



Regency Square's Town Crier

## The Friends of Regency Square Blog No 19 May 2017

### ***WEEK 1 PIER SIGN COMES AND GOES PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR PIAZZA, FEEDBACK ON THE LITTLE BEACH BUGGIES,***

Saturday was cloudy but dry with the Donut doing good business.

#### ***FAN ADORNS OUR OLD LADY***



The *West Pier's* name returned to the crumbling hulk for the first time in more than 14 years. "Massive fan" Richard Michalec paddled out to the pier and scaled the precarious legs of the Grade 1 listed structure to unfurl a banner bearing the same style of writing as the original sign. But, sadly within a few days, his stunt had been called "incredibly dangerous" and the sign was removed.

***RICHARD'S SIGN FOR OUR GRAND OLD LADY***

#### **A PIAZZA WITHOUT THE MOTOR CYCLES**

We learn this week that the RSAS are to provide a commemorative bench on the west side of the front of our square to match the one purchased by Mrs Boulden in memory of her late husband. The presence of Mrs Boulden's bench has helped reduce the number of illegally parked motorcycles at the very front of the square.

#### ***FEEDBACK ON BUGGIES***

Beryl of Preston St likes the idea of the little golf carts trundling along our beach road at a safe pace between the Palace Pier and the King Alfred complex.

"The *Little Lemons* would certainly catch the imagination of the eco friendly Brighton tourists - but so also would stylish battery powered ***Rickshaws*** which I have encountered in my travels - and they would be lots cheaper!"



***RICKSHAWS FOR OUR BEACH ROAD?***

## **WEEK 2 FESTIVAL BEGINS - BUT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IT HERE, DOGS IN OUR TOP GARDEN?**

Brighton Festival begins and we have a sunny Saturday morning. Sadly there is no sign of any festival activity or signage at Brighton's new focal point for tourists - namely the *i360*. Surely there is room in the very large box office for one of the desks to be given over for Festival bookings and publicity. There are many other occasions when an extra focal point for Information and bookings would be very useful for the many thousands of extra tourists the *i360* will attract.

This will often be their first stop on a tour of all Brighton's attractions and an *Information Point* here would be very useful. It will also help the new attraction to become more integrated into our community.

### **DOGS IN OUR TOP GARDEN?**

We learn that residents of Norfolk Square are considering making their square dog-friendly again. They wish to encourage responsible dog owners to enjoy their newly planted square and the present exclusion of dogs is not working anyway.



With new bins and their new *inclusive* approach the residents of the square think this might be a step in the right direction. Palmeria Square/Adelaide Crescent has already shown that a dog friendly approach is not abused and it might help with our antisocial problems if we also allow responsible dog owners in our beautiful top garden as well as the rest of our square. They would set a good example.

What are your views?

**PELLEAS HOPES WE WILL BE DOG-FRIENDLY!**

## **WEEK 3 NEW MAN FOR BA 1360 KEEP FIT CLASSES ON REGENCY SQUARE, HANDYMAN NEEDED FOR TUNNEL TEAM, PUZZLING NEW EVENT SPACE**

Saturday - the day before the big football parade - was dry and sunny.

We learn this week of *BAi360's* appointment of a new CEO. He is Steve Bax from *English Heritage* and he starts in July.



The **Metropole LivingWell Health Club** have provisionally scheduled their outdoor *Keep Fit* activities on Regency Square beginning early June. On **Mondays** (Box Fit), **Wednesdays** (Circuit Training) and **Fridays** (\*HIIT Training) and these will be at 1800 - 1900 hrs. On **Thursdays** The Run Club will be from 0800 - 0900 hrs.

**HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING "PHEW - I SHOULD SAY SO!"**

(\***HIIT**, or *high-intensity interval training*, is a training technique in which you give all-out, one hundred percent effort through quick, intense bursts of exercise, followed by short, sometimes active, recovery periods. This type of training gets and keeps your heart rate up and burns more fat in less time.)

The *Friends* hope that our less-than-svelte residents can keep up!

They have special rates for Regency Square residents and a day rate of £4 will apply for the *Keep Fit* sessions. These will be subject to weather and availability.

### **HANDYMAN REQUIRED**

Our Beach Tunnel will soon be open and when it is we will be commencing our growing exhibition of community photos and prints.

We need a *handyman* (with basic carpentry skills) to join our tunnel team to price up and fix the 8 x 4 boards to the tunnel walls so that we can offer exhibition space to local societies and groups.

This will be occasional paid work in Brighton's first Community Subway Exhibition of its type. Please apply to the [friendsofregencysquare@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofregencysquare@gmail.com)

### **“WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?”**

Comment overheard from bystander seeing the new *Event Space* on the east side of the *i360* for the first time. The white paving stones and grey lines are certainly very striking - toning in with the colour of the predominantly white and grey *i360* colour scheme.



**THE NEW EVENT SPACE**

It will be interesting to see what kind of *event* or activity it attracts. Clearly the Council are hoping that the space will be booked for performances or other events to boost their funds.

