

BOB YOUNG



CMPCA awarded Lottery grant for Community Website



We are delighted to announce that our application to the National Lottery's Awards

For All scheme for £6,760 to produce a community website has been successful.

This grant provides an exciting opportunity to fund a specially designed software and training package that allows a team of contributors and editors to be easily trained to develop a genuine community website, by the community and for the community, rather than depending on one 'expert'. The new website team will, for example, be able to conduct surveys and gather authoritative information on CMPCA residents' opinions on matters of topical interest. The site will include a 'comments and messages' space, which will allow residents to engage in a direct exchange of views and it will also include an area where residents will be

able to record the local history of the area on a street by street basis, and the remembrances of long term residents.

A team of editors will be trained to add and modify the website's content. Editors need no previous website knowledge as full training will be given. The software package we shall use is similar to that used by the award-winning website www.mybrightonandhove

designed by www.communitysites. A look at either of these will illustrate the ease of contributing. If you are interested in acting as an editor or in providing material for the new site, please contact john.riddington@tiscali.co.uk or 01273 771431.

We hope that by late spring this site will replace the temporary site (www.cmpca.co.uk) that has operated for the past year.



Banish those winter blues!

- Support the Old Market as it faces closure (page 8)
- Visit St Nick's Christmas market (page 12)
- Prepare for the festive season with Andrew Catchpole's drinks (page 6)
- Walk off the excesses of the holiday season with Louise Schweitzer's 'particularly good winter walk, with wonderful hill ridges and woody bits' and February lambs (pages 10–11)
- Have some warming stocks and soups ready for your return (Judy Bow on page 7)
- Laugh with Phil Mellows at the Winter of Discontent (page 6)
- Tend your containers to produce herbs, fruit and veg (page 3)
- Send in the crossword by 4 February.



BBC Tree O'clock 11am Saturday 5 December St Nick's Green Spaces

Watch the Mayor plant five trees (including cherries and a mulberry) in the Rest Garden and the Churchyard as part of the BBC's attempt to break a world record for the most number of trees planted in one hour!

• Get romantic with Anthony Hawgood and friends at our Winter Social Event on Saturday 13 February at St Nick's For information and tickets cmpca.info@googlemail.com 07816 403099 in the New Year

>>> Future meetings . . .

Meetings held at St Mary Magdalen's Community Centre Upper North St at 8pm preceded by Police Surgery at 7.30pm. Confirm dates and topics at www.cmpca.co.uk

- **Tuesday 19 January** St Nicholas Green Spaces: past present and future
- **Saturday 13 February** Winter Social Event. See above.

- **Tuesday 16 March** Topic to be confirmed
- **late April** AGM (at S Michael's)

Who are we?

The Clifton Montpelier and Powis Community Alliance is a community association for the Montpelier and Clifton Hill Conservation Area. All residents can call themselves members and membership is free (for more information and streets included, see p15).

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Dear residents!

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0845 60 70 999 ext. 27375
Alena.martauzova@sussex.pnn.police.uk

My colleague PCSO Bobbi King is on extended sick leave, however I can reassure you that she is getting better very fast! In her absence please direct your concerns, reports to me, **PCSO Alena Martauzova**, on alena.martauzova@sussex.pnn.police.uk or leave a message on **0845 60 70 999 ext. 27375**.

I have two very important things on my mind I can help you with: clocks went back and afternoons are shorter. Dark is welcoming to local burglars therefore: 'LEAVE A LIGHT ON!' Operation TWILIGHT is calling you to secure your homes this winter. For further details please visit www.sussex.police.uk. Christmas is round the corner! Operation CRACKER concentrates on tackling the crime over the festive period: Make sure your house looks occupied (use timeswitches for lighting and close the curtains); keep your home secure and store your gifts out of sight until Christmas comes; be a good neighbour and report anything suspicious; don't leave goods and presents in view in your car; empty boxes outside your house advertise valuables inside.

Have a safe, secure and happy Christmas! Enjoy winter!

Alena writes: "I came to Brighton five years ago and I created my second home here. Prior to this job I worked with adults with learning disabilities in Hove. I found challenge living in Brighton due to cosmopolitan community I meet every day is helped by my background. I am Slovak and lived my childhood not far away from Polish border. I used to watch Polish channels and listen to Polish radio. It doesn't make to speak great Polish but helps me to understand and interact with Polish Community I meet in my daily work routine. I also speak Italian and I am learning Spanish. I can still remember a little Russian, but this stays with basics. It doesn't make a language genius but I love learning about different cultures. So this is my passion! Well, there is no way you cannot speak to me, now you have several options. And I love dancing. Any guess? Latin American and ballroom. Started this year and I am coping well. Any little community is our community of Brighton. All they come for different reasons because friend of friend was here, studied or lived here, and had a memorable stay".

Recent CMPCA meetings

For full meeting minutes visit www.cmpca.co.uk

At our **September** meeting, **Gil Sweetenham** (Assistant Director for Schools, Children and Young Persons' Trust) described the Council's planning for **primary school admissions**. To east and west there are vacant places but around 130 additional entry places will be needed in central Brighton and Hove by 2011. Despite temporary arrangements this year and next, a shortage for this area is inevitable. A £4.5 million capital programme is planned. The need results from demographic changes, compounded by the admissions policies of faith schools in the central area. Subsequent

options agreed by Cabinet member Cllr Vanessa Brown on 5 October included expanding existing schools and building a new one (8 possible sites were identified).

Back in **June**, at a lively meeting on **Waste Management**, **CityClean's Head of Operations Mike Moon** reported that over the last nine months, waste collection and recycling rounds had been reorganised to improve efficiency and make savings: recycling volumes are currently 29% of waste. The target for 2012 is 32%. He addressed concerns on a range of issues,

particularly communal bins, including noise, fly tipping (street cleaning teams report this), intrusive times of collection, and location. He invited those present with particular concerns re location to contact him directly (and a number of bins were subsequently successfully relocated). He agreed that Cityclean let itself down with response times when problems were reported. Questions were asked about **composting** and Brighton's lack of organic waste collecting service: there is a need to monitor the technological advances in the collection and use of organic waste. Could urban food production be supported?

