

Conservation Strategy

A Strategy for the Conservation of Brighton & Hove's Historic Built Environment



1 Aim

1.1 To publish a strategy that:

- clarifies the council's responsibilities and reaffirms its commitment toward the conservation of Brighton and Hove's historic built environment, and
- includes a programme of action for the future management of the city's cultural heritage.

1.2 This strategy will guide future work programmes, influence investment decisions and ensure the city's historic built environment is managed in a co-ordinated, structured and corporate way.

1.3 It will be subject to widespread consultation and involvement in its development and delivery.

1.4 The strategy will highlight key objectives and targets, help prioritise action and help ensure resources are directed to best effect. It will assist the making of bids for resources, including partnership funding, to deliver regeneration projects that respect the historic environment and a quality conservation service.

1.5 It will be consistent with and help achieve the council's corporate goals and commitments, and inform the emerging community strategy.

1.6 Through the conservation strategy the council will reaffirm its commitment to the provision of a 'conservation service' as requested by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport at the time of the Local Government Reorganisation in 1997.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Government urges local authorities to maintain and strengthen their commitment to stewardship of the historic environment and to reflect this commitment in their policies and their allocation of resources.

2.2 This is a shared commitment; the council cannot work alone. Preserving the historic built environment requires broad public support and understanding, and it remains a key element of planning policy for historic building conservation that there should be adequate processes of consultation, evaluation and education to facilitate this. This strategy will provide for such involvement and express the council's commitment to and appreciation of the part the historic built environment plays in developing its vision for a safe, attractive and sustainable city. The council is proud of the city's exuberant cultural heritage, for which the city has increasing international renown. It now seeks to make best use of this considerable asset, and through the publication of this strategy, to drive forward projects for the continued preservation and enhancement of this heritage.

2.3 The overarching objective is to:

Adopt a conservation strategy, that will seek to manage change within the historic environment and to ensure the available resources are put to best use, having regard to the council's commitment to:

- *the preservation of the city's listed buildings*
- *the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of its designated conservation areas*
- *maintaining and introducing high quality architecture, streets and open spaces within the city,*
- *investment in this environment for the economic well being of the city as a tourist destination, and sub regional commercial and cultural centre,*
- *provision of an attractive, safe and sustainable place in which to live, work, play and invest,*
- *leading by example in the management of the council's property portfolio (buildings and spaces).*

2.4 This objective is a response to public concerns regarding:

- a perceived lack of a consistent corporate approach when addressing the many interrelated environmental issues within the city's historic areas,
- the high level of unsympathetic alterations to historic properties and inadequate enforcement against unauthorised developments,
- the poor quality of new developments, and
- the number of neglected and poorly maintained historic buildings and vacant sites, particularly in the central conservation areas.

2.5 The strategy focuses on delivering the conservation and design policies and proposals within the Brighton and Hove Local Plan second deposit draft and on meeting the council's duties and responsibilities having regard to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2.6 It is also a response to the actions recommended by the Historic Environment Review Steering Group in its report '**Power of Place - the future of the historic environment**' and by the government in its response statement '**The Historic Environment; a force for our future**'.

3 New Developments in Historic Areas

3.1 In the city's many historic areas there are sites and properties that either make little contribution or cause actual harm to the area's character, and which would benefit from new development. These sites may be identified in the Brighton & Hove Local Plan or in a conservation study for a particular area.

3.2 Equally there are historic buildings that make a very positive contribution to an area's character and yet are having a damaging visual effect through neglect or because no new economic use can be found for the building.

3.3 Either way opportunities exist in historic areas for change and improvement, and these need to be taken. The chairman of English Heritage in his introduction to its 'State of the Historic Environment Report 2002' argues that "***The historic environment is always subject to change. This is not a matter for regret, since without change there would be no history. But change needs to be managed intelligently.***"

3.4 The council is committed to preserving the best from the past, yet it also seeks to meet the city's new building requirements by good quality contemporary architecture, which will be admired in years to come as the regency terraces are admired today. This requires design skill, a proper understanding of the historic environment and a sensitivity to its quality, urban grain and scale.

