

## NEWSLETTER 138 October 1998

### You ain't seen nothing yet !

The new Churchill Square is drawing huge crowds into this part of Brighton. But if the plans for the West Pier ever turn into reality - as now seems likely - the crowds could be even bigger.

Estimates have been made that the pier will need to attract two million visitors a year to be viable. It's worth comparing this with the Palace Pier which currently welcomes five million people a year.

Of course, many of the visitors to the West Pier will be people who were already in the town for shopping, conferences or whatever. But another major attraction right on our doorstep will certainly make this part of town even busier than it is now.

So we will need to look carefully at the West Pier planning application when it is published. The first plans will be for buildings on the lower esplanade below the pier: these plans are expected soon.

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### At the end of the rainbow ...

... there just might be some re-generation money for our three squares. But don't hold your breath! Originally all the work was due to have been finished during 1998. In fact, nothing has even started. The reason is simple - no money.

This month the Council is making a new bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). A decision is expected within six months.

If money is forthcoming from HLF it will only cover 75% of the cost. The rest still needs to be found locally. Our Society fund of almost £8,000 will contribute towards this and plans are in hand for further fund-raising (see below).

The bid is based on the new ideas for re-generation which have been developed by Chris Blandford Associates. These were the subject of a public consultation exercise earlier in the summer.

### Public Patience

This was in fact the second public consultation on the re-generation scheme. The first one related to a scheme which was unacceptable to the HLF. Showing admirable patience the public once again responded to the request for comments.

### Regency Square

39 people responded to questions about Regency Square. Most of the proposals were widely supported, including the restoration of heritage railings, a border of shrubs and a path inside the railings and a central grass area. Seating around the perimeter and bushes to screen the carpark vents were also welcomed.

The only controversial proposal seems to be the restriction of dog walking to the lowest third of the square. 46% support it but 36% object; the rest didn't mind or didn't reply.

Other comments included "No dogs at all" - "don't like the large grass area .. would prefer island beds of shrubs and tall grasses" - "more/larger bins for rubbish, enforce fines" - "architecture of the square is formal ... this should be reflected in the layout" - "car park vents too noisy" - "no ball games" - "private gardens for residents only"

### Russell Square

17 people commented on Russell Square. Plans for heritage railings, more formal planting and new trees were widely supported.

But only 40% supported the plan for no footpaths with 47% against. On seating, only 29.5% supported the plan for no seating with 47% against.

Other comments: "retain existing trees" - "bins" - "flowering shrubs as it can be a dark square" - "more lighting" - "stop hard ball games".

### Clarence Square

13 replies received. Everyone supports heritage railings and keeping existing trees. Shrubs round the border and in the centre got support from most respondents, as did corner seats and a path.

Other comments: "enforce no dogs" - "enclosure needs height .. more trees to make it seem bigger, which is what the architects intended" - "extra seating would encourage extra visitors with their rubbish" - "something must be done with the unsightly backs of shops".

### Brick Paving Unlikely

The consultants report indicates that pavements in all three squares were originally made of brick. There were several comments in support of this. However, the regeneration project is restricted to the central enclosed areas so new pavements are unlikely to be included.



**Passenger Transport Map**  
We have been sent copies of the new East Sussex  
Passenger Transport Map. Call Roger Hinton  
(321794) if you want one.

### **A Noisy Auction this Time!**

The Society has already held two silent auctions to raise funds for improvements to Regency Square. We are planning a real one this time, with proper bidding and the fall of mallet to close the deals. There will also be a raffle for smaller items.

If you have any items which could be auctioned or raffled please contact Traude Tappin (tel 735167).

The auction will be held on Thursday 10 December at the Beach Hotel - more details in the next issue.

### **Laundry Plan is a Wash Out**

To the relief of residents in Queensbury Mews, the Metropole Hotel has withdrawn its planning application for a laundry in part of its carpark.

Planning officers were concerned about the lack of detail in the application. Local councillor, Nimrod Ping has told us that the hotel will be investigating whether a laundry can be created in a more thoughtful location.

### **The Short Cut is Back**

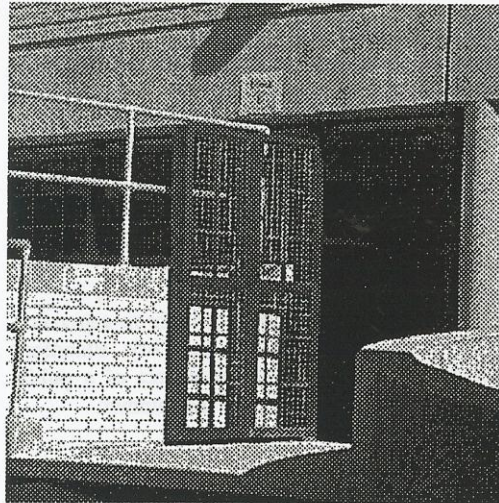
Not long ago we were complaining about losing Regency Road as a short cut to the town centre.

Now that the shopping centre is open it is possible once again to get from Russell Square to West Street without going up or down the hill.

Walk into Regency Road from the roundabout in Cannon Place. Just before you get to the dead end there is a large blue rubbish compacting unit on

your right. Walk down the right-hand side and turn left through a gap in the railing.

You can then get into the carpark through a gateway (see picture). Once inside you can walk through and out into West Street. Or to your left there is a lift which goes up into the shopping mall.



But watch out for cars moving around the carpark!

### **Expelling Air Noisily**

Residents of Queensbury Mews have won a limited victory against the noisy ventilation equipment on the Metropole Exhibition Halls. Time switches have now been fitted so that it does not run all night long.

Meanwhile people in Russell Square are suffering from the noise from equipment in the new shopping centre. The vents on the corner of Cannon Place and Regency Road can be heard all over the square. Society member Jim Harris and other residents are organising a petition. A recent report in the Argus suggests that noise tests will be carried out

### **The Council Acts on Rubbish**

After months of pressure from the Society, Council Officers have finally taken some action to try to reduce the amount of rubbish in the streets.

Letters have been distributed reminding residents when rubbish is collected. For most parts of this area the collection day is Thursday.

Residents are asked to put their rubbish out by 7am. The letter makes clear that people are responsible for storing their rubbish at other times. There are fines of up to £2,500 for offenders. It will be interesting to see if this publicity has any effect, and whether Council makes good its threats against those who ignore it.

It is encouraging that some action is being taken. More is needed: a circular letter on its own is not enough. One member has already reported that he did not get a copy of the letter: he lives in a house divided into two flats. Perhaps only one copy was put through the door - though there are two bells.

### **Holes in the Wall**

It is sad to see that a door has been installed in the beautiful old flint wall on the east side of Clarence Gardens. It is a new exit from the basement of the betting shop.

The door was approved in a planning application some time ago but when it was finally built a number of other holes were also made in the wall and a central heating flue was installed in a position where a passer by could easily bang their head.

Society committee member, Diana Dunn contacted the Council and the flue has now been re-positioned. Most of the holes have also been tidied up, though a couple still remain unfilled.