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£67,000 to improve the Children's Play Area



Congratulations to SNGSA for securing this funding which is part of a national initiative to make play parks more adventurous and challenging, especially for 8–13 year olds. The final designs, taking people's feedback from the special consultation day in July into account, were produced in early September. Local children overwhelmingly opted for challenging climbing frames similar to the one pictured, stepping–stone paths and keeping the existing swings. Other ideas include new planting and picnic tables. Work should start in December and be completed before the end of next March.

The Gardening Group welcome plant donations: bring them to the green spaces on Tuesday mornings, when the volunteers are at work, or contact Richard Brown on 241651. Check out SNGSA's second newsletter www.sncgsa.org showcasing their latest achievements. Chair Shaun Kiddell says it is, "a real joy to see these city centre green spaces being so well used".

Grow Your Own in small spaces

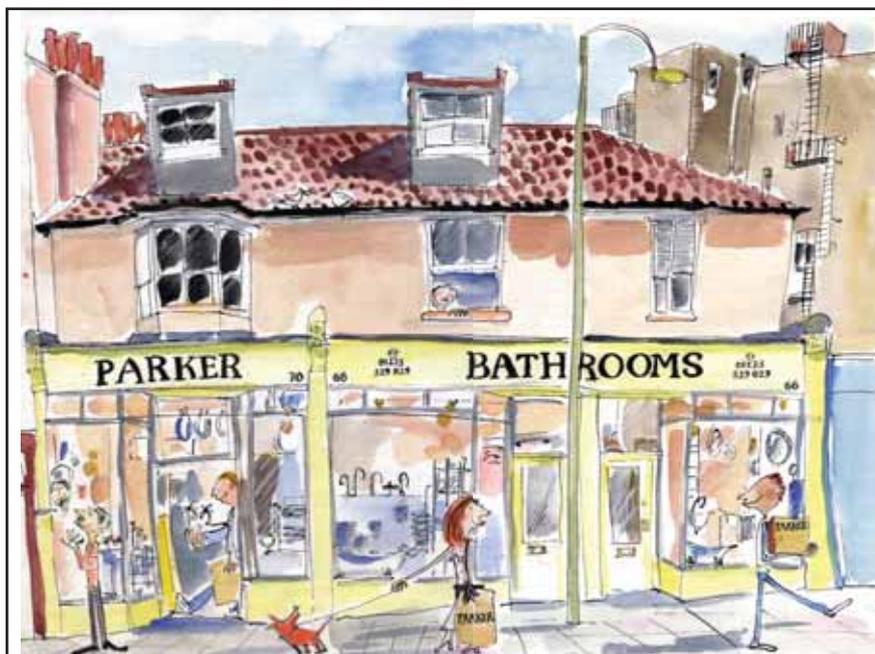
Watch this space: following our inspirational **November** meeting with **Ann Baldridge** (Harvest Brighton and Hove), **Karina Rodriguez Villarreal** and her beautifully illustrated talk about growing herbs, fruit and vegetables on her first floor balcony and **Jo McCartney** on the joy of growing 12 'edible products' in her typical Brighton 'backyard' with two small boys, we hope to make this a regular feature.



Harvest Brighton and Hove is an exciting new Lottery-funded project designed to increase the amount of food grown (and eaten) in the city: 'from pots of parsley to community allotments and Harvest Scrumping, there are opportunities for everyone to join in'.



Sign up for more info on their projects and courses (composting in December) at www.harvest-bh.org.uk or call 431700.



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Conservation and amenity in the Alex Triangle

Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for the Environment, has promised a planning brief for the Royal Alex site that 'will ensure that all considerations have been taken into account in providing guidance on the future development of this important and sensitive site'. As the council finalises the brief, Mike Hales (who lives in Homeless House, adjoining the Alex site) writes:

Another year in the life of the Alex site, and still The Alex Triangle seems invisible to most people. It's a large area which furnishes the immediate sense of open space for perhaps 300 people in Dyke Road, Clifton Road and Clifton Hill whose gardens border the Alex site. It's good to see the Council (following the Inspector) promoting recognition of conflicting expectations for the site: on one hand, the hope of many people that old buildings will be conserved, and on the other, the dismal reality that the site will stay derelict unless its owner can get a commercial return. As it turns out, both pressures work to the disadvantage

of Triangle-dwellers, with regard to both conservation and amenity.

Conservation on the 'dark side' of the Alex site – towards the north and west boundaries, equal in length to the familiar street frontages – is not about buildings, but about the quality of the space itself. It's a large space: several times the area of Powis Square, for example. It feels open because existing structures rise only two storeys above the Alex site level; its textures and shapes are interestingly diverse. This quality of space is part of the diverse quality of the Conservation Area; and preserving the multi-textured, low-rise, open quality of the Triangle as a shared outlook surely is as equally important as conserving historical bricks and mortar in the south and east of the Alex site? They're directly linked: each retained low-rise building in the south or east of the site increases the pressure on a developer to add units (equals bulk, equals height) in the north and west, away from public gaze.

And so: amenity. The Council's

scheme suggests a 3.5 storey block at the highest point on Clifton Hill. Everybody living in the Triangle would get a view of it because it sits dead in the centre. What the Council's sketches don't show is the sharp drop of land at the Alex boundaries. A three-storey block becomes five when viewed from somebody's back doorstep or bedroom window. Compared with the two-storey heights of existing structures above Alex ground level, it's obvious that the sense of low-rise environment for Triangle residents can very easily be destroyed. And imagine monolithic, uniform, white blocks planted in what is currently a multi-textured, diverse, low-rise setting: what might work on an Alex street frontage like Dyke Road obviously shouldn't be a recipe for those elevations and heights facing inwards.

Finalising the planning brief has been delayed and it is now expected to go to Planning Committee on 13 January 2010 for information and to Cllr Theobald, Cabinet Member for the Environment for decision on 26 January.



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Discontent

Of course, I remember the first Winter of Discontent. No, that can't be right. That was in the reign of Richard III. Ages ago. Anyway, I remember a previous Winter of Discontent, dead bodies lying unburied in the street, all that. And now they're saying we're heading into another one.

In Brighton the binworkers came out on strike and won in a couple of days, while the post workers nearly came out, the threat being enough to force some sort of deal. The funny thing is that it takes a strike before those in authority get what everybody else knows, that we can't cope without these public service workers. The seagulls know, too. Some say it was the seagulls wot won it for the binworkers with their dawn raids on defenceless bin bags, spilling their messy guts out. For goodness sakes, we can't let visitors see our uneaten muesli, sanitary products and stuff we really should be recycling on display over the pavements!

