



Regency Square's Town Crier

The Friends of Regency Square Blog No 18 April 2017

WEEK 1 BELEAGUERED I360! LITTLE LEMONS FOR THE SEAFRONT BEACH ROAD?

All working fine on the Donut now but the media this week really seemed to have it in for our new attraction. They appear to resent the lack of information about the recent i360 shutdown and even the delay in appointing a new CEO.

A quaint sight recently seen on the seafront beach road has been heavy lorries servicing all the recent works being preceded by a restricted-speed golf cart which reminds us of the days when new motor cars had a safety man with a red flag walking before them.

This suggests a way forward with regard to coping with the transport needs of the thousands of new tourists after they have had their twenty minute ride on the **1360**. They could be at a loss as to where to go. Their booking for the i360 will often be the first call on their list of attractions to see.

A shuttle service of 4/6 seater electric (or LPG) go-carts trundling along at a leisurely safe pace on the beach level road between Palace Pier and the King Alfred (together with appropriate audio guide) might well be the answer and we are hoping that someone will give some thought to a trial run. Plenty of request stops could be provided and for ease of operation there could be a flat fare.

Perhaps **The Big Lemon** might be interested? (or even the **B&H** bus company who are now trying out electric buses.) This would be a seasonal operation and bus companies would be ideally placed to provide the staff.

Such a service would be of great benefit to all the retail units along the seafront and also help new visitors get a sense of the layout of our city. The main coastal road above gets very congested and this service will keep them away from the traffic jams. The request stops along the beach road would be at useful points to provide easy access to key avenues into the city attractions - eg at Palace Pier (for The Royal Pavilion), at The Shelter Hall (for The Lanes and Brighton Centre), at the i360 (for Churchill Square), at The Peace Statue (for Hove Lawns. Brunswick Square etc etc).

At the *Peace Statue* the beach road and the cycle lane for the seafront are at the same level and the little golf carts could then choose either route.

What do you think?

WEEK 2 OUR BEACH TUNNEL OPENS FOR THE MARATHON, OOPS. HAVE A NICE TRIP! THEN AND NOW - THE PEACE STATUE WITH COLOUR

Beautiful Sunny Saturday morning and the day before the Brighton Marathon. For this special weekend the beach tunnel was opened and was an opportunity to plan what needs to be done for the proposed tunnel exhibition.

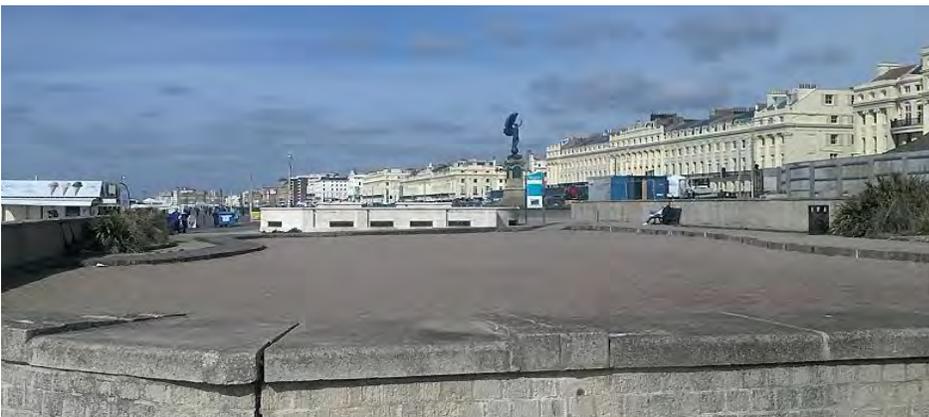
It has now been closed again and we believe there is discussion about locking it at night time.

This week about half of the new **Event** space was opened and local resident Reginald, (who commented in the last issue about the new dangerous unmarked kerb) appears to be quite right with a number of people already having tripped down the step.

This bare expanse of paving will cry out for some activity to live up to its eventful name - Interesting to see what the area attracts.

In days gone by Seafront landscapers had a different approach. *Events* happened on the beach and landscaping didn't just mean acres of paving stones but also plants and the colour of flowers.

We see here a photograph taken in **1949** at the *Peace Statue* which shows how (even at this



period of post-war austerity) the Council knew a thing or two about how to enliven the seafront.

And what do we have now? - a bare, cold and oversized *event* space for *Petanque* or *Boules*. (The game is traditionally played on small town-centre gravel pitches underneath Plane trees alongside other community activities.)

Which do you prefer?

THEN (1949) AND NOW

We learn this week that residents in Norfolk square are looking to crowdfunding for new plants and flowers and this is perhaps the only solution at a time of Council cuts. It is something that perhaps we should consider for Regency Square.

The Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) introduced in January we believe cover the seafront squares and would enable fines to be issued to those erecting tents. They are becoming controversial and there is a sit-in alongside St Peter's Church.

WEEK 3 BAI360'S TOYTOWN SECURITY LOCKS OUT US LOCALS, IF NOTHING ELSE A SPACE FOR WOOLLY JUMPERS!

Quite a cold and cloudy start to the Easter Weekend. Saturday proved a bad day for signatures but at least we had the welcome sight of lots of activity on the upper esplanade which was being used for the first time in nearly 7 months.

(unfortunately we spoke too soon for by Monday all loading and unloading of the 1360 pod was being done down below and the upper platform was again empty and locked)

It is difficult not to believe that the main consideration in this regard is the take of the gift shop and that passing the passengers through twice will probably double the take.

We see this week that a big green screen has been erected inside the structure alongside the ticket office to facilitate the taking of photos of all passengers by staff dressed as airline stewards. This is in addition to their very OTT measures - body searches, electronic scans and intrusive bag checks. (remember this is essentially only a 20 minute up and down seaside observation ride!)



One day someone will cast a critical eye on this toytown security which actually ignores the main vulnerability of the attraction.

It would appear that the conservationist groups' objection to the look of this structure has also been ignored. The new green screen blocks even more of our view.

Sadly the 1360 have not as yet shown much interest in local opinion.

EMPTY AND LOCKED (EVEN ON A SUNNY BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY!)

With the hoarding now removed the new *Event Space* is revealed. Whilst we may not warm to the blank and colourless expanse of paving (which looks from above like an empty swimming



THE CRAFT ARCHES BRING COLOUR AND CHARACTER TO THE NEWLY PAVED EVENT SPACE.

pool!) it does, at least, allow space for the craft arches to add their own individual flair and style to the area in front of their doors.

We see a motley collection of signs, woolly knitted things, plants, bicycles, fixtures and bric-a-brac which they put outside their shops each day and which truly enlivens the whole area.

WEEK 4 GOING ONLINE WITH OUR PETITION, OUTDOOR MUSICAL AEROBICS WITH THE HILTON METROPOLE

A mild but cloudy Saturday morning with the Donut doing very well.

This week the General Election was announced and for the next few weeks our little domestic issues might seem small fry in the context of the big national concerns. But we expect it will be good for signatures as there will be a new political awareness on the busy streets.

It might be a good plan to delay going online with the petition until after the election and we will take advise from our friendly Councillors.

We learn today that the **LivingWell Health Club** of the **Hilton Metropole** are planning outdoor keep fit classes for their guests and local residents and Regency Square is their favoured location. These *Circuit* classes would be between 6pm to 7pm from 1st June to 1st October .



The Club know of the *Friends* keen interest in promoting this kind of event and they have asked us to sound out our members on the proposal.

When we know more we will fill in the details.

MUSICAL STAR JUMPS AS SHOWN IN THE FRIENDS PICTURE BY OUR LISA HOLDCROFT

CAMPAIGN RECAP AND PROGRESS - A MONTHLY ASSESSMENT.

Relations with the West Pier Trust

Whilst we are hoping that the new **CEO** of the **BAi360** will both live and work amongst the local community it is probably the case that the whole commercial and international scope of the operation does not lend itself to concern with our home grown domestic local issues.

So we will have to seek other means to help integrate the attraction into what is an area of great historical and local interest and this is where we look to the *West Pier Trust* who are the landlords of both the new attraction and also of any future new pier.

The Friends Of Regency Square are working towards a good relationship with the *Trust* to help establish a community feel to the new *Piazza* which will be the new home of the *Trust*. It will be nice to have them here on hand again after an absence of many years and we welcome their new Chairman Michael Farthing.

Our *Beach Tunnel* leads directly from the new *Piazza* to our square and we hope the planned exhibition of historical prints, photos and historical graffiti will help with creating this new community identity as well as encouraging the new visitors to cross over to the attractions on our side of the road.

The new arches on the east side of the *BAi360* will soon be inhabited and this will bring in newcomers to the community. Some of these will be catering outlets and there will be much anticipation of the *West Pier Heritage Centre* which will be at the east end of the *Piazza*.

The West Pier Tea Shop could be so much more than it is now (they have *Palace Pier* photos on the Wall ?!) and we hope these will soon be replaced with *West Pier* photos as a taster for our tunnel exhibition. The new community noticeboard directly outside the entrance to the tunnel will add to the package of measures which hopefully will bring some life to what is presently a soulless area.

The *Friends* think it would be much better if the *West Pier Trust* were in charge of the tea shop as they were before when it was a gift shop.

NEIL ROSBOROUGH 28/4/2017

