



NEWSLETTER 246 November 2009

A Little Gem in Stone Street

Next time you are near Stone Street, take a moment to look at the old yard and stable buildings on the south side near the junction with Preston Street. Until recently they were a builder's yard.

Up close they look rather a mess, but step across the road for a better view and you will see some signs of their original charm. What's more they are one of the few, if not the only reminder of the days when Castle Street and Stone Street housed providers of the many services needed by the grand houses in Regency Square.



So it would be sad to see this little bit of history disappear. After all, they are in a conservation area. However, demolition was threatened recently by a planning application to replace them with (yes you've guessed it) a modern block of flats.

Of course no one around here needs stable yards any more, while the need for housing seems insatiable. But why not develop the existing structure in a sympathetic way which preserves some local heritage and provides housing at the same time? For an example of what can be done, just look at the new housing on the site of the old garage at the bottom of Queensbury Mews.

So we objected to demolition and were supported by the Council's Conservation Advisory Group. Since then the planning application has been withdrawn.

But that will not be the end of the story for sure. So keep your eyes peeled for a new application.

O yes / O no

A planning application has now been submitted for the Brighton O, the big wheel proposed for the lower promenade opposite the Metropole Hotel.

The management of the hotel has made an objection on the grounds that the wheel will block sea views from their best rooms and will allow riders on the wheel to see into bedrooms.

The sailing club, which is based on the lower promenade near the site, has also objected.

On the other hand the planning application documents include the results of a survey of about 40 other local businesses keen for it to go ahead.

We have looked at the detail of the application. It includes a report on potential noise pollution, which could come from both the machinery and from people queuing. The expert's report suggests that any noise will be within the Council's guidelines. However, there can be all the difference in the world between an expert's forecast and reality on the ground. So we have suggested that the Council should impose a planning condition that noise must be kept within the guidelines.

We have also suggested that lights on the wheel should be switched off after the ride closes in the evening.

The Council is aiming to reach a decision on the application by the end of the month. You can see the full details online by putting the application number BH2009/02331 into the Council planning register at <http://tinyurl.com/Brighton-Planning>.

If you want to read what online objectors are saying, you can visit <http://www.brightonno.org.uk/>.

Free Public Transport Maps

We have received copies of the East Sussex Passenger Transport Map (winter 2009). They show bus and train routes throughout East Sussex – along the coast from Brighton to Rye and north to East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells. If you would like a copy contact Roger Hinton (✉ hinton@clara.net ☎ 01273 321794).

New Year Breakfast

10 am Friday 1st January at the Regency Restaurant
Put it in your diary now! Full details next month.

Staggering through the twitten?

Most people agree that cyclists should push their bikes through the twitten by the Regency Tavern, rather than riding them. And motor cyclists shouldn't be there at all. What's more, this is what the law says as well.

So we asked the police if they could do something to discourage those who use the twitten as a cycle path.

Their suggestion was to place two "staggered" barriers halfway down the passageway. This would certainly do the trick. But is it really what we want?

Barriers will make life less convenient for everyone else: those pushing prams, or push chairs and those walking their bikes will all have to manoeuvre around them. Even people just walking will have to stand aside when they meet people coming the other way. And all because of a few irresponsible cyclists who don't understand the rules of the road.

What's more, this twitten is an attractive, old-fashioned spot, which still looks just as it did in 1944 when it appeared in the classic film of Brighton Rock and probably many years before that as well. It would be a pity to spoil it by adding modern barriers.

So we have said no thank you to this suggestion. Instead we have asked if the police can place a temporary "No cycling" sign on the pavement at the Russell Square end of the twitten.

If you have any other suggestions, please let us know.

Cycles on the Road

The cycle lane in Preston Street used to have cycle symbols painted on the road surface. They have disappeared as a result of the many recent re-surfacings. The Council have assured us that they will be replaced by the end of the year.

Developments in Brighton and Hove

An illustrated talk by Malcolm Dawes about recent plans and changes to local buildings and townscape.

24 January 2010

3 - 5pm at Dorset Gardens Church (off St James Street)

£3 including tea / coffee and biscuits

Organised by the Kingscliffe Society - visitors welcome

Just Like Old Times

Do you remember the good old days when the streets were littered with bags full of rubbish and the seagulls used to drop by for something to eat?

Welcome to memory lane: a re-cycling collection was missed on 5 November and the communal bins are full and disappearing under piles of plastic bags.



We asked Cityclean what is going on. Their answer was brief and to the point:

“There will be no refuse collections this week ... All our refuse, re-cycling and street sweeping staff are on strike ... The action is currently scheduled to end on Sunday 15 November.”

So what are we supposed to do with our rubbish?

“You can take all of your refuse and recycling to either of the household sites at Wilson Avenue or Leighton Road. These are open from 8am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday and at the weekends.”

Fine if you've got a car! And of course the over-sixties amongst us can use their free bus passes!

But Seriously

The Council has a legal duty to keep the streets clean and protect public health. They are not fulfilling that duty at the moment!

If the striking refuse collectors don't get back to work very soon, something else needs to be done to get this rubbish off the streets and to get regular collections started again.

Cycle Parking

The Council now has a new Cycling Officer. She is Tracy Davison. Society chairman, Roger Hinton met with her and Councillor Sven Rufus recently in Regency Square, to re-cycle the meeting we had had with the previous cycling officer almost two years ago.

The purpose was to find suitable places for cycle parking stands, in order to reduce the number of cycles chained to railings, lamp-posts etc. The outcome was much the same as last time. Tracy is going to arrange for some stands on the paved areas either side of the middle green.

She is also going to investigate the possibility of some more at the top of the green opposite the steps down to the car park. There is a problem with this location: when all the car parking spaces along the top are occupied it is difficult to get a bike past the cars. It may be possible to create a small gap at the centre of the parking area, using bollards and kerb extensions. These should benefit not only cyclists but anyone wanting to cross from the north side pavement into the gardens.

There was even a mention of possibly converting an on-road parking space, such as the little used police space outside Abbots.

So keep your eyes open for changes soon, and if nothing happens we'll have another meeting in two years time.

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