The Royal Mail is no less essential. Perhaps we write letters to a distant sister recounting the squire's latest bid to get beneath our bodice, we've got Facebook for that, but I expect some Christmas cards even though I think it's humbug. I like humbugs. And I appreciate the courage of the postie having leafleted houses and had to battle with sharp-flapped letterboxes positioned at back-breaking angles by sadistic architects.

It would be nice if those who rule us desist from trying to cheat and squeeze those who really make society run. Even if it takes a Winter of Discontent.

Phil Mellows is online at www.philmellows.com

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A Merry Christmas

Andrew Catchpole, local resident and food and drink writer (andrew.catchpole@virgin.net) gives some seasonal tips

Rudolph may have a red nose but Father Christmas must have a beacon of a beak after slurping his way through tot after tot of whisky left on mantel-pieces on Christmas Eve. You can imagine the portly old fellow lugging yet another sack of goodies down the chimney and thinking 'just once it would be nice to have something with a little pizzazz'. And, after

all, you can do ordinary any other time of the year, but Christmas really is a time to indulge, so roll on a fantastic selection of drinks with real oomph and festive flavour.

Cocktails are a heart-warming start and many of the old classics – the rickeys, slings, smashes, cobblers and fixes – are a doddle to mix at home. Try a brandy cobbler (cracked ice, a teaspoon of fine sugar, a slice of orange topped up with spirit) or a mint julep (crushed mint leaves, a soupcon of sugar, cracked ice, bourbon and sprig of mint to decorate) to lift the soul. Hot buttered rum is a favourite in our household (1/3 golden rum, pinch each of nutmeg and cinnamon, teaspoon brown sugar, 2/3 boiling water, topped with a slug of melting butter), especially after a damp walk on Christmas day.

I'll certainly be stocking up on great



vino, too, but it's great to lend a twist to the proceedings. Perhaps the wackiest sounding idea is to bag a sparkling red shiraz, from Down Under, packed with plummy, peppery spice, perfect for all those overwhelming wine-bashing flavours delivered by the bird with all its trimmings, and guaranteed to

produce a smile.

Fine German Riesling, too, is a pretty *recherché* seeming choice, but uncork the nervy, mineral energy of an off-dry *spätlese* or *auslese* and you'll weep at the thought of ever having contemplated insipid pinot grigio. I love Port, both mellow tawny and warming vintage, but try for a change the intense, plum and licorice dry Amarone from Veneto, or its raisony-sweet cousin Recioto, for fireside sipping or with cheese.

And forget buckets of cheap fizz. Head instead, for a few squids more, for a rich, decadent, mellow, lingering bottle of vintage champagne to savour once the day is almost done. After all, better to have a handful of sensational treats than buckets of boring booze if you want Christmas to be special.

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Hubble, bubble and **bon appétit**



Stocks and shares may be down the pan, but the stock pot is the gold standard in the new austerity. It's an emblem of both frugality – extracting every essence from scarce ingredients – and plenitude. It warms the hearth and the heart assures **Judy Bow**.

A pot of good stock is the foundation of a panoply of dishes, and best of all, it's the ideal focus for the winter veg box. Suddenly the lowly roots; celery; hardy herbs that survive the onslaught of cold and wet; and scrag ends and bones become the star ingredients for a robust broth, which will then be transformed into the main event.

The raw materials won't break the bank, but it is worth investing in a good piece of kit. A mouli sieve is invaluable for making smooth soups and is useful for the laborious job of skinning and deseeding of tomatoes. Get a pan with a heavy base – it will prevent the soup burning. It also needs to be big; around 2–3 litres. Then you can save your scouring for the French flea markets where you can pick up amazing soup accoutrements – tureens, ladles, silver spoons, earthenware bowls, and the very important skimmer or 'écumoire'. Soup, after all, is derived from the French 'souper' – the light evening meal of broth poured over bread.

Good things take time, and meat and

vegetable stocks need to bubble gently for up to four hours, but then you have a freezerful of almost instant meals. For most soups, vegetable, chicken and meat stocks can be used interchangeably. Fish stock is more specific.

● For one litre of basic **vegetable stock** chop 2 large onions, 3 leeks, 5 celery sticks, 1 fennel head, 2 large carrots and put in your stock pot with 2 litres of water, 2 bay leaves, a sprig of thyme, half a teaspoon of black peppercorns, 3 allspice berries and a pinch of sea salt. Simmer gently until volume is reduced by half.

● For **chicken stock**, add 1kg of chicken bones, raw or cooked and some parsley stalks. Bring to the boil, skim off any foam, cover loosely and simmer very gently (surface should only tremble) for 3–4 hours, skimming off impurities regularly.

● For **beef stock**, add 2kg beef bones roasted at 180C/350F/gas4 for 30 mins til browned and 500g chopped leeks, including green bits. Cover loosely and simmer until reduced by half. Strain. Cool and lift off layer of fat and use for roast potatoes.

If you're freezing your stock, reduce it again by half. It will then be more strongly flavoured so using ice cube containers can be practical. Be sure to use your culinary secret weapons within three months.

Chestnut and celeriac soup

300g dried chestnuts, soaked overnight
500g celeriac, diced
750ml vegetable or chicken stock
1 cinnamon stick
2 egg yolks
50g unsalted butter, diced
Sea salt and black pepper
1–2 tsp ground cinnamon

1. Put soaked chestnuts in their water in pan with diced celeriac, stock and the cinnamon stick. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer 30–40 minutes, until the chestnuts are soft.
2. Remove the cinnamon stick and reserve a few whole chestnuts.
3. Push everything through a mouli sieve or transfer to a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
4. Return to pan and add water if necessary. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Whisk in the egg yolks and butter. Reheat gently, being careful not to allow the soup to boil.
5. Serve, finishing each portion with a whole chestnut and a sprinkle of ground cinnamon.

Tip I always use filtered water for making soups. Especially important when making clear soups and consommés.

