



Regency Square Area Society

NEWSLETTER 166
August 2001

Fire!

People living in Abbots and nearby properties, including many society members, were evacuated from their flats at about 6 am on Wednesday 1st August. The reason was a fire raging in the house next door at 128 Kings Road.

This building has been a cause of complaint for years because of neglect by its owner. Perhaps the fire means that something will now be done. It is a pity that we have had to wait this long and that lives have been put at risk in order to get to this point - one person who was rescued from the building is still critically ill in hospital at the time of writing.

The Council has put scaffolding on the building front and back. This is to make it safe so that investigations can be made into the cause of the fire which is believed to have been arson. There was a 24 hour police guard on the building while it was made safe.

Although the building has been gutted by the fire the external walls are sound so demolition will not be necessary. The Council will give the owner a "reasonable time" to re-build. As yet we don't know what "reasonable" means or what they will do if, as in the past, he does nothing.

The West Pier - at last a plan!

Two large buildings are planned for the lower promenade, either side of the West Pier.

Made largely of glass, they will rise above the level of the upper promenade by about one and a half stories. They will start at the eastern end of the old paddling pool and run to the western end of the pétanque area, with a gap in the middle for the pier.

Society committee member Sue Paskins was at the AGM of the West Pier Trust last month when artist's impressions of the buildings were displayed. She describes the scheme as "massive over development" and as a long time supporter of the West Pier she now feels for the first time she "could wish it pulled down ... this is a development too far." These views are shared by a number of other committee members.

The plans have been prepared by a company called St Modwen Properties which also hopes to develop the pier itself. At present the plans are only "initial proposals" and no formal planning application has been made.

Why do we need it?

Most people would like to see the West Pier restored. That is the primary aim of the West Pier Trust as well. They hope to restore it just as it would have looked in the 1920's.

So why do we need these new buildings on the lower promenade? The answer is simple: money. It's no good restoring the pier if you are not going to have any money to maintain it. This money will come from letting space on the pier to businesses. But the space on the pier itself will not generate enough rent to meet future costs.

So the Council has offered to make the space on the lower promenade available to build more lettable space. These plans allow for 70,000 square feet of shops and restaurants. The developers have said that there will not be a night club.

Finding out more

The Society will be meeting one of St Modwen's directors and the company's architect soon to find out more about the plans and to let them know our initial reaction. Full details, in the next newsletter.

Please don't feed the birds!

Pigeons and seagulls contribute to the mess which seems to be a permanent feature of this area. They tear open bags of rubbish searching for food, and they leave droppings all over the place.

And yet some people deliberately put out food for them! Do we really want to give these scavengers even more reasons to come into our area?

Let's make it a great day!

Next year is the Queen's golden jubilee, celebrating 50 years since she came to the throne. There will be a double public holiday on the 3rd and 4th of June and we are planning a party in Regency Square on the 3rd. Put it in your diary now!

It will be a good old fashioned street party - but in a square of course! There will be food, a licensed bar, music, games and most important of all - fine weather!

We have set up an organising committee to plan the event. As the date gets nearer we will be looking for lots of volunteers to help out. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions or ideas, please contact Roger Hinton (☎ 321794; email hinton@clara.net).

Rubbish - what next?

Sita's contract to collect our rubbish ends next month. That is probably good news given the appalling service we have had.

But it is worrying that there is no news yet about who will take over responsibility for rubbish collection when Sita goes. We are trying to find out what the Council is planning.

Cutting a corner

The north east corner of Regency Square has become a permanent rubbish dump. One reason is the convenient cobbled area where people can put their rubbish bags.

The Council has accepted our suggestion that these cobbles should be removed and the railings re-located to make this a less obvious place to dump rubbish. The work will be done when general improvements are made to the top green in the autumn.

Parking Bonus for Residents

Did you know that if you have a residents' parking permit you can now park in any voucher bay in your zone between 9 and 10 am and 5 and 6 pm Monday to Friday, and all day Saturday and Sunday.

A Date for your Diary

We are planning a members' meeting for

Thursday 13 September 2001

Details are still to be finalised and will be in the next newsletter.

Society Contacts

Chairman and Acting Treasurer: Roger Hinton

☎ 321794 email hinton@clara.net

Secretary: Andrew Walker ☎ 700340

If at first ...

A boat full of people booked for the planned sea trip last month from the Marina to Brunswick Square and back.

Unfortunately it had to be called off because of bad weather. However, we have decided to try again. The trip is now planned for 6pm on Saturday 25 August 2001. It will last one hour and the price is £5 per head.

If you want to book a place, please send your money with the form below. There will be a second trip at 7:15 pm if there is sufficient demand. Book early to be sure of a place!

Boat Trip Booking Form

Please reserve me _____ place(s) on the boat trip at 6 pm on Saturday 25 August 2001. I enclose £_____ which I understand will be repaid if the trip is cancelled.

Name

Telephone number (required)

Would you like a place on the 7:15 pm trip if the 6 pm trip is full? Yes / No (Delete one.)

Late Night Havana

The bar in the basement of number 5 Regency Square, now known as the Havana Club, has been granted a public entertainment license and extended drinking hours until 2 am.

The Society's objection that the premises are in a residential area was unsuccessful. Let's hope this does not set a precedent for further developments of this kind.

Have You Paid Your Subscription?

A cross in the box means your subscription is due.



To Roger Hinton, Acting Treasurer, Regency Square Area Society, 39 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ

I would like to renew my membership of the Regency Square Area Society for the year 2001/2002 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 _____
Optional donation _____
Total enclosed _____

Name

Address

Payment by cash or cheque payable to Regency Square Area Society please. Members' details are stored on computer for administrative purposes only.

A cross in the box means your subscription is due!