3.5 In this respect the council welcomes English Heritage's and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE) joint publication 'Building in context - New developments in historic areas' and its advice. Rarely is there just one architectural solution to the development of any particular site. To quote from the above publication, " the general most important lesson from all the (case) studies is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and careful character appraisal of the context. This lesson is of universal application. "

Action:

For prominent or otherwise visually sensitive development sites the council will encourage pre-application discussions with owners and their architects.

The council will support the selection of architects and /or designs by competitive means, and will encourage public involvement, whether directly or through the use of consultative groups, including local representation.

3.6 The council will base its design assessments of the appropriateness of any building design, on the particular quality of the building in itself and on its contribution to the wider street scene. The council will require objective design statements to accompany applications for new development in historic areas, and these should address the criteria set out in the government sponsored documents - 'Buildings in Context', 'Urban Design Compendium', and 'By design: Better places to live'.

Action:

Design statements and character appraisals will be required in support of major new developments in historic areas. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared, giving advice on issues to be addressed within these design statements, including historic environment and sustainability issues, to supplement advice in the Local Plan and in government guidance in PPG1.

3.7 The council will also encourage appropriate new development proposals for development sites allocated in the local plan, through the publication of planning briefs as supplementary planning guidance. Planning proposals for the Brighton Station land and the Jubilee Street area, were developed following consultation and publication of planning briefs. Planning briefs have also been adopted for the following sites, for which planning permission has yet to be granted:

King Alfred site, Kingsway, Black Rock site, Madeira Drive, and Brighton Marina,

Action:

Planning briefs, which will explicitly identify and address historic environment issues, will be prepared with community involvement for the following sites and for sites identified in any future urban design strategy:

***The Open Market, Ditchling Road,
Brighton Centre, Kings Road,
Wholesale Market,
Preston Barracks,
Brighton General Hospital,
Childrens Hospital, Dyke Road,
Hollingdean depot and adjoining sites
Benfield Barn and adjoining land.***

3.8 The city has a remarkably high number (56 in total) and rich architectural diversity of Anglican churches, that now exceed the number that can be sustained as places of worship. The Anglican church is currently considering proposals to close many down. Over the decades some have been demolished, more recently several have been adapted to new uses. Those remaining are of an age incurring ever increasing costs of maintenance, including for example St Peter's Church, York Place, Brighton, All Saints, The Drive, Hove and St John's Church, Church Road, Hove. A number of listed churches are currently under consideration for redundancy, many of which are 'landmark' buildings of special architectural and historic interest, deserving retention. At present planning issues associated with their future use are addressed in an ad-hoc, piecemeal way.

Action:

The council will offer to assist the church authorities complete a city wide assessment of the future requirements for their churches, and assist in preparing an action plan for future uses of redundant churches, including conservation statements on their architectural or historic merits of individual churches and their adaptability to change, having regard to their townscape value and architectural merit, and their eligibility for public grant funding.

3.9 For all development sites the council will seek to secure improvements in the quality of planning submissions so that schemes can be properly understood, the architectural quality appreciated and the development assessed in its wider context. This will make processing applications easier, consultation more effective, and make for swifter decision making.

Action:

The council will provide guidance on the level and type of information required in support of new developments and introduce a crystal clear award scheme, through which the council will give publicity to architects who make quality planning submissions on a regular basis.

Action:

The council will publish a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on the appropriateness of tall buildings in Brighton and Hove, to include guidance on the design and location of such buildings.

3.10 The council receives valued advice from its Conservation Areas Advisory Group and its Architects Panel, when considering planning applications. To develop the work of these groups further a new Design Panel is under consideration.

Action:

The council will investigate establishing a Design Panel, to serve the planning applications sub committee.

The council will work with conservation, amenity and business groups, individually and collectively under the mantle of the Conservation Areas Advisory Group, to develop schemes of improvement within the city centre and other neighbourhoods.

3.11 Design award schemes have been set up in the past by the city council's predecessor councils and are still run by the Civic Trust and locally by the Sussex Heritage Trust to promote both quality architecture and conservation work.

