

THE
MONTPELIER
AND
CLIFTON HILL
ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

Executive Committee

Jim Gowans, Chairman
Corinne Attwood, Honorary Secretary
Chris Jackson, Honorary Treasurer
Jack Tyson

Co-opted Members to the Executive Committee

Duncan Cameron
Tony Davenport
Carol Dyhouse
Janice Johnson
Brian Morris
Jane Osler
Graham Towers
Ninka Willcock

Independent Examiner of Financial Statements

Arthur Collins OBE

Subscriptions

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

Executive Committee Report 2017-18

Your committee has met eight times between the 1st April 2017 and the 31st March 2018. Four Trustees were elected in June at the AGM 2017 and in July these trustees appointed Dr Graham Towers as a fifth trustee. During the course of the year six members were co-opted to the committee. Among these were two members who had not previously been co-opted: Duncan Cameron and Janice Johnson. The maximum number of trustees allowed by the constitution is ten but the existing trustees did not seek to make any further appointments.

The proposed major development on the site of the former Baptist Church in Montpelier Place was discussed at the AGM 2017. Residents of Grade 2 listed Belvedere Terrace which is that part of Norfolk Terrace which faces the site, expressed their concern that the five storey block proposed for the eastern end of the site would take light from their homes particularly in the evening. The MCHA had supported the proposal which included five terraced houses of four storeys and a three storey block of five flats at the York Avenue (western) end of the site. It had considered that as the design was sympathetic and the five storey block was no higher than Belvedere Terrace and lower than the adjacent Abbey Hotel, and was to be set back from the site boundary, no harm would be caused to the character of the conservation area. In December the Council's Planning Committee granted permission with the endorsement of its Heritage Team and demolition of the 1960s Baptist Church building followed shortly after.

The other major development affecting the conservation area is on the former ice rink site overlooking St Nicholas' churchyard. The permission for a 56 room "apartment hotel" was granted by the Planning Committee in controversial circumstances in 2012. There has since been a number of applications to vary the conditions attached to this 2012 permission some, such as the change of brick work to a lighter colour, have been welcomed by the MCHA but the committee has noted the amenity issues raised by the developers' attempt to increase the number of rooms and allow hotel guests to access terraces facing Wykeham Terrace. The steel frame of the apartment hotel's six storeys

(described as only five in the applications) has been more or less completed during the year and once the curtain walls are built the effect of the loss of light on the churchyard trees immediately to the north will be felt. Time will tell whether or not this effect will be seriously damaging.

Communal on-street waste and recycling bins continue to threaten the area's character in addition to raising amenity issues and indeed issues of health and safety. CityClean, the Council's in-house team, can be credited with emptying bins more frequently whilst it is often the thoughtless behaviour of residents themselves which creates unsightly and sometimes dangerous mess on pavements and in the road. The committee continues to be dismayed by the bin outside the Grade 1 listed St Michael's church and cannot understand why CityClean have failed to move it a little further from the church main entrance. Our area has not been spared from the spray paint vandalism which has plagued the city this last year especially. Most householders and businesses (including Waitrose within the MCHA area of benefit) have realised that repairing the damage as soon as possible helps to prevent proliferation, but the problem is likely to persist until the police give a higher priority to the arrest and prosecution of those causing criminal damage and the council and organisations such as British Telecom set firm boundaries on "street art". On a more encouraging note it can be reported that the Council's Planning Enforcement Team, under its new leader, has at last ensured that the regulation introduced in 2010 banning the display of estate agents boards outside (residential) properties has been largely enforced, with just one breach being noted (in Norfolk Road). There have been several other clear breaches of planning rules such as the replacement of original timber sash windows with inappropriate plastic which have notably affected listed buildings in Powis Square, but it has otherwise been pleasing to note the care with which most residents and businesses throughout the area have looked after their properties. In this respect the tasteful and painstaking restoration of 33 Clifton Hill and the completion of the renovation of the telephone boxes in Powis Square by Sam Toft of the Little Mustard Shop persuaded the committee to name her the Conservation Award winner for 2017.

In addition to monitoring planning issues in the area the committee has continued to organise a number of events. In April a tour of Stanmer Nursery

was followed by a guided walk through the village with Stanmer Preservation Society. The summer lecture was given by Paul Snelling of the Letter Box Study Group and this was followed in July by the garden party kindly hosted once again by Pauline Messum and made "rain proof" by the purchase of a second gazebo! The autumn lecture was given by Dr Kathryn Ferry, author of "The Victorian Home" and was held at the Brighton and Hove High School who again generously placed the Cherub Room at our disposal. The Christmas Party was held, as in recent years, in St Nicholas Church. In the spring of 2017 the Association was awarded £5,000 from the Co-operative Society's "Community Fund". The committee's bid had proposed to enhance the area near the Seven Dials roundabout by the introduction of planters and plantings. They should make this part of the conservation area opposite Montpelier Crescent a particular attractive one for the many residents, visitors and workers who use the green during the summer months and also for those pedestrians and road users simply passing through.

