the Society build up a significant endowment for such charitable objectives. As a registered charity, we can take advantage of substantial, tax efficient methods of donation and bequest.

Finally, I must thank and commend the work of all the Society's honorary officers and committee for the sterling work put in on your behalf, and in service to the cityscape and its wider community.

The Regency Society is in good heart – and that is ultimately down to those who work so tirelessly for its cause.

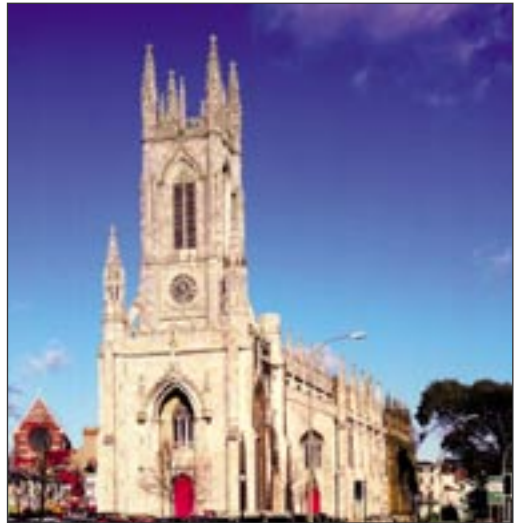
Gavin Henderson, chairman, March 2003

Committee changes

Ian Dunlop has resigned from the committee after many years service both as a member and as chairman. Regrettably, vice-chairman Derek Granger has also resigned. Their wise counsel is already greatly missed. Robert Watson resigned in February 2003, through pressure of work. David Robson has notified us of his intention to resign from the committee at the AGM because he expects to be abroad intermittently during the coming year. Delia Forrester, a former town planner, architect and photographer Duncan McNeill and Dr Elizabeth Darling, of the University of Brighton, have joined the committee.

Donations

During the year the society donated £1,000.00 to the Regency Square Area Society for specific use in supporting the campaign to improve the proposals for the “enabling development” at the West Pier. A donation of £1,116.25 was made to promote design proposals for potential development to provide capital towards repair costs at St Peter’s church, Brighton. A further £1,667.00 went towards our support for the Philippe Garner exhibition at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery.



Summer study tour

A report of the study tour to Normandy, based on Dieppe was included in issue 6 of our newsletter, Regency Review. In addition to two days in Dieppe the tour included visits to Rouen, Varengeville, Lutyen’s house Les Moutiers with Gertrude Jekyll’s garden, and Monet’s home and garden at Giverny.

Summer party

The summer party at Yvonne Dale’s secret garden in Kemp Town was a great treat, once again and was more popular than ever. Our thanks to Yvonne, John Orpen, for a major donation towards the wine and to Audrey Simpson for organising the catering.



West Pier

Proposals for the rebuilding of the structure and buildings of the West Pier progressed very little during 2002. All who wish to see the Pier brought back spent much time and energy discussing the proposed “enabling development”. The West Pier Trust put forward a changed

design in September, following comments from the Victorian Society and a more detailed analysis by Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment of faults in the proposals submitted as a planning application in April 2002.

We still consider that the proposed design of the development is uninspired and that its bulky buildings are out of scale with the existing structures on the pier.

On 26 February 2003, the Council’s planning applications sub-committee granted planning approval for the proposals, subject to the completion of a complicated Section 106 Planning Obligation and more than 30 conditions. Many of these conditions require much more detailed information regarding the design of the enabling buildings and the reconstruction of original structures on the pier.

Listed building consent was similarly constrained by the need to satisfy a number of conditions and subject to authorisation from the secretary of state. The plans will not be called in.

At the turn of the year part of the concert hall collapsed into the sea. As a result it must now be re-built rather than restored.

Jubilee Street redevelopment and the new central library

In early December, the site was cleared and a start was made on the infrastructure works and phased construction programme for the library and other buildings.

We trust that commercial pressures to complete this complicated public-private partnership development on time and within budget will not compromise the architectural design of the library, with its energy saving credentials, its materials and finishes.

We shall monitor any proposed revisions that are submitted.

Marlborough House and Stanmer House

The external restoration of the west-facing, main façade of Marlborough House progressed slowly during the latter part of 2002.

