

## NEWSLETTER 262 June 2011

### What do you think?

We want to hear your views on our plans for improvements to the Regency Square gardens.

The plans include:

- painting the railings – but what colour?
- a new flower bed in the centre of the top green;
- new seating, possibly adding tables in some places;
- low level lighting on the top green;
- wild flowers and grasses on the south facing banks;
- painting the concrete walls green or cream;
- new litter bins;
- a new path to the central car park entrance;
- two columns from the West Pier near the war memorial.

### Where's the money coming from?

These our ambitious plans and they depend on funding being available. In some cases the Council will be able to help. We will also use our own Regency Square Improvement Fund. Sponsorship

will also be needed from local businesses and residents.

### Consultation overload?

Apologies if you've heard all this before, particularly if you have already responded to our earlier requests for your views.

We are now carrying out a wider consultation in order to demonstrate to the Council that our plans have local support. A questionnaire has been distributed to most households in the area, not just to Society members. It is the response to this questionnaire which will decide whether the Council will support our project.

So, even if you've already told us what you think, please fill in a questionnaire. If you don't have a copy you can:

- print one from the News section of the Society web site ([www.regencybrighton.com](http://www.regencybrighton.com)), or
- contact Nigel Rose ☎ 07850 031 082  
✉ [rosenigel@btinternet.com](mailto:rosenigel@btinternet.com).

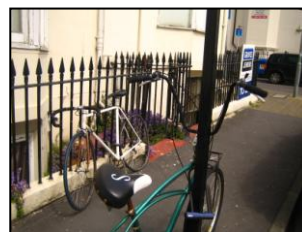
Completed questionnaires need to be returned by June 20<sup>th</sup> please, to Nigel Rose, 65-66 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FF.

### Mind the bikes!



narrow in places.

We have asked our local police community support officer if she can get them moved.



If you walk up the west side of Clarence Square, watch out for bikes. They protrude across the walkway, making it quite

### More bins in the streets?

The Council are planning to make some changes to the recycling arrangements. They have plans to install communal recycling facilities in the city centre.

They can't tell us the locations yet. We are trying to find out whether they will be consulting before making any final decisions.

### Society mix up

The Regency Society is a large and relatively wealthy city-wide group. It organises lectures and owns the wonderful James Gray collection of historic photographs ([www.regencysociety-jamesgray.com](http://www.regencysociety-jamesgray.com)).

So you may have been surprised to read in the Argus last month that it was offering to donate some money towards a bench in Russell Square in memory of Ken Kennar. You would also perhaps have been surprised by the comments from its chairman, one Roger Hinton, about squatters in number 43.

It was of course a mistake and we have now had an apology from the reporter responsible.

### Car Park Takings

How much money does the Council get from the car park in Regency Square? As the result of a Freedom of Information Act request we can now tell you that the total revenue during 2010 was £565,975.

What we actually asked was how much was taken during the evening hours but they couldn't tell us. We wanted the information to support a suggestion that parking could be free in the car park in the evenings. This would help restaurants in Preston Street and prevent visitors using resident spaces in the street.

Back in 2009 we presented the Council with suggestions for making better use of the car park. We never had a proper response. It's time for another look at this issue.

## The West Pier Site

It is time for new thinking about the future of the West Pier site.



The i360 is still a possibility but it is five years since the project was first announced and there is still not enough money to build it and no date for the start of

the work.

So what are the other options? We approached the Brighton West Pier Trust (BWPT) with a proposal for a “round table” meeting to discuss alternatives. We suggested inviting various interested parties such as Brighton and Hove Council, English Heritage and local conservation groups.

This is their response:

“BWPT has now discussed your proposal of a round table meeting with its partners, including of course the Council.

“BWPT as the owner and landlord of the West Pier site is fully supportive of the i360 scheme and to that end is in a development agreement with the designers and developers, Marks Barfield. The Council is also fully supportive of i360.

“The funding delay is frustrating but by no means unique in the current economic climate and I can assure you that everything is being done to secure the final element of funding necessary to begin construction.

“Consequently, we agree that since all parties continue to be completely committed to delivering the scheme, a public roundtable meeting along the lines you suggest ... would

not be appropriate because it could possibly detract from and potentially damage the current focus on fund raising activities.

“Also we are aware of the continuing widespread support for the scheme amongst the business community, other City organisations and of course, the general public.”

This is a disappointing response. It does make one thing very clear: the West Pier Trust does not want to consider any alternative options for the future of the West Pier site.

### Where do we go from here?

This leaves us with a problem. Does it make sense to discuss alternatives without the involvement of the Trust? This would be rather like “Hamlet” without the Prince.

On the other hand, does the Trust’s unwillingness to discuss alternatives mean that no one else is allowed to discuss them either?

The Society committee will be trying to answer these questions at its next meeting, so watch this space ... and the one down on the seafront!

### A Coach Trip to Lacock

M and M Tours are offering a trip to Wiltshire to visit Lacock Abbey and the Fox Talbot Museum of Photography. The area should be familiar with film lovers: it was used as a location for various Jane Austen productions and the Harry Potter films.

The trip will be on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June, leaving Powis Square at 8am. The cost is £37 including entrance fees (£28 for National Trust Members).

Contact Martin Foster (01273 729998) if you want

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## Empty property causes problems

No. 43 Russell Square is in the news again. Last month we reported that squatters had re-occupied it.

The latest news is that a property on the north side of St Margaret’s place was burgled recently. The police believe that those responsible gained access from the rear of the Russell Square house.

Meanwhile we have been in contact with the family of the late Ken Kennar, who owned the property until his death last year. They are aware of this latest development and are keen to gain possession of the property as soon as possible. Probate formalities are now almost complete.

This should mean that action can soon be taken to regain possession of the house and secure it.

### Hats off to Cityclean!

Graffiti reported at 9:30 am on 3rd June on benches on the top green of Regency Square was removed at 10:30 am the same day.

### How would you like your newsletter?

It can be delivered to your door on paper, or sent by email as a PDF attachment.

If you would like to switch to the email option please contact Roger Hinton ([hinton@clara.net](mailto:hinton@clara.net)).

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