



NEWSLETTER 282 OCTOBER 2013

Meet Caroline Lucas M.P.

Our local M.P., Caroline Lucas, will be answering questions from members and friends of RSAS on Thursday 7 November from 8.00 – 9.00 pm. The informal event will be held in the distinguished surroundings of the Library of the Metropole Hotel. Light refreshments will be provided. All local residents will be most welcome.

Take a last look

Officers at the City Council have undertaken to remove this unsightly car park sign and replace it with an unobtrusive glass panel. Thanks to Cllr Jason Kitkat for supporting the Society in keeping our area uncluttered.



Society Contacts:

Chair: Trix Webber,
✉ tew823@gmail.com
☎ 01273 321858

Secretary: Suzanne Hinton ☎ 01273 321794

✉ s@hinton.clara.net

Web site: www.regencybrighton.com

Wot, no i360?

You may have noticed that no work has yet started on the i360. Don't be misled by all the activity either side of the West Pier: that's the Council reconstructing the seafront arches which support the promenade.

About a year ago we were told that work on the i360 would start early in 2013. Nothing has happened. Why? David Marks, the architect behind the scheme, spoke to a Council committee recently and explained the problem: there still isn't enough finance, in spite of the Council's offer to lend £15 million or so.

The reason is that one of the other investors in the scheme has now pulled out and no one has been found to take their place.

At the same committee meeting, Selma Montford of the Brighton Society asked two very simple questions: how long is the Council willing to wait for the i360 promoters to raise enough capital; and what happens if they fail? For those of us living opposite the West Pier, these are important questions because at the moment the site is just a mess and has been a mess for several years.

Sadly Selma did not receive straight answers to her straight questions. The answer that was given explained how committed the Council is to the i360, but showed no willingness to consider the possibility that it might never happen.

This is not good enough. The Society committee believes that it is time to recognise that there may never be an i360 and to start thinking seriously about what happens instead.

We are working with the Brighton Society and others to persuade the West Pier Trust and the Council to take this leap into the unknown.



PCSO Parsons

Francesca Parsons pounds the beat in Regency Square and around. She does much more than that. She and her colleagues consistently confiscate alcohol from street drinkers, fine pavement cyclists, liaise with the managers of the West Pier Project hostel. She is tough with those behaving anti-socially and sympathetic to the more amenable residents of the hostels. Fran gives her time to the Society by attending part of some committee meetings, she listens to what the Committee has to say and acts on it.



CPSO Parsons has given us the following advice: if you see drug dealing taking place, or a drug dealer hiding his drugs (so that he/she is not caught carrying incriminating evidence) don't hesitate to phone 999. The police are well aware of drug dealing taking place in the area and are as keen as we are to curb it.

Dates for your diary

Monday 16 December (to be confirmed): Meet the Committee for an informal evening in the Regency Tavern.

Saturday 25 January: Guided visit of the Metropole hotel from basement to rooftop. £12.00 with afternoon tea.

Monday 24 March: AGM in the Metropole Hotel with local speaker.

The Society is most grateful to the Metropole Hotel who regularly "donate" rooms to the Society for meetings.



Welcome to new committee members

Angelo Martinoli and Paula Brooks have both agreed to become co-opted members of the Society committee. The committee was aware that most of its members came from Regency Square itself. As owner of the Casalingo restaurant in Preston Street, Angelo is well placed to represent the businesses in the street. Paula is very active in the Castle Street / Stone Street, but let her tell you about herself:

I bought my cottage in Stone Street twenty years ago, moving from the Sillwood area. I soon learnt that my cottage was owned in the 1880s by Mr Ben Hamblin, a “fly cab” proprietor. The only remaining stables of that era are N^{os} 13A and 14 which I believe were built at the same time as my cottage.

During the 1950s, part of the neighbouring fly cab stables, along with my own cottage, became a snack bar owned by Mrs Eagan. In “Flying Sparks” by Tim Wren, Mrs Eagan is described as “quite a character”. I love living in Stone Street and the Regency Square Area. There is a wonderful community spirit.

I have fostered two children who are now 27 and 18 years old. My own son, aged 16, is busy raising £4000.00 to go to Tanzania this July to do voluntary work with his school. Last year, he and some friends raised £800.00 for the Martlets Hospice. I am very proud of him.



At present I work as a teaching assistant in a local junior school and love my work and the children. My parents often come to Brighton. They thoroughly enjoyed a stay at the Artist Residence in Regency Square – a prize I had won at a RSAS raffle. Next time, they will be enjoying a “fabulous” deal at the Regency Hotel, thanks to the generosity of owner James.

Planning up-dates

43 Russell Square

The Society is still waiting to see if the owner of the property will appeal against refusal of his planning application. There is work being carried out at the moment. This is at the insistence of the City Council who have asked for period features to be replaced.

19 Castle Street / 13A Stone Street

There have been 25 objections to the new, amended application for the building in Castle Street. The application will now be discussed by the full Planning Committee of the City Council. As yet, no date has been set for this, but local residents are ready and waiting to make their objections in person to the Committee.

Telecoms mast on West Pier Trust property

The Society has long turned a blind eye to the ugly telecoms masts erected on West Pier Trust land each summer. Local residents have now come to the conclusion that they do not want the mast to re-appear next year.

Fourteen residents in our area have objected to the retrospective planning application for the erection of these masts; the application must therefore be presented before a full Planning Committee of the City Council. Objectors have the right to speak, for up to three minutes, to support their objection.

The Society hopes that next year, given the already chaotic appearance of the Trust’s property, the Council will refuse to grant permission for the erection of masts that make the area even more unappealing than it is at present to residents and tourists alike.



Green finger news

We are continuing the garden improvements in Regency Square. In the spring we will be planting hedges at the north ends of the middle and lower gardens to hide the unsightly car park walls. We have received help and advice on this from the new Council manager for our gardens, Graeme Rolf, who has offered to have the ground prepared by his staff.

Join the small, friendly group of gardening enthusiasts which meets regularly to work (and enjoy the fresh air) in Regency Square. For more details, contact Trix Webber on 01273 321858 or tew823@gmail.com



Oh, no, not Christmas already

The Committee is keen to continue the Society’s tradition of having an illuminated Christmas tree in the top garden of Regency Square. Julie White is in negotiation with the City Council to get all the necessary permissions. If you would like to make a contribution towards the purchase of the tree or the lights, please contact the Treasurer, Trix Webber (contact details on previous page).



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Tel: 01273 70 60 20 www.mbebrighton.co.uk
Email: print@mbefbrighton.co.uk 91 Western Road, Brighton. BN1 2NW