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The Old Market could close before Christmas

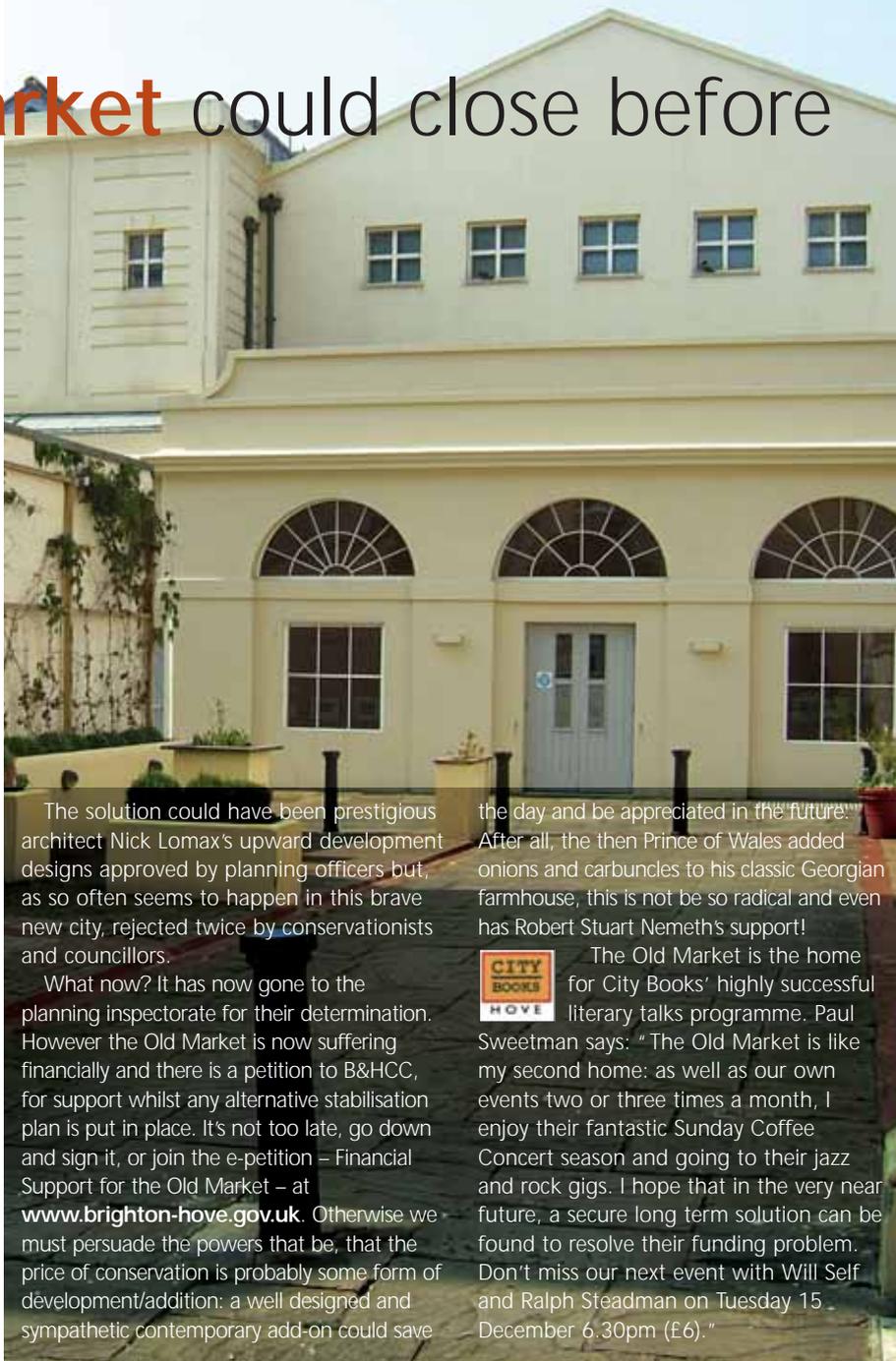
Ann Smith

It is no exaggeration to say that for more than 20 years, Clifton Terrace residents Stephen Neiman and Caroline Brown have lived and breathed the Old Market. They are now fighting for its survival.

Stephen, who grew up in the city, and his wife, Caroline, who founded The Hanover Band returned with their young family in the mid 80s.

Many will remember the Old Market as a long abandoned derelict building: a failed market, riding school and donkey shelter. In the 70s there was a move to raise funds but it wasn't until Stephen, walking along Western Road, noticed the derelict building and immediately determined to save it, that the development funding campaign began in earnest. With local authority help, and Lottery and Arts Council funding (the largest arts award to South East England), and when the prestigious Hanover Band made it their home, the future of the Old Market seemed secure. It was further strengthened by its expansion into an outstanding venue for film, comedy, theatre, jazz, world and contemporary music – and getting married.

Are you a fan of Rick Stein, John Otway, Bonbon, Nick Cave, Endellion Quartet, Eclipse, Alan Davies, Jacqui Dankworth, Geno Washington? The Old Market offers these and more. But despite successful programming, full houses, frequent use by the community, the loans taken out for revitalising this beautiful building can no longer be sustained, partly because of the financial downturn which has seen the value of real estate go down in the eyes of lenders.



The solution could have been prestigious architect Nick Lomax's upward development designs approved by planning officers but, as so often seems to happen in this brave new city, rejected twice by conservationists and councillors.

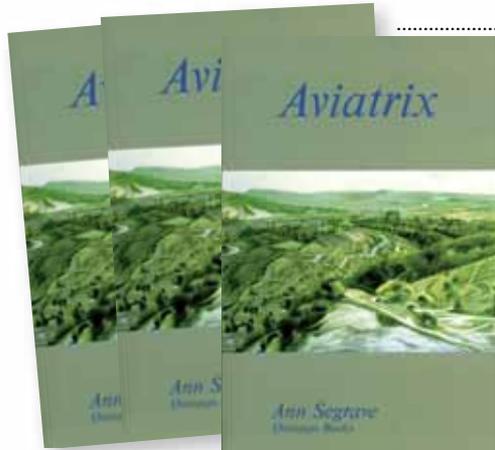
What now? It has now gone to the planning inspectorate for their determination. However the Old Market is now suffering financially and there is a petition to B&HCC, for support whilst any alternative stabilisation plan is put in place. It's not too late, go down and sign it, or join the e-petition – Financial Support for the Old Market – at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Otherwise we must persuade the powers that be, that the price of conservation is probably some form of development/addition: a well designed and sympathetic contemporary add-on could save

the day and be appreciated in the future." After all, the then Prince of Wales added onions and carbuncles to his classic Georgian farmhouse, this is not be so radical and even has Robert Stuart Nemeth's support!

