



NEWSLETTER 312 April 2017

Report on the AGM

Trix Webber has moved a very short distance away from the Society's core area and has stood down as Chair. However, the Committee is pleased to report that Trix has agreed to be co-opted onto the Committee.

The following were elected or re-elected:
Treasurer: Nicola Floyd (Queensbury [Mews])
Secretary: Suzanne Hinton (Kings Road)
Paula Brookes (Stone Street)
Diana Dunn (Clarence Gardens)
Ellie Smith (Kings Road)

The Society is delighted to welcome Ellie Smith to the committee. Originally, from New Zealand, Ellie decided to finally settle in beautiful Brighton because of the sea and close proximity to the South Downs where she frequently walks her dog.

"I find the people in Brighton so friendly and I love the fact that there are wonderful cultural events like the Brighton Festival. It's a great place to live".

First, a big thank you to the Metropole Hotel for generously allowing the Society to use the Osborne Room at no cost.

The evening of the AGM started with a very informative talk from Paul Campbell, Project Manager with the City Council, about green spaces in the city. Much of his talk centred about Stanmer Park.



Trix Webber (Chair) and Paul Campbell were really were much happier than they look - honestly. Photo (c) Diana Dunn

As far as Regency Square was concerned, Paul expressed the view that cars around the square are an "eyesore" and suggested having an annual car free event. He also talked enthusiastically about the need to make heritage more accessible to ordinary people to encourage them to value it more.

Paul pointed out that fixed items in public spaces cease to have any effect once people become familiar with them. He is in favour of "ephemeral art".

This view chimed very much with the report Trix Webber made to the AGM on the progress of the regeneration of the Regency Square gardens. Trix reminded members that money is available for a master plan and topographical survey (£10,000). However, she expressed her frustration that working with the Council is "terribly slow" and that major funding is not likely to be available until 2018.

Trix expressed the concern of the committee that it is very few in numbers. The existing volunteer members are keen to do their best for the area, but there is only so much that six people can do.

The committee is delighted that Ellie Smith has offered her services. Please do contact any members of the committee if you would be interested in taking part in the running of the Society.

Points from the floor:

Nigel Rose asked specifically whether 1% of i360 ticket sales was being made available for use locally. Trix confirmed that is the case. She also said that council officers were supporting the view the 30% of this money should be spent in Regency Square, but pointed out that this was still to be confirmed by the relevant Council committee. She gave credit to Nigel for persuading officers to support this 30% allocation. She mentioned that a loan would be needed to meet the up-front cost of work in Regency Square and the 30% would then meet the loan payments into the future.

There was considerable discussion about hotels becoming hostels. This is a matter which the committee is actively investigating.

The prize draw was a huge success, raising £145.00
Many thanks to the following for donating prizes:

Casalongo Restaurant, Preston Street (£40 voucher),
Regency Tavern, Russell Square (meal for 2 with wine)
i360 (2 tickets)
Al Fresco Restaurant, Kings Road (£75 voucher)
The New Club, Kings Road (bottle of wine)
Regency Restaurant, Regency Square (meal for 2)
Hotel Una, Regency Square (1 night for 2 people)
Artists' Residence, Regency Square (ditto)
The New Club (bottle of wine)
Sushi Garden (bottle of sake)
Suzanne Hinton (book)
Ross Page (two books)



Open letter to "The Friends of Regency Square"

You may have noticed, every Saturday morning, Neil Rosborough at his table near the War Memorial in Regency Square. He is collecting signatures for a petition to the City Council on behalf of "The Friends of Regency Square".

You might not have seen a copy of the e-mail which Neil sends out monthly to people who have signed the petition. The open letter below explains the situation:

Dear Neil,

In your latest "Friends" e-mail you say the following:

"... the RSAS cannot be blamed for **not wanting to get involved in activities** on our square. Their main concern is with conservation issues for the whole area and it has to be acknowledged that in the DNA of conservationists generally is a dislike of change."

This statement is, to say the least, inaccurate.

The Regency Square Area Society has existed since 1978. Its volunteers have worked tirelessly over the years to maintain and even improve the quality of life and the community in the area. The Committee is elected at a meeting which is open to the public. As you are not a member of the Society, you do not realise how much work is being carried out at present. Here is a very short list of just some of the work undertaken recently by those volunteers:

- Our area was in danger of being excluded from the seafront improvements funded by Section 106 monies accruing from the i360. Thanks to a former Society committee member, one third of this money has been ring-fenced for Regency Square.
- The Society has consulted widely with residents and businesses on how best to spend this money.
- Since December 2016 the Committee has been working regularly with a City Council Officer and a landscape architect to discuss how best to

implement what local residents say how they want the square to be regenerated.

- The Society was instrumental in the creation of two on-street motorbike bays. This has already reduced the number of motorbikes parked on Regency Square.
- The Society monitors and, in some cases comments, on planning applications
- The Committee maintains a web site which enables two way communication with the public.
- There is a regular newsletter which is publically available on-line
- The Society regularly makes representations to the City Council regarding illegal alterations to properties, noise nuisance and other matters brought to the attention of the committee.
- A renovated bench will soon appear in Regency Square, funded by the Society.
- Many residents and visitors enjoyed the Christmas tree funded by Restaurant Casalingo and erected by the Society. Many people also enjoyed the lights on the tree and the carol singing which were organised by the Committee.

We would like to work with you, Neil, but you have always declined to co-operate, preferring to plough your own furrow. That is fine, but please do not criticise and misrepresent the work done by the volunteers of the Society.

In the interests of co-operation we would be grateful if you could circulate this Newsletter to your e-mail list.

Signed: The committee of the Regency Square Area Society as elected on 20 April 2017.

Planning

Sussex Heights - As 11 letter of objection have been lodged against the re-cladding of this building, the application will have to be considered by the full Planning Committee. Twelve letters of support have been received.

26, 27 and 28 Clarence Square / 48-50 Western Road
The creation of 6 one-bed flats and 3 two-bed flats. The shops will be retained. This is an identical application to that given permission in 2015. This development should improve the look of the north side of Clarence Square. The Society will support this application.

22 Clarence Square: the ugly ventilators pumping fatty, smelly air from the Piri-Piri restaurant have been removed. The result is that now foul-smelling, black smoke is frequently emitted from the property. The Society is pressing the Council to find a solution to this problem.

122 Kings Road / Queensbury Mews: The tiny cottage which was slightly enlarged last year to form a family home has now been turned into an Air B+B property accommodating 10 or more guests.

The property has no proper fire escape, an unauthorised balcony and several other design defects. The Society is urging the Council to act against the owners of this property in the interests of the safety of its users.

Regency Square 200 - A Request

The year 2018 marks the 200th "birthday" of Regency Square. The Society's committee plan to publish a commemorative book about the square. The Society already has a large amount of formal history relating to the square but very little in the way of personal histories.

If you have reminiscences or personal photographs relating to life in the square in the 20th century, please contact Suzanne Hinton (01273 321794) or via the Society's website: www.regencybrighton.com



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