



NEWSLETTER 307 October 2016

Social events

Thursday 1 December: Join the Committee of the Society round the Christmas tree in Regency Square. There will be early evening sing-song with the Salvation Army band. More details next month.

Tuesday 13 December: "The Wizard of Oz" at the Little Theatre in Clarence Gardens at 7.45 pm Tickets £10.00. A pre-performance glass of wine at the home of a committee member included. Please contact Trix Webber by Saturday 30th October at the latest. Tickets going fast.

The Squares and the Aviva Fund

Society Treasurer Nicola Floyd has applied for funding from the Aviva fund. The application is for up to £5,000 to buy plants, paints, anything needed to maintain our heritage squares. As Regency Square is already a beneficiary of some funding via the i360, any money from Aviva would be devoted in the first place to Clarence Square and then to Russell Square.

Where's the catch?

None really - except that to get hold of the money, the Society's application has to win votes from the public. We will all have to get our friends, relations, followers and acquaintances to vote asap. If you receive this Newsletter electronically, details are in the accompanying e-mail. Or contact any Society officer for help voting.

Clarence Square residents reclaim their square

Following energetic efforts on the part of residents, Clarence Square is becoming a much more agreeable space. The gate is now regularly locked at dusk. The grass does not therefore suffer so much from the detritus left by the gaggles of youths who used to congregate there.

Ladbroke's have also played their part by refusing permission for groups of youths to linger around their entrance door. This has had a very positive effect.

Composting in the city centre

Regency Square has had two composting bins discretely hidden away at the top of the square for a couple of years now. If you are interested in joining the scheme, contact either Gill Wales (gill.wales@virgin.net) or Julie White (jcw40@aol.com).

Should the bins be tucked away where it might be a little tricky to access them, or should they be on the grass in full view to encourage their use?

If you are in Clarence Square or Russell Square, the good news is that a composting scheme will soon start up in Clarence Square. More details to follow next month.

Goodbye and hello at the Regency Tavern

After several years as Mein Hosts at the Regency Tavern, Paul and Robin have moved to pastures new in the exotic far east of East Sussex. We will miss them, but do pop in to say hello to Kim and his partners, Shelley and Patricia who have taken over the running of the pub.

"There are no plans for major changes", Kim says and it is certainly nice to see Richard still behind the bar. Inside and out have been spruced up. The Society wishes our new neighbours all success in their new venture.

Kim, Shelley and Patricia invite you to their re-launch evening on 12 November.

A pretty face in Regency Square



Congratulations to the owners of 46a Regency Square. The rather dusty duckling has turned into a beautiful swan of a building with delightfully sympathetic paintwork, new railings a perfect match to those in the rest of the square and new paving. A real success. Thanks you to all involved in the restoration of the property.

Roofs - plain or pearl?

Every flight on the i360 reveals something new. The Argus spotted something new last week. The Hotel Metropole has a new face ... on its roof. Should local buildings embellish the i360 view with paintings (or is it graffiti) on their roofs? Should perhaps adverts for a local business be allowed? or do you prefer the crazy paving look of, say, the Abbotts block of flats? Here is a link to the Argus photo: <http://tinyurl.com/zuc9z6u>

Another roof concerns the Society and that is the new one being constructed by the i360 on the upper esplanade. It is necessary for the essential security checks. Most visitors who take a "flight" are no doubt reassured by the care taken by the i360 to protect them. Is this the best way to do so? See overleaf.

Planning

i360: Here is something else to comment on. There have been several adverse comments in the press and on social media about the gazebo erected to protect visitors and staff from bad weather during the security check process.



Everyone was glad to wave good-bye to the gazebo - but with its shapely roof, it was a bit more in keeping with the elegant curved pod and the flanking pavilions than the flat roof now under construction.

Does the new structure enhance the esplanade area? Or do you think it destroys the symmetry of the two wonderfully restored tollbooths.

35 Russell Square: the committee of the Society will examine carefully the final drawings for the "shop front" to ensure that the new ground floor windows onto the square are sympathetic to neighbouring buildings.

St Margarets Place (rear of 35 and 36 Russell Square): permission has been given to build a three story home. This should tidy up the area considerably.

2A Regency Mews: The application for a three-bed house has been refused. One reason for the refusal was that the historical structure of the building would not be respected. Of more interest is that one objector had found that the property was already listed on a "party house" site.

It is not clear that the "party house" threat was the reason for the refusal, but local residents may well be pleased by the decision.

Russell House (formerly the BUPA building): a full planning application has been received by the Council but no details are yet available on the Council website. The advantages of the scheme are that it will provide many much needed homes in the city centre.

The disadvantages are that the flats will overlook at very close quarters several properties in Regency Square and Castle Street and the development will no doubt increase the number of vehicles in the area.

13a Stone Street: Several objections have been submitted to this retrospective application. The main objection is the excessive height of the outer walls and the narrowing of the gates. Both these aspects fail to respect the character of this Grade II listed property.

61-61 Western Road (former HMV shop): The residents of Stone Street have welcomed this application for nine large flats with an entrance in Stone Street.

Enforcement: The Society has requested that the Council takes enforcement action against the following breaches of planning:

- 22 Clarence Square - unauthorised external extractor fan;
- 51 Regency Square - poor condition of the property which is highly visible to residents and visitors as they enter Regency Square from Russell Square;
- 23 Clarence Square - unsightly black drainpipe on the facade of an otherwise very well restored property;
- Russell House - unacceptable noise and dirt reaching neighbouring properties from building materials being thrown from the building, often from a height of four storeys into lorries at ground level

Removal of parking bays

The City's Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee decided (even before the committee meeting was held) that the 13 shared parking bays on the garden side of the west of Regency Square should not be removed.

The Committee of the Society is still of the opinion that blockages to the car park entrance on busy days causes excess pollution, noise of motor horns and a barrier to emergency vehicles.

As the bays are shared by residents and the paying public, many of the bays are not available to residents during daytime hours, so the loss is, in practice, possibly far fewer than thirteen bays.

The Committee is also beginning to campaign for longer parking restriction hours until 10pm so that any resident returning home after 8pm will stand a far better chance of finding an available parking space.

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A date for your diary

"Behind the facades of Regency Square" Suzanne Hinton will be giving a talk to the Forum Society on Wednesday 2 November at the English Language Centre in Palmeira Square at 7pm. £3.00.

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