

Work begins on Kevin McCloud's eco house



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Brighton O ferris wheel gets green light



Artist's impression of wheel. The proposed site of the ferris wheel is about 100 metres east of The Brighton Pier.

Plans to build a giant ferris wheel on Brighton's seafront have been given the go-ahead by councillors. The decision was agreed by Brighton and Hove City councillors at a meeting on 28th April.

Permission is temporary for five years. A condition of the consent is that the structure is removed by May 2016.

Developers are expected to start work soon and have the attraction ready during the main summer season.

illuminated at night

The site of the proposed wheel is enclosed by seafront railings and about 100m east of The Brighton Pier. At full capacity it would carry around 280 passengers in 36 cabins for an 11-minute ride.

The giant wheel will be similar to ones in Paris and at Niagara Falls.

The wheel would be open from 10am to 11pm, every day and would be illuminated at night.

Businesses have welcomed the plans, describing it as a boost to traders. But, if the i360 observation tower is built before the temporary

period expires, the wheel will have to be taken down and relocated elsewhere.

A spokesman for Paramount Attractions said: "This type of project has a proven track record of regenerating areas and attracting visitors, helping local businesses and the economy.

"It will be a fantastic attraction for Brighton and Hove and this can really happen."

Ian Coomber, of planning firm Stiles Harold Williams, said the proposal has already received local support, adding: "It will complement rather than compete with other attractions."

Max Leviston, general manager of Brighton Sea Life Centre, said: "From a business view I'm absolutely delighted. A high-profile visitor attraction is exactly what Brighton needs."

Anne Martin, general manager of The Brighton Pier, said: "Anything that encourages more visitors to Brighton is good for all the businesses in the city."



Market Trends

Relative to recent years, 2011 has been comparatively uneventful in terms of big fluctuations in the property market locally.

Despite some concerns over economic growth and property prices reportedly seeing their greatest drop for some time, the housing market in Brighton & Hove has remained stable.

Properties in the city have held their value from the beginning of the year and look likely to do so. Just as the weather has hotted up so has the market, with a steady increase in sales as we move from Spring to Summer. The number of transactions is also on a par with this time last year and the number of properties coming on to the market and potential buyers indicates a healthy state of affairs.

If you are looking to move, as ever, the secret to a successful sale at the best possible return is realistic pricing. It is a competitive market and although it is tempting to put your home on at the highest possible price this could lead to your property sitting on the market losing value, whilst similar places are snapped up. Ensure your estate agent has a good knowledge of the local area and what similar properties in the area have sold for when agreeing the list price to market your property.

Without a crystal ball it is difficult to predict with certainty what the second half of the year will bring but we are quietly confident that the local property market will remain stable. Despite some economic pessimism, with the base rate being maintained, GDP figures better than expected and interest rates being held longer than predicted things have been far more positive than perhaps forecast. Indeed, some mortgage lenders are actively reducing their rates in order to be more competitive and encourage lending and growth.

That said, there is a rate rise expected in the second half of 2011 so if you are looking to move this year it is advisable to get in before it so you can take advantage of cheaper mortgage deals.

Brighton & Hove continues to prove an attractive place to live, as illustrated by its relative resilience in comparison to the rest of the UK. In this vibrant city with a thriving population, we enjoy a dynamic property market with people continuing to move for a whole variety of reasons.

What's on!

Some local events scheduled during the next few months.

May 21 **Deans Festival** Family funday - free entry! Woodingdean Primary School, Warren Road - 11am to 4pm.

June 05 **Hanover Day** - Community Festival - Hanover District.

June 12 **Concours D'Elegance** - Classic Car Display Stanmer Park.

June 25 **Take Part Festival** - Annual sports festival Preston Park.

Please note: It is advisable to check dates, times and venue before travelling as each event is planned well in advance.

Barracks plan takes a step forward

Plans that could see land at Preston Barracks developed along with the adjoining University of Brighton sites were presented for approval at the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting in March this year.

The council and university, who have been working together for the past 18 months towards wider plans for the former barracks site, are keen to join forces to create a comprehensive development spanning the Lewes Road.

The former Preston Barracks site has been earmarked for development for several years, but the addition of the adjacent University of Brighton sites (Moulsecoomb campus and Mithras House) opens up many more opportunities.