The Old Market is the home for City Books' highly successful literary talks programme. Paul Sweetman says: "The Old Market is like my second home: as well as our own events two or three times a month, I enjoy their fantastic Sunday Coffee Concert season and going to their jazz and rock gigs. I hope that in the very near future, a secure long term solution can be found to resolve their funding problem. Don't miss our next event with Will Self and Ralph Steadman on Tuesday 15 December 6.30pm (£6)."



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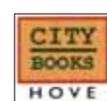
Frank and unpretentious, **Ann Segrave** is a Sussex poet with a bracing range and depth of feeling. She is an aviatrix with passionate curiosity, a bird's eye view, catching the 'sweep and pull of landscape'. She is a word catcher who 'can slip my pen-cramped hand into a falconer's glove',

her linguistic muscle taut as 'leathered wrist' for a hawk. Standing at an angle to the familiar, she see snails 'move like slow trains on grey rails', suddenly noticing one signalling 'its huge hydraulic will/to cross stone deserts, feast on green.' Digging her fingers into root-knotted earth, she discloses the secretive life of a night garden. Her acute eye for detail new mints the Sussex Downs in Spring.

She gives quiet advocacy to the unobserved: the silence of a monastery village in Crete, its church has a fresh tomb for an old woman, 'sprinkled petals – tender chaste confetti' – round her photograph. But the poem resonates with the classical Greek world in the closing sentence: 'Over the arched door, one word:/ METAMORPHOSIS.' She evokes spirit of place in Paris, Amsterdam, or

gliding down 'the mute corridors' of a Midland hotel shrouded in winter afternoon rays. Her poems have spring-heeled concision. Her tribute, 'To My Father', recollecting his final hours, touches with poignant candour. Description triggers catharsis. Her down-to-earth poetry is an extraordinary rendering of experience. She captures the world in clenching metaphor, watching Friesian cows sat 'like tumbled dice', or scanning 'the quiet, reliable brilliance of the morning star.' Ann Segrave's life-affirming poetry has deft, subtle mastery to be treasured.

Dominic Sankey



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Where were you on 26 December 2004?

Probably and fortunately at home, getting over Christmas. However, mention tsunami and you may remember more: the terrifying pictures that hit our television screens that evening. By the end of that day 150,000 people were either dead or missing and millions more in 11 countries were homeless.

Many of those are still homeless and here in one corner of Brighton, Karla tries to help: Karla grows vegetables and flowers. Walk along Upper North Street on a Sunday morning and you will find her outside St Mary Magdalene's church and for a contribution to her tsunami fund you can walk on with a bag full of organic produce.

Karla came from Sri Lanka via Canada to this country and it is to Sri Lanka that she returns to help, in



whatever way possible, some of the many people still in 2009 suffering the effects of that tsunami.

The project started when she went over with her daughter taking medical supplies bought with funds collected in church. There she saw the plight of her people, many of whom were not even living in camps but had just a makeshift covering for protection and privacy. Realising her family's good fortune, she determined to help. In contact with a tsunami team in Sri Lanka she uses the donations for her produce to build homes. The first family to be helped owned land and their house was built at a cost of £5000 – her next project will cost more. This family's land is on the coast where building is no longer allowed so land must be bought before

a house can be built. The amount needed this time is in the region of £12000–£13000.

It's a tall order but Karla is indefatigable. In the winter months when there is no produce, she makes curries to raise funds but unfortunately, she doesn't cook to a recipe so we can't benefit except by tasting. The only hint is in the spices; cumin seed, fennel, ginger and garlic and I suspect a little something else.

It's too late for this year but go along Upper North Street from May onwards and make a donation. The table will be laden with fruit, flowers and vegetables. Get there about 10.30am to avoid the regulars who come for a chat as well as a cabbage and be assured that you are helping.



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Housedean, St Ann Country Park and Balmer

Louise Schweitzer, veteran Garden Gadabout opener, is a passionate walker and recently conceived the idea of local walks to celebrate the South Downs achieving National Park status in April 2009. These circular walks, easily accessible from Brighton, each has a feature such as a monument or a lost village as a focus.

This circular walk of approximately four miles up and across the Downs, starts northwards from the A27 just past Sussex University.

We shall meet a section of the familiar South Downs Way on its route through some spectacular undulating and much less oft-walked downland, as well as passing through the remnants of medieval Balmer. Cars can be left on the old turnpike road between Brighton and Lewes, awkward to turn left into from the fast traffic on the A27: if you miss the first turning, the second will serve our purpose just as well.

This ancient way, blighted by traffic noise, is still interesting for the old flint walls, massive sycamores and smattering of brick and flint cottages around Housedean Farm. Blue circle signs announce that it is National Cycle Route 90, one of a number of long distance bicycle trails perhaps most often used by the 50 mile South Coast Circular.

Immediately past Housedean's formidable estate walling, a finger post bearing the South Downs Way acorn emblem announces that Ditchling Beacon lies 5 miles to our left.

This is a steep hill and I am grateful for the helpful wooden stairs up and across the rolling uplands of St. Ann (Without) Country Park, an area outside the Lewes Parish of St.

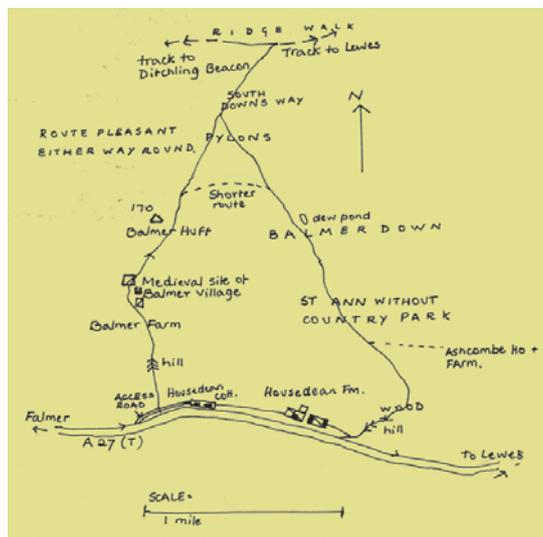
Ann. Climb the top of this particular hill and a necessary breather gives the chance to look behind and up at the huge grassy slope of the Kingston Ridge, or the familiar crest of Firlie Beacon away to the East. On a clear day, you can see the white rim of Seaford Head and the open sea beyond.

for its huge, peculiarly twisted beech trees. Little grows under the canopy of beech so the wood lies open and largely accessible – we missed the two deer (roe or fallow) peacefully grazing in the dusk, but my dog did not, and hurtled down in fruitless quest.