Two newsletters have been produced although responsibility for the layout has now been given to the Printhouse. The committee is grateful to Tony Davenport for his layout work in the past and draw attention to the savings which resulted. The web site has remained neglected but communication with members has been maintained with email using the Mail Chimp system for group mailings and by post where necessary. The Association's representative to the Conservation Advisory Group (CAG) to the City Council has been Jack Tyson with Corinne Attwood his substitute. Your chairman has become joint chairman of the CAG and continues to sit on the Planning Committee as a co-opted member. Membership subscriptions remain at the modest levels set ten years ago and for the time being no increases are envisaged. Standing orders have proved to be difficult to administer and it is hoped that the introduction of a direct debit scheme using GoCardless will improve matters in this respect.

Jim Gowans, Chairman, May 2018

Balance sheet as at 31st March 2018

| | Notes | 2018 | | 2017 | |
|--|-------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Fixed Assets | | | | | |
| Wootton Print | 1 | 125.00 | 125.00 | 125.00 | 125.00 |
| Current Assets | | | | | |
| Debtors | 2 | 5.41 | | 5.41 | |
| Conservation Plates | 3 | 200.00 | | 240.00 | |
| Room Hire Deposit | 4 | 300.00 | | 300.00 | |
| Cash at Bank | 8 | <u>7,817.22</u> | | <u>2,903.53</u> | |
| | | | 8,322.63 | | 3448.94 |
| Liabilities | | | | | |
| Adv subs | 5 | -45.00 | -45.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Total Assets less Total Liabilities | | | <u>8,402.63</u> | | <u>3573.94</u> |
| Reserves | | | | | |
| Opening Reserve (restated) | 7 | 3,573.94 | | 3,360.81 | |
| Deficit for Year (2017 surplus) | | <u>-254.62</u> | | <u>213.13</u> | |
| Normal Reserve | | | 3,319.32 | | 3,573.94 |
| Special Reserve | 6 | | 5,083.31 | | 0.00 |
| Total Reserves | | | <u>8,402.63</u> | | <u>3,573.94</u> |

Notes

- 1 The Wootton Print is in the Committee's possession.
- 2 £5.41 carried over from 2012-13 and relates to claims/counterclaims made against the Association by Roger Amerena. Please refer to the Association's 2012-13 Annual Report for further details.
- 3 Represents five Conservation Plates. The 2016 plate has been awarded.
- 4 Monies held by Brighton & Hove High School and St. Nicholas Church on account as a deposit against damage relating to room hire.
- 5 Receipts of subscriptions in the period January - March 2018 which will be counted in the Financial Year 2018-19.
- 6 This amount of £5,083.31 is from the Co-op Community Fund which is to be spent on the 'Hanging Baskets' Project and is to be released in future years to the Income and Expenditure Account to meet the future costs of the project.
- 7 Opening reserve for 1st April 2016 is restated for subscriptions paid in advance, that have not been accounted for previously, and in addition for the deposit made to the Brighton and Hove High School (which was inadvertently expensed). Opening reserve for 1st April 2017 is restated also for subscriptions paid in advance that were not accounted for previously, and in addition for the deposit made to the St Nicholas Church (which was inadvertently expensed).
- 8 Cash at Bank as at 31st March 2018 is adjusted for an unrepresented cheque of £3.
- 9 £143.55p was released from the GoCardless account to the HSBC account in May 2018. This sum partly relates to subscriptions collected by direct debit for the year 2017-18. For the purposes of these accounts this was not regarded as significant. It will be fully accounted for in next year's accounts.

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2018

| | Notes | | 2016-17 | |
|------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Income | | | | |
| Subscriptions | | 1,148.00 | 1,276.90 | |
| Donations | 2 | 10.00 | 30.66 | |
| Events | | 875.23 | 696.36 | |
| Gift Aid | 1 | <u>0.00</u> | <u>1,000.90</u> | 3004.82 |
| | | 2,033.23 | | |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Events | | 714.26 | 483.54 | |
| Meetings | | 266.48 | 171.67 | |
| Leaflets/Stationery | | 31.51 | 0.00 | |
| Admin | | 0.00 | 83.01 | |
| Memberships | | 178.60 | 316.47 | |
| Newsletters | | 1,057.00 | 737.00 | |
| Gifts/Donations | | 0.00 | 960.00 | |
| Use of Conservation Plates | | <u>40.00</u> | <u>40.00</u> | 2791.69 |
| | | 2,287.85 | | |
| Deficit for Year (2016-17 surplus) | | <u><u>-254.62</u></u> | | <u><u>213.13</u></u> |

Notes

- 1 Gift Aid for the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 remains to be claimed.
- 2 Contribution from the Co-op Community Fund has been taken to a Special Reserve, as shown in the balance sheet as at 31st March 2018. Amounts will be released from the Special Reserve into the normal Income and Expenditure Account as and when costs are incurred in relation to the Hanging Basket Project.

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.