



NEWSLETTER 251 May 2010

Underpass improvements to go ahead

We reported last month that the Council plans to spend £10,000 on improvements to the underpass that links the Regency Square car park to the beach. The money will come from the i360 developers as one of the conditions of their planning permission.

This suggested that the improvements would have to wait until the i360 was operational, or at least under construction. We have now been assured by Katherine Rawlins, the planning officer involved, that the money is due for payment in mid June regardless of any further progress with the i360 itself. She has added that the Council has no date for the resumption of work on the i360 itself.

Cycle path plans

There are also plans to make some changes to the seafront cycle path where it runs in front of the West Pier. Most of the path was widened recently between the Hove border and West Street, but this section was left out, pending completion of the i360.

The Council has received further funding for cycling this year and plans to spend some of it on making this section of the pavement better for both cyclists and walkers.

One problem for walkers is that they have to stand in the cycle path while waiting for the green man at the crossing by the bottom of Preston Street. We have asked the Council if they can change this arrangement as part of the improvements.

Is someone listening?

We have been arguing for some time that the Council should do something to deal with the blight affecting our bit of the seafront, caused by the delay to the i360 project. The news about the underpass and the cycle path suggest that someone may be listening, or at least thinking the same thing!

Designs for Regency Square

A student of garden design at Plumpton College is doing a project to re-landscape Regency Square and has asked the Society for some background information. Unfortunately the project is only theoretical at the moment since there is unlikely to be any money to make it a reality. However, we will be interested to see the result. Who knows ... maybe one day?

Society Contacts:

Chairman: Roger Hinton,
✉ hinton@clara.net, ☎ 01273 321794;
Treasurer, Sue Paskins
✉ paskins@brighton.fsbmail.co.uk,
☎ 01273 329934;

Web site: www.regencybrighton.com

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What's it like on the inside?

Embassy Court is an impressive block of 104 flats, built in 1934-5 to a design by architect Wells Coates. It was the first modern, high rise block in Brighton and caused quite a stir at the time because of its proximity to Hove's 19th century terraces.



Whether you love it or hate it, you can't ignore it and we are now offering a chance to find out what it's like on the inside. On Saturday 5th June there will be a

guided tour. It starts at 11am and will last between 1 and 1½ hours. The cost is £6 (concessions £5).

Places are limited. If you would like to come please send your money now, with your name and telephone number, to Sue Paskins, c/o 39 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ. (Please note that there are lifts in the building, but the tour will also use some steps. There are no toilet facilities.)

Plans to extend the French church

The former French church in Queensbury Mews is now a private residence and plans have been submitted for a two storey extension and roof terrace to the north elevation. You can see details on the Council's planning register at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/planning under application number: BH2010/00839.

The Society has not made any objection to the plan, though some members feel it will spoil the appearance of the building. The Conservation Advisory Group has recommended refusal and indications are that this will be the outcome.

Cyclists watch out!

The twitten between Russell and Regency Squares is a popular route for cyclists but it really isn't suitable for cycling. Some cyclists come through the twitten at speed. It is narrow and there is a blind corner at the Russell Square end. People step out from the pub directly into the twitten. It is an accident waiting to happen.

We raised this with Bobbi King, one of our local PCSOs, and she has arranged for officers to spend time in the twitten to speak to offending cyclists. The times chosen have been during the morning and evening rush hours, when commuters use the route to get to work.

Cyclists who are found riding through are given a warning and their details are recorded. If they are stopped again they can be given a £30 fixed penalty. Several such penalties have been already been issued.

Many thanks to Bobbi and her colleagues for listening to local concerns and responding.

Parkers watch out!

Car crime has been on the increase again in the Regency Square car park. If you or your visitors park there, be extra careful not leave anything visible in the car which might attract a thief to break in.

Careless drivers watch out!

How often do you see a driver doing something stupid? And then you ask why the police don't do something about them. The answer of course is that the police can't be everywhere.

Operation Crackdown is an answer to this problem. If you see a driver driving in an anti-social way, try to make a note of the number and (if possible) the colour or make of the car and a brief description of the driver – any details will be useful, male/female, young/old, big/small etc.

Then log on to www.operationcrackdown.org or call 01243 64 22 22 and make a report. If the police receive several reports about the same vehicle they will contact the driver.

The 'Wet Pier' in Castle Street

During the Brighton Festival, number 8 Castle Street is one of the artists' Open Houses. You can visit to see an exhibition of photos of the West Pier, all taken from the water. It's open Thursday to Saturday until 23 May (except 21 May) from 17:00 to 20:30 on Thurs/Fri and 11:00 to 17:00 at weekends.

Criminally Good Brighton & Hove

Best-selling local crime writer Peter James will be giving a talk at a West Pier Trust fundraising social event at the Alfresco Restaurant on 23rd June at 7pm.

Peter sets his novels in and around Brighton and an atmospheric photo of the pier often features on the front cover. He will read from his latest novel, "Dead Like You" and talk about his research behind the scenes with Sussex Police and the darker side of his beloved city.

Tickets cost £20 but for members of the Regency Square Area Society are offered at the special price of £15. The price includes generous canapés and a glass of wine. This will be a great opportunity to meet Peter in a convivial setting with wonderful views of the pier. To book tickets contact Rachel Clark at info@westpier.co.uk or 01273 321499.

M and M Tours

Martin Foster and Michael Robbins set up their tour business last year because they were aware that most local amenity societies like ours are not big enough to be able to run their own tours. So M and M run tours which are open to members of all the local societies.

Their next tour will be on Sunday 13 June to the Red House and Eltham Palace. The Red house was once the home of

William Morris, writer, artist, craftsman and socialist who was influential in the Arts and Crafts movement in the late 19th century. His house, designed by architect Philip Webb, was influenced by Gothic, mediaeval styles. It contains furniture by Morris and Webb and stain glass by Edward Burne-Jones.

After lunch at the Bulls Head at Chislehurst there will be a visit to Eltham Palace, boyhood home of Henry VIII. The house was later converted in the art deco style for the Courtaulds family.

The cost is £39.90 (seniors £38.60) with reductions for members of the National Trust and English Heritage. This covers coach travel and entrance fees and conducted tours at both sites.

For full details and an application form contact Roger Hinton (☎ 01273 321794 ✉ hinton@clara.net). Booking must be made by the end of May.

Details are also available of M and M's July trip which is to Hylands House near Chelmsford, and Ingatestone Hall.

Kingscliffe goes it alone

The Kingscliffe Society is still running its own coach outings and our members are always welcome to join them. The next one is on Thursday June 3rd to Scotney Castle at Lamberhurst in Kent, a most interesting house set in delightful grounds around a lake. The cost is £25.50 or £15.50 if you're a National Trust member. Roger Hinton has full details.

Guided Tour of Embassy Court

11am Saturday June 5th

£6 (concessions £5)

Places are limited. To book, send your money now to Sue Paskins c/o 39 Regency Sq. Brighton BN1 2FJ with your name and phone number.