With a programme of events alongside the nearby *Bandstand* it is unlikely that the Council will take on the programming themselves.

So the Craft Arches alongside are worried that inevitably the space will just be used by skateboarders - for the flat surface is very attractive for them.

#### **WEEK 4 NEW WEST PIER PIAZZA TAKING SHAPE,**

Dry Saturday with Donut very busy but upper esplanade empty and locked.

Work has begun on a *Golden Spiral* of West Pier pillars which will form the centrepiece of a new



seafront square alongside the i360 called the *PIAZZA*. The artwork made from 24 of the pier's original cast-iron columns will feature a central plaque commemorating the work and life of West Pier creator Eugenius Birch.

**WEST PIER PIAZZA**

The columns seem to cry out for something new to support and perhaps a structure mounted on top of them could reflect their original supportive role and, at the same time better define the spiral shape.

How about a competition to design such a structure on top of the columns which could be used for all sorts of things or maybe they could be offered individually for sale to West Pier enthusiasts to be used as flower pedestals?

A nice way to add colour to the area perhaps?

Please let us have your thoughts on the spiral of columns.

The western end of the new Piazza will also eventually be home to a new Heritage Centre for the *West Pier Trust* which in the meantime has been paved in white to match the *Event Space* on the other side of the i360. The square is due to open later in the summer.

#### **WEEK 5 CRAFT NEIGHBOURS MOVING IN, WOODEN TOPS AND FREE BA DECKCHAIRS,**

Bank holiday weekend following a week dominated by the Manchester bomb.

Strangely on Saturday the upper esplanade is again locked and empty with customers entering and exiting the Donut down at beach level.

It is not clear whether the decision to close the upper esplanade has to do with the weather, the whims of the staff or perhaps a security aspect -in the light of recent events. It remained closed for the whole Bank Holiday weekend and begs the question of whether entrance and exit to the pod should always be at beach level.

### **CRAFTY NEIGHBOURS**

This weekend more Craft Arches on the east side of the i360 are being opened. There is developing a sizeable community around the base of the i360 and surely now is the time for the managers of the *BAi360* to start up again the community feedback meetings that were discontinued when the attraction opened.

### **NEW DECKCHAIRS AT BEACH LEVEL**



New this week - pukka slatted wooden tops on the terror prevention blocks and also free BA deckchairs down on the lower level.

Let's hope this deckchair gesture could eventually be extended to the upper esplanade which so often is underused?

**FREE DECKCHAIRS**

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### **CAMPAIGN RECAP AND PROGRESS - A MONTHLY ASSESSMENT.**

#### **MAJOR LANDSCAPING VERSUS COMMUNITY GARDENING FOR REGENCY SQUARE?.**

Norfolk Square has recently had a *Planting Day* amid a blaze of publicity and with local MP Caroline Lucas leading a team of local enthusiasts in planting 400 new plants and shrubs. These were purchased with a Council grant and very successful crowd funding among local businesses.

The planting scheme was provided by a local garden designer who provided the plants at cost and the crowd funding was so successful that they have embarked on a 3 year plan which will ensure funding for maintenance and also new lighting.

The *Friends* believe that this could be the way forward for *Regency Square* and it may be the time to encourage local



enthusiasts to do something like this and to start our own *Planting Project* which will be open to all interested gardeners

We fear that putting everything on hold until the possibility of funding from the *i360* has discouraged local gardening enthusiasts and in this regard we differ from the approach of the *RSAS* who continue to wait for funding for major relandscaping. This has been talked about for more than a decade.

We believe that there is not enough support for major relandscaping and that, like Norfolk Square, we should now start to gain the support of local businesses for our own community based initiative.

This would improve planting, (a designed *Planting Project* for the top garden perhaps?) stonework maintenance/improvements and new lighting especially in the front garden which has been very neglected.

Regency Square is a public square belonging to all of us and not just the subscribers of the local *special interest* groups such as *the West Pier Trust* and the *RSAS*.

An *inclusive* approach is what our free *Friends* group stands for and we would encourage participation in all the activities on the square by all who use it - including tenants and hotel guests.

Norfolk Square has shown the way and the very generous grant they have received indicates that the Council favour this *non-exclusive* approach in a public space.

In the light of the anti-social behaviour evident in all our squares Norfolk Square have shown courage and resolve in adopting such an approach. We wish them well.

Whether we ask for gardening funds from the Council, the *i360 community monies* or through crowd funding the *Friends* believe we stand a bigger chance of success if we adopt the *inclusive* approach.

We also believe we should limit our request to a much more affordable planting and maintenance scheme rather than complete relandscaping which has already been given the thumbs down in a recent survey.

If recent designs by the celebrity gardener Diarmuid Gavin were so little appreciated the new design proposed by the Council seafront landscaper (responsible for the controversial new *Event Space* alongside the i360) is even more unlikely to find favour and more time will be wasted.

And this is always assuming that the public would be invited to comment on the design (which is not the case with seafront designs).

Please let us have your views.

Next issue - an open letter to the new CEO of BAi360

NEIL ROSBOROUGH 29/5/2017





