



NEWSLETTER 197
September 2004

Otter Invasion!

Operation Otter is the code name used by the police for the security arrangements at this year's Labour Party conference. Your committee has had a useful meeting about the conference with two of the police officers involved and the Council's head of tourism.

The Good News

Police intelligence indicates that the conference, which will run from 26 – 30 September, is a "low risk" as far as terrorism is concerned. However this doesn't mean the police are complacent: they are planning a huge security operation, which is probably one of the main reasons why the risk will be low.

We need to play our part in looking out for anything out of the ordinary.. If you are worried or suspicious please let the police know.

☎ 0800 789 321

The Otter Island

As in previous years there will be a secure "island" including the Brighton Centre and the Grand and

Metropole Hotels. Entry to the island will be restricted to those holding valid security passes.

Traffic will be affected!

There will be some traffic restrictions. Cannon Place will remain open but it will not be possible to drive into it from the seafront: access will be via Russell Road and security passes will have to be shown. Residents with cars who need to use Cannon Place have been given passes. Taxis will still be able to get through.

If you are expecting a delivery during the conference and the van will need to use Cannon Place, you need to warn the police that it will be coming.

The northern carriageway of the seafront will be closed at night with a contra-flow provided on the southern side.

Parking will be allowed as usual in Regency Square, but it is probably not going to be a good time to park illegally. Traffic wardens will be operating "zero tolerance" and a tow-away truck will be in operation.

An additional park and ride facility will be provided at the Race Course to reduce congestion.

It's not all problems

The conference will cause inconvenience for local people but there are benefits as well. It brings extra trade for local businesses, and the chance of any normal criminal activity in our area will be just about nil.

If you want to know more...

...look out for the Council newsletters. There have already been two and more are on the way. If you have a specific query you can email the council: conference.questions@brighton-hove.gov.uk. A

police enquiry number will be included in the next Council newsletter.

We want our Post Office!

Wouldn't it be nice if we could have our post office back? We have written to the manager of Waitrose in Western Road to ask if he would consider opening a post office counter in the store.

The Blue Bench Mystery

No sooner had we reported (in our last newsletter) the re-appearance in Regency Square of what looked like the Society's long lost bench, than it disappeared again. Does anyone know where it went, this time or last? This mystery must be solved!

Keep right to avoid jam tomorrow!

The car park queues continue to plague Regency Square, causing frustrating traffic jams for drivers wanting to get through to Preston Street.

We have raised the matter with the police but they are unable to do anything about it. The traffic sign asking drivers not to queue too far back is not legally enforceable. The police suggest that we contact the Council again about the problem.

In fact, even if cars queue back beyond the sign they do not cause a jam provided they keep well over to the right. One member, who was caught in a jam recently, got out of his car and spoke to the drivers in front; he asked those who were queuing to move over to the right. As a result the through traffic was able to get past.

We are going to ask the Council to investigate whether additional road markings would encourage those who are queuing to keep to the right.

Car Park Colours

If you have a property in Regency Square you are required by the Council to paint your railings black and your walls cream. This is because it is a conservation area with a “uniform painting scheme”.

The only exception seems to be the one property in the square that is owned by the Council itself, the car park.

In fact the car park is managed by NCP who are responsible for its upkeep. Recently they painted the railings blue, the walls blue and white and the kerbs bright yellow.

A number of members pointed out how inappropriate this colour scheme was, and we took it up with the Council. They are talking to NCP about changes.

The railings have already been re-painted black. We are hoping that the walls will be painted in a more neutral colour. The kerbs need to be yellow for safety reasons but it may be that they can be repainted in a lighter shade.

Many thanks to Lesley Johnston at the Council who is pursuing this.

It's not the Chewing!

A new Subway sandwich shop has opened in Western Road. Residents in Stone Street, directly behind it, have been disturbed by the noise.

It's not the sound of customers chewing their baguettes that causes the problem. The restaurant is open late, until 3 am at weekends, and the staff using the bins in Stone Street don't always think of neighbours trying to sleep nearby.

The Council cannot take any action since the shop is not breaching the terms of its planning permission.

More Trees not Less

Society member, J Bentham-Dinsdale has been reading the Supplementary Planning Guidance for the area around the Brighton Centre. (Details were reported in a recent newsletter.)

Like most people, he is unhappy with the suggestion for a new building at the end of Russell Square, which would involve the loss of some fine, mature trees. So he has approached the Council with an alternative scheme for reducing the visual impact of Chartwell Court: plant a new tree in the centre of the roundabout in Cannon Place.

He has also suggested other ideas such as adding some visual variety to the boring west facing wall of Churchill Square, and putting trees in the car hire site opposite.

Bins big and small

We have been asking the Council for months to put some more litter bins in Regency Square. Recently they proudly announced that they had done so.

The bins in question are extremely small containers strapped to lamp posts on the pavement. They are hardly big enough for Macdonald's burger box and they often look a mess because of the plastic rubbish sack, which sticks out from behind the front panel.

We had been hoping for decent sized floor standing bins to be located in the square itself. Part of the problem is probably that the larger bins cost £800 each! We are monitoring the situation to see if the new small bins make any noticeable improvement.

Your Web Site Needs You!

The Society's web site is www.regencybrighton.com. It has a mass of local information including up to date news, for example about the West Pier and the peregrine falcons on Sussex Heights. There are lots of local photographs and information about the Society, including a copy of our very first newsletter!

The site is maintained by former Society chairman Brian Smith and his son Andrew. The only cost to the Society is an annual payment to our internet service provider. We have recently switched to a cheaper provider so the bill for this year is £180. This is not a lot but it represents a fair chunk of the Society's income.

So we are looking for sponsors who can help us meet this cost. Anything you can give will help. Contribution should be sent to Andrew Walker, 8 Chartwell Court Russell Square, Brighton BN1 2EW. Please make cheques payable to the Regency Square Area Society. Your help will be acknowledged on the site – unless you say you would prefer not.

If you run a business and would like a link from our web site to yours please contact Roger Hinton (☎321794).

Society Contacts

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www.regencybrighton.com

Did you know about the Mobile Library?
Monday mornings
10:30 – 11:30
Brunswick Square
at the top of the gardens