Brighton & Hove City Council has drawn up a draft planning brief for the site, to create a mixed development of office space, educational buildings, housing, shops, and student accommodation.

The brief states that the development should be looking to include a substantial amount of employment floor space, around

300 residential units, retail and community facilities along with university buildings, including a new business school with 750 units of student housing.

Plans could also include pedestrian and cycle links, improved linkages across the Lewes Road, and a parkland walk to connect the adjoining residential areas with Moulsecoomb station.

Professor Julian Crampton, the University of Brighton Vice-Chancellor, said: "This is a significant and positive step forward for a development that will support local businesses, the community and higher education in general."



Changes afoot in Rottingdean

Residents in Rottingdean have been asked for their views on plans to make changes to the conservation area which covers the historic village.

The proposed changes are to the boundary of Rottingdean Conservation Area to help preserve and enhance the area for future generations.

Rottingdean Conservation area was formed in the early 1970's and includes the High Street and village green, along with green spaces to the east and west. There are 54 listed buildings, and an archaeological notification area. The listed Rottingdean Windmill is set on the adjacent hillside.

Much of the open downland surrounding the village was designated as part of the South Downs National Park in April 2010.

The council proposes extending the conservation area to include some gardens and allotments to the rear of properties on the Green adjoining Beacon Hill and to establish the boundary around the RC Church of Our Lady of Lourdes and the playing field to the rear of The Rotyngs.

A final decision has yet to be made.



Plans for market revamp submitted

These images show how the Open Market could look after an £18 million redevelopment. Five years after the idea was first raised, the application for the much-anticipated revamp has now been submitted to Brighton and Hove City Council.



Pictures released by developers show the transformation of the market into a modern shopping hub, complete with new trading space and 87 homes.

Christina Summers, from campaign group 'Another London Road', which opposed Tesco's plans for a store in the area, said: "One of the arguments for a multinational here was that it would provide an anchor to attracting people to the area. "The Open Market can provide this and will hopefully have a positive effect on other shops in the area. "The redevelopment

Story by kind permission of the Brighton and Hove Leader

will create 44 permanent stalls around a public square plus 12 arts and craft workshops, with more than 100 new full time jobs created.

The plans have been drawn up by Brighton firm Lomax Cassidy Edwards, which designed the city's Jubilee Library. Hyde Housing Association signed the building contract in March and it is hoped it will be complete in early 2013.

The planning statement reads: "The redevelopment will extend customer choice, strengthen the retail offer and improve the London Road centre's competitiveness. Developers said stall rents have been set to ensure that

the space is affordable to existing traders as well as like-minded small, independent local businesses.



Eco-meters available from libraries

Energy-saving meters can now be borrowed from all Brighton & Hove libraries. The Owl Micro wireless smart meters tell householders how much electricity their appliances are using. Meters display consumption either in terms of money or kilowatt hours - and underline the savings from switching appliances off or turning them down.

Meters are easy to fit, requiring no special skills or tools. A sensor is clipped onto a cable near the domestic electricity meter. This transmits information to a small digital display.

Councillor David Smith said: "These smart meters often make interesting reading for homeowners so it's apt we should make them available in libraries. "When you can see how much money your appliances are burning it's a real incentive to take action." For details of your nearest library visit: www.citylibraries.info or telephone 01273 290800.

Work has started on Kevin McCloud's eco house in Brighton

Work has begun on an ultra-sustainable house being created by a local architect with Grand Designs presenter Kevin McCloud.

The House that Kevin Built will be made largely from organic material such as straw and wood, plus waste products.

It is based on a home Kevin and Lewes architect Duncan Baker-Brown constructed in just six days for Grand Designs Live in 2008. However, this time the building will become a facility for the University of Brighton's arts department.

The project, supported by Brighton & Hove City Council, aims to show how low-carbon homes can be built cheaply and quickly. The building will have a number of ground-breaking eco-features.

Materials will include scrap from the nearby building site for Amex's new HQ. Walls, for instance, will be made from panels filled with straw bales to keep the house warm in winter and cool in summer. Heavy walls downstairs will act as a heat store, while lightweight materials upstairs provide insulation.

