



# NEIGHBOURHOOD BRIEFING

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE HOVE STATION QUARTER

ISSUE No.5 - DECEMBER 2024

## From Neighbourhood Plan to Hove Station Neighbourhood Quarter

The community-led Hove Station Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was finally completed last Spring, when the Council brought the Plan into legal force after the Referendum in which all 9,599 residents on the electoral register in the NP Area were eligible to vote. In a turnout of 15.13 %, 1,348 voted Yes (93%) and 102 (7%) voted No.

This hugely positive outcome gave the Forum a democratic mandate to continue working with local residents and businesses to secure the delivery of the community vision of an integrated and inclusive Hove Station Quarter (HSQ) which straddles the railway line.

This means campaigning to ensure that both the Council and landowners/developers take full account of long established community priorities including improving connectivity over and under the railway line, dealing with rat running, providing affordable social rented housing, virtually car free mixed use developments (as pioneered at Hove Gardens), and systematic street tree planting linked to traffic calmed streets and improved local parks

As guest speaker at our 2024 AGM, the Leader of the Council, Bella Sankey expressed full support for the development of the Hove Station Quarter in line with these community priorities.

**This Newsletter reviews 2024, sets out prospects for 2025, and provides end of year news items.**



## CHAIR'S REPORT - HOVE STATION QUARTER RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

by Mike Gibson

This is the time of year to reflect on the year now coming to an end and review prospects for 2025 and beyond. Such reflection must start with thanks to our members for the massive effort they put in to an intensive Vote YES campaign in the run-up to the Referendum. Forum volunteers produced and hand delivered 3,500 copies of a mid-January Newsletter and 3,500 'reminder flyers' (together with street posters) in early February - all backed up by an article in the Hovarian, the publication of a Neighbourhood Plan Summary on our website, and social media posts.

The period since the Referendum has been one of transition in the Forum's work - a shift of emphasis from the complex, legalistic process of plan-making to campaigning for the implementation of our Neighbourhood Plan Polices.

In broad terms, it makes sense to see the redevelopment to date of the underused brownfield sites in our area as the first stage in the emergence of the Hove Station Quarter, marked by the arrival of hundreds of new neighbours. The fully occupied Hove Gardens apartments south of the railway now provide homes for some 350 private tenants. North of railway the former railway goods yard is now the MODA Hove Central Neighbourhood with over 500 residents, which will rise to 1200 plus when all the newly constructed flats are fully tenanted.

Thus it will be vital next year to engage with our new neighbours to enable them to identify with and participate in the ongoing development of the HSQ. This will mean improving our social media presence and website, together with delivering a quarterly Newsletter, neighbourhood workshops and occasional high profile public meetings.

Next year will see the onset of the second stage in the emergence of the HSQ. North of the railway, the redevelopment pipeline will deliver some 148 Goldstone Apartments for sale on the Newtown Road site of the former Peugeot Garage. The high rise blocks will be

clustered around a small pocket park with a new café, adding to the adjacent 63 owner-occupied properties which replaced the long derelict Chrome Works.

Thus far, the redevelopment north of the railway has delivered homes for private tenants and owner occupiers with only 10% of affordable units, however this imbalance will change substantially from next year onwards.

The planning approval for the newly constructed MODA Central Neighbourhood also permitted the redevelopment of the industrial estate to the north for supported homes for elderly owner occupiers. But as the result of a recent deal between MODA, Hyde Housing Association and the Council, next year will see the beginning of the redevelopment of this site wholly for affordable housing – a planning application will be submitted in February.

This project will deliver 346 affordable homes - 183 Social Rented Units (Council Housing) and 123 Hyde shared ownership units. As such it will make a major contribution to the implementation NP housing policies.

South of the railway, the redevelopment of the Denmark Villas sorting office will start next year. Patcham residents' objections to the relocation of the city's Post Office facilities were finally quashed by the new Secretary of State Angela Rayner in September. A planning application will be submitted early next year for a housing-led, mixed use redevelopment. In accordance with NP policies the Forum's comments will focus on the need to restrict housing to 9 storeys and the provision of publicly accessible green space.

In contrast, the timing of the regeneration of the balance of the NP area south of the railway is far from certain. The ongoing redevelopment of the Brighton Bus Company's Conway Street offices and garage site west of Fonthill Road will be completed next year - eventually to be followed by the demolition of

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the run down garage east of Fonthill Road and its temporary use for open air bus parking. The submission of the planning application for the final Hove Gardens block of flats (currently used for parking) has been put on hold.

Last year the new Council established a joint urban design process involving landowners, i.e. the council itself, Matsim, the bus company and Network Rail, all tasked with developing proposals for an integrated long term redevelopment of the Conway Street area, in line with the City Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies.