The repairs comply with specifications and schedules prepared by conservation architects Donald Insall Associates, the guidelines agreed by English Heritage, the council's conservation planners and the listed building consent granted before the work began.

We look forward to seeing the completed façade and to the

start of internal re-decoration and repairs. We hope that occasional public access will be possible once the building is occupied again.

At Stanmer House, planning permission and listed building consent has now been granted, subject to implementation of a section 106 agreement, for conversion of the main house into very large flats above gallery space on the ground floor.

The re-created north wing will be divided into a terrace of houses. Work has not yet started, nor has an application been made for the restoration and change of use of the adjacent stable block.



Brighton station good yard site

The urban design of this huge – and hugely important – site has proceeded in a most unsatisfactory manner. The Government Office of the South East received letters from the Regency Society and many other concerned parties requesting that this application be called in for determination by the Secretary of State.

This did not happen and planning approval for the core areas of the development has been granted subject to agreement on a range of outstanding issues.



The Regency Society will watch for the details of the reserved matters affecting the remainder of the site, for which only outline approval has been granted.

Minimal information on these buildings is currently available, so improvements could possibly be made as information emerges.

King Alfred redevelopment proposals

There are three dramatic, very different proposals for flats and a new indoor sports and swimming complex for this site. The frontrunner (below) is the proposal by architects Frank Gehry and Piers Gough with sculptor Anthony Gormley. Its four slim tower blocks of flats, ranging from 17 to 38 storeys, surround a three-storey plateau containing the sports and leisure facilities and pools. The architects claim that the total public open space, on several levels, is greater than the site area.

The Anthony Gormley sculpture is located in a deep subterranean spherical chamber, with tidal seawater, above which is a winter garden enclosure with a matching, but fully-glazed, sphere above it.



The proposal by architects Wilkinson Eyre (right) consists of residential slab blocks ranging from eight to 11 storeys with the sports facilities and pools in a separate, but linked, five-floor leisure centre.

The scheme by the Richard Rogers Partnership (next page) consists of

five stepped slab blocks of flats, each with their longer dimension running north-south, ranging from five storeys in the north and between nine and 19 storeys in the south. The leisure facilities are mainly underground, or at ground level, with decked open spaces above forming pedestrianised squares and gardens.



Each scheme contains some car parking facilities for the leisure centre and flats. The proposals have been exhibited for public consultation and council officers have begun examining the schemes and making financial appraisals. It is likely that each design will be further developed before the selection is made.



Redevelopment proposals for Black Rock

Three proposed schemes have been exhibited for public consultation. Two of the proposals include large public arenas for ice skating or general purposes and one of these includes a tall block of flats. Our preliminary opinion is that both proposals are likely to have a thoroughly detrimental effect on this prominent site, so close to Arundel Terrace and Lewes Crescent.

The buildings would be overpowering and there would be a massive impact on transport requirements from the large numbers attending the frequent events that would take place to ensure the financial success of these venues. The third proposal (below) is altogether different: a health spa and hotel with conference facilities and underground parking. The outline scheme holds out the prospect of a thoughtful, contextual building forming a low lying, four storey crescent, with its convex side facing the sea, echoing the massive arc of Lewes Crescent, at a higher level, to the west and behind it.

The roofs of the building would be fully landscaped, with the possibility of a small park, and would be below the Marine Parade parapet wall, accessible via a slim, lightweight pedestrian bridge. There is also the possibility of a long winter garden, built as a greenhouse against the Marine Parade retaining wall, and stretching the full width of Lewes Crescent, but this proposal could not be fully funded as part of the development. This more modest scheme would seem to make only a slight impact upon the Grade I listed buildings behind it, and could act as a catalyst for real improvements to the Black Rock site.



Tall buildings policy

Several planning applications for tall buildings are being held in abeyance, by agreement with the applicants, while the council seeks specialist urban designers/architects to act as consultants in drawing up a policy document for this contentious subject.

We hope that the local policy will conform with *Guidance on Tall Buildings* issued by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment /English Heritage in March 2003; and that it will clarify the criteria for designing tall buildings in Brighton & Hove to prevent a repetition of the unsatisfactory tall towers and slab blocks of the mid-20th century.

We now expect a full examination of views of potential buildings, both from nearby and from more distant viewpoints. The CABE/EH document even mentions “highlighting opportunities for correcting past mistakes” – but in most instances this will be wishful thinking.