Action:

The council will review whether it would be desirable to reintroduce a local design / building restoration award scheme.

4 Conserving our Historic Areas

4.1 The Council has responsibility for designating as conservation areas any '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'. These are areas of high townscape quality each with its own distinctive character, which gives cohesion to buildings of intrinsic merit and creates a sense of place.

4.2 The Council has a duty to review its conservation areas from time to time and to consider whether there is merit in designating additional conservation areas or amending their boundaries.

4.3 33 areas of Brighton & Hove have been designated as Conservation Areas; the first in 1969; the most recent in 1997. Some 18% of the city's built up area lies within a conservation area. These areas vary in character. They include:

- residential estates from different periods of history, each with its own distinctive uniform character,
- downland villages that have evolved gradually and piecemeal through the centuries, whilst maintaining their own particular distinctiveness, and
- mixed use areas exhibiting rich architectural variety and a strong sense of place and community.

4.4 The existing conservation areas and their dates of designation are illustrated in appendix 1. Each of these conservation areas is considered very deserving of the designation, and there are many other non-designated areas with townscape quality. Nevertheless the council does not foresee there being justification for many additional conservation areas within the next 10 years.

Reviewing our conservation areas:

4.5 There is a need to complete area character appraisals. These give justification and credence to conservation area designations and form the groundwork for later in depth conservation area studies or policy statements, where applicable. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to prepare conservation area character appraisals, they are encouraged in government guidance and carry considerable weight when planning appeals or appeals against enforcement action are considered by the Planning Inspectorate and can offer constructive guidance for owners when preparing their own development proposals. They can also help remove uncertainty, because informed decisions can be made more efficiently.

4.6 These area appraisals can also contribute to community led conservation and management plans, as recommended in the White Paper 'Our Towns and cities: *the future*' and can encourage greater involvement by local communities in conservation issues.

4.7 The government's recent statement '*The Historic Environment: a force for our future*' commends this approach.

4.8 There are insufficient resources to complete in depth studies, enhancement plans and character appraisals, or reviews, where necessary, for all 33 conservation areas within the next 10 years.

Action:

Future priority will be given to the review of those conservation areas where:

- ***there is no recent character appraisal in place,***
- ***there has been substantial physical change to an area's character or appearance since designation or where there is substantial pressure for change or opportunity for enhancement, or where***
- ***the setting of a conservation area is at risk.***

Reviews will involve local residents, businesses and amenity societies

4.9 Some 11 of the city's existing conservation areas have no such appraisals, others have appraisals in need of review. 5 Conservation studies and enhancement plans have been adopted within the past 10 years for the Valley Gardens, Kemp Town, East Cliff, Patcham and the North Laine Conservation Areas. Conservation studies for Portslade village and Brighton's Old Town, which were published in the 1970's, require review.

Action:

In 2003, area character appraisals will be published, after consultation, for the Round Hill, Preston Village, Preston Park, Clifton Hill, West Hill and Regency Square conservation areas.

4.10 Conservation areas without any detailed character assessment will then comprise the Brighton College, Ovingdean, Queens Park, Rottingdean and Stanmer Conservation Areas.

4.11 In order to inform selection of areas for review, a brief biennial city wide State of the Built Environment report will be prepared corporately, in consultation with ward councillors, community and business groups. This will identify pressures upon the built environment and residents' quality of life within the various neighbourhoods, their vulnerability to adverse change and opportunities for enhancement. This report will also inform future funding decisions, and bids for external grant partnership funding toward community led initiatives, and neighbourhood regeneration or enhancement plans. It will also identify any need for 'neighbourhood specific' supplementary planning policy guidance notes or site specific planning briefs.

Action:

A methodology will be developed in 2003, with a view to publishing a city wide 'state of the environment' report in 2004 and every two years thereafter.

New Conservation Area designations

4.12 Designating any area as a conservation area carries significant resource implications for the council. Further designations will be made only if the council is satisfied it can meet its consequential duties and responsibilities, which include producing character appraisals and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas, and that it is satisfied that there is a strong local commitment.

4.13 The following criteria will be used for the selection of new conservation areas, including extensions to existing conservation areas.

