



# The Round Hill Reporter

March 2023 Issue 90

See all issues of *The Reporter* and much more on [www.roundhill.org.uk](http://www.roundhill.org.uk). Contact RHS Committee: [roundhillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:roundhillsociety@gmail.com)

## ADVENT WINDOW DISPLAY WINNER!



We loved seeing your advent window displays in December! The winner, voted for by the RHS Committee, was 4 Princes Road. It was both aesthetically pleasing and made from recycled materials.



Congratulations! To claim your prize of vouchers for the Roundhill pub, please email [roundhillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:roundhillsociety@gmail.com)

## ROUND HILL DEFIBRILLATOR NEWS UPDATE!



Just two days after launching our campaign to cover the cost of a defibrillator and installation, we achieved our fundraising target of £2,000! Special thanks to local resident Gilly Smith, who donated generously in memory of her late husband, and Stuart Chapman.

At our request, the new managers of the Roundhill pub, Nathan and Adam, got permission from their brewery as the property landlord to house the defibrillator on an exterior wall of the pub. This will ensure 24/7 public access.

Discussions are currently ongoing with the British Heart Foundation, the Sussex Heart Trust, and paramedics over the purchase of a defibrillator and cabinet, and provision of community training.

If you're a qualified electrician and you'd like to volunteer time to help us with the installation, please let us know via email today!

**Dominic Furlong**  
[dominicfurlong@gmail.com](mailto:dominicfurlong@gmail.com)





## FINDING A HOME - THEN AND NOW

In 1983, I was earning £5300 pa at Brighton Polytechnic, and was able to get a mortgage to buy my house on Upper Lewes Road for £23,000 - between 4 and 5 times my salary. Today the house is maybe worth half a million pounds, and the average Research Assistant might earn £30k, making the house worth 17x their salary - simply unaffordable. The deposit needed on half a million would be huge. I had to find under £1200 - still difficult, but achievable.

A year later we needed to tackle damp in the ground floor walls, and replace the floor in the bathroom. We approached the council and received a grant for several thousands to help with the work!

Last week I met a Brighton-born chap, brought up in a council house in Hollingbury. He used to be a carpenter, working on the original American Express building on Edward Street in the mid 70s.

At that time, he heard about a council scheme to help locals with steady work buy their first home. It was a 100% council mortgage, with an interest rate significantly lower than the usual building society rate, at 6%. He had to complete some paperwork, get proof of his employment, hand over one pound in cash, and a week later was told by letter he could go out and find a house. He bought one in the North Laine for £7000. He thought that without the council mortgage he would never have owned his home.

Incidentally, before either of us bought a home we had rented. The carpenter's family's council house had a rent set to recover the building cost over 20 years or so, and create a pot for repairs and maintenance. My private rented flat had the maximum rent set by the town's Rent Officer, who had the power to decide on the 'fair rent', which could not be exceeded by the landlord.

All these things have mainly come about through political decisions.



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## COUNT THE TOADS!



If you're on the cat creep after dark, don't be surprised if you see someone with a torch apparently staring at the stairs. From February to April, a group of local enthusiasts counts toads and newts as they migrate from one side of the cat creep to the other to mate.

The cat creep is registered with the charity Froglife as an official toad crossing route. Watch out for our amphibian neighbours as you're going up or down the stairs, especially at night and the weather is wet. That's when they're most likely to be out and are harder to see. Use your phone or a torch to avoid stepping on them.

Want to become an official toad counter next year? Email **Paolo Oprandi**:

[pa](mailto:paolo@froglife.org.uk)



## GIFT FOR JAN CURRY



Jan Curry, resident of Roundhill for 66 years, is moving on to pastures new. Jan so kindly shared her award-winning garden with the locals, often inviting people to visit. Jan has always been a pillar of the community and will be greatly missed.

To thank Jan for her contributions to the community over the years, the RHS Committee asked local artist, Zara Slattery, to create a piece of artwork.

