

Regency Society Conversation: 19 February 2020

Comments recorded (comments in red were mentioned by more than one table)

Question 1: How would we like our city to change for the better?

Discussions focused around several topics including the city centre, the suburbs, parks, streets, and the dominance of cars.

General:

- Climate crisis
- Dirty city
- Want cleaner, greener and pocket parks
- We need a single vision like New York, Amsterdam and Sydney
- Learn from opportunity lost when old Amex demolished, not only the building but there was lots of space around it
- Food specialism for Brighton beyond Brighton Rock!
- Graffiti – need flying squad – but there is a difference between graffiti and genuine street art
- Maybe deal with one area at a time – find a pilot
- Brighton as a European City with a 'European Promenade like Nice 'Promenade des Anglais' (a drawing of the Eastern seafront accompanies this suggestion)
- We like: the sea, some of our architecture, our friendly, non-threatening, open, diverse people, the buzz – a lot going on for all ages, good daytime buses, active recycling, parks
- We dislike: graffiti/tagging, litter, too much traffic, trees breaking up the pavement, paving over gardens for parking, too much street furniture
- We want to improve: park and ride, shared space, more and better buses, trams, hail and ride system
- We want a statement contemporary art gallery to continue the creative coast trail
- How about an outdoor gallery to promote street art?

Traffic

- Car free streets
- Park and ride, cheap, efficient, well-publicised
- Raise funds by higher parking and fine charges
- Fewer buses on North Street
- We need a bus station
- Huge volume of cars and emissions
- Vehicles are guests
- Ban cars from the city centre
- Introduce congestion charge
- Electric charging points

City Centre:

- Street furniture clutter
- Evening facilities for older people in the city centre including more public toilets and cafes
- More public loos for everyone!
- Water fountains on street corners
- Better use of the bandstand – live concert
- Make Phoenix Gallery more accessible
- Segregate cyclists and skateboarders from pedestrian ways
- Impact of second homes and party houses/Airbnb
- Urgent improvements needed to south end of East, Middle and Ship Streets
- Ban cars from the city centre
- Street musicians should be vetted and encouraged
- More pedestrian streets

Suburbs:

- Eyesores like the cement works in Shoreham
- Homes to higher eco and design standards
- Double yellow lines on every road
- Barrier to close off streets every other day so children can play
- Grass verges often used for parking and backing
- Trees sometimes block pavements
- We need more 'New Road' spaces in the suburbs to turn streets into playgrounds

Homes:

- Homes to higher eco and design standards
- Homelessness/ housing crisis

Parks, open spaces and trees:

- Limited open space, many not well managed
- Level is great space but too often unsafe, even during the day
- Need to plant more trees and bushes
- Many are hidden (e.g. Brunswick Square)
- Parks need better signposting
- Extension of raised walk on rail line north to Preston Park
- Pocket parks, planting, small spaces all welcomed
- There are 20 million trees to be planted – where? I would like more planted in my road. Can I plant them anywhere I want?

Heritage:

- Our national treasures not being looked after, e.g. Madeira Terraces
- Restore the Hippodrome as a theatre

People/attitudes/politics:

- **Need for more personal responsibility**
- Transient residents are a problem
- No city champion, no real mayor, i.e. not political one
- Recruit/identify a champion for the city, e.g. pride, sustainability, design, nurturing of heritage
- City needs 'green policy' based on facts and transparency (having just a Green Party one not good enough)
- Consider community v individual – how best managed for max city gain
- Active citizenry
- Have a real mayor, not political one
- Coherent policies, i.e. identify what is good, promote it, link to other good ones; identify what is bad, avoid it
- Coherent connections → Strengthen local communities
- Get communities involved in local landmarks and city treasures – but HOW?
- **More community involvement in marginal open spaces**
- More public participation in city gardens
- **Campaign to make Brighton and Hove a model of sustainability**

Other:

- We need stats on Brighton and Hove's eco-performance
- Underground bins

Question 2: What should the Regency Society do about it?

- **Involve citizens in sponsoring tree planting (Tree angels as Hove Civic)**
- Put on events with speakers who are running our city – e.g. planners
- **Talk from Extinction Rebellion**
- Influence councillors
- Get the RS onto Advisory Panels including transport
- **Liaise with all sorts of other local organisations (Brighton Soc, local area organisations)**
- **Much better publicity**
- **Launch campaign to plant X,000 trees; use crowdfunding**
- Have specific roles for individual trustees
- Local Rs groups looking after local environments
- Co-ordinate local 'tidy up' teams
- Individual pledges by members
- **Attract younger members: facebook, meetup, talk to the University of Brighton**
- Survey RS members to find out what they really think and want to do

- **Promote the Circular Economy model**
- Street lamp replacements should be sympathetic to Conservation Areas
- 5 minutes quiet at the start of RS meetings
- Teaching and learning packs for schools
- Adopt a city facility (e.g. a bus shelter)
- Hold workshops
- Encourage adaptation of existing structures to new uses, e.g. offices, housing
- Encourage better design standards for the **privilege of building in Brighton and Hove**

- Hold more discussions to energise people and attract others
- **We need more members and a louder voice**
- **Raise our profile**
- Invite council (those who make the decisions) to meetings
- Invite speakers from progressive London boroughs to speak
- Promote additional RS focus on the spaces between buildings
- **Set up local activist groups; start by mapping groups – is there one for every conservation group and/or street?**
- Widen consultation – not just expert architects
- Offer different pattern of meetings such as 1. academic lectures (inform and challenge) 2. work/discussion groups (practical ideas)
 - See model of BH Camera Club, 2 meetings every week, 60-100 participants, contact David Sears
- **Lead discussion on ‘circular economy’, bringing in all disciplines including science: find out from council where waste goes, i.e. whole process**
- Competitions
 - Recognise quality
 - Have many categories including domestic, public, low cost
 - Use expertise to develop model designs, especially to handle ‘low cost’ quota
 - What and where?
 - Pocket parks
- **Have more of these conversation, as tonight’s**
- Better cycling lanes
- **Change our name?**
- Publish small pocket books on Brighton
- Keep monitoring planning applications