Action:

When considering future designations, areas will be required to satisfy the following criteria:

- (i) the area must have demonstrable townscape quality and interest;***
- (ii) its special architectural or historic character or appearance should be largely intact.***

In addition the area may either:

- (iii) make a positive contribution to the setting of a listed building or existing conservation area or***
 - (iv) have made a significant contribution to the social or historic development of the city or***
 - (v) be an exemplar of estate planning,***
- and there must be a local community commitment to its preservation.***

4.14 Areas that may merit further investigation, include:

- Part of the Carlton Hill area, including Tilbury Place and Mighell Street.
- Parts of the area of Hove between Old Shoreham Road, the west coastway railway line, Dyke Road and Fonthill Road.

4.15 A number of existing conservation areas also merit possible extension, in part because of the increasing importance placed on an area's wider landscape setting, for example the Stanmer and Patcham Conservation areas.

Action:

Priority will be given to:

(i) Those conservation area extensions and modifications recommended in the Valley Gardens, North Laine and East Cliff studies and in the Regency Square, Preston Park and Preston Village area reviews.

(ii) Reviewing the boundaries of the Stanmer and Patcham Conservation areas.

(iii) Assessing the Carlton Hill area for possible designation.

5 Preservation of Listed Buildings

5.1 The statutory lists for Brighton and Hove were reviewed in the 1990s by English Heritage and the Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport's listings branch. The lists are now considered comprehensive and up to date. They include some 3360 listed buildings including 476 (14%) that are graded 1 and 2*. This percentage is more than double the national average (6%). Some 475 buildings were added to the Brighton list in 1999 ie a 16% increase in the number of listed buildings in Brighton and Hove. The council welcomes this recognition of the city's exceptional historic and architectural quality, and yet recognises the need to manage this resource in an efficient manner.

5.2 It is vitally important that owners are made aware if their property is listed, and that new purchasers are made aware of the consequential responsibilities, as 'guardians' of this valued heritage.

Action:

Owners of newly listed buildings will be notified promptly. Leaflets advising new purchasers of listed buildings of their responsibilities will be produced and sent out with local land search responses.

5.3 The council will continue to give owners of historic buildings advice on works requiring listed building consent and on appropriate ways to carry out such works of alteration or repair to their property. This however is likely to be increasingly in the form of leaflets. Technical and policy leaflets have been published, which are regularly updated.

5.4 Many of the city's historic buildings are houses in multi occupation or in a use other than that for which they were originally designed. The council is aware that owners of such listed properties are faced with reconciling the sometimes conflicting demands of many statutory acts and regulations including for example the Disability Discrimination Act, the Housing Act and Building and Fire Regulations.

Action:

The council will publish an abridged list of listed buildings within the city and produce and maintain up to date information sheets, which advise owners of best practice and policies concerning the proper preservation of historic buildings, including matters requiring reconciliation between the various pieces of current legislation and maintain records of specialist contractors, suppliers and other sources/contacts.

5.5 Buildings will continue to be added to the statutory lists from time to time. However it is improbable that further comprehensive reviews or re-surveys will be commenced within the next 10 years.

Buildings of Local Interest

5.6 Local authorities are empowered to draw up lists of locally important buildings. There are currently separate lists for Hove and for Brighton.

5.7 These lists include buildings that are valued locally but which do not have sufficient national significance for statutory listing. Many of these are within conservation areas and therefore are protected. Many others are not but nevertheless are cherished within the local scene as important landmark buildings, or for their local historical or vernacular associations. The Hove list was last updated in 1997. The Brighton list is over 10 years old. It includes buildings now listed and requires review following completion of the statutory list review in 1999. Any review will invite nominations for listing from local residents and from community groups.

Action:

A review of both lists will be undertaken as a lesser priority.

5.8 The local lists do not give buildings protection against demolition. Nevertheless some may justify listing in the future, including for example distinguished buildings of the late 20th century and older buildings with a special architectural or historical interest previously unknown. Through local plan policy the retention, good maintenance and continued use of buildings on the local list will be encouraged.

