



Regency Square Area Society

NEWSLETTER 289
June 2014

Mayor to unveil Heritage Board

The Mayor of Brighton, Cllr. Brian Fitch, will be coming to unveil the Society's Heritage Board at noon on 7 June. There will be a short ceremony in the top garden of Regency Square. The Committee will then offer the Mayor refreshments in the Regency Tavern.

Please do come to join us for both parts of this event. Cllr. Fitch is the first mayor to honour our area with a visit since the Golden Jubilee celebrations of 2002.

... and another event for your diary

At 5.45 on 29 May the two composting bins will be opened for business at the north end of Regency Square. You will be able to sign up as a user of the bins. You will be given a code and, as a special welcome present, a composting caddy. You will also be most welcome if you simply wish to come and meet your neighbours and see how the composting system works. Contact Trix Webber (details overleaf) for more details.



“Don Juan” at the Little Theatre

There are still seats available for “Don Juan in Soho” on June 24th Details at: <http://www.brightonlittletheatre.com> Performance starts at 7.45pm and costs £9.00. Please send cash or cheque to: Suzanne Hinton, 39 Regency Square by Wednesday 4 June if you would like to buy tickets to go in a group.

Goodbye PCSO Fran. Hello PC Fran

Congratulations to PCSO Francesca Parsons who has passed a whole raft of exams and tests to become a fully fledged Police Constable. Fran has been of immense support to the Society over the last 18 months. We wish her well and are sad that she will no longer be on our “beat”. Our new PCSO will be with us in July.

News from Fran

In her last report to the Committee, PCSO Fran said that:

- The police policy of zero tolerance to anti-social behaviour in the area is working well at the moment. However, as the weather improves, the police are aware that their task will become harder;
- The managers at the hostels of the West Pier Project are liaising with the police about nuisance caused by associates of the residents of the hostels;
- The police had assisted at the eviction of squatters who had been occupying an empty property in Castle Street;
- There have been thefts from vehicles in the Regency square car park. Fran herself had found the security gates broken on more than one occasion and had reported the fact to BHCC.

Regency Square Car Park

The last point above was of concern to the Committee. Our elegant area has been blighted with something even less impressive than Colditz Castle ... and the vehicles that the aggressive-looking gates protect seem to be even less secure than if they were in Colditz Castle.

The car park is very much underused and even our bold PCSO commented on the unpleasantness of the sequential lighting in the car park: it light up a little way in front of you, but goes dark almost before you have moved forward a few paces. Lighting worthy of some horror film.

The City Council is in the process of removing the large white sign to the right of the entrance. The Committee will ensure that any replacement is an improvement on the sign and that it is not replaced by something even more hideous.



Why the grey walls? All properties in Tegency Square should be painted in the standard colour BS 10 31 C

Why is the car park so empty in the daytime? Look at the charges per hour and compare them to another car park:

Regency Square		Churchill Square	
1 hr	£ 1.00	0-2 hrs	£2.00
2 hrs	£ 5.00	2-3 hrs	£4.00
4 hrs	£12.00	3-4 hrs	£6.00
		4-6 hrs	£10.00
9 hrs	£17.00		
24 hrs	£20.00	6-24 hrs	£25.00

What do we want?

Here is a short wish-list for our area which the committee is working towards:

- Removal of parking bays from the garden side of the west carriageway of Regency Square. This should prevent tailbacks as cars queue to enter the car park;
- Residents parking permits to be extended until later in the evening, given the competition for places with hotel guests and restaurant clients (and i360 aficionados?);
- Residents-only parking on several streets in our area; there is a virtually empty car park under one square;
- Eliminating anti-social behaviour from our area;
- Gates to the squares that work;
- Cleaner, tidier communal refuse bins ;
- Trees in planters in Regency Square ;
- A tasteful, Regency-style mural on the blank wall of the Metropole Hotel in Queensbury Mews;
- Gardens that we want to be proud to use, to show to visitors and to tourists (and i360 aficionados?) .

When do we want it?

Now ... is not an option, but gradually the Committee are working towards these aims, either in collaboration with the City Council or through the very hard work of volunteers from within the Society.

Planning

The developers of 67 Preston Street have appealed against City Council's decision to refuse permission to turn the property into a house in multiple occupation. The appeal will go to the Planning Inspector. It will be an individual inspector who will give his or her decision.

The Committee has written a detailed letter to the Inspector asking him/her to support the City Council's refusal of permission.

The Inspector is entitled to give a "desk top" decision without seeing the property. In the letter, the Committee is also asking the Inspector to ensure that an on-site visit is made to the premises.

Projects

The wish-list list on the left is just a start. Do let the committee know if you have any other projects which, however large or small, which will help improve our area.

Society Contacts

Chair: Trix Webber ☎ 01273 321858

✉ tew823@gmail.com

Treasurer: Nicola Floyd ☎ 078 3352 7270

✉ nicola.floyd@yahoo.com

Secretary: Suzanne Hinton ☎ 01273 321794

✉ s@hinton.clara.net

Peregrines

Even if you have no ornithological leanings, do have a look at the peregrine falcon chick on the live web cam – voyeurism really pays off. The chicks are fascinating: <http://sussexheights.co.uk/peregrine-falcons-at-sussex-heights>



"You lookin' at me?"

Volunteers needed

You love being in the open air? You love gardening? Why not spend a few hours in Regency Square in the company of other Society members? At the moment, the vast majority of the work on the gardens of the square is carried out by just 3 members. They would love to have some help. The City Council mows the lawns but does virtually no other gardening work in the RSAS area.

If you have a spare hour or two, meet Trix, Jenny and Lally in the top garden on any Friday at 11.00am.

The Society visits the Metropole

On Monday afternoon 24th March, a small group of RSAS members were treated to a tour of the Metropole Hotel. Jon Allan, Events Manager, was our guide and we were admitted to areas unseen by ordinary visitors: two original stained glass windows which have been boarded up inside a void; subterranean passages leading the boiler room where two enormous cylinders, equipped with the most up to date technology, supply hot water and central heating to the whole complex; and finally, the kitchens, which serve food to dining rooms and for room service 24 hours a day.

Jon recounted many fascinating stories of past and present, the most bizarre of which concerned the discovery of three million pounds worth of gambling chips in a safe which had been bricked into a pillar long ago and forgotten until renovation work revealed it. Sadly, the chips are now worthless!

Finally, we were totally spoilt with a delicious Metropole cream tea and pastries.

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