Our track winds up, down and round, slightly hemmed in by fencing after we leave the wood until we reach a crossing of routes and a gate. Away to our right, a less-walked trail leads to Ashcombe, the beautiful grey and redbrick Georgian mansion once owned by Sussex University before it was acquired by antiques dealer Roy Green, who continues his business from the Old Coach House.

We turn sharp left and a fuller picture appears before us, opening up onto the slopes of the Ditchling Ridge which connects Ditchling Beacon to Lewes, a wide, busy chalk trail, popular with weekend walkers and famous for panoramic views down across Ditchling, Plumpton and Westmeston.

The wide grassy trail dips and rises across open downland, a patchwork of brown and green, decorated occasionally by flocks of grazing sheep and dotted about by sea gulls, wheeling and crying behind the plough. This is Balmer Down, an extensive system of archaeological field systems still visible,



*No tender hearted garden crowns
No Bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bowheaded, whale
backed Downs
But gnarled and withern thorn.*

Or so wrote Rudyard Kipling around the turn of the last century. But there are a few precious woodlands on the Downs and we shall take a narrow, winding path through a mixed wood, notable

reminding us of the South Saxons who occupied this area in the 5th century after the departure of the Romans and before the Normans, five centuries later.

Balmer is a Celtic name and historians differ as to whether the name means the pool by the bush or a stronghold near the pool but all names ending in 'mer' relate to water. We pass a pool on our right – a recent concrete dew pond for grazing animals and wild birds.

These arable slopes have now been designated as ESAs, or Environmentally Sensitive Areas, on which no chemicals or fertilisers are used. A limited and occasional crop rotation involves spring barley or winter wheat, but the wide open downlands are mostly used for sheep grazing.

*'On the Downs, in the weald,
in the marshes I heard the Old
Gods say Here come very many
people We must go away'.*

Rudyard Kipling c1900

The family who farm this land, the ups and downs, they call it, are sensitive to modern agricultural thinking and carefully tend the species, both husbanded and natural, who live here. Ground birds are encouraged and skylarks rise suddenly from underfoot: way up in the sky can be glimpsed kestrels and sparrow hawks, with an occasional lucky glimpse of a buzzard.

The first lambs are due on 10 February. Like lettuces, lambing is planned in stages to allow sufficient shepherding time to care for the newly born and the next batch will appear around 1 April. A black mark on their fluffy new fleece means an early lamb: blue means an April fool, and a black line means the sheep is barren and will become mutton.

As we see a line of pylons, we know that a cross track is near and we shall turn left along the newly lain chalk road which leads up and over Balmer Huff. There is no obvious reason for the hilltop name except to wonder if Huff meant out of breath when you get to it, and pause at the trig point! Trig points, the small concrete pyramid surveying stations built in the 1930s, are largely

redundant due to aerial photography, but they remain useful landmarks.

The chalk road leads into Balmer, or as it was once known, Boromor, now a major farming station which has long forgotten its medieval past. There was a chapel: a tithe map of 1838 preserves the name Church Laine: and there are some ancient flint walls. But even Falmer Church Register which dates from 1640, makes no mention of its neighbour and so we have no idea what happened to the chapel, or indeed when.

Medieval ownership of lands at Balmer was split between the Priory of Lewes and the Earls of Arundel; apart from sums raised in taxation (£2 2s from the joint Falmer/Balmer manors in 1327) we know little about them except that poaching was a problem. Thomas Cromwell took it all over in

1538 but today, Brighton and Hove Borough Council offers more democratic and beneficent rule.

In the attractive confusion of a modern working farm, our chalk path becomes a modern asphalt road which takes us down the steep wooded slope back to the turnpike road and our car.

Or for walks even closer to home, why not slot into the **Brighton and Hove Healthwalks**?

Graded led walks every day of the week: bus links, some are wheel chair or buggy friendly, most have a café and toilet facilities, dogs on leads welcome.

Phone **292564**, pick up a booklet from tourist information or King's House or go to **www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwalks** and get going.



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S Michael & All Angels' news



Christmass Services

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER

6pm TRADITIONAL CAROL SERVICE by candlelight. Followed by mince pies and mulled wine/soft drinks

CHRISTMASS EVE

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER

5pm CRIB SERVICE for young children (around 30 minutes)

11.30pm MIDNIGHT MASS by candlelight with carols and blessing of the crib

CHRISTMASS DAY

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER

8am LOW MASS of the Dawn

10.30am SUNG MASS of the Day for all ages with carols and visit to the crib

Social events in 2010

Saturday 23 January 2010 7.30pm

'Burns Night' in the Parish Hall. Dinner and Entertainment

Tuesday 16 February 2010 7.30pm

'Pancake Party' and Silent Auction at the Vicarage

For further information about the above events, please contact the Parish Office on 822284.

St Nicholas' news



LUNCHTIME RECITALS

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THE CITY
Wednesdays 12.30-1pm Admission free!

December

2	Jennifer Carter and Kate Walter	Piano and Flute
9	Nick Andrews (Bach's sixth Partita)	Piano
16	The Queene's Concert	Baroque Chamber Music
23	NO RECITAL	
30	NO RECITAL	
January 2010		
6	Audrey Edwards/Muriel Hart	Soprano/Piano
13	Nicola Grunberg and Judith Maddison	Piano Duets
20	Cornelius Gorman	Natural music/flute/gongs
27	James Shenton and Glen Capra	Violin/Piano

February

3	Jacque Currie	Mezzo Soprano
10	Norman Armstrong	Baritone
17	Sue Mileham	Soprano
24	Stephen Carroll Turner	Piano

To be considered for a lunchtime recital or evening concert at St Nicholas', please contact the Parish Office 07746 198026 or www.stnicholasbrighton.org.uk