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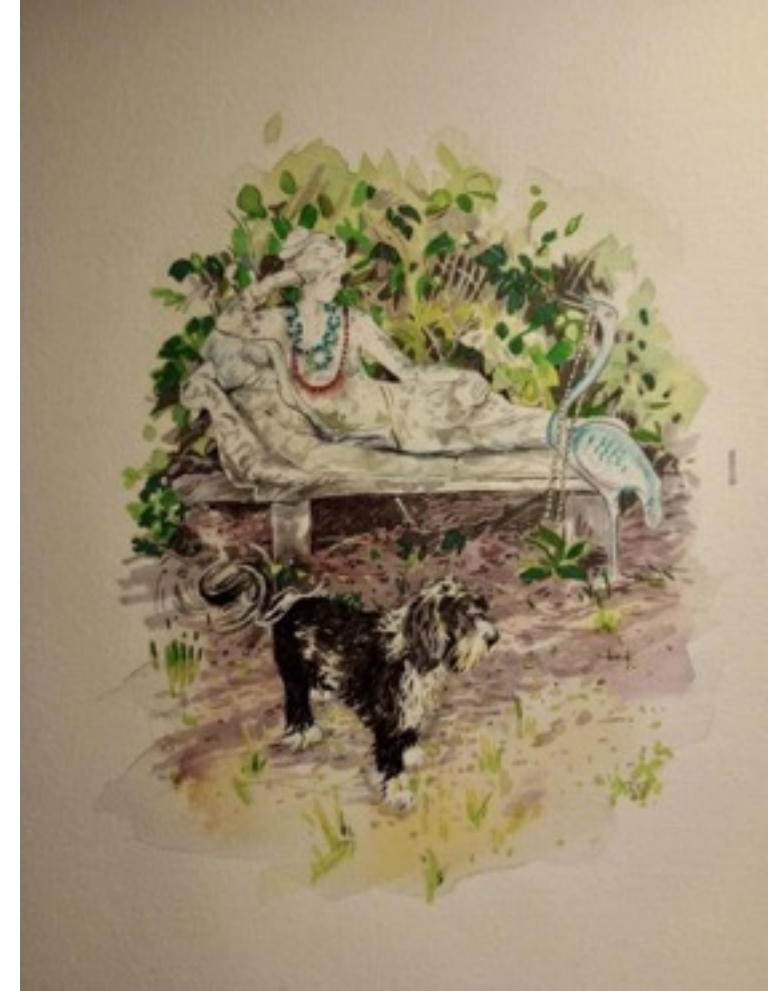
20-26 Round Hill Street, Brighton BN2 3RG

[www.unit4brighton.co.uk](http://www.unit4brighton.co.uk)

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Zara depicted Jan's beloved dog Benjie in front of one of Jan's favourite garden statues (which she is leaving behind).

Thank you for being a great neighbour, Jan!



## SYLVAN HALL WILDFLOWER MEADOW



Before he passed away last year, the chairman of Sylvan Hall Residents' Association, Barry Hughes, put a lot of energy into diversifying the piece of land that forms the eastern end of Sylvan Hall Estate. This is the area where Wakefield Road meets Princes Crescent.

Working with the Round Hill Society, we planted a mixed species hedgerow around the edge of the plot, some of which remains. Barry also arranged to have a selection of meadow plants inserted into the grass, and finally had a range of fruit trees planted.

Maintenance has always been difficult. The meadow needs an annual autumn mowing, followed by raking and removal of the cuttings. This keeps down the vigour of the grasses and helps the meadow species expand. The fruit trees and hedgerow need some seasonal work to foster their development. A simple management scheme will help keep the area looking cared for and fend off any critical comments from neighbours and passers-by.



Fruit tree planting (above) and Coldean Lane meadow and noticeboard (below).



On Coldean Lane a new noticeboard has been erected to celebrate a grass verge that residents and the council have changed to a meadow over the last five years.

It would be great if Sylvan Hall's wildlife area could be equally recognised. If you'd like to volunteer, please get in touch: [rob.stephenson51@gmail.com](mailto:rob.stephenson51@gmail.com)

**Rob Stephenson**

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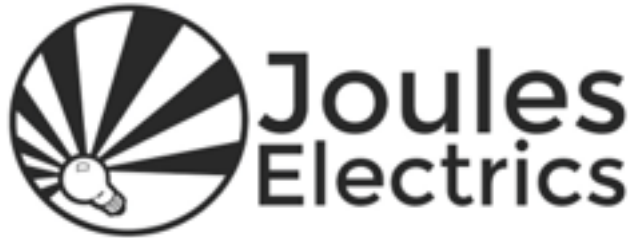
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**[roundhillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:roundhillsociety@gmail.com)**  
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## WHAT IS THE “RCACS” AND HOW CAN IT HELP US?



The "Round Hill Conservation Area Character Statement" (RCACS) is an audit of the area and includes information which, amongst other things, helps with planning decisions. It consists of a definition of the special character of the area, spaces and vistas, materials used for construction, and a description of buildings.



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Any future planning application that harms one or more of the special characteristics defined by the RCACS should usually be refused. It is, therefore, vital that the Statement is clear on the area's special characteristics, comprehensive, up-to-date and reflects best practice.

Our current statement published by the Council in 2005 does not fully reflect the area's special characteristics. It contains a 'history of the area' summary and an assessment ('audit'). It does not meet best practice as defined by Historic England and lacks area-specific policies, a management plan, and design guidance.

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Resident Michael Doyle, a town planner and urban designer, has kindly offered to work on behalf of RHS to update the Statement to make it fit for purpose in 2023. This would then be offered up to the Council for consultation and adoption as 'Supplementary Planning Guidance'. The updated Statement will provide clarity for residents and the Council when making critical decisions that affect the neighbourhood.

The revised and updated Statement could potentially form the first few chapters of a future 'Neighbourhood Plan' for Round Hill - design, conservation, trees, open space, and public realm.

Given the recent interest in public realm enhancements and traffic calming, the revised Statement (the public realm and management plan chapters) would help build the case for investment in the public realm and enhancement of the conservation area.

This is an excellent example of how local residents can make a real difference to our community.



