

= Brighton Forum =

Citibase Brighton ( previously known as the The Brighton Forum by Topcentre ) is a complex of serviced offices on a prominent elevated position in the Round Hill area of Brighton , part of the English city of Brighton and Hove . The large Gothic Revival building , by two architect brothers from London , has had three greatly different uses since its construction at the edge of Brighton parish in 1854 : for its first 85 years , it trained Anglican schoolmistresses ; then it became a military base and records office ; and in 1988 it opened as a multipurpose business centre and office complex . The elaborate flint exterior is finely detailed in the Gothic style , especially around the windows . English Heritage has listed it at Grade II for its architectural and historical importance .

= = History = =

The ancient Sussex fishing village of Brighthelmston , which in the 18th and 19th centuries developed into the fashionable seaside resort of Brighton , lay within the Anglican Diocese of Chichester . In the 19th century , before the Elementary Education Act 1870 centralised the provision of primary @-@ level education and established school boards , most 5- to 12 @-@ year @-@ olds were taught ( if at all ) at schools founded and sponsored by charities , private benefactors or churches . There were many such church schools in Brighton : Anglican churches with their own schools included Christ Church , St Bartholomew 's , St John the Evangelist 's , St Mark 's , St Martin 's , St Paul 's and St Stephen 's .

The Diocese established an institute to train female schoolteachers for the Anglican schools in Brighton and the rest of Sussex in Black Lion Street in The Lanes ( the ancient heart of the town ) in April 1842 . This was done in association with the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church . More space was soon needed , so in 1854 it found a site on the west side of Ditchling Road on which to build a larger college . Ditchling Road , which ran across Ditchling Beacon to Ditchling village and then on to Cuckfield and eventually London , became a turnpike in 1770 and was thereafter one of the main north ? south routes into and out of Brighton . The chosen site was on the north side of Viaduct Road , which was built to link Ditchling and London Roads and which formed the northern edge of Brighton 's ecclesiastical parish and municipal borough until 1873 .

The architects William and Edward Habershon were commissioned to design the new building . They were based in London but worked extensively in Sussex ; buildings they designed separately or together in the county include St Leonards @-@ on @-@ Sea Congregational Church , St John the Baptist 's Church in Hove , St Helen 's Church in Ore and St Augustine 's Church at Scaynes Hill . They started work at the large corner site in 1854 , and the building was ready later that year . The local firm of Edmund Scott and F.T. Cawthorn extended the building to the rear ( north side ) in 1886 .

Teachers continued to be trained at the college ( officially called the Chichester Diocesan Training College for Schoolmistresses ) until 1939 . As World War II approached , the institution closed and the building was auctioned ; but before it could be sold , the Royal Engineers requisitioned it for their use during wartime . They used it as a base for their operations , then after the war it became their archives and records office . In 1987 , they moved out , and the vacant building was threatened with demolition . A local campaign helped it receive listed status , offering a degree of protection , and the building 's future was secured when it was bought and converted into a complex of serviced offices . It opened in November 1988 as the Brighton Business Centre , and was later renamed the Brighton Forum .

The Brighton Forum was listed at Grade II by English Heritage on 22 March 1988 . This status is given to " nationally important buildings of special interest " . As of February 2001 , it was one of 1 @,@ 124 Grade II @-@ listed buildings and structures , and 1 @,@ 218 listed buildings of all grades , in the city of Brighton and Hove .

= = Architecture = =

Brighton Forum is built on a high , prominent corner position , giving it good visibility from the west and south and long southward views . Knapped flint is the main building material , augmented by stone dressings and some yellow brickwork to the quoins . The roof is laid with tiles .

The two @-@ storey façade to Viaduct Road is E @-@ shaped and regular , with a symmetrical seven @-@ bay plan . The first and seventh bays project further forward than the centre ( fourth ) bay , which is formed by an elevated entrance porch . This has lancet windows on the sides , grouped under single hood moulds and with a string course . The doorway is under a segmental arch which is topped by a gable . The rest of the ground floor has larger lancets arranged in pairs and with a small trefoil above . The south @-@ facing walls have two pairs together , while on the inward @-@ facing walls of the first and seventh bays there are two sets of paired windows placed some distance apart . At first @-@ floor level , similar paired lancets and trefoils rise as gabled dormers above the roofline . The south walls of the first and seventh bays have prominent five @-@ light oriel windows , canted to form a 1 ? 3 ? 1 pattern of trefoil @-@ headed panes . These oriel windows are supported on ornate corbels . Above these at first @-@ floor level , and also above the entrance porch , there are three @-@ light trefoil @-@ headed windows set under a segmental arch @-@ shaped hood mould . Many of the windows on the south side have plate tracery .

The eastern face ( to Ditchling Road ) has eight bays and a carriage arch at the north end . The first four bays have trefoil @-@ headed lancet windows , while the next four have simpler straight @-@ headed windows . The carriage arch is segmental @-@ headed . The first floor has eight dormers . On the west side , the roof is cross @-@ gabled : the gables are parallel to , rather than perpendicular to , the ridge .