



NEWSLETTER 168
October 2001

Save Our Seafront

This is the message which came from the Society meeting held last month.

Society members and representatives from other amenity groups packed the Beach Hotel's bar to hear speaker after speaker condemning the plans put forward by St Modwen Developments plc.

These plans would result in three storey buildings either side of the pier, running for 400 feet from the eastern end of the old paddling pool to the Al Fresco Restaurant. Views of the sea and of the pier itself would be blocked out by structures which would stand more than 16 feet above the upper promenade.

What would it be like?

This would change the whole appearance of our sea front. It would also destroy the historic setting of the pier which it designed to conserve.

We have produced a photo mock up which gives an indication of the scale of the building. A copy was published in the Argus last month. You can also see it on our web site (www.regencybrighton.com).

Not just NIMBYs

When plans were approved to build the Al Fresco restaurant above the level of the upper promenade, many people were worried that it would set a precedent for other buildings to cut off the sea view.

How right they were! St Modwen's plans will set an even stronger precedent. We have talked to the Nobel Organisation which runs the other pier. They have told us that if this scheme goes ahead, they will apply for a major building at their shore end. If the Council were to refuse them, they could use the West Pier development to support an appeal.

But what about the pier?

We invited the West Pier Trust to come to our meeting. They declined, saying that "opposition to the scale of the development is tantamount to voting against the restoration of the pier."

What a blinkered view! We are not voting against the West Pier. We would love to see it fully restored. But this scheme means that from many places we would not be able to see it!

There must be other ways that the pier can be saved. If the leadership of the Trust believe that to save our pier they must destroy our seafront, they should be replaced by people with a broader vision.

A Howl of Protest

In the words of one speaker at the meeting, we must raise a "howl of protest". A campaign group of amenity societies has been formed to do just this.

The Kingscliffe Society recently campaigned against the development on the Aquarium Terraces. Although they were unsuccessful, the lessons learned then will be invaluable this time. The Brighton

Society and the Friends of Brunswick Square and Terraces have also joined the campaign.

What can we do?

The group's aim is to influence the opinions of those who will make the final decision. We will be contacting Brighton and Hove Councillors, MPs, members of the West Pier Trust, English Heritage and the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

We will distribute copies of our photomontage and make sure that everyone involved knows just what these plans really involve.

What can you do?

Decision makers are influenced most of all by numbers. If you don't want this development, please

- Write to local councillors (John Warmington, Susan Joy and Roy Pennington, c/o the Town Hall). A short letter is best: just ask them to use their influence to prevent the development.
- Talk to your friends and neighbours and encourage them to write to their councillors.
- Join the West Pier Trust and vote at the next AGM for new board members.
- Visit the Society web site and put your views on the message board.
- When the formal planning application is submitted, write to the Council to register your objection: again a very short letter will do.
- Help the Society meet the cost of the campaign: we have already spent over £100 on photographs, copying, postage etc. If you can make donation to society funds please send it to the acting treasurer, Roger Hinton, 39 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ.

...as they mean to go on?

So the Council has finally given up its attempts to find a contractor who will collect our rubbish. They are going to do the job themselves.

They have made a good start! Queensbury Mews and parts of Regency Square were piled with stinking bags of rubbish last weekend. Much of it was put there by the refuse collectors: they brought it out of rubbish stores but then left it lying in the streets.

Isn't the Council supposed to prosecute people who do that?

Credit where it's due

We moan a lot about the way the Council collects, or doesn't collect our rubbish. It's about time we said thank you to our local road sweeper, John Lawrence.

He works very hard clearing up the litter left around by passers by, rubbish collectors and marauding seagulls. It is obvious that he really cares about trying to keep our streets tidy. And he always has a friendly word for any one who stops to say hello.

So we have decided to invite him to be an honorary member of our Society.

Thanks John for doing a difficult job so well!

Never there when you want one!

Our streets were full of police during the Labour conference but crime goes on just the same. A 61-year-old man was kicked and punched by four people in Russell Square on Wednesday 3 October. He needed hospital treatment for severe facial injuries.

The attack took place in Russell Square, between 9pm and 10pm. If you saw anything please contact the police (☎ 0845 60 70 999).

The French are coming!

Some of Dieppe's finest musicians will be coming to Regency Square next June to help us celebrate the Queens Golden Jubilee.

Fifteen members of L' Orchestre d' Harmonie de Dieppe will be playing at our Golden Jubilee party. They will come the night before (Sunday 2 June) and will need overnight accommodation.

Can you help? If you have a spare room and might be able to offer a bed for the night please contact Suzanne Hinton (☎ 321794) for more details.

One day, some time, ever?

Improvement work in Clarence and Russell Squares is progressing very slowly. If the railings and paths are not finished by the end of October the contractors will face financial penalties. The proceeds will be contributed towards the improvements planned for Regency Square

Work in Regency Square will start on 29 October and is planned to take 14 weeks. Tenders for this work were all over budget so there will be no irrigation system or low level lighting.

"Drought tolerant" plants which don't need watering will be used instead. They will be watered for the first year to get them established.

The Council asked large businesses in the area to sponsor the low level lighting but only received one offer of a raffle prize.

Society Contacts

Chairman and Acting Treasurer: Roger Hinton

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Secretary: Andrew Walker ☎ 700340

www.regencybrighton.com

Thanks

To the proprietors of the Beach Hotel for giving us a room for our meeting last month...

..and to the Council noise patrol who tried to quieten a noisy party in Regency Square in the early hours of 7 October

Have You Paid Your Subscription?

There are still a few members who have not renewed their subscriptions for the current year. If your subscription is due there will be a cross in the box below. Please help keep the Society strong by renewing your membership today!



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!