Action:

Buildings on the council's list(s) of buildings of local importance will be recommended for 'spot' listing

Preservation and maintenance of historic buildings.

5.9 Owners of listed buildings have no specific duty to keep their buildings in a good state of repair, and may be reluctant to do so when the building is perceived to be of insufficient value to justify its long term up keep. The council is however empowered to take action where a building has deteriorated to such an extent as to put its preservation at risk and / or to cause wider visual harm.

5.10 For more than 20 years the council and its predecessor councils have sought to encourage the preservation of the city's historic building stock by offering financial assistance. In the last 5 years alone council historic building grant schemes have assisted the repair of some 160 historic buildings, including 21 that were identified as buildings at risk. They have also provided an effective means to secure, through negotiation, the reinstatement of architectural features important to a street's character and appearance. Partnership grant schemes now focus on area based regeneration, rather than property based restoration and, should this trend continue, investment in the care and maintenance of the historic building stock outside the grant aided areas may decline. Where this becomes evident, the council will use its powers under the Planning, Housing and Building Acts to secure repairs, good long term use for this building stock and its proper preservation.

Action:

The council will act corporately to secure the repair and reuse of historic buildings.

Within the next three years the Council will endeavour through negotiation and/or legal action to facilitate the repair and where appropriate, the reuse of the following buildings at risk:

*West Pier
Bandstand, Kings Road,
Stanmer House, Stables and Barn,
Marlborough House, 54 Old Steine,
Embassy Court, Kings Road,
3 Old Steine,
Dovecote, Church Hill, Patcham,
38 Brunswick Street East,
128 Kings Road.*

5.11 Comprehensive condition surveys of the listed buildings in Brighton & Hove were last completed in the early 1990's. More recently English Heritage has published each year a register of grade 1 and 2* listed buildings at risk, including several of those listed above.

Action:

The Council will assess the resource implications of introducing over time a public 'historic buildings at risk' register, including council owned historic properties, based on national English Heritage criteria. Listed Buildings entered on the register will be treated as live cases requiring regular review and action.

5.12 A comprehensive and systematic re-survey is unrealistic, nor does it necessarily identify major building defects if the survey is simply carried out from the street. Instead the register will be publicised and updated in response to individual reports from council staff and residents. The register will include listed buildings, buildings on local lists and others that make a special contribution to the appearance of a conservation area. It is anticipated that a Register would in this way have identified all buildings at risk within 3 years. Buildings on this register may be in poor to very bad condition, or in fair condition but functionally redundant, making their future uncertain.

5.13 The register will include a record of the condition and appearance of neglected buildings, ownership details and progress towards repair.

This knowledge will enable an assessment to be made of the nature of the threat and the likely cost of securing the long-term preservation of the historic buildings. It will inform any future bids for grant funding from government agencies etc. It is a working tool, helping to define the scale of the problem and to prioritise action. All buildings on the public register will nevertheless be considered as live cases requiring regular review and action.

5.14 The council is committed to reduce the number of historic buildings at risk in Brighton & Hove and ensure adequate levels of maintenance for all historic buildings, including those in its ownership, as promoted in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Building's recent publication "Stitch in Time".

Action:

The council will continue to make use of its statutory powers, for example, under sections 47, 48 and 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, under section 215 of the Planning Act 1990 and under sections 189, 190, and 372 of the Housing Act, at an early stage in the process of neglect and decay to secure the future of other historic buildings not on the register, yet vulnerable to more serious and rapid decay.

5.15 Historic buildings are a finite, irreplaceable resource. They are usually very flexible and adaptable over time to a variety of uses. They are more sustainable in the long run, particularly having regard to the environmental capital already invested and the waste that would be generated by their demolition, than most modern replacement buildings. All around us are good examples of old buildings brought back into modern use for the enjoyment of future generations.

Action:

Consideration will be given to the designation of a Historic Buildings at Risk Officer, to increase the number of repair notices served and monitor repair work to buildings on the 'at risk' register. The council will commit to proactive involvement in securing repairs and a viable future for buildings on the list.

