

## NEWSLETTER 283 November 2013

### Hope springs eternal down on the pier

Proposals are to be invited for a “sea-based” pier opposite Regency Square. At the recent AGM of the West Pier Trust chairman, Glynn Jones announced that they were preparing a design brief to encourage prospective developers.

The brief will say that the pier must be compatible with existing plans for the i360 observation tower. It must also be open to the public and not be excessively commercial. He added that work on the new pier could start before the i360. But don't hold your breath: the Trust has been considering development proposals for over three decades; even the obscenely commercial St Modwin scheme failed to get off the drawing board.

Members of our own committee were at the AGM and asked all the right questions.

- Will the Trust be repairing the arches under the pier, as the Council are doing with those on either side? The answer was yes, once the I360 gets started.
- How much will the Trust be budgeting to tidy up the root end of the pier in the short term? The answer was that they are removing the Portacabin and investigating whether it would be safe to open the boarded area to the public. But they don't want to spend much money

because any short term improvements will be redundant once work starts on the i360.

- Why are all the Trust's ideas based on large and complicated schemes? Surely the time has come to be less ambitious and simply bring our section of the seafront up to the standard of the rest. The answer was that any scheme must be able to pay for itself, as the i360 will.

The i360, the i360, the i360! As far the Trust board members are concerned there really is no other show in town. So when will the show start?

David Marks, its designer and promoter was at the meeting. He is confident that the necessary finance will be found soon and he's fully committed to the scheme. Glynn Jones added that the Trust Board would be reviewing the position “early in the New Year”.

This time last year they said that work would be starting on site “early in the New Year”! Hope springs eternal!

### Composting bins

The result of the recent questionnaire to Regency Square residents was overwhelmingly in favour of a three-month trial of composting bins at the north end of the square. They will be well hidden by greenery. These will appear in the next month or so. Watch this space if you are interested in using the bins.

### Benches

A member of the Society has kindly donated £15.00 towards material for cleaning two of the benches on the middle garden of Regency Square. Zoren Marikovic is generously providing the labour.

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### Underneath (and over) the arches



The City Council has been repairing the Kings Road Arches to the west of the West Pier site. A great deal of attention has gone into creating superb reproduction brick work. A quick look at the whole line of arches will reveal a great improvement.

The Committee of the Society is disappointed that the black asphalt surface on the Kings Road pavement is permanent, as confirmed by the City Council's Heritage Team.

Surprisingly, the City Council had omitted to ask itself for planning permission to demolish the old and erect new arches and to provide replacement railings on the upper esplanade. The part of the application which refers to change of use from “storage” to A1 (shops) will, most likely, be generally welcome, especially as four of the arches are designated as public toilets.

Plans to encircle the windows of the arches with red LED lighting, however, might well lead some gentlemen passers-by to misconstrue the nature of the goods on sale.

### M.P. Caroline Lucas at the Metropole

Caroline Lucas, our local MP, gave her time at the Metropole Hotel on Thursday 7th November for a question and answer session. Caroline introduced the session with a brief insight into her life as an MP and then opened the floor to questions from the 30 members and friends of the Society.

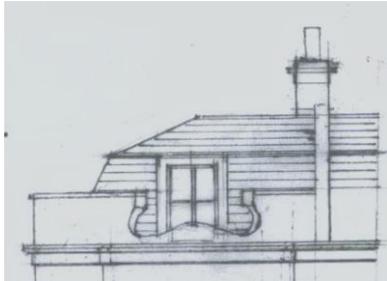
The questions were varied but related to local issues., ranging from the high proportion of hostel residents, the number of empty properties in the area to problems with massage parlours. Caroline agreed to look into these issues and get back to the questioners.

We would like to thank Caroline for her time and the Metropole for again donating a room for this event.

## Planning matters

An application for converting **67 Preston Street** (or more accurately, the house which is 21 Regency Square), into a house in multiple occupation has been made. The developer wishes to convert the single house into two one-bedroom flats in the basement and two on the third floor of the house. There would be five bed-sits over the ground, first and second floors.

The proposed restoration of the windows should be a vast improvement, but the proposed “ventilation pipes on the roof” do not seem in keeping with a house that stands on a prominent corner of Regency Square. And what is that funny curly feature at the top of the house? It is quite unlike anything else in the conservation area.



*Details of plans submitted to the City Council.  
Is that a ventilation pipe below the chimney?*

The plans submitted to the council are so poorly produced that it is difficult to judge whether the ugly metal supports holding up the ground floor bay will be removed. Their removal would seem essential. If you wish to comment on the plans go to the City Council Planning website and look for: <http://ww3.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1199915&node=20476&splash=application number BH2013/03445>

In another part of our area, the **radio mast** erected on the property of the West Pier Trust was refused retrospective planning permission. It is to be hoped that the City Council is consistent and that it will refuse permission for the ugly mast in 2014.

**Stone Street** is so beset with illegally placed bins that the bins even show up beautifully on Google Street view. The Committee is continuing to complain about bins which, as in this case, are not only unsightly but put pedestrians at risk by forcing them to walk on the roadway.



## Take a trip down memory lane

Do you remember what happened in our area in, let's say, 2003? Well now you can remind yourself by reading each and every one of the 2003 Newsletters, and not only for that year, but for every year since 1979. Indulge in a little nostalgia by dipping in to one of the 283 Newsletters at:

<http://regencybrighton.com/news/newsletters>

## Or look to the future – dates for your diary

16 December 2013 8.00pm: Informal Christmas Social at the Regency Tavern.

1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 at 10 am: New Year's Breakfast at the Regency Restaurant. Come along, take a seat at the long table, choose anything from a piece of toast to a “full English”. Pay on your way out. Simple.

Members and friends all welcome to both events

## Welcome back, little friend

Many thanks to the City Council, and Tim Jefferies in particular, for arranging a replacement for the irreparably broken 19<sup>th</sup> century bollard in the twitten. The only visible difference between the old and the new is at the base. The “original” bollard has the name of the foundry which made it. The lettering seems to read: “C & J Reed”.

The two Reed brothers (Charles German and John) jointly ran the appropriately named Regency Foundry in Foundry Street from 1871 until 1878 when the firm became “C.G. Reed and Son”. It is disappointing that our “original” bollard is probably not contemporary with the twitten itself (about 1818) but it's good to see it with its new twin.



*Paul Smith, licensee of the Regency Tavern and committee member of the Society ensures that neither bollard is allowed to escape.*

Paul formerly worked, and still occasionally works, in the railway industry. He and his partner Robin took over the iconic Regency Tavern in 2010, making the Tavern a nice place to eat drink and be merry. It's a full time job, but Paul still finds time to undertake important railway assignments, the most recent assignment being in Oman in September. Paul and Robin look forward to seeing everyone at the RSAS social in December (see previous column).

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