



Regency Square Area Society

NEWSLETTER 291
October 2014

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 21 October - The Regency Restaurant. You are invited to an "i360 Neighbours' Community Meeting" by i-Xperience (a PR branch of the i360 project) to meet with representatives of the developers and constructors. (See also article on i360 later in this Newsletter)

Sunday 26 October - The Regency Tavern. Not to be missed, a two-hander tribute to Gilbert and Sullivan under the title; "Here's a how-de-do". No entry charge so get your drink, settle down and enjoy!



Wednesday 5 November: A performance of "Hay Fever" by Noel Coward at the New Venture Theatre, Bedford Street.

Thursday 11 December: "The Wind in the Willows" by Alan Bennett at the Little Theatre, Clarence Gardens.

To book tickets, please send £9.00 per person to Suzanne Hinton at 39 Regency Square by Saturday 25 October for "Hay Fever" and Saturday 22 November for "The Wind in the Willows"

OUR "NEW" TREASURER



Apologies to all for a recent dearth of newsletters. At last, here is a chance to introduce Nicola Floyd, our Treasurer:

After spending some time travelling around the world, Nicola moved to Brighton almost two years ago with her husband, David. They live in an old converted stables on Queensbury Mews, which has also seen life as a working garage and now a quirky family home. Moving here from anonymous central London the wonderful local community has been a most welcome change.

Nicola feels very lucky to be able to live and work in central Brighton and is only sorry that she did not make the move many years ago!

On the work front, Nicola has a Masters degree in economics and finance and is currently the CEO of an economic consultancy business, working with the UK's major media and telecommunications firms.

And on the leisure side, she is a keen scuba diver and an enthusiastic (rather than good!) sailor, and on dry land you will often see Nicola in the lower Regency Square garden walking her little puppy Bandit. Please do come over and say hello – but be prepared for Bandit to lick you!

COME INTO MY PARLOUR ...

The Mayor of Brighton and Hove, Cllr. Brian Fitch and Mayoress Mrs Nora Fitch kindly invited a group Society members, along with members of the Kingscliff Society, to a reception in the Mayor's Parlour in Brighton Town Hall.

During the reception Cllr Fitch gave several Society members a guided tour of the Council Chamber and talked of some of his predecessors.

On behalf of the Society members present, our Chairperson, Trix Webber thanked the Mayor during the meeting, whilst also skilfully singing the praises of the work done by the Society over the last 33 years of its existence.

Society Contacts

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i360 WORK

Work on the i360 goes on a-pace, although recent bad weather and "unforeseen issues in the ground" may well "necessitate some more weekend working to get certain works completed before the winter sets in". The I-Xperience Company now have a Public Liaison Officer, Ruth Chapman. You can contact Ruth at enquiries@brightoni360.co.uk

If you would like to be notified of any additional weekend working, ask Ruth to add your e-mail address to the I-Xperience mailing list.

UNDERNEATH THE ARCHES

The City Council has submitted a retrospective planning application for the repair work they are carrying out on the arches to the east of the i360 site. The Society has no objections to the restoration of the arches if the work is to be carried out to the same high quality as the arches further west.

The Society has reservations about the use of concrete blocks at the foot of the upper promenade railings, although these are apparently necessary for health and safety reasons. The design has been accepted by English Heritage.

The Society is very concerned that the Council proposes to convert, retrospectively, 2 three-arch sections from beach huts into commercial premises. The committee of the Society will be objecting to the Council about the retrospective nature of the application but on the whole welcomes the fact that the area will become more vibrant ... and that the changes will possibly even lower our council taxes if the Council can garner some hefty business rates, as well as the rents, from the properties.

DE... AND RE...GENERATION

The majority of the hedge plants donated by the Casalingo restaurant have been either stolen or vandalised. That's the bad news. Please do report any theft or vandalism you witness, either to the police or the Society. In general, despite the best efforts of RSAS volunteer gardeners, the gardens of the square are in a very sorry state.

The good news is that the Society is actively seeking funds to bring the gardens into a fit state to be seen by residents and visitors to the i360. Money is being sought from the City Council, who hope to borrow some £1M to regenerate the seafront as a whole. Members of the Society's Committee will be meeting Cllr. Jason Kitkat on 23 October in the hope of enlisting his support in this bid. An application is also being made to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

ACTIVE POLICING

The Committee are very pleased to be able to welcome regularly PCSO Richard Wright and/or a colleague to Committee meetings. Lately the police have been very active in the Stone Street / Castle Street area where squatting, illegal immigrants and drugs have all been very problems detrimental to those resident in those streets.

Police have also recently removed squatters from the former Topps Hotel and drug dealers from a basement flat in Regency Square.

GATES

A bouquet to the City Council. The railings in Clarence Square, damaged recently by a run-away car, were expertly repaired within days.

A brickbat to the City Council who, after months of pressure from the Society, are still failing to repair ever-open gates in Russell and Regency Squares.

A NEW WEST PIER?

The West Pier Trust has put forward three options for the land and seabed they control:

- do nothing and let the "sea island" decay and disappear
- build a non-commercial, promenade pier
- build a new, commercial pier.

The Society is well aware that the WPT could not afford to build and maintain a promenade pier which would bring in very little revenue.

Trix Webber, Chair of RSAS has written to the Trust stating that further hefty commercial development in addition to the i360 would not be welcomed in the area. She asked the WPT to reconsider the possibility of stabilising the "sea-island" to remain as an iconic Brighton structure.



The Society welcomes the WPT's plans to open a Heritage Centre in one of the old West Pier kiosks. The Trust is seeking money for this from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FORUM

At a recent Committee meeting Helmut Lusser, one of the driving forces behind establishing the Hove Station Neighbourhood Plan Forum explained the advantages as well as the difficulties and frustrations of setting up such a Forum.

The Committee decided that, at present, such a Forum would not be appropriate in the RSAS area - but have undertaken to analyse the draft City Plan to ensure that the Society is aware of any impact that the Plan might have on this area.

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