Action:

- *Consideration will be given to creating a corporate working group within the council, with the purpose of*
- *maintaining a record of council owned heritage assets,*
- *developing a maintenance strategy for council owned historic buildings & monuments,*
- *developing conservation management statements,*
- *advising on alternative use or disposal of heritage assets.*

6 Conservation Led Area Regeneration

6.1 The council has invested heavily in its historic built environment in recent years to enrich the cultural well being of people in the city, whether residents, businesses, employees or visitors, to provide an enduring legacy for future generations and to assist the city's developing prosperity.

6.2 In the 5 year period 1997 - 2002, the council has, with its funding partners English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery and Arts Lottery Funds, and the government through its Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund, invested heavily in the restoration and enhancement of its historic buildings.

6.3 The restoration of the Art Gallery, Museum and Dome complex was perhaps the most significant achievement, completed at a total cost of some £35 million. A start has now been made on the Jubilee Street development, which will incorporate a new city library and complete the development of the city's cultural quarter; at the same time rebuilding the fabric and grain of this historic area.

6.4 The council is also currently receiving funding from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme to produce a Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan for Stanmer Park, a registered historic park and garden. This work aims to preserve and enhance the historic character of the park and will also provide future opportunities to seek additional funding sources for the historic park. Restoration work within Preston Park, an urban park, and similarly on the historic parks and gardens register, is also underway, with the walled garden restored as a first phase.

6.5 There has also been considerable success in attracting heritage funding to assist in the regeneration of the physical built environment in the socially and economically deprived historic areas. This work, particularly in the Regency, Brunswick and East Cliff areas, has complemented housing grant initiatives in the same areas to improve the quality and condition of the city's housing stock. Grants have also been made available to retailers and other businesses in the commercial streets.

6.6 The funding from the Regency /Brunswick Conservation Area Partnership Scheme is now fully committed and the outstanding works to the building restoration projects will be completed in 2003. The St James's Street / St George's Road Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme is also now nearing completion, with grant projects offered to assist business premises in this commercial quarter.

6.7 There is an opportunity each year for the council to bid for new partnership funding for historic building grant schemes, where there is a proven need. The minimum matching sum, required from the council is currently £100,000 spread over 3 years.

Action:

No bids for partnership grant funding will be made in 2003/04.

The need for grant funding will be reassessed in 2004 following:

- i) the delivery of the outcomes agreed in the Action Plans for the East Cliff and Regency / Brunswick Conservation Area Partnership Schemes and for the St James's Street / St George's Road Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme,*
- ii) a 'state of the environment' appraisal, and*
- iii) the completion of other high priority projects.*

6.8 Future grant funding is likely to focus on area regeneration in the Valley Gardens, London Road/Lewes road area and on areas with a high number of historic buildings at risk.

6.9 Meanwhile grants continue to be available from English Heritage to assist with major structural repair to listed buildings of outstanding importance and for repairs to 'buildings at risk'. Non profit making bodies may also be eligible for grant assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund toward repairs and improvements to listed buildings.

6.10 In the past small grant schemes have operated locally, to assist with the repair or enhancement of buildings of architectural or historic interest. However the council currently has no local conservation grant scheme.

6.11 In most cases there should be no need for public subsidy. Nor would it be an appropriate use of public funds simply to assist with modest repair or routine maintenance costs, which secure the value of a property. However there are historic structures which provide little or no financial return, but which nevertheless are of considerable public interest and value and which contribute to the cherished local scene, including for example, flint boundary walling.

Action:

Consideration will be given to introducing a Conservation Grant Scheme to assist with the maintenance or securing the future use of listed buildings, or other historic structures identified in conservation area appraisals as making a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

7 Regulatory Planning Controls

7.1 In order to raise local awareness of the special qualities of particular neighbourhoods, and to manage the council's staffing resources efficiently, leaflets will be produced, which explain the planning and conservation policies that apply within conservation areas and which give general planning advice for prospective applicants and incoming residents.

Action:

A general conservation guidance leaflet will be produced in 2003. Area specific leaflets will follow for the Preston Park and Round Hill Conservation Areas.

7.2 Topic leaflets providing guidance on specific planning and conservation issues have been produced in the past as supplementary planning guidance to the council's Local Plans, covering such topics as roof coverings, roof alterations, window replacements, painting, shop fronts and adverts.

