



**NEWSLETTER 252  
June 2010**

**Dangerous Decking**

There is one section of the West Pier which has actually been restored. It is the decked area at the root end. It was rebuilt in the early 1980's by volunteers who managed to raise enough money to buy some steel joists and other materials.

It is ironical that if the i360 does get built, this restored section of the pier will need to be demolished. It is also a great pity that it is now an eyesore at the southern end of Regency Square.

We understood that the decking was unsafe for cars and the fencing was to prevent drivers parking there. So, we recently suggested replacing the fencing with bollards, which would keep cars off but allow people to stroll on one bit of the pier. This would also have made the site look a bit better.

Our idea was rejected because the decking is actually in a much worse condition than we thought. Jon Orrell, the West Pier Trust's consultant engineer says that he has "never been 100% sure of the design."

He also explains that much of the deck has now "sprung off the supporting beams" and the "handrailing is substandard". So his advice is not to allow the public to use it.

Does this mean that nothing can be done at present to improve the appearance of the site? Since the old rock shop will need to be removed when work on the i360 starts, why can't it be



removed now? The other buildings could be taken away at the same time.

A neater line of fencing could then be put in place across the whole site, and perhaps the weeds that are flourishing there could be dealt with.

flourishing there could be dealt with.

**Invasion of the Big Green Boxes**

Those of us who use BT telephone lines for our broadband connection to the Internet would no doubt welcome an increase in speed. That is just what BT wants to provide.

However, to do it they need to put new junction boxes alongside all their existing ones.

That means a lot more boxes on the pavement. The new ones will be over five feet high! They will also make a noise from the fan needed to cool the equipment inside.

So, the existing BT junction boxes in our area will shortly have a much bigger partners, all sited within 50 metres of the existing boxes. These bigger boxes will be visually intrusive and may adversely affect the conservation area.

BT needs planning permission for each of these new monsters, but it seems unlikely that any of them will be refused. Perhaps the best we can hope for is to have some say about exactly where each one will be sited.

If there is an existing BT box near you and you have any views about where its new partner could go, please let us know.



Society member, Suzanne Hinton (5ft 1inch tall), standing next to one of the existing BT boxes.

**What are pavements for?**

'Walking on' might seem to be the obvious answer, but many local businesses seem to think that the pavement is an extension of their store rooms.



Sainsbury's is the latest recruit to this band of land grabbers. They regularly store delivery trolleys outside their store in Western Road. These join the many trade waste bins and 'A' boards already littering our pavements.

In site of a lengthy investigation of street access issue by a "scrutiny committee", the Council seems to be unable to do anything about this problem.

They employ an enforcement officer who talks to offending traders and tries to help them find alternative solutions to their storage problems. But often, if a trader simply ignores the enforcement officer's suggestions, nothing happens. Just look at the bottom of Queensbury Mews where a trade refuse bin is still blocking the narrow pavement and forcing pedestrians into the path of passing traffic.

We have asked many times for action on this and other similar problems but nothing happens. The Council should either enforce the law or come clean and admit that their policy is to allow businesses to use the pavements for storage.

**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](http://www.regencybrighton.com)

## All Change at the Regency Tavern

New managers, Paul and Robin have taken over at the Regency Tavern and are planning some changes.

The pub will close on 30<sup>th</sup> June for a thorough internal refurbishment which will enhance the present ornamentation. When it re-opens on 10 July, look out for the grand piano!

The new managers want the Regency to play a part in local life. They plan to join the Society and will be using some of the information from our website to provide a bit of the building's history on their menu sheets.

## A Plea for Patience and Prettification

Society member John Clinton lives in St Margaret's Place and so is a close neighbour of the Churchill Square car parks. When he read in the newsletter that one of them is to be refurbished he decided to make some suggestions.

He wrote to the Churchill Square management suggesting two things. The first was that they try to discourage impatient motorists from blowing their horns while queuing in Cannon Place; some notices in the car parks or a message on the tickets might help. Sam Eastwood, the Centre Director replied that he would review signage at the entrance and exit, and "assess whether cars are producing avoidable noise pollution."

John's second idea was a bit more ambitious. Describing the car parks as "not a pretty structure", he suggested that foliage might be used to improve the appearance and reduce the impact of noise resonating off the hard surfaces. The car park next to Hove Town Hall has in the past benefitted from this kind of improvement.

Mr Eastwood's reply to this proposal was 'no', but his reasons make interesting reading: "...the car park is not aesthetically pleasing, however the works that are currently underway are designed to extend the lifespan of the 1960s car park and upgrade the customer experience ... Any further cosmetic improvements have been deemed not commercially viable and

may be affected by the potential development of Churchill Square."

Watch this space? No doubt John will.

## Save that Church!

Plans were submitted recently for a two storey extension and roof terrace at the back of the former French Church in Queensbury Mews. The application has been refused.

Two reasons were given. The first is that it would "fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of this part of the Regency Square conservation area". The second is that the terrace would overlook neighbouring properties.

Although our society expressed no view for or against the development, members of the neighbouring Montpelier and Clifton Hill Association were strongly against it; they have applied for the church to be listed to reduce the risk of any future inappropriate changes to the building.

## A Peep into Embassy Court

Committee member Margaret Brisley reports.

It was a bright sunny day and we were shown to the roof by our guide, where we were given a very enjoyable and instructive talk about the building and its history. We were allowed to view the archive which is stored in the basement. This included original documents and photos of the building prior to refurbishment.

One resident very kindly allowed us into his flat and from there, we admired a panoramic view of the sea and the east of Brighton.

## Let there be...

One of our members who lives on the west side of Regency Square has been complaining to the Council for some time because the street lights on that side of the square were not

working. Having had no success she approached the Society for help.

We started by registering a complaint on the Council web site. Two days later the lights were back on. Such is the power of your Society! Or was it just good timing?

## M and M Tours

18 July; Hylands House near Chelmsford and Ingatestone Hall.

4 September: Bodiam castle and Batemans

Full details and application forms available from Roger Hinton (✉ [hinton@clara.net](mailto:hinton@clara.net) ☎ 01273 321794).

## Dates for your Diary

3:45pm, July 10<sup>th</sup> – unveiling of a commemorative plaque to Henry & Arthur Wagner, followed by the Montpelier and Clifton Hill Association garden party in the Old Vicarage, Temple Gardens – entry £10 by ticket from Martin Foster (01273 729998) or £12 at the gate.

7:45pm, August 5<sup>th</sup> – Society trip to the Little Theatre to see "**Steel Magnolias**", a sparkling and sombre comedy by Robert Harding; if you would like to come, please send £7.50 plus your name and telephone number to Ros Boulden, 8 Abbots, 129 Kings Road, Brighton BN1 2FA **by 19 July**.

11am. September 4<sup>th</sup> – backstage visit to the Theatre Royal; full details soon.

Newsletter printing sponsored by

## Mail Boxes Etc.

Your friendly print, copying and mailing service (opposite Waitrose)