At our AGM, Councillor Bella Sankey revealed that this working arrangement had collapsed and needed reviving. But she acknowledged the value of our experience of working in the community's interest with developers and fully accepted the need for an early input from the Forum when this work eventually moves forward. The NP has earned us a seat at the policy table!

Overall, regeneration of our area both north and south of the railway is set to continue through 2025 and well beyond. The longer this process goes on the more urgent becomes the need for the radical improvement of north-south connectivity - over and under the railway - in ways which make journeys within and through the evolving HSQ safer and more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists.

This clearly needs investment to secure a sustainable improvement of the existing footbridge, a second footbridge from MODA Central to the station car park to the footbridge, and traffic management and lighting measures to improve the pedestrian hostile Fonthill Road tunnel under the railway. A key source of this investment will be developer funding through S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy. Planning law requires that 25% of the many millions of funding that will eventually accrue from continuing regeneration of the Neighbourhood Plan area must contribute to the development of the HSQ - this is the incentive for sustained campaigning

Next year the Council will develop a new City Plan 41 and a new Local Transport Plan 5. The Forum is already engaged in these strategic planning processes to make sure that they make provision for the continued development of the HSQ as envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan

Finally, as the Forum gears up to engage in the second stage of the development of the HSQ, if you would like to explore the possibility of contributing to our work, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or the Forum Vice-Chair Carmen Appich by email and we will be very happy to have a chat.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Footbridge campaign - action at last!

In recent weeks the graffiti has been removed and work has begun replacing the steps on the north side of the bridge made essential by ongoing decay. But at the beginning of December a newly painted west facing panel was blown on to the footway - fortunately in the early hours. The high wind and perhaps frustrated pedestrians removed the tape which was used to temporarily close the bridge, but the panel was nailed back in place by mid-morning.

This incident evoked memories of a section of the roof being blown off some two years ago, and underlines the need for the Council and Network Rail to get their act together and move from increasingly expensive short term measures to deal with dangerous deterioration, by delivering a sustainable upgrade of the Grade 2 listed historic bridge. Cllr Trevor Muten, cabinet member for Transport and Goldsmid ward councillor recently assured HSNF that high level negotiations are now finally underway... watch this space.

### Developer contributions finally revealed by Council

Our campaign to get the Neighbourhood Portion (25%) of developer contributions from projects in the Neighbourhood Plan Area invested locally will be much better informed and more effective next year. Until now, information on which development projects delivered how much funding, where it is spent and who decides has not been at all transparent. Stung by ongoing criticism of an inherited officer-led system that resulted in an alleged £100m of S106 contributions sitting unspent in Council coffers, the new administration has developed and published its Developer Contributions Database. This is a key component of a major innovation called the Brighton and Hove Public Facing Module powered by EXCACOM. Data is now available by ward on S106 and CIL dashboards, along with a massively improved planning application lookup facility. However, the NP Area includes parts of several wards so HSNF has secured a commitment from the new City Planning Officer, Nicola Hurley, to tweak this system to provide data for the NP Area. In the meantime it is well worth dipping into the Council's Database at <https://pfm.exacom.co.uk/brightonhove/index.php>

### On-street tree planting

A key Neighbourhood Plan policy is the planting of one tree for each new housing unit in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Forum is supporting the development of Hove Civic Society's community-led planting pilot scheme in the Poets Corner, which if successful could be scaled up east of Sackville Road. This potentially major contribution to greening-up HSQ has already secured commitment from residents in several streets and is part of the HSQ bid for MODA S106 funding.

### Highway junction improvements

At an HSNF public meeting a year ago, Cllr Trevor Muten committed to substantially improving community engagement in the design and development of improved road junctions, and in projects to minimise rat running through the HSQ. The news is that he has made a good start. Details of a revised design for the notorious Fonthill Road - Newtown Road junction were circulated to residents, and meetings have been held with Newtown Road and Fonthill Road/Goldstone Lane Action Groups.

The original design focused on a raised platform at the junction to slow down approaching vehicles and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The substantially revised scheme added the closure of the western arm of Newtown Road at Fonthill Road. This will considerably benefit Newtown Road residents by reducing east - west through traffic from The Drive, but some of this traffic may turn north up Fonthill Road at the junction. Moreover, through-traffic running north from the railway tunnel which now turns west at the junction may now simply carry on up to the Fonthill Road-Old Shoreham Road junction.

Cllr Muten has assured the Forum that this issue will be addressed by a wider HSQ traffic management plan that could restrict the north-south flow, to be prepared as part of the ongoing development of the 2025 BHCC Transport Plan 5.

### Public meetings 2025

The first will be with Cllr Gill Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Housing and New Homes, in early February.

Stay informed, see:

[www.HoveStationForum.co.uk](http://www.HoveStationForum.co.uk)  
our **NextDoor** page and **Facebook**



We wish everyone a very Happy Holiday and all the best for 2025