Action:

Topic leaflets will be updated throughout the next 10 years as resources permit.

7.3 Quite minor alterations to historic buildings can cumulatively have a very damaging effect upon the quality of the street environment and can undermine the restoration work achieved through the council's grant schemes. Such alterations often do not require planning permission or consent under the Advertisement Regulations.

7.4 There are however now many streets, which are subject to additional planning restrictions introduced by the council, to help preserve the quality of the historic environment. For example 'single colour' uniform painting schemes apply to those historic squares and terraces, designed as formal architectural set pieces. Article 4 directions, which remove permitted development rights, are also in place in many conservation areas. These ensure conservation policies can be applied consistently to all properties, by bringing under planning control, for example, the painting of unpainted properties, the demolition of boundary walls and railings, and alterations to roofs and facades of single family houses. The need for these controls elsewhere will, where applicable, be identified in conservation area character appraisals.

Action:

Unless the national planning regulations are changed to extend planning control within conservation areas, the council will continue to introduce Article 4 directions, where 'permitted developments' are identified in conservation area appraisals as harming an area's special character, and where there is a substantial local community support.

Further 'Article 4' planning restrictions will, subject to government approval, be introduced in the Regency Square, Clifton Hill, North Laine and East Cliff Conservation Areas within the next 3 years.

Regulation 7 directions, controlling the display of estate agents' 'for sale or to let' boards in visually sensitive areas, are currently under consideration by the council.

8 Conservation Promotion

8.1 There is a need to raise awareness of what makes the city so special and to develop a positive city wide appreciation of these special qualities and create a pride in the city and confidence in its future.

8.2 The council is very keen to continue to work with the voluntary sector, including local resident groups, amenity societies and 'Friends' groups to deliver the actions within this strategy, and whose involvement and contributions to date are commended. The council is however also anxious to involve those who in the past may have considered the historic environment to have no relevance to them or even perhaps to be an obstacle to their aspirations.

Action:

The council will continue to support and sustain those groups, who volunteer their time to manage and promote local environmental projects and historic properties.

The council will continue to assist, wherever possible, with research for and publication of leaflets/ displays/ interpretation boards promoting the activities of local amenity societies.

The council will continue to support the Civic Trust's Heritage Open Weekend event and/ or similar events.

8.3 The council has published 'town trail' guides, erected interpretation boards and maintains interpretation centres. It had also agreed criteria for accepting nominations for commemorative plaques in January 2000, prior to the funding for this scheme being taken as a saving later that year.

Action:

The council will continue to publish educational resource/interpretation packs on the local historic environment and specific 'heritage' sites.

The council will maintain and publicise its existing Commemorative Plaques schemes. There are however no plans to extend these schemes.

9 Enhancing the Streetscene & Open Spaces

9.1 The council has invested heavily to make city streets attractive, safe, accessible and pedestrian friendly, whether by environmental enhancement, calming traffic, increasing pedestrian space and crossing points, removing physical obstructions, or by introducing closed circuit television (cctv) surveillance cameras or improved lighting.

9.2 During the past 5 years, major street improvements have been completed including improvements to:

- Queen's Road / West Street (Station Gateway & Ocean Boulevard)
- Trafalgar Street, Sydney Street, Gloucester Road,
- St James's Street,
- Western Road, Hove,- Church Street/New Road
- Lower promenade, between the Piers.

9.3 During the same period restoration work, including the reinstatement of original iron rail enclosures, has been completed to the public gardens in the New Steine, Bloomsbury Place, Russell and Clarence Squares. The Clock Tower at the West Street/ North Street junction has also been restored.

