



26 August 2026

The Right Honourable Lord Bassam of Brighton, and
Councillor Jacob Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration.
Brighton and Hove City Council
By Email

Dear Steve and Jacob,

First of all, thank you for inviting me to the launch of your Seafront Prospectus.¹ I was sadly unable to attend in person, but my staff found the event to be positive and very interesting, and I was very impressed with the prospectus itself.

I am now writing to follow up on this work from my perspective as MP for Brighton Pavilion, and to provide some highly constructive suggestions for actions for the board and the council to take in further developing these ideas.

Welcoming positive ideas for Brighton Pavilion

In my early discussions with Lord Bassam and council officers, following initial announcements from the Board that the early areas of focus would be: “on the area between the Palace Pier and the Marina”.² I was keen to push for areas within my constituency to be included in the early work of the Board.

I argued that the central section of seafront that lies within Brighton Pavilion is a keystone for, and gateway to, Brighton and Hove a whole for visitors and has many areas that need support and regeneration. I also noted that a longer-term vision and wider prospectus of ideas that included this central core would have more impact, and would generate more confidence from government, the new strategic authorities, and other potential investors.

Therefore, I am very glad to see this wider approach much more clearly being taken now, with the prospectus including projects at many different stages of development across the whole length of the seafront in the city.

The plans to expand and improve access to the Brighton Centre are much needed in a programme of this kind. And I was also very grateful for the firm pledge made by the council to preserve the Kings Road paddling pool, in response to questions and concerns I raised alongside local residents, and I was further encouraged to see this pledge reflected in the brochure.³

In particular, including Pool Valley as an area for attention is very welcome indeed. I believe it is important for the Valley Gardens project – which is now so close to completion – not to be the end of the ambitions we have for this part of the seafront. I have been working with traders in this area for some time to try to tackle the continuing challenges they face



following the fire and subsequent demolition at the Royal Albion hotel site, and also the relocation of the coach station. I am very glad to see that feasibility work is now planned by the Board and I have included proposals below for next steps that involve Pool Valley traders and transport users in developing ideas further.

Next steps for developing projects in these areas

In the introduction to the prospectus, Lord Bassam says: “The Seafront Development Board invite partners to work with us to help realise this ambition and deliver a world class waterfront for Brighton & Hove,” and I believe that, in response to this, it is very important future plans are developed alongside residents and existing local businesses, and not primarily just potential investors.

Community-led ideas, co-production and meanwhile uses

An approach which prioritised community-led planning and co-production is not only in line with our city’s values of inclusion and transparency, but is also the best approach to ensure community support throughout the planning and development process in future, and to minimise delays in taking action.

This approach can also result in creative, community-led ideas for temporary projects in spaces earmarked for development, as well as meanwhile uses for buildings and structures. In my role as MP, I meet with a wide range of local organisations, charities and communities, as well as national groups who have created and curated many meanwhile spaces in London and elsewhere, who I would be happy to put you in touch with.

I also believe it is vital that any feasibility work around Pool Valley is co-produced with the existing traders in the area, who have kept this part of Brighton going through the most severe challenges, and deserve to be at the forefront of making new plans. It is crucial to note that, in addition to the longer-term focus and ambitions for Pool Valley, I remain very concerned about the present challenges for the businesses, and I will continue to work with them to seek urgent council support for them.

In addition, I have met recently with Brighton Buswatch, and this organisation’s insights into the details of the needs of bus and coach transport users and providers will also be important to seek and include.

I also urge you to enhance the links the Board is making with other local grassroots business groups (for example the excellent Music Venues Alliance Brighton) and a range of other diverse community organisations and representatives (for example the Older People’s Council, Possability People, and the organisations based at BMECP Centre).

A formal Statement of Community Involvement and enhanced transparency

In my past work on regeneration and planning, I have found that one of the best ways to build trust from the community, and to ensure consistent approaches to community involvement



through the lifespan of long-term projects, is to publish a formal Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This ideally involves working with community groups and residents to develop a set of pledges and commitments to truly involve the community in all stages of development planning, delivery and evaluation.

I appreciate that the work of the Board does not fall under the laws which make this kind of statement a statutory requirement,⁴ but strongly urge you to consider this as an early next step in pushing forward the work of the Board on these projects.

A good quality SCI should also contain commitments to provide transparency and scrutiny around the interaction of the Board with other stakeholders, including developers and potential investors. As an MP, I publish a quarterly log of all my official meetings with campaigners, lobbyists and businesses in my role (as I did when I was an Assembly Member in London before this).⁵ I believe this format would be a good model for all members of the Board to follow as part of building trust and demonstrating openness.

Including Brighton Old Town as a further regeneration area

Both myself and my predecessor, Caroline Lucas, have been acutely aware that the wider area of Brighton Old Town between the Lanes and the seafront is also in need of strategic planning and a long-term vision, and I believe this area needs to be included in the work of the Board in future.

This would be a highly strategic intervention, which could not only help bring together the range of projects taking place to regenerate key sites – for example on Middle Street alone, the Hippodrome, the primary school and the Synagogue – into a strategic project that could help attract investment and funding, but could also involve the wider community in planning for sustainable restoration and renewal of this important historic area.

I am aware that Matsim, which has been doing excellent work to restore the Hippodrome, already has representation on the Board and I hope that this idea would have strong support for this reason. And again, as I am already in touch with many residents, businesses and stakeholders in this area, I would be very happy to help convene meetings or workshops to generate ideas and further work, or to help the Board to do the same.

Cross-party working

In the past, developments on the seafront have taken shape over several years, spanning council administrations and even governments. These have included the seafront arches and i360, Hove Beach Park and Shelter Hall.

We also have an upcoming period of transition into a new council area, where a shadow administration will work alongside the legacy administration, and the introduction of a new layer of local government in the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority. In all of these changes I am urging everyone involved to maximise the level of cross-party involvement and



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communication about projects and decisions, and I stand ready to help with this approach in any way I can.

For example, I was very happy recently to lend my support to the Kings Road arches project in the council's successful bid for Major Road Network funding, and I would be enthusiastic to provide similar support to projects that affect my constituents in future too.⁶

I hope you will both respond positively to these ideas and my offers of help and support, and I look forward to hearing from you about your plans for next steps towards this important vision for the future of our city.

Yours sincerely,

Siân Berry MP
Green Party, Brighton Pavilion

¹ Brighton & Hove Seafront Prospectus. Brighton & Hove City Council, June 2026 <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/city-regeneration/major-developments/brighton-hove-seafront-prospectus>

² "While it's important that the board consider the seafront as a whole, the early focus will be on the area between the Palace Pier and the Marina," quote from press release. Brighton & Hove City Council, July 2025 <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2025/seafront-development-board-announced>

³ King's Road paddling pool in Brighton will be replaced, leader vows. Argus, March 2026 <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25949149.kings-road-paddling-pool-brighton-will-replaced-leader-vows/>

⁴ Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and associated guidance <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/18>

⁵ Official meetings disclosure log. Siân Berry MP, last updated July 2026 <https://www.sianberry.org.uk/official-meetings-disclosure-log/>

⁶ Major funding boost for the King's Road arches. Press release, Brighton & Hove City Council, July 2026 <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2026/major-funding-boost-kings-road-arches>