

THE
MONTPELIER
AND
CLIFTON HILL
ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

Executive Committee

Jim Gowans, Chairman
Mick Hamer, Vice Chairman
Corinne Attwood, Honorary Secretary
Chris Jackson, Honorary Treasurer
Tony Davenport, Honorary Membership Secretary
Pauline Messum
Michael Fisher
Graham Towers
Gabi Tubbs

Co-opted Members to the Executive Committee

Susan Brushneen
Carol Dyhouse
Jane Osler
Ninka Willcock

Honorary Auditor

Arthur Collins OBE

Subscriptions

Due 1st April each year
Single - £10
Couple - £15
Corporate - £30

Executive Committee Report

Since the 1st April last year your committee has met on six occasions. The vacancy for one trustee has remained since the AGM but all officer positions are filled, with Tony Davenport elected as the new Honorary Membership Secretary. The committee has co-opted four members, one of whom, Susan Brushneen is serving for the first time. The committee has continued to communicate on a regular basis with members and the wider community in a number of ways: by means of the website, via email, at open meetings and through three further editions of the newsletter.

Andrew Harvey stood down as Honorary Auditor having inspected the accounts with great assiduity during a difficult period for the Association. We send him our very warmest wishes for recovery from the fall he has suffered this year and thank him once again for the considerable time and effort he devoted to ensuring that our finances were once again in order. Trustee Ian Thorburn has also stood down. We are grateful for the work he did preparing the various documents mailed to members over many years and for his wise counsel in committee.

The development of the Royal Alexandra site has continued with the virtual completion of the new-build apartments whilst the conversion of the old Victorian hospital Lainson building is well under way. In August trustees were invited by Taylor Wimpey to see the progress being made and were particularly impressed by the efforts to transform the hospital building into attractive residential accommodation. The works at Mitre House have been resumed since the builders' bankruptcy and compliance with the planning permission has been monitored. The former ice rink site next to St Nicholas churchyard is likely to be a residential block rather than the party hotel originally proposed. This is less of a bad neighbour for the churchyard and Wykeham Terrace but the Association still considers the six storeys to be too high and overbearing. Successful submissions have been made to influence planning applications in Upper North Street, Victoria Road, Victoria Street, Powis Grove and Montpelier Villas and these have helped to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area. The blight of estate agents' boards, especially in streets such as St Michael's Place, has been ended, with rare breaches of the rules being quickly dealt with. Dr Graham Towers prepared the Association's submission to the draft City Plan, highlighting the danger of high rise development on the Kings West and Brighton Centre sites and vice chairman Mick Hamer submitted a list of buildings, including the Lainson Building, for inclusion in the Local List of Heritage Assets. A submission has also been made to the City Council's Draft Conservation Strategy dealing with a range of topics concerning the maintenance of the public realm and the introduction of Article 4 Directions. Regrettably, however, the Association failed

to persuade the City Council not to destroy the front garden, original timber fenestration and door of the arts and crafts house which the Council owns in Windlesham Gardens. It seems extraordinary that such destruction has to take place in order to provide “security” and off-street parking for council staff.

The Association has been represented on the Conservation Advisory Group (CAG) which meets every three weeks and acts as a reference group to advise the City Council on the implementation of the Conservation Strategy, on major planning applications, on Council proposals affecting conservation areas, on listed buildings and on the development of policies for the protection of the historic environment. The CAG also sends a representative to the City Council’s Planning Committee where influence can be brought to bear on the voting members.

A major development which, if built, will seriously affect our conservation area is the controversial i360 observation tower, which will be particularly visible from Powis Villas and Clifton Place. The controversy of its design and position is now compounded by the City Council’s proposal to provide £36.2 million from public funds to support a scheme which has failed to attract private investors. A further £4 million is to come from public funds via the Local Enterprise Partnership.

In contrast to the i360 project, the Association’s social events have been on a sound financial footing! Together with Carol Collington, I had great pleasure in hosting the summer party, whilst the Christmas party was held in the Cherub Room of the Brighton and Hove High School. The AGM lecture on the history of small shops through the ages was delivered by Dr Janet Pennington; the autumn lecture on the story of seaside entertainment by North Laine resident Ian Gledhill and the spring lecture on the various uses of terracotta at home and abroad by Shoreham-based artist Amy Frankie Smith. Once again the Association wishes to record its thanks to the Brighton and Hove High School for generously providing the venue for these events.

