



BRIGHTON AND HOVE
HERITAGE COMMISSION
Registered Charity 1193686

ANNUAL CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

By Acting Chairperson Mike Davies



*He proudly dons his bowler,
his blazer and his tie,
For today he will remember
the ones who fell and died.
On his chest there is a poppy, a
blaze of scarlet on the blue,
He steps out into the cold, he
has a duty he must do.
Once at the cenotaph he
stands amongst the ranks,
Thoughts of those who
marched to war and those who
manned the tanks.
He bows his head in reverence,
as the last post begins to play,*

And he wonders what will happen at the ending of his days.

Maria Cassee

We pay tribute to the man who had the vision to establish our organisation, the personality to attract important and influential supportive connections, the ability to surround himself with talented foot soldiers and a glint in his eye that we all came to understand there was work for us to do.

It is hard to believe he is not here. In his final Annual Chairperson's Report last Autumn, Roger opened in sombre tones by calling 2023 an "Annus Horribilis" and reminding members of the loss to our charity of such great and influential figures – Alderman **Francis Tonks** to retirement; twice former Mayor [first of Brighton and later of Brighton & Hove] Alderman **Brian Fitch**; and founding member and "Ancient Monument" Martin Foster, an institution in himself who had made a huge bequeathal to BHHC.

Back then, whilst Roger was battling the ravages of MND, having all but lost any voice, he (indeed we all) could not have known how little time remained. And yet he stayed focused on his many ventures throughout, hand very firmly on the tiller and not short of instructions via his talk-box. Much has been written by many people in tribute to Roger. This Statement to our Members has no place trying to match or repeat.

Roger, our turn to salute you as we continue your initiative.

On Roger's Estate

Simply, we Trustees, Members and anyone else cannot comment on any "potential" legacy at this point.

The estate of the late Roger Amerena is solely in the hands of his remaining chosen Executors, his solicitors Edward Harte Solicitors. The assets of that estate are vested in the Executors, including any properties in Roger's estate. No-one else at this time, including BHHC, has any say or responsibilities.

Until probate is granted. At that point there will be an Extraordinary General Meeting to inform any outcome and allow all current Members to have your say in any potential decisions affecting the Charity.

Roger's will is not public and is likely to remain not public during a probate process that has to resolve a number of complexities in the estate. All that said, the Trustees of BHHC were given sight of the will in July of this year under the strictest of confidence that any reference to its contents would break trust and be unlawful.

Ensuring Continuity – Changes in Running the Charity

All the changes in the management committee have presented challenges that the BHHC Trustees have risen to with integrity and energy. The BHHC Trustees welcomed advice and guidance from the Charity Commission on governance responsibilities. The upshot has been a thorough review of the running of the Charity that began at the beginning of 2024.

In the 12 months since our 2023 Annual General Meeting, the running of our Charity has developed significantly. We knew over time the enormous personality leading us would begin to fade and recognised the BHHC Organisation needed to be in as good order as possible. Rather than relying on one person's near photographic memory, the Trustees had to reorganise and build robust processes to manage all aspects of the charity.

We began with the financial procedures, making sure the Charity's activities and associated spending would comply with any form of audit or scrutiny. Then followed a review of our other processes against Charity Commission guidance. Where previously the knowledge of what to do was spread across different members of the committee, new Policies were developed so that all and any of the Trustees are expected to work within the Code of Conduct framework and adhere to the Conflict of Interest policy. Those are the fundamentals of a well-run Charity organisation, one that protect its Members. Each Officer (Commissioner, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary) now has a full Role Description. All documentation has to be agreed by the committee and then is securely stored in an encrypted Share Drive.

But what about our Constitution? BHHC gained charitable status under the stewardship of dear departed Barry Hughes. He and Roger followed the Charity Commission's template and submitted the BHHC Constitution to them in 2021. We became a Registered Charity – a CIO.

The Constitution has not changed since that date. What has changed is BHHC has received the advice and guidance from the Charity Commission mentioned earlier. Their advice first reminds us that the Trustees share collective legal responsibility for governing the Charity and making the top level strategic decisions about it. And that the Trustees must make sure BHHC complies with our Constitution.

The Charity Commission's advice recommended to make a thorough review of how the Charity is run versus our Constitution. That review flushed out some results that may not have been adhered to in the past by BHHC:

Clauses 10 and 23[1] govern that Officer positions are decided and appointed by the committee of Trustees;

Clause 16 governs that Membership application approval is by the Trustees ... The Trustees may remove Membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the Charity;

Clause 17 addresses the three decisions that must be passed by Members. These are Changing the Constitution; Amalgamating with another Charity; Winding the Charity up;

Clause 10 governs that every Trustee is only appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the committee;

Clause 18 governs Annual General Meeting procedures, including Members approving/declining Trustees appointed by the committee.

In short our Charity is in Great shape and carries the blessing of the independent regulator for all charities for England and Wales – the **Charity Commission**.

Review of This Year's Activities

Brighton General Hospital



Heritage research, assessment and proposal for **Brighton General Hospital** site as the 35th Conservation Area in Brighton & Hove – preserving for reuse (rather than demolition) the historic buildings of the country's only remaining intact Workhouse Village Complex. We recently presented our proposals at the Town Hall Chamber.

BHCC Conservation Advisory Group (CAG)

Representation on the **Conservation Advisory Group** to Brighton & Hove City Council – assessing around 120 planning application during the year that affect the heritage of our City.