Saturday 12 December 2-4pm Spectacular Christmas Market in St. Nick's

With 20 festive stalls – Christmas sweets, puddings, cookies, pickles, jams and cakes, a Bran Tub, St Nick's Grotto, stocking fillers, Christmas bags, pots, stockings and decorations, St Nick's Christmas T-shirts, Christmas cards, toys and balloons. Sausages, turkey burgers, mince pies, mulled wine, real ale. Carollers, hand bells and lots of children's activities: Christmas face painting, how to make presents and sing carols. Outside a brazier and the smell of chestnuts as the afternoon darkens and a Christmas chill descends



12

Sunday 29 November 6.30pm

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE by candlelight with Brighton Chamber Choir Director: Jane Money, Organist: Jonathan Leigh and Soloist: Robert Chavner

Saturday 5 December 11.30am

SAINT NICHOLAS DAY

Patronal Festival Eucharist with City's Mayor and Mayoress present

Friday 11 December 7.30pm

KANTANTI ENSEMBLE SING HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Tickets in advance £10.50 (£9) call 474979 or email tickets@kantanti.com on the door £12 (£10.50)

Wednesday 16 December 6pm/6.30pm

BRIGHTON FESTIVAL FRIENDS CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Doors open 6pm Concert 6.30pm Tickets free to Festival Friends, extra tickets £3.50 in advance, £5 on the door. *t* 260827

Friday, 18 December 7.30pm

RAINBOW CHORUS CONCERT

Tickets at door £8 (£5)

Saturday 19 December 5pm

Join 'Brighton Festival Friends of Churches' singing **Carols around the city** starting at St Nicholas'. Refreshments afterwards at Dorset Gardens Methodist Church.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 20 December 6.30pm

St Nicholas' Carol Service Nine Lessons and Carols

Thursday 24 December Christmas Eve

4pm and 6pm Crib Services for parents and children

11pm Vigil with Advent Carols

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Friday 25 December Christmas Day

8am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Christmas Day Family Eucharist

Sunday 3 January 2010

Feast of the Epiphany

8am Holy Eucharist

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Conserving the fabric of Brighton's Victorian Churches

Our review in CMPCAnews 17 of Thomas Cocks's *Brighton Churches* highlights the problems of conserving the fabric of Brighton's Victorian Churches including S Michael's and St Nicholas. The new chairs of the Friends of each of these churches describe their vision for the role of the Friends and what they hope to achieve.

Restoration at S Michael's

Have you marvelled at the interior of Saint Michael's when attending a Brighton Festival or CMP Festival event? Or been disturbed by the rattling of the William Morris windows in a gale? This magnificent interior is in urgent need of repair and restoration. A re-launch party will take place at St Michael's church on Tuesday 6 January 2010 from 6.30pm to mark the renewal of the organisation behind the Friends of St Michael's. Under the chairmanship of local resident, **John Cox**, the newly constituted committee aims to support the continuing programme of restoration of the fabric, furnishings and fittings of the church and to continue to develop the involvement of the church with local culture and community. The

magnificent Pre-Raphaelite stained glass is widely known but there are many other works in need of repair, maintenance and conservation. Some are hidden away because of lack of suitable display space, others are visible, like the paintings on paper attached directly to the brickwork of the old church and now peeling off. It is almost certain that a local artist painted these as her contribution to the adornment of the new church and to serve her community. This 19th century local response to the newly built church reflects the motivation underpinning the re-launch of the Friends today. The Friends plan to hold a number of events to help raise funds for a programme of prioritised restoration projects.



The first dates for your 2010 diary are:
Tuesday 6 January – Re-launch party
Friday 25 June – Dinner
October – Annual lecture
If you'd like to be involved or kept informed, please leave your details with our liaison officer:
01273 822284 or e-mail
parishoffice@saintmichaelsbrighton.org
and we will be in touch.

Making St Nick's shine even more brightly



funeral of the oldest man in the world, war hero Henry Allingham, at St Nicholas allowed the TV camera-men to track around the gleaming rood screen in televisual awe.

Now we have an even larger job. St Nick's is Brighton's oldest church, the mother church, the city centre church, the fishermen's church with a rich history and an extraordinary architectural heritage. We have two major and immediate tasks – the complete restoration of the Chancel and the restoration of the exterior

Richard Hall, local resident and new Chair of Friends of St Nick's, writes:

The Friends have been doing a great job raising money over the past years – enough to restore the historic 15th century Rood Screen, the Lady Chapel and the Thomas Kemp wall decorations at the west end of the church.

The authenticity and skill of the restoration work by Stig Evans and Greg Howarth won them and us a Sussex Heritage Trust Award – only one of two awards from many church entries throughout Sussex. A few weeks later the

stonework. What comes next are a succession of restorations and improvements to showcase the church's history so St Nick's becomes a compelling destination must-see for visitors to Brighton.

Already the authoritative *501 Must-Visit Cities* says on its Brighton page '... don't miss St Nicholas Church the oldest surviving building in Brighton dating from around 1350 with a wonderful carved font' (It is, of course, much older than that). Our vision of achieving the future is by raising funds through mounting unique, popular,

pleasing and highly professional events that keep St Nick's at the centre of the City's map like the architectural and historic star it is.

Don't miss our Spectacular Christmas Market in St Nick's 12 December. If you'd like to become a Friend of St Nick's it costs just £10 a year or £80 for life membership: contact me at richard@hallogram.freemove.co.uk

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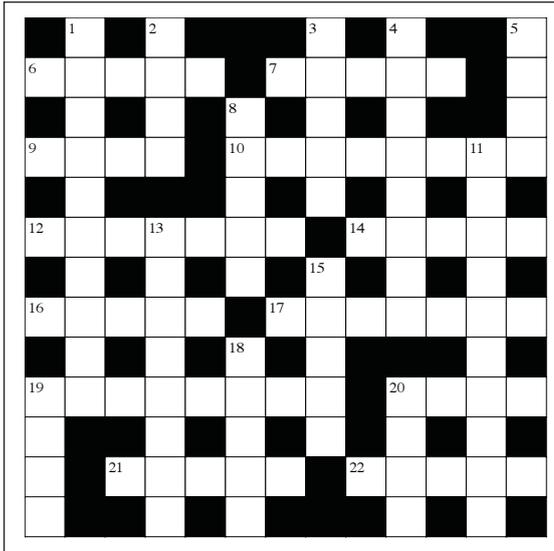
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CMPCA Crossword 006



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Deadline 18 January 2010 for
cmpca **ews** 19 (March–May 2010)