9.4 Street improvements currently programmed will connect with previously completed schemes.

Action:

Works programmed for years 2003 and 2004 include:

- ***Completion of the improvements to the lower promenade, including the restoration of the Victorian bandstand, between Preston Street and the Peace Statue.***
- ***Improvements to Church Road Hove between Palmeira Square and Sackville Road.***
- ***Improvements to Gardner Street, in the North Laine.***
- ***Improvements to street lighting along the Kingsway and within the Brunswick/ Adelaide area.***

9.5 Future street works may include further street improvements within the Old Town, to complement the existing 'pedestrian priority areas', within the London Road shopping area and along Madeira Drive, between Brighton (formerly Palace) Pier and the Marina and street lighting schemes. A street design manual is being prepared which will inform designs and specifications for future street improvements and highway works, and advise on the location of signage and street furniture etc, which can have significant and often adverse effect on the visual quality of a street.

9.6 Environmental improvements are also proposed for Stanmer Park as part of the Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan for the park. The plan will set out actions to conserve, repair and restore the park and its historic features, focusing on good estate management, including maintaining and enhancing its biodiversity, and identify opportunities for visitors' increased enjoyment of the park. This forms the basis of a 10-year Countryside Stewardship agreement.

9.7 Improvements to public open spaces will also continue, including major improvements to Preston Park, a registered historic park and garden. These will be completed in accordance with a conservation management plan, to be subject to public consultation during 2003.

Action:

Works of restoration and improvement will commence in 2003/2004 to the gardens and buildings in the southern part of Preston Park.

9.8 Future schemes of improvement to historic parks and gardens will depend upon the availability of council and partnership funding. At present no capital funding is available. These schemes may include:

- further phases of improvement within Preston Park,
- further phases of restoration work within Stanmer Park,
- further phases of improvements to the Regency Square garden,
- actions following the completion of the proposed 'parks and green spaces' strategy,

9.9 The need for improvements to the walls beside the ramps to the Adelaide Crescent gardens, to park structures within Queen's Park and to the railings around Norfolk Square have also been identified, as requiring further investigation and action.

10 Delivery

10.1 The council's lead councillor for environment and the Director, Environment will lead the council in its care for the historic environment and the delivery of the actions identified in this strategy. The duty of care runs throughout the council; nevertheless a front line conservation service exists within the Environment Department. This provides conservation policy and technical advice, a proactive conservation related enforcement service, project management of grant aided building restoration and area regeneration schemes, and support for the promotion of the city's cultural heritage.

10.2 The conservation service in the Environment Department currently distributes its time as follows:

Conservation, listed building & planning control	35%	(2.00 staff)
Area regeneration including grant schemes	25%	(1.50 staff)
Conservation policy / promotion	10%	(0.50 staff)
Proactive enforcement	10%	(0.50 staff)
Conservation advice and team support	20%	(1.00 staff)

10.3 This distribution of staff resources reflects past priorities. The size of the team (5.5 full time equivalent (fte) team members) reflects the city's rich cultural heritage. This includes some 3,360 listed buildings, 5 parks/gardens of national historic interest and 33 conservation areas; of which those along the sea front have attracted in recent years very substantial public funding to assist with their regeneration. Of the planning applications made to the council for approval, some 40% impact on conservation areas and listed buildings.

10.4 In addition other council services have complementary responsibilities, interests and expertise, particularly in regard the council's own historic buildings. The Royal Pavilion, Libraries & Museums Service is responsible for the ongoing conservation, restoration & preservation of a number of historic buildings & registered historic gardens. These are opened to the public to provide inspiration, learning & enjoyment to both visitors & residents alike. Buildings include the internationally important Royal Pavilion & its restored gardens, listed buildings like Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, the Booth Museum, Preston Manor & its gardens, Foredown Tower & Hove Library. Ongoing development & research into restoration techniques & materials will ensure the long term preservation, and high quality restoration of these landmark buildings. The Division also plays an important role in raising the awareness & appreciation of both the built & natural heritage & environment through exhibitions, displays, publications, talks, lectures, and other educational & promotional events.

10.5 The delivery of the proposed actions within this strategy within the prescribed time frames (if any) are based on existing staff resource levels and subject to the availability of funding.

10.6 Should you have any queries related to this strategy or wish to make comment, do write to the Conservation Team Manager, 2nd Floor, Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove BN3 3BQ, or e:mail conservation@brighton-hove.gov.uk

**Jenny Rowlands Director of Environment,
Brighton & Hove City Council**