



# Stanmer House – a sleeping beauty awakes

Ten years ago I was asked to write an appeal brochure for Stanmer House. This fabulous, Grade 1 listed building was, at that time, in a very poor state of repair and I doubted then whether it could ever be returned to its former glory. I was wrong.

by Roger Lynn

Under its new owners, the beautiful Palladian style building has been transformed into a palace in which business and pleasure coexist. Set in the stunning grounds of Stanmer Park, the house has already become the South's premier function centre. You don't have to look far to find the source of the energy which seems to drive it. Ansell Henry, arguably the most popular man ever to have appeared on TV's 'The Apprentice', is the

Sales and Marketing Director of Cherrywood Events, who manage the facilities with Director Vincent Holland.

We met in the library. In spite of the wonderfully high ceiling, which is so characteristic of the age when the house was built, the log fire gives the room a very cosy atmosphere and I was reluctant to leave the deep armchair to start our tour. The first floor is where the contrast between the old and the new is most apparent. Here, the beautifully furnished rooms are equipped with all of the

electronic wizardry so essential in today's high tempo business world. WiFi, 60 inch plasma screens and video conferencing facilities are all standard. In size and layout, the rooms are flexible enough to accommodate numbers ranging from a discreet meeting of the Directors to the entire marketing department's annual bunfight.

Cherrywood Investments are rightly proud of the setting they have created and the facilities which are proving so popular with the South's business community. And the same might be

said of the Stanmer House members club which offers benefits like a hot desk facility, in-house IT support, a relaxing lounge area and, of course, discounted rates for all of the other Stanmer House functions.

The ground floor, which is open to the public and has its own elegant licensed bar, hosts social functions of every imaginable sort, including weddings, parties, dinners and gatherings, small and large. The beautifully proportioned rooms are lit by vast floor-to-ceiling windows and their walls are hung with gilded, ten foot mirrors which seem to double the already ample dimensions. Add the stylish marquee and manicured gardens and some very large numbers can have a good time here. Nor is there any lack of invention when it comes to partying. Last summer a party for a thousand people was entertained with its own funfair and guests arriving at last month's Mexican event were surprised to find that complex lighting in the grounds had transformed the entire frontage of the house into a gigantic Mexican flag.

In the 18th Century, Stanmer House was the centre of a thriving community. Its great rooms rang with laughter and were busy with the affairs of the day. How wonderful that it has come into its own again!

*Stanmer House, Stanmer Park, Brighton. Tel: 01273 680400*