

GAVIN STEWART

Nominated as a result of Council recruitment process by Amanda Jones (Chair of Council) and Matt Pope (Deputy Chair of Council)

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Thank you for this opportunity to outline what I feel makes me a suitable candidate as Trustee for the Sussex Archaeological Society, Sussex Past.

First and foremost, I have a passion for heritage. Notwithstanding a first degree in Archaeology, from Glasgow University and latterly working as an employed field archaeologist for Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division I have also gained a Post Graduate Diploma from Sheffield University in Arts and Heritage Management, later practicing as the Assistant Curator at Horsham Museum. I genuinely care deeply about our shared local and national history, and would hope, if elected, to bring my experience outlined here, to the role.

I have firsthand knowledge of several of the 'Learning and Participation' criteria for the role. From a community engagement perspective, I have successfully run two Business Improvement District (BID) ballots. Engaging with over 500 businesses to write business plans which have then been taken to successful public vote. This has delivered a programme of projects which otherwise simply wouldn't exist, from city dressing and festive lighting schemes, to cleansing, marketing and security measures, all aimed at making Brighton city centre a better place to live, work and visit. In a heritage context, as Assistant Curator at Horsham Museum, I was also responsible for numerous major exhibitions and interpretation as well as running the 'Reminiscence' service.

As with any organisation in the charity and not-for-profit sector, financing and navigating funding opportunities is clearly key to survival. In this regard I have solid proven experience with the Brighton BID gaining over £2m worth of private investment over two, five-year cycles for Brighton city centre. (£4.7m in total have also been key in winning grant funding from the Arts Council to deliver a partnership programme of events alongside Brighton's ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme and Brighton BID.

Sussex Past is lucky enough to employ many very talented people across its many locations. All experts in their field or bringing significant expertise to their volunteering roles. I have been a volunteer myself in a heritage setting (Brighton Museum and Art Gallery), so appreciate the commitment and loyalty which is freely given. I have also been on the other side when managing over 60 volunteers on a daily basis at Horsham Museum. I understand both the love volunteers have for the heritage they care for, as well as the challenges inherent in managing large teams of unpaid staff.

As I've already mentioned, I'm currently CEO of the Brighton city centre Business Improvement District, a not-for-profit limited company, which, under the 2004 BID Legislation, requires full adherence to company law. As such, I have an excellent understanding of board governance, risk assessment, financial literacy and diversity awareness. I have been in this position since 2011. As well as this, my work with the Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership has seen my involvement in several Economic and Tourism Strategies over the years.

I also sit on a number of business groups, including:

- Chair of the Brighton & Hove Destination Experience Group
- Advisory Board Member for British BIDs
- Co-Chair of the UK Coastal BIDs Group
- CEO of Brilliant Brighton (the city's Business Improvement District)
- Executive Director for the Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership
- Brighton & Hove Business Crime Reduction Partnership Board Member
- Director Forbes Stewart Management Consultancy

I hope my breadth of experience feels like a good fit with the work of Sussex Past and I confer this statement to the membership for consideration to become a trustee.

Gavin Stewart