## THE FUTURE OF STREET PLAY

2022 was my first year running 'Street Play': a seasonally-themed event, where we close a street in the Round Hill area so local families can get together and kids can play.

These events have always been hugely popular, so I was delighted to bring them back following the pandemic. We had loads of fun! And learned a lot. One learning was to avoid school holidays, as lots of people are busy or away. Another was finding the most suitable road to close. We've always closed Mayo Road in the past, but the council brought in a new requirement to obtain approval from Mayo Court residents. Can we find a different low traffic road to make things easier?

Aside from timing and location, I'm thinking of the fun stuff for 2023! I'd like to appeal to a broader section of our community. For example, running table top sales, book swaps, coffee catch-ups, sing-alongs, or plant sales. I'd love to hear your ideas.

We always need more volunteers for these events. One of our events was cancelled last year due to low volunteer numbers. An important job is to marshal on the day. At our Halloween special (following the doughnut eating competition) a rogue driver drove through the barrier! That might not have happened if we'd had more marshals. Even just offering 30 minutes of your time would make a huge difference.

Let's bring the community together - it's not just about the kids 😊 Get in touch today to get involved!



## KIDS CORNER WORD SEARCH

Disney  
**FROZEN**

A	T	Y	N	W	I	V	B	F	I	Z	E	X	V	H
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X	N	K	E	S	L	Q	O	H	I	Z	S	N	I	N
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ANNA  
DUKE  
HANS  
KRISTOFF  
OLAF  
SNOW  
TROLLS



CLIMBER  
ELSA  
ICY  
MAGIC  
QUEEN  
SNOWMAN  
WESELTON



DISNEY  
FROZEN  
KINGDOM  
MOUNTAIN  
REINDEER  
SVEN  
WINTER

## ROUND HILL GREEN SPACES UPDATE



The Round Hill Green Spaces (RHGS) team is active throughout the year. And with spring just around the corner, the community should soon start to enjoy the flowers resulting from last autumn's planting.

Here's a short summary of what we've been doing since our last update:

- April 2022: Received £1,000 funding from our ward councillors, Pete West and Sue Shanks, towards a pocket park at the junction of Prince's Crescent and Ditchling Road
- May 2022: The annual RHGS Plant Sale raised £230 for the upkeep of the Round Hill community planters. Many thanks to all those who came along and those who donated plants and seedlings!
- June 2022: Received £200 from the council as part of the Jubilee celebrations to purchase new plants for the Round Hill planters
- September 2022: Planters refreshed with new soil and plants purchased from One Garden at Stanmer

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- January 2023: Submitted planning application for the bus stop pocket park. Technical discussions with council officers are currently ongoing. Brighton & Hove News ran a story on this, which you can read here: <https://bit.ly/pocketparkjan23>

If you want to get involved with the RHGS team, send me an email today!

**Dominic Furlong**  
dominicfurlong@gmail.com



## HANDY LOCAL CONTACTS

**Veolia waste plant smell, noise, dust:**  
Environment Agency, 0800 807060

**Illegal parking in the CPZ:**  
Report it on 0345 603 5469

**Student liaison officers:**  
Sussex - 01273 678220 or  
[housing@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:housing@sussex.ac.uk)  
Brighton - Andrew Keeffe,  
[communityrelations@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:communityrelations@brighton.ac.uk)

**Non-emergency police reporting:**  
Call 101 for non-urgent issues.  
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## CAROL SINGING SUCCESS



In December 2022, between bouts of torrential rain, a brave bunch of Round Hill Community singers ventured out to sing carols and raise money for charity. Thanks to their beautiful singing and the generosity of the Round Hill residents, they raised more than £300!

Steve Bustin did a great job of motivating the singers. All the proceeds were donated to Brighton Food Bank.

## FIND & CONTACT THE ROUND HILL SOCIETY COMMITTEE ONLINE

**Online:** [www.roundhill.org.uk](http://www.roundhill.org.uk)  
**Twitter:** @RoundhillSoc  
**Facebook:** Round Hill Society  
**Email:** [roundhillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:roundhillsociety@gmail.com)

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## ROUND HILL SOCIETY COMMITTEE

Reporter Co-Editor	Jamie Aitchison	<a href="mailto:jamieaitchison71@gmail.com">jamieaitchison71@gmail.com</a>
Reporter Co-Editor	Julia Valentine	<a href="mailto:julzenthefirst@gmail.com">julzenthefirst@gmail.com</a>
Co-Chair	Eva Wendler	<a href="mailto:wendler.eva@gmail.com">wendler.eva@gmail.com</a>
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Police Liaison	Christophe r Paul	<a href="mailto:christopherpaul@hotmail.co.uk">christopherpaul@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Special Projects	Dominic Furlong	<a href="mailto:dominicfurlong@gmail.com">dominicfurlong@gmail.com</a>

Want to get involved? If you see this message in time, come to our next meeting on 13th March, 7:30pm at the Roundhill pub. RSVP  
[roundhillsociety@gmail.com](mailto:roundhillsociety@gmail.com)