



NEWSLETTER 156 July 2000

Web Site Goes Live

The Society's web site is now live. You can visit it at www.regencybrighton.com.

The site has details of the Society, some history of our area and a lots of pictures. These include old views, such as shops in Western Road before it was widened and some early drawings of the squares.

There is also a section of the site devoted to our neighbours on top of Sussex Heights, the peregrine falcons ("Perry's Page"). This includes some amazing pictures of the chicks growing up inside their nesting box, and even an animated sequence.

Do visit the site if you can, and use the feedback form to let us know what you think of it.

Congratulations ...

... to Brian Smith and his son Andrew who have put in a lot of hard work getting the site up and running in a very short time.

They will be continuing to maintain the site and add to it, hopefully with material from other members.

It's Your Site

Can you contribute something? Here are some suggestions:

- Your memories of living in the area - whether they go back decades or just one or two years. Tell us about events which have stayed in your memory or changes which you have noticed.
- Pictures you have of the area, particularly if they are old or show a significant event. All pictures will be handled with care and returned safely after they have been scanned into the computer. If you can provide a few sentences of information to go with them so much the better.
- Thoughts about living or working in the area - for example, bringing up a family or running a hotel.
- Suggestions for new sections to add to the site.

If you have any suggestions please contact Brian Smith (☎ 325175) or one of the Society contacts.

West Pier Update

The latest newsletter from the West Pier Trust makes for depressing reading if you are a fan of the pier.

Geof Lockwood, the Trust's chief executive says that plans to start the main restoration this year have been frustrated, partly by "bureaucratic delays.. but mainly through not being able to conclude a deal with our private sector partners."

The Trust does have another possible commercial partner in mind, but for the time being the pier is still without the private sector funding that is essential for its re-development.

Driving up Cannon Place ...

... is almost impossible on busy days when traffic tails back from the car park entrances.

The Council has accepted our suggestion that a second north bound lane is needed to let residents bypass the queues. They will be painting new white lines shortly.

Our other proposal was that both entrances to the car park should be opened at busy times. Apparently this idea was tried several years ago but was discontinued for safety reasons..

The reason is that it would not "help with congestion as the car park's entrance was designed as a single entry lane with the alternative lane for emergency use only.... both lanes converge at the same point inside the car park where vehicles would have to cross each other in order to use the upper or lower levels."

Re-generation re-generated

Plans for re-generation of our squares seem to be moving forward. Catherine Gray, the Council's senior landscape planner, has produced proposals.

Now she wants to know what we think. The plans will be on display at the Metropole Hotel on Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th August -10.00am to 8.30pm. Staff from the council will be available to answer questions from 10am-2pm and 5pm-8.30pm .

They will move to Hove Town Hall on 16-20 August and St Bartholomews House on 21-26 August.

There will be a questionnaire for you to fill in to record your views. Alternatively you can contact

Catherine Gray on 292265 or email
catherine.gray@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Society Contacts:

Chairman: Roger Hinton ☎ 321794
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Talking Rubbish

Members of the committee met with Jonathan Fortune who is the Council's Neighbourhood Services Officer for this area, and his colleague Paul Bish who manages the refuse collection contract.

The purpose of the meeting was to tell them, yet again, our concerns about the poor refuse collection arrangements. Things were particularly bad following the late May bank holiday. They told us that this was the result of industrial action caused by different terms and conditions of employment for former Brighton and Hove employees.

We asked specifically whether anyone had been successfully prosecuted for dumping rubbish. The answer was that lots of warning letters have been sent but no one has been taken to court. The reason is the difficulty of getting proof of who actually dumped rubbish.

We talked about various possible ways of improving the situation such as

- better information about collection days
- more frequent collections (funds permitting)
- further attempts to identify and warn those who dump rubbish at the wrong time
- communal bins at appropriate locations
- encouragement to landlords to provide rubbish storage areas for flat dwellers
- and so on...

Two things were fairly clear by the end of the meeting. Firstly, although the Council officials recognise the problem and are keen to solve it, they do not have a solution. The best they are hoping for is some improvement.

Secondly, there is little or no chance of daily collections, seven days a week, which is what we had asked for.

Where Next?

So what can we do next? We have decided to start collecting information to establish clearly the size of the problem. Various members of the Society have taken responsibility for specific streets and squares. Once a week, on a Monday, they will count the number of bags or boxes of rubbish. This will enable us to see whether any of the Council's initiatives have any effect.

Once we have collected evidence, we plan to seek a meeting with senior councillors to try to persuade them of the need to spend more money to give us daily collections.

Parking

If there's anything other than rubbish which is likely to get members swapping horror stories, it's parking.

The Council is currently consulting us about proposed changes to the parking arrangements. The most important change will probably be the transfer of enforcement from the police to the Council.

Since the Council will be able to keep the fines they collect they will be able to finance wardens out of income. More wardens will mean more income - the exact opposite of the situation faced by the police for whom more wardens means less money for other priorities.

Other welcome changes will be the extension of restrictions on residents' bays until 7pm and to Sundays. But why only 7pm? Why not 8pm like in Brunswick Square?

Visitor Vouchers

More controversial is the suggestion that all residents should be able to buy up to 25 visitor vouchers per year for £1 each. These would allow visitors to park on a resident bay.

The problem that some people see with this is that it will result in increased pressure on resident parking bays. If every resident bought their full 25 vouchers there would hardly be a time when the bays were available for those holding a resident permit.

Since a visitor voucher will be one of the cheapest ways to park on the street (legally), a market could well develop, with residents selling their vouchers on at a premium.

Yellow Lines

There are only minor changes proposed for yellow lines in our area. Some loading bays will be provided for hotels, for example on the south side of Russell Square.

And the taxi bays in Cannon Place are shown as unchanged on the present plans. The taxi drivers obviously don't want them so why can't they be made into resident bays?

Have Your Say!

Let the Council know what you think. Send in the questionnaire which should have come through your door. It needs to be back by the end of July.

If you haven't got one or if you have any queries you can call the Council free on 0800 028 6702.

Visit your Society's web site -
www.regencybrighton.com

Have you renewed your membership?

If there is a cross in the box below, your annual subscription is overdue. Please help the Society by sending your subscription today.

To Paul Stanford, 50 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ

I would like to renew my membership of the Regency Square Area Society for the year 2000/2001 in the category ticked below:

	£
Ordinary member	4.00
Family	4.50
Senior Citizen	3.50
Junior	2.00
Associate (non-resident)	3.50
Business (non-resident)	6.50

Basic subscription _____
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Address _____

Cheques payable to the Regency Square Area Society please
Members' details are stored on computer for administrative purposes only.

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due