3 Old Steine

The development of the design for a building on the linear site to the north of 3 Old Steine, now a ruin, formerly part of the Blues and Buffs, has improved during the pre-application process, through informal consultations between the applicants’ architects, 3W, planning officers, English Heritage and representatives of the Conservation Areas Advisory Group and the architects’ panel.

This land, in a very prominent position opposite the Royal Pavilion and in front of the former Parochial Offices, which are now flats, was sold by the council as a development site, despite its disadvantages.

We hold some hope for a well-designed new building comprising offices and flats. A planning application is expected soon.

The Clock Tower

We were delighted when, at 10.00am on 17 December, the long awaited extensive restoration and cleaning of the Clock Tower was officially completed.

The golden ball rose up its mast for the first time in more than 100 years. Its descent was carefully controlled, in contrast with the original mechanism, when the crash of the ball was said to have frightened the horses.

Unfortunately, the mechanism has been sporadically indolent.

More unfortunately still, the clock is not completely accurate in registering the time.



Membership

As at 31 March 2003, there were 252 ordinary members of the Society, 129 life members and four corporate members.

Life members

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Mrs B Abbott
A Adams
Professor S Adutt
Miss C Allen
Mrs M Anderson
Mr D Arnold
Mr A Ashwell
Mrs G Askew
I Askew
Miss J Averill

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Lady E Barbirolli
Mrs J Baker
Mrs N Bath
Miss A Beckett
Miss D Berwick
Mr R Betts
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P Boydell QC
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W Budd
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C

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Miss E Chadwick
Professor D Chamberlain
Mrs J Chamberlain
Lady Aline Cholmondeley
His Hon Judge J Clay
Mrs J Clay
Mrs J Coppack
Mr S Corson
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D

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D Day
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N Dennys
J Doyle
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Mr D Jones
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L Pullum

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Mr J Wells-Thorpe
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Goldstone Ward Residents'
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Mrs H Liwicki
Mr L Lobo
Mrs L Lobo
Mr R Lynch-White
Mrs L Lynch-White
Mr D Lyon
Mr T Lyttelton

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Mrs S Macoun
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Mr W Mann
Mr J Marsh
Mrs S Marsh
Mrs J Marsh-Hobbs
Mrs F Matthews
Mr McCall
Mrs McCall
Mr A McGuffog
Ms H McKay
Mr J McKean
Mr D McNeill
Mrs D McNeill
Mr A Mercer
Mrs S Mercer
Mr R Mercer
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Mr P Mitchell
Dr R Moffat
Mrs R Moffat
Mr A Montford
Mrs S Montford
Mr R Morfield
Mrs R Morfield
Cllr C Morley
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Miss C Oxenbury

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Mr W Parker
M Pellant
Mr S Perry
Mrs R Perry
Miss M Pickerill
Mr M Pierson
Mrs M Pierson
Ms R Payne
Mr R Parsons
Miss E Plumb
Mr N Porter
Mrs N Porter

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Mrs I Ranger
Mr A Raven
Mrs A Raven
Mrs E Ray
Mr M Ray
Miss V Raynar-Smith
Ms S Rockall
Ms T Radcliffe
Mr M Rayneau
Miss P Reading
Mr J Remers
Mrs P Remers
Mr P Ridler
Mrs M Ridler
Mr D Rignell
Mrs D Rignell
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Mrs J Rookledge
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Mrs Stevens
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Mrs R Stiles
Mr R Stubbs
Mrs R Stubbs

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Mrs H Williamson
Ms H Weston
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Corporate members

Ernest Cragg & Sons
Friends of Lewes
Lloyds TSB plc
Woolley, Bevis & Diplock

The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2002

A: general

Income	2002	(2001)	Expenditure	2002	(2001)
Subscriptions	£2460.97	(£2,379.00)	Lecture Fees	£2,097.18	(£1,619.16)
Donations	–	(£519.50)	Stationery, printing & stamps	£1,358.21	(£1,791.85)
Portman B.S.	£1,264.74	(£1,553.97)	Insurance	£397.50	(£277.50)
Bank interest	£24.85	(£81.29)	Subscriptions to other societies	£231.50	(£137.00)
Other Investment income (& posters/cards]	£5,544.34	(£5,401.59)	Donations from income*	£4,007.25	(£840.00)
National Savings	£50.11	(£69.80)	Sundry expenses	£20.50	(£240.20)
Totals	£9,345.01	(£10,005.15)		£8112.14	(£4,905.71)

A surplus £1,232.87 (2001: £5099.44)

* Includes three principal donations of £1,000 (Regency Square Area Society); £1,116.25 (St Peter's Church) and £1,667 (Brighton & Hove Museum).

