TASA visits the Regency Town House, 13 Brunswick Square, Hove, on 22 October 2026

It was a sunny and mild day. The sea glittered and the houses in Brunswick Square looked impressive. A group of TASA members managed to make their way to the Square by train, bus, car and foot despite cancelled trains and blocked roads. We came prepared to find out more about the restoration work on this special house, prepared for a 90 mins tour – and after 2.5 hrs, not including the lovely coffee, tea and cake, admitted rather exhausted that we had learned an awful lot about the area, building, Regency period and the people who used to live here.



Our tour leader, Nick Tyson, an historic architect and Honorary Secretary, explained the history of Brighton and Hove, how it developed and where the Regency houses fitted in. They were built as part of architect Charles Busby's 'Brunswick Estate' to accommodate wealthy Regency landowners who needed a place to partake in the social life of the Regent and friends, nearly 200 years ago.

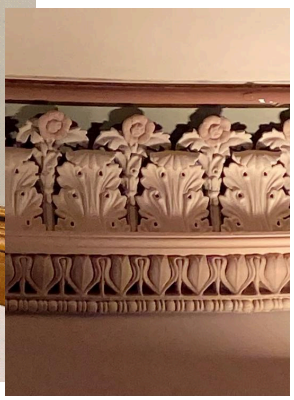


Built mostly from local materials (flint and lime) with Scandinavian oak used for the walls. I had certainly not realised that flint was formed from sea sponges that had their bodies partially filled with silicon. The lime came from the chalk. Cost at the time £3000.

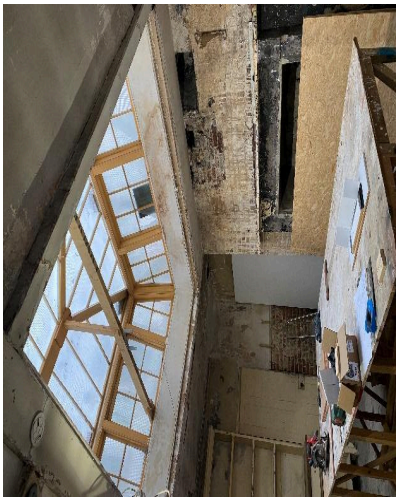
To discover the original colour of the walls, circles are made with varying grades of sandpaper to reveal different stages (see photo with Nick) or a minute cut was made to remove a section of wall to examine under the microscope.

Ceiling heights as well as the height of the skirting boards and the intricacy of the ceilings diminished with each floor, although the servants did have wooden planks rather than cold tiles under their bed!





We moved to no 10 to see a basement, at the moment still belonging to centre but this may have to be sold in order to hold on to the original stable block. Here were the kitchen, wine and silver cellars. The work done so far has concentrated on preservation of the building, before reinstalling the old kitchen, main rooms etc. The kitchen was flooded with natural light – partially so designed to save on gas and electricity used by the servants.



Although in size far removed from their country estates, one had to be seriously rich to fit into the Regency circle: curtains and furniture would be replaced with the up-to-date versions on a very regular basis. Keeping one's horses, carriages, tackle, hay in good order would cost a fortune. A minimum 8-9 live-in servants a necessity.

To get an idea what the servants' life was:

Diary of William Tayler, footman, 1837
Wise, Dorothy (edited); Saunders, Ann (notes)
Publisher: London: St. Marylebone Society **Year:** 1987

Synopsis: The personal diary of William Taylor, who was decided to keep a diary for a year to help him improve his writing. Illustrated with some of his own drawings.