



NEWSLETTER 226
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More Consultation on the Way

Councillor Geoffrey Theobald is Chair of the Council's environment committee. Back in September, he tried to get plans for communal bins throughout central Brighton and Hove approved without any consultation. Thanks to protests from societies, including our own, his committee refused to agree until residents had been consulted.

A group of councillors from each of the four main parties has been set up to plan this consultation. Our local councillor, Sven Rufus, is a member. So watch out for another chance to have a say about the bins, this time directly to the Council.

Consult and Conserve

Meanwhile our society and a number of others have formed an informal pressure group called "Consult and Conserve". This is led by Tom Chavasse of The Friends of Brunswick Square and Terrace.

He has worked extremely hard. He has managed to get details of how a similar proposal was dealt with in Edinburgh, another city with fine Georgian architecture.

The City Council wanted to put communal bins in the Georgian squares and terraces of Edinburgh's "New Town". Widespread protests results in this idea being rejected. In

the Old Town area around the Castle and the Royal Mile the scheme was not rejected outright. Instead criteria were agreed to establish where bins could be placed, and where they could not.

The Consult and Conserve group has obtained details of these criteria and is asking for similar guidelines to be applied in any sensitive areas of the Brighton and Hove where bins are approved. It seems likely that Regency and Russell Squares would fall into this category because of their listed buildings.

Tom Chavasse has been working through the sensitive areas carrying out assessments using the criteria. He walked round our areas with Society chairman Roger Hinton recently and we hope to have the assessments shortly.

What do we want the Council to do?

The Society is opposed in principle to communal bins for a number of reasons:

- They are unsightly and attract dumped rubbish and graffiti.
- They are inappropriate in conservation areas and close to listed buildings.
- Residents will have to carry their rubbish further than they do at present,
- The stated reason for bins is to clean up the streets, but our streets are already kept clean by Council street cleaners and enforcement officers.

We have welcomed the Council's decision to consult before approving any new bins. We hope they will listen to the results of that consultation and will allow areas to opt out and retain their existing refuse collection arrangements, if that is the clear wish of residents.

If residents in sensitive areas do approve bins, we want the Council to use criteria like those developed for Edinburgh, to ensure that they are located appropriately.

Abbotts as it was

Before the modern block of flats was built at the southeast corner of Regency Square, there was a hotel, also called Abbots. If you want to see what it looked like, take a walk along New Road where you will find a large reproduction of a picture called "Brighton Front", painted in about 1920 by Charles Burleigh. It has been placed on a boarded-up shopfront.

According to an article in "The North Laine Runner", Burleigh was a local artist who, until 1940 ran a school of painting and drawing and an art gallery in the building at the end of Clarence Gardens, now Brighton Little Theatre.

Inside the Old Ship

How about visit Brighton's oldest hotel? The Old Ship in King's Road dates back to 1559 and has been frequented by royalty, aristocrats and artists. Local historian, Jackie Marsh-Hobbes has offered us a guided tour on Friday 11 January 2008 at 6pm, lasting about an hour. The cost is £5 per person. Booking is essential: if you want to come, send your name, telephone number and email address (if you have one) to Roger Hinton, 39 Regency Square, together with £5 (cash or cheque payable to the Regency Square Area Society).

New Year Breakfast

Welcome the New Year with your
neighbours.

10 am Tuesday 1st January 2008 at the
Regency Restaurant



It's very informal: just
take a seat at the big table,
order what you want and
pay when you leave.

I see no i

There is still no visible sign of work starting on the i360 viewing column at the West Pier.

In fact some investigations have taken place on the site, including drilling boreholes, studying the sewers and examining rock and chalk samples.

According to Geoff Lockwood of the West Pier Trust there are several reasons for the delay in starting the real work. The main one is described as “the creative interaction” needed between the architect and the engineers to avoid problems such as those suffered by the “wobbly” Millennium footbridge over the Thames when it first opened.

There have also been legal problems. The proprietor of the café and rock shop, which currently operate on Trust land, has challenged the validity of the notice to quit, issued by the Trust. This is currently under negotiation with a view to the properties being vacated before March next year.

A second legal problem relates to a lease given to the Council by the pier’s owners in the 1930s, for a roadway beneath the pier. This roadway no longer exists since it ran through the area, which is now an enclosed compound. The Council has agreed to surrender this lease in return for a new lease on the lower esplanade roadway.

The Trust has also had problems finding suitable storage space for artefacts from the old pier, currently stored on the site. A remote storage facility has now been found for these and for others that will be dismantled when the landward end of the pier is demolished to make way for the base of the i360.

So when will the real work actually start? Having given several precise dates last summer that turned out to be wrong, the Trust is now being a bit more careful. They are simply saying “in the New Year”.

Locked Gates Shift a Problem

Residents of Clarence Square have been worried by gangs of youths congregating in the garden in the centre of the square. The police have been trying various things to discourage this use of the garden. One is that they have started locking the gates overnight.

This has had some success as far as Clarence Square is concerned, but the youths still congregate, now in the vicinity of MacDonald’s in Western Road.

We have discussed this problem with local police and community support officers. We have welcomed their efforts to discourage undesirable behaviour in the square. We have also said that we hope the locking of the gates will only be a temporary measure. It would be pity if the garden became permanently off limits in the hours of darkness, even to someone just wanting some fresh air or a quiet smoke.

Helping with Enquiries

We are now holding regular meetings with the Brighton Police’s Regency Team. If there are any issues you would like up to raise with them, please let us know.

If you have any information you think would be helpful to the police you can contact them on 0845 60 70 999 (extension 16088 for PC James Marter, or 17915 for PCSO Sharon Birt) or email the team: Regency.Team@sussex.pnn.police.uk.

The Crowded Twitten

The contractors laying new water pipes in our area are having particular problems with the passageway between Russell and Regency Squares. It is already crowded with other services. They have dug it up once, but will probably need to do so again, possibly blocking it entirely as they search for a way to fit the new pipes through.

Hermione Roy

Hermione Roy was elected as a Green party councillor for Regency ward earlier this year. She has now had to resign for health reasons.

During her short time as a councillor she has helped the Society with a number of issues. We thank her for her efforts and wish well for the future.

Our remaining councillor is Sven Rufus, also of the Green party. He can be contacted at sven.rufus@brighton-hove.gov.uk. There will be a bye election on 13 December to elect a second councillor.

Cycle Racks

We have identified a number of possible locations for cycle racks in the area. In our last newsletter we showed photographs of possible areas in Regency Square.

As a result of suggestions from members, we are also now considering areas in Russell Square (east end) and Cannon Place (just north of the north junction with Russell Square). We are also going to raise with the Council the possibility of using some on road parking spaces for cycle racks.

Councillor Sven Rufus supports our proposals and will be helping us to make a case to the Council Highways Department.

More memories from the US

The Society's most far-flung member is Clive Seymour, who now lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma and who recently visited Brighton. He has given us a few more reminiscences of his schoolboy days here in the 1950s. Find them in the "Looking Back" part of the website (www.regencybrighton.com).