



Regency Square Area Society

NEWSLETTER 58

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BUSES in PRESTON St

Brighton Council has prepared plans for radical changes to the way traffic moves around central Brighton.

The main aim of the plans is to keep traffic out of congested areas such as the Clock Tower and Western Road. The result will be a big increase in traffic flows on roads bordering the central area such as Montpelier Road and the Seafront.

In our own area, Preston Street would be most seriously affected; it would become a one way street with traffic going down to the seafront. More importantly, it would become a major bus route: all the buses which at present go along Western Road to Churchill Square would turn down Preston Street instead. They would then go along the Seafront and back up West Street to the Clock Tower.

The other major change would be at the bottom of Regency Square by the Regency Restaurant. New traffic lights would be installed to allow westbound traffic to turn right into the Square from the far side of the Seafront. Traffic flows past the end of Regency Square would increase considerably.

The Council are asking for people's views on the plans. The Society will be submitting its views once we have studied the plans in more detail. If you have any views which you would like the Society to take into account, please contact one of the Society officers (see "Society Contacts" for telephone numbers).

We have asked the Council for more detail about some aspects of the scheme. For example, will parking be further restricted in Preston Street; will the left turn onto the seafront from the Regency Square car park be removed?

More information will be published as soon as we get it. Meanwhile if you want details of the full scheme contact the town hall (tel 29801) and ask for a copy of their "Breeze into Brighton" leaflet.

Markets

The threat of a street market in Clarence Square seems to have receded. There is still talk of one in Western Road. We have asked the Council to clarify just what the position is.

THANKS

Many thanks to members Mr and Mrs Paul Collins of Tops Hotel who have once again provided a Christmas tree in Regency Square. Thanks also to those members who have helped the Society to meet the cost of electricity and insurance for the tree.

Congratulations

to Joyce Evans who was elected as a Director of the West Pier Trust at the AGM. Joyce is a resident of Regency Square and a member of our committee.

Society Contacts

Roger Hinton (Chairman) Tel 21794
Richard Pau (Secretary) Tel 26711
Harold Lawson (Treasurer) Tel 28203

"For Sale"

With so many small flats in the area it is not surprising that there are always estate agents boards on view. New regulations have placed restrictions on the size of boards. The purpose is to reduce their impact on the appearance of buildings.

On commercial property one board of up to 2 square metres is permitted. Where two boards project from the building in a V shape the maximum size of the two combined is 2.3 square metres and they must not project more than 1 metre.

For residential property the rules are stricter: one board of up to half a square metre is permitted and two boards in a V must not exceed 0.6 square metres.

However, buildings which contain several flats may have more than one board; in fact they can have one per flat.

"Sold" boards may only remain on a property for two weeks.

If you think an agent is breaking these rules contact the Planning Department (tel 29801) or let the Society know.

**Happy
Christmas!**

The Society committee wishes all members a happy Christmas and all the very best for the new year.



THE WEST PIER: Will Merlin's Magic Work ?

Merlin International is the company which has been invited to prepare proposals for the development of the West Pier. At the AGM of the West Pier Trust last month, these plans were unveiled.

They involve three main buildings. At the far end the theatre building will be re-constructed but at a higher level with an additional floor below, covering the entire area of the deck at the end of the Pier.

The Concert Hall in the centre will be restored as it stands.

At the shore end there will be a new large building covering almost the entire width of the Pier with a frontage set towards the back of the existing restored deck area. It will have two stories above the deck with a third in the central part and a central dome above that. There will also be a floor at lower promenade level. The appearance will be based on an original nineteenth century design for the theatre at the other end.

The kiosks and small shop buildings will be restored and replaced in roughly their original positions.

What will the buildings be used for ? The shore end will be a shopping centre. The example which is being quoted for comparison is Covent Garden. The developers want to create a "festival atmosphere" with open stalls dotted around and street performers. However we have been assured that it will be very different from the "market" that was there a few months ago.

The uses for the other buildings remains unspecified, but Merlin have said that they want to build the new large space at the far end to create a major tourist attraction of some kind such as a museum of the Victorian and Edwardian Seaside. They say this is necessary to ensure that people are attracted to walk along the pier.

Merlin's proposals are not so much for a restoration of the Pier as a re-development. Some members of the Trust have serious reservations about this; they believe that the Trust's aim should be to restore the Pier as it was.

The alternative view is that after many years of trying, the Trust has failed to raise grants large enough to carry out a true restoration. If there is to be a Pier opposite Regency Square it will have to involve a major re-development including a large building at the shore end.

This view was endorsed by the vast majority of Trust members who asked their Board to proceed with negotiations with Merlin. At a meeting last week, the Board made a definite decision to accept Merlin's proposals.

Merlin will now undertake detailed engineering and commercial studies to decide whether they really want to proceed.

As local residents, we too must decide whether we would prefer no Pier, or a newly developed Pier with a large building at the southern end of Regency Square. Nothing can happen until planning permission has been granted and it is at that stage that we can have our say.

We hope that there will be an opportunity for local people to meet representatives of Merlin and their architects at a public meeting when drawings and plans will be on display.

In the meantime, if you have any preliminary views, please let the chairman, Roger Hinton, know (tel 21794 or write to 39 Regency Square).

