



University of Brighton

The Coastal Regeneration Research Centre, Hastings



Bringing education-led regeneration to Hastings – University of Brighton offers 25 courses to the Hastings community at its campus on Havelock Road.

“To generate new evidence to support and guide the regeneration of coastal areas, while raising the profile of the Hastings and Bexhill area”



Professor Peter Ambrose



Professor Andrew Church



Research Centre activity in Hastings and Bexhill

Recently academic staff have completed research in the following areas:

- Tourism, Culture and Creativity
- Debt in Greater Hollington
- Neighbourhood Management Partnerships

Introduction

The University of Brighton is committed to research activity that 'is applicable to professional and creative practices and to economic and social transformation'. Our values include engagement 'with the cultural, social and economic life of our localities, region and nation'.

The development of the Coastal Regeneration Research Centre is a result of rapidly expanding and innovative research activity that is supporting teaching and learning at the University Centre Hastings (UCH), the home of University of Brighton in Hastings.

Current university research projects based at University Centre Hastings examine key issues facing Hastings and Bexhill such as changing aspirations towards education, migration into Hastings, the role of the cultural and creative industries and sustainability in the urban regeneration process. There are now six University of Brighton research students undertaking research in Hastings and Bexhill, and staff connected with our Hastings campus have generated over £150,000 of funds to support research.

Our mission

- To work with local communities to identify research that is a local priority.
- Generate new evidence to support and guide the coastal regeneration process locally and elsewhere.
- Raise the profile of Hastings and Bexhill, as well as university education in the area, nationally and internationally.
- Contribute to the development of the Hastings Helpdesk, which supports local community groups and organisations in need of research support, advice and guidance.
- Raise the level and quality of research produced by staff affiliated with the University of Brighton in Hastings.

Our co-directors

Professor Peter Ambrose and Professor Andrew Church are the centre's co-directors who are also closely involved in the University of Brighton Community University Partnership Programme and also the South East Coastal Communities project supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Current research projects

Aspirations and education in the Ore Valley – led by Professor Yvonne Hillier

The Hastings and St Leonard's Strategic Partnership – Learning and Skills Group and the Community University Partnership Programme funded this project to examine how aspirations towards education can be raised in the Ore Valley. The project has just started, and will report in mid-2009.

Widening participation in Hastings and Bexhill – led by Dr Judith Watson

A grant has been awarded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England to assess approaches to widening participation in Hastings and Bexhill. This will be a key part of the centre's work in the next year and will be co-ordinated with the Ore Valley project above. The project will report in December 2009.

The impact of Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) expert advice on clients' mental health – led by Professor Peter Ambrose

The network of Citizens Advice Bureaux is interested in a project to assess the mental health changes following the delivery of expert advice to a sample of clients. The demonstration of positive changes might well assist in securing continuing funding for the Citizen's Advice Bureau. When initiated, the project will last nine to 12 months and will begin in 2009.

New research projects

Two new research students funded by the University of Brighton and Seaspaces will be based in Hastings over the next three years:

Social Dimensions of Sustainable Urban Regeneration in Hastings and Bexhill – Jo Orchard-Webb

This will investigate the relationship between new forms of urban governance and the social dimension in urban regeneration. It will examine the potential role of social sustainability in developing a new 'urban future', and how this will be affected by different types of governance.

Student Identities in New Spaces of Higher Education and Urban Regeneration – Mandy Curtis

This will involve a study of the experience of being a student amongst those in further and higher education in Hastings and Bexhill. It will examine how learning and student life in general contributes to individual and collective identities.

University of Brighton research students researching Hastings and Bexhill

Four research students based in the University of Brighton have undertaken their research in the local area on the following areas:

- Alberto Forte** – tourism and regeneration
- Katherine King** – mountain biking at Bedgebury
- Preena Shah** – gentrification in St Leonards
- Jenna Truder** – migration in Hastings Old Town.



Jo Orchard-Webb



Mandy Curtis



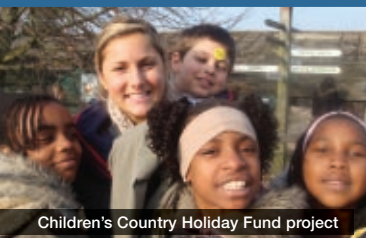
THE Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community'



Art to Access project



A community outreach project



Children's Country Holiday Fund project

University of Brighton Community University Partnership Programme and South East Coastal Communities

The University of Brighton Community University Partnership Programme aims to establish community-university engagement within the University of Brighton. We recently won the Times Higher Education (THE) Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community'

Since May 2008, this programme has run a research helpdesk for Hastings and Bexhill that has allowed over 30 community organisations in the area to utilise the expertise of senior researchers in the University. This facility was expanded as part of the South East Coastal Communities project funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

What does the Hastings Helpdesk offer?

This is as a user-friendly point of entry for local community, voluntary organisations and groups requiring research assistance. It works by linking local voluntary and community organisations to research specialists within the University of Brighton.

It also acts as a first point of contact for University of Brighton researchers who want to access specific community and voluntary organisations for research purposes. Organisations eligible for support include small community and voluntary groups and organisations with limited funds and organisations concerned with tackling social exclusion.

To find out more about the research centre or to access research support or to discuss an idea for a partnership project:

Contact **Polly Rodriguez**,
Community University Partnership
Programme Helpdesk Manager
at: p.v.rodriguez@brighton.ac.uk
or call **(01273) 643229** (Monday–
Wednesday) or mobile:
07936 909 828 (Thursday).