Commemorative Plaque Committee

We must remember that the Commemorative Plaque Committee, also known as the Blue Plaque Panel, lost their Chairperson too in Roger. Recently the organisation appointed panel members Keith Sharpe as new Chairperson and Peter Crowhurst as Archivist. Keith and Peter are well known to us as BHHC Members.

We have met with Keith as our two separate organisations regroup. As ever, there are a number of potential blue plaques in the pipeline and the Trustees of BHHC have offered to help where we can and to continue contributory donations.

Brunswick Festival

Since being enabled by becoming a Charity, BHHC has partnered with Brunswick Community Festival Group, in support of the **Brunswick Festival** – the very successful annual celebration of the Heritage and Character of the Hove community and wider.

This year, due to circumstances, we were unable to provide our support however a number of BHHC Trustees and Members were able to join the large and gentle crowds in the sun. We continue to be in touch with the festival's leadership for the future.

Brighton Gasworks Coalition

BHHC has represented heritage views for four years now on the Brighton Gasworks Coalition – 14 societies across our City who came together to fight for the Kemp Town community against the detrimental plans of one of the largest construction developers in the country. the plans would have deeply impacted that East Brighton community and the Heritage Setting of the only Grade I listed seafront estate in the country, Kemp Town Estate.



And we won. At the Council Planning Committee earlier this year, our arguments to preserve heritage informed the Council's reasons for REFUSAL to grant planning approval. We have not seen the last of this application yet as the inevitable Appeal against this decision is expected to land later this year. We continue the fight.

Montpellier Hall continued as a venue

... through the year until Roger passed when it became unlawful to enter under the probate process. It was a meeting place for use by BHHC and by the Conservation Advisory Group to Brighton & Hove City Council and also as a location for filming scenes in “Vindication Swim” that celebrates the forgotten Brighton heroine Mercedes Gleitze.

Some Other Heritage Initiatives

... supported by BHHC in Brighton & Hove include: the proposed statue to **Mercedes Gleitze** – the first British woman to swim the English Channel; continued involvement with **Sussex Heritage Trust** and their Annual Awards; the restoration of the **Blakers Park Clock Tower**; the planned statue to suffragette **Mary Clarke**, the younger sister of Emmeline Pankhurst.

Fund raising social events

Our social calendars have been underpinned for many years by the biannual BHHC Members’ Summer Garden Party and Christmas Party. Traditionally held in Roger’s home, it was clearly not appropriate this summer. The tradition that these events represent is important to maintain and we are currently exploring alternative venues.

Planning Matters

BHHC has continued to provide **advice in general terms on Heritage** to the Brighton and Hove public on request. BHHC has made **Comments of Objection or Support** regarding planning applications across the Brighton and Hove affecting Heritage. We have been vigilant on heritage and raised many **Planning Enforcements Requests** – a 66% success rate in gaining planning enforcements from 110 enforcement requests to date.

Since becoming a Charity there have now been 23 Committee Meetings of the BHHC Board of Trustees.

In the challenging few months since dear Roger departed this life, your five Trustees, all volunteers, have given a huge amount of time and worked tirelessly for the Charity between their day-jobs and commitments.

I wish to thank them all enormously on behalf of the whole of Brighton and Hove Heritage Commission.

Best,

Mike

Mike Davies, Acting Chairperson,
Brighton and Hove Heritage Commission



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OVERLEAF - MEET YOUR TRUSTEES ...

-- Board of Trustees --



With Brian – much missed Alderman, Mayor, BHHC
Trustee & BHHC Vice Chairman

NORAH FITCH Trustee and Secretary



Former Mayoress of
Brighton & Hove;



Former Children's Guardian of
the Court.

DR JULIE WRIGHT Trustee and Treasurer



Volunteer Visitor, Limbless
Association;
Advocate, Meningitis Research
Foundation;



Chairperson Regency Squares
Community, Brighton;

Treasurer for 14 years, Society of
Manchester Dental Alumni.



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JAMES FORBES Trustee and Commissioner



Chief Purser



Conservation Advisory Group to the
Brighton & Hove City Council.

-- Board of Trustees --

ANIA MASON

Trustee and Membership Secretary



Financial Accountant, Business Analyst and Commercial Manager for John Lewis & Partners;



Charity Volunteer

"No-one should be lonely or socially isolated".



MIKE DAVIES

Trustee and Acting Chairperson



Ambassador, Meningitis Research Foundation;



Conservation Advisory Group to the Brighton & Hove City Council;



Advocate Speaker, Worldwide Confederation of Meningitis Orgs;

Planning Officer, Regency Squares Community;
Ambassador, Volunteer Visitor, Limbless Assoc.

Income and Expenditure Account

1st Aug 22 - 31st July 23



BRIGHTON AND HOVE HERITAGE COMMISSION

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INCOME

	£
Subscriptions including General donations	3,255.00
Martin Foster Donation	20,000.00
In memory of Martin Foster	440.00
Christmas Party	1,656.50
Total Income	25,351.50
Total Expenditure	<u>- 2,820.49</u>
Surplus for year	<u><u>22,531.57</u></u>

EXPENDITURE

	£
Refunds	15.00
Heritage Donations	505.00
Brunswick Festival	233.33
Party Expenses - Summer '22	253.00
- Christmas '22	666.42
AGM Catering	239.00
General Spending -Printing Post etc	789.48
Bank Charges	119.26
Total Expenditure	2,820.49

Balance Sheet 31st July 2023

	£
In Bank 1st Aug '22	9,782.56
Martin Foster Donation	20,000.00
Surplus for year	2,531.01

In Bank 31st July '23	<u><u>32,313.57</u></u>
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