

Regency Square Area Society

NEWSLETTER 139
November 1998

Good News in Russell Square

As a result of protests from Russell Square residents, the Council has taken action over the noise from car park extractor fans under Churchill Square.

Sound measurements were taken which established that a nuisance was being caused by the fans and the Council issued two abatement notices.

The first required the fans to be switched off between the hours of 7pm and 7am. There may be some exceptions to this: the fans are designed to remove carbon monoxide from the carparks which are fitted with automatic detectors. If levels of the poisonous gas were to build up for some reason the fans would come on.

This first notice gave only 14 days to comply and Standard Life, the owners of Churchill Square have now complied. So residents on the north side of Chartwell court can sleep with their windows open again, if they want to.

The second notice was for longer term improvements, to reduce the noise from the fans when they are in operation during the day. Standard Life are planning to comply with this by fitting silencers.

What about the other noise?

Residents are also complaining about the noise from the rubbish compactor behind Chartwell Court. Council officers are investigating this but it is more difficult to measure because it is intermittent.

What's in a name?

Not a lot if it's not used. The street sign for Regency Square has disappeared from the railings at the corner with Preston Street (again). We have asked the Council to replace it. We have also asked them to consider one on the wall opposite for the benefit of people coming down Preston Street.

Impossible Parking

Since Churchill Square re-opened parking for residents has become even more difficult than before.

Residents' restrictions only apply Monday to Saturday. But the shops now operate 7 days a week. So restrictions should apply on Sundays as well.

Shops are also staying open later so residents' restrictions should be at least until 7 pm each day.

We are putting these views to the Council.

Bikes and Blooms

The Society paid for the flowers that were displayed at the top of Regency Square during the summer.

What a pity that they were located in the middle of a motor cycle parking area. Tarpaulin covered bikes are regularly parked on the Square. There is a properly marked out motor cycle bay only yards away across the road.

West Pier expects controversy

The West Pier now seems to have a better chance of survival than it has had for a long time.

However, its long term future does depend on its ability to generate income from commercial activity. One way that this will be achieved is by developing land on the lower promenade between the paddling pool and the pétanque terrain.

Plans for this development will be published soon. West Pier Chief Executive, Geoff Lockwood has described these plans as "dramatic and challenging; probably as controversial as was the West Pier in 1866".

Thinking about Brighton

We have been invited to send representatives to a one day workshop under the title "Urban Design Public Participation". Its purpose is to get people thinking about the town and what they value or dislike about it in relation to things like buildings, parks and transport.

It will be held at the Cornerstone Community Centre on Saturday 21st November from 10am to 5pm.

For more information contact Mick Anson at the Council planning department (☎ 292354).

Fund-raising Auction **for the Regency Sq. Improvement Fund**

7:45pm, Thursday 10 December 1998
Beach Hotel, Regency Square

Meet your neighbours for a pleasant evening. Who knows, you might get a bargain. A list of what is on offer will be in the next issue. If you can give anything to be auctioned please contact Traude Tappin (☎ 735167).

Rubbish- what's happening?

The Council has launched a campaign to discourage people from dumping rubbish in the street. Two areas are being targeted, the North Laine and the Regency Square Area.

Letters were sent to residents and notices have been put on lamp posts. These remind people that the official rubbish collection day is Thursday and that there are fines for dumping rubbish at other times.

Council officials have been opening rubbish bags in the street to find evidence of who dumped them. As a result warning letters are being sent to offenders. By mid October about 20 letters had been sent, mostly in our area.

One property in this area has been identified as a particular problem, though Council officers are not willing to say which. It has already received a second warning. The next step is a fixed penalty notice imposing a fine in the region of £25. As a final step the Council can take court action against persistent offenders.

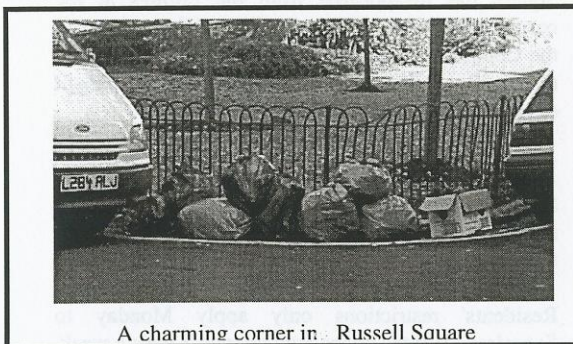
Rubbish- what about the 7 day service?

This time last year we were celebrating the fact that we had persuaded the Council to collect rubbish seven days a week. Has this now been reversed?

According to Bill Heron, the senior council officer responsible for this area, the aim is to "wean us off" the seven day collection, which was only introduced as a temporary measure. At present the Monday and Friday collections have been withdrawn.

This is clearly a cost cutting exercise. The Council's contract with Ecovert allows them to increase or decrease the frequency of collections in an area, with a corresponding change in cost.

Seven day collection has had its problems. Firstly, it has not been a true seven day service: there have been many days when no collection was made, and others when collectors took some rubbish but left some lying in the street.



A charming corner in Russell Square

Secondly, in spite of more regular collections the streets have still been a mess. This is because people think they can put rubbish out at any time of the day or night - even minutes after the lorry has been.

The Council has not yet said about how many days they will eventually send the lorry around the area.

Rubbish - what does the Society think?

It is good to see that the Council is trying to do something to solve the problem. We must wait to see if their strategy is effective.

It is a pity that their campaign was so poorly publicised. The letters to residents did not reach everyone. The notices on lamp posts should be backed up with posters in shops, pubs etc. Temporary posters could also be put up at places where rubbish is regularly dumped.

The enforcement action being taken by council officers is long overdue. It will need to be maintained on a permanent basis if it is to have any hope of working.

Even if enforcement is effective, it is implausible to think that one collection a week could ever be enough. This is a densely populated area with many people living in small flats or rooms. They cannot be expected to store rubbish for a whole week.

Rubbish - what do you think?

One member in Clarence Square has written to the Society to say that she thinks there is less rubbish in the square since the notices went up.

Two members in Russell square have expressed serious concern about the loss of the seven day collection.

What do you think? Have things improved? How frequently do we need collections? Let us know your views.

Rubbish

- more in the next issue no doubt!

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