As always I take this opportunity to thank you the members for supporting this charity. It is established for the public benefit and aims to stimulate interest in this area, where it promotes high standards of planning and design and seeks to preserve and protect its historic character.

On behalf of the Executive Committee I recommend this report to you and trust you will adopt it at the AGM 2014.

Jim Gowans, *Chairman*, May 2014

Treasurer's Report

The next two pages provide the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2014.

Both income and expenditure are less than last year. The principal reasons for the reduction in income are the facts that there were a number of first-time subscriptions last year that did not renew this year; we offered smaller member-only events; and a Gift Aid claim for this year is still outstanding. With respect to the reduction in expenditure, this was due to incurring a significantly lower cost for the member-only events and a further reduction in admin costs (which at just less than 10% of total expenditure represents a 'best in class' figure).

My 2012-13 report mentioned that a former member has asked the Association for £5,000 that was contributed to the 'Coach House Project'. There has been no further demand for this sum in the last year and the trustees continue to believe that the Association has no liability for this sum.

Finally, note that expenditure has exceeded income, although by a much smaller amount than last year. Our bank balance continues to be healthy.

Chris Jackson, *Honorary Treasurer*, May 2014

Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2014

	Notes			2012-13	
Fixed Assets					
Wootton Print	1	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00
Current Assets					
Debtors	2	5.41		5.41	
Conservation Plates	3	400.00		400.00	
Room Hire Deposit	4	100.00		400.00	
Cash at Bank (Current Account)		3,154.65	3,660.06	3,275.53	4,080.94
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities	5	10.00	10.00	55.00	55.00
Total Assets less Total Liabilities			<u>3,775.06</u>	<u>4,150.94</u>	
Reserves					
Opening Reserves		3,750.94		4,901.70	
Deficit for Year		-81.88	<u>3,669.06</u>	-1,150.76	<u>3,750.94</u>

Notes

- 1 The Wootton Print is in the Committee's possession.
- 2 £5.41 carried over from 2012-13. Please refer to Note 4 of the Income & Expenditure sheet on p.7.
- 3 Represents ten Conservation Plates. The 2012-13 plate still needs to be presented.
- 4 Held by Brighton & Hove High School on account as a deposit relating room hire.
- 5 Receipts of subscriptions in the period January - March 2014.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 23 May 2014.

Chris Jackson
Honorary Treasurer

Corinne Attwood
Honorary Secretary

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2014

	Notes		2012-13	
Income				
Subscriptions	1	1,736.00	2,254.00	
Donations		35.00	45.00	
Events	2	803.00	2,386.00	
Gift Aid	3	0.00	403.25	
Net Effect of Court Judgement	4	0.00	5.41	
Unquantified receipts		0.00	146.00	5,239.66
		2,574.00		
Expenditure				
Events	2	634.41	2,594.10	
Meetings		286.00	307.00	
Legal Fees	5	0.00	80.00	
Leaflets/Stationery	6	60.00	617.52	
Admin	7	187.00	830.75	
Memberships		321.91	402.91	
Newsletters		1,166.56	1,305.90	
Gifts/Donations		0.00	212.24	
Use of Conservation Plates		0.00	40.00	6,390.42
		2,655.88		
Excess of Expenditure over Income		<u><u>-81.88</u></u>		<u><u>-1,150.76</u></u>

Notes

- 1 The reduction in subscriptions represents c.40 households who did not renew membership in 2013-14 and who we are encouraging to renew for 2014-15.
- 2 Lower values this year reflect a focus on smaller members-only parties which have made a surplus.
- 3 Gift Aid claim made for 2013-14 to be made.
- 4 2012-13 figure relates to claims/counterclaims made against the Association by Roger Amerena. Please refer to the Association's 2012-13 Annual Report for further details.
- 5 2012-13 figure relates to fees incurred in defence of activity and claims/counterclaims made against the Association.
- 6 2012-13 figure includes re-platforming of the Association's website and publicity flyers against the Ice Rink re-development proposal.
- 7 Expenses in the Admin category continue to decrease this year as the new Constitution allowed for increased electronic communication with members.

The Report Cover is in the same colour as that originally used for the exterior of buildings in the conservation area.

The Logo of the Association is inspired by the Victorian cast iron and china street signs.