ACROSS

- 6. (and 7.) Local author and radio playwright (5,5)
- 7. (see 6.)
- 9. Crypt
- 10. Part of a telephone receiver
- 12. Fr. _____, Parish Priest of St. Nicholas
- 14. Astute
- 16. Viewpoint
- 17. Listed terrace off Dyke Road
- 19. Climbed
- 20. Respiratory organ
- 21. Adhere
- 22. West and Palace

DOWN

- 1. Musical instruments, as played by Sir Patrick Moore
- 2. Rebuke

- 3. Cornish city
- 4. Guess
- 5. ____ Dean Mohamed
- 8. Pekingese dogs
- 11. Holders
- 13. Capital of Malta
- 15. Chrissie _____, Pretenders vocalist
- 18. Decree
- 19. ____ Wilds, architect
- 20. Cut of meat

14



Congratulations to **Margaret Stack** who won a signed copy of *A Fortunate Life* by Paddy Ashdown courtesy of City Books for her correct entry drawn for Crossword 005 in our June 2009 issue.



PRIZE! The first correct entry drawn for Crossword 006 receives, courtesy of City Books a signed copy of *I'll tell me Ma* by **Brian Keenan**.

Write your name and address below and send your entry to **CMPCA Crossword, 20 Clifton Hill, BN1 3HQ to arrive by 4 February 2010**

NAME _____

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Nominations for 2010 AGM

Our fifth AGM takes place in late April 2010 when the four Honorary Officerships (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) will be up for election together with the Management Committee, which, including the officers, can total 14 members. For the current list of members, see page 15. For those interested in standing, job descriptions for the four officerships, a list of duties and responsibilities for Management Committee members and nomination forms are available from the Secretary and the website www.cmpca.co.uk. The nominee, proposer and seconder must all be full members of the CMPCA (ie resident in the streets on page 15) and all three must sign the nomination form.

Nominations must be submitted on the appropriate forms to the Secretary, CMPCA, 21 Clifton Hill by Tuesday 23 March. Enquiries: cmpca.info@googlemail.com or 07816 403099. All nominations will be displayed on the website 14 days before the AGM.

The **CMPCA's** purpose, as stated in our constitution is to 'promote the benefit of the inhabitants . . . without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions by associating the local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and to improve the physical and economic conditions of life . . . and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.'

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 Chairperson
Adam Jones
 Vice-Chair
John Riddington
 Treasurer
Peter Freeman
 Secretary
Philippa Sankey

Management Committee
 also includes Officers
Corinne Attwood
Tony Bailey
Richard Brown
Judy Bow
Jane Gray
Aidan Lunn
Pauline Messum
Steve Pavey
Nick von Tunzelmann

Newsletter and advertising
Philippa Sankey, Judy Bow, Ann Smith
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 e cmpca.advertising@googlemail.com
 t **07816 403099**
21 Clifton Hill BN1 3HQ
 Design **Teresa Dearlove** e t.dearlove@dsl.pipex.com
 Print **one digital**
 Webteam **John Riddington, Tony Bailey, Judy Bow**
www.cmpca.co.uk

The views expressed in *cmpcaneews* are those of contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official view of the CMPCA

Street Reps

Would you like to be a street rep? There are still some vacancies! For those whose details do not appear below please e cmpca.info@googlemail.com or t 07816 403099 and we will put you in touch or try www.cmpca.co.uk

Non-resident in street in red

Borough Street	Jo McCartney	Montpelier Terrace	Jane Gray
Church Street (Upper)	Shaun Kiddell	Montpelier Villas	Jane Osler
Clifton Hill	Carole Moorhouse	Norfolk Road	John Bristow
Clifton Place	John & Jenny Riddington	Norfolk Terrace	Peter Mullarky
Clifton Road	Pauline Messum	Powis Grove	Steve Crockett
Clifton Road (Homelees)	Michael Hales	Powis Square	Ann Smith
Clifton Terrace	Morham White	Powis Road	Brian Izzard
Crown Gardens	Helen Smedley	Powis Villas	Roger Wardle
Crown Street		Regent Hill	
Dean Street		St Michael's Place	Liz Stewart & Roz Charters
Dyke Road (west side)	Bernard Howells	Spring Street	Steve Pavey
Denmark Terrace	Sadie Cook	Temple Gardens	
Hampton Place/Street	Arnold Rose	Temple Gdns (York Mansions)	Simon-Pierre Hedger-Cooper
Hampton Terrace	Richard Brown	Temple Street	Aidan Lunn
Marlborough St/Mews	Sue Paskins	Upper North Street	Richard Brown
Montpelier Crescent	Peter Freeman	Vernon Terrace	Ali Brownlie Bojang
Montpelier Road (Lower)	Margy Nixon	Victoria Place/Street	Peter Woodhead
Montpelier Road (Upper)		Victoria Road	Nick von Tunzelmann & Carol Dyhouse
Montpelier Road (Park Royal)		Vine Place	Dan Andrew & Malene Kastor
Montpelier Street	Bernard Dutton-Briant	Wykeham Terrace	Michael Fisher
Montpelier Place	John Warmington		

>>>> Summary records of **CMPCA meetings**

Wednesday 16 September 2009
City Centre access to primary schools

1 PCSO Bobbi King reported local crime statistics to be low except for street drinking **2 Gil Sweetenham** (Assistant Director for Schools, Children and Young Persons' Trust) described the Council's planning for primary school admissions (see p3) **3 MC Report:** Council planners producing draft planning brief for redeveloping the former RAH site – local people to be consulted. CMPFestival successful both artistically and financially. **4 AOB:** Powis Square Association had concerns over planned new house in Powis Road.
 12 attended

Full minutes available at www.cmpca.co.uk

Wednesday 18 November 2009
Growing Your Own in Small Spaces

1 Police Report: 24 hour security reportedly in place at former RAH site to deter illegal use. Police operation to stop begging on Western Rd resulted in five arrests. Discussions held with First Base concerning activity outside centre. Crime figures reduced over last three months **2 Grow your own in small spaces:** presentations by **Ann Baldrige (Harvest Brighton and Hove), Karina Rodriguez Villarreal and Jo McCartney** (see p4) **3 MC Report** The Vice-Chair reported grant of £6760 awarded by National Lottery for new community website. Decision on planning brief for former RAH site expected 26 January.
 29 attended

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