B – other activities

Income	2002	(2001)	Expenditure	2002	(2001)
Summer trip to Dieppe	£8,274.00	(£9,689.95)		£7,745.16	(£9,606.73)
		Surplus: £528.84	(£83.22)		
Social events	£635.00	(£482.00)		£456.15	(£476.60)
		Surplus: £178.85	(£5.40)		
		B surplus: £707.69	(£88.62)		

Total of surplus of income over expenditure for 2002: **£1,940.56** (2001: £5,188.06)

The Regency Society of Brighton & Hove

Statement of assets at 31 December 2002

Fixed assets at cost

Circular Regency table	£520.00
Georgian state chair	£500.00
Candelabra	£120.00
Ormolu bust of George IV	£575.00
James Gray Photographic Collection	£10,000.00

Total **£11,715.00**

There were no changes between 2001 and 2002

Investments at cost

£3,328.00	8.5%	TS 2007	£3,211.00
£19,110.00	7.75%	TS 2012-2015	£20,154.00
£19,310.00	7.75%	TS 2006	£20,147.00
£3,085.00	8%	TS 2009	£2,945.00
£19,790.00	8%	TS 2009	£19,934.00
£1,934.00	6.25%	TS 2010	£1,789.31

Total **£68,180.31**

TS = Treasury Stock. There were no changes between 2001 and 2002

Current assets at 31 December 2001

	2002	(2001)
Bank current account*	£10,583.16	(£8,660.30)
Portman Building Society	£34,778.31	(£33,513.57)
National Savings	£1,906.51	(£1,856.40)
Total	£47,267.98	(£44,030.27)
Assets total	£127,163.29	(£123,925.58)

* Includes £5,000.00 in Business Call account at higher interest rate

Andrew McGuffog
Honorary treasurer,
21 March 2003



The Regency Society

CONSIDERING THE PAST
FRAMING THE FUTURE

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The Regency Society was formed in 1946 to fight the proposed demolition of the Brighton and Hove waterfront. It is a registered charity which campaigns for the preservation of the **historic architecture of Brighton & Hove**, and promotes Georgian, Regency, Victorian, 20th, and 21st century art and architecture.

The Society also works with Brighton and Hove City Council and other bodies on planning matters such as new roads, buildings and the use of open spaces.

The Regency Society is the oldest conservation and amenity society in Brighton and Hove. The Society is for everybody who cares about preserving the heritage of the city and ensuring that new developments improve the quality of its life. It is also for anybody who would like to learn more about the beautiful buildings that we have inherited and how best to live in and use them today.

Please travel through our site to discover more about the Society, and about the issues



A Regency-style building in Brighton's Victoria Square

[April 8 Lecture and AGM](#)

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The Regency Society

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Current planning matters of major concern

REGENCY CONSERVATION STRATEGY at SLIPPER

The Local Inquiry into this planning application is now in progress at Hove Town Hall is having a break during the week commencing 10 March 2020 and resumes its hearings on 16 March.



THE BEST FIVE

The Planning Applications Sub-Committee decide, at its meeting on 26 February that it was wished to grant planning approval to the enabling development on the forehere



NEW ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSALS

Three dramatic, and diversely different, proposals for flats and an entirely new retail space and swimming complex for this site are at present being exhibited for public consultation ...



CRUISE SHIP

The development of the design for a building on the lower site to the north of this River has progressed during the pre-application process during which informal consultations ...



REGENCY CONSERVATION STRATEGY at SLIPPER

These proposed schemes have now been exhibited for public consultation for the redevelopment of this important site.



BRITAIN JERON BOOKS AND GIVE

Despite the society and many others letters to the Government Office of the South East requesting that the application should be called in ...



Three pages from the new Regency Society web site
Visit it at www.regencysociety.co.uk

An alternative address, www.regencysociety.org, will be online in the summer