Innovative techniques will involve partly pre-fabricating the house off-site, using waste such as paper, straw, tins, glass and earth.

The house will be regularly evaluated and new research will provide improved techniques and materials for the house over its predicted five to ten-year lifespan.

The sun will heat hot water by shining onto pipes behind glass roof tiles. Other solar tiles will generate 2.5kw of electricity.

Building will take around three months. The premises will be used as an experimental venue for university research, student workshops, seminars and for exhibitions and events open to the wider public.

The project has a fund-raising drive to collect the £300,000 required for completion. Other funds are also needed for landscaping, boundary improvements and extra design work.

The project is able to start because of the generous backing of local housing services provider The Mears Group. They have pledged to cover the costs of all works below ground such as drainage, foundations and connections to existing mains electricity and sewers. They have also pledged to provide the site agent and their apprentices.

Other backers on board include Brighton & Hove City Council, the Building Research Establishment, and Deeks & Steere who built the original house.

What they say:

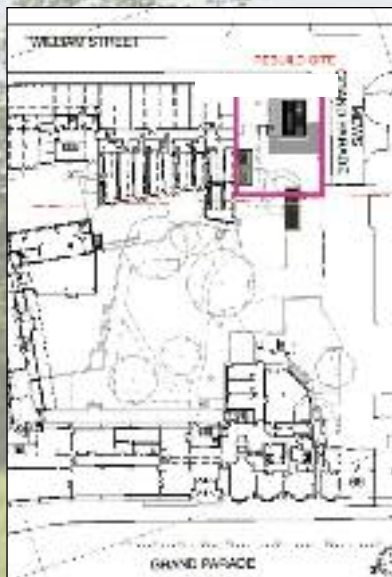
Kevin McCloud says: "I'm very pleased that the University of Brighton is committed to exploring new low-carbon methods of building. It's exciting to think that the campus could have its own practical demonstration building and I'm delighted to be connected to the university through this innovative piece of construction."

Duncan Baker-Brown says: "We're talking to large local builders who are kindly offering to donate what used to be called waste but is now called 'resource'. And we really want to hear from individuals or organisations who can help financially."

"Architecture students have already been involved with projects, influencing the development from the original design. Once complete, the House will continually evolve, allowing students and others to design elements of the interior, such as the staircase, kitchen and so on."

Professor Stuart Laing, the University of Brighton's Deputy Vice-Chancellor, said: "The house will be a working exhibit for people to view but it will also be a place for children, youth clubs and adults to meet, talk and learn about environmental issues, healthy living, reducing the use of carbon, and tackling climate change."

"This is an exciting project that we hope will become an example for sustainable construction around the UK and one that will produce far-reaching benefits for the university and the community as a whole."



BRIGHTON - NEWS IN BRIEF

Five star accolade for Royal Pavilion tearoom

A tearoom with a colourful royal history has received a five star accolade.

The tearoom at the Royal Pavilion in Brighton has received the maximum five stars in the 'Scores on the Doors' food safety scheme.

Visitors to the Royal Pavilion can tuck into a cream tea, or enjoy a meal at the tearoom inspired by Regency dishes, knowing that the kitchen and food preparation areas meet the highest standard.

The Royal Pavilion was the lavish seaside residence of King George IV. The tearoom - which serves up more than 10,000 cream teas and 30,000 cups of tea a year - was originally two rooms during the time of George IV and it is believed they were occupied by the King's last mistress, Lady Conyngham. What was her dressing room, had a 'secret' staircase leading to the King's bedroom on the floor below.

After George IV's death in 1830 the rooms, which are on the first floor overlooking the Royal Pavilion Gardens, were occupied from 1832 by Queen Adelaide, wife of William IV. When Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837 the rooms were occupied by her mother, the Duchess of Kent and her Ladies in Waiting.

Visitors can learn more about the colourful life of King George IV at the Dress for Excess exhibition in the new Prince Regent Gallery running at the Royal Pavilion.

Award for smarter car park

One of Brighton's busiest car parks has won a national award, following a major refurbishment by the council.

The Lanes car park below Brighton Town Hall has been named winner in the Best Refurbishment category of the British Parking Awards, organised by Parking Review magazine. The awards were presented at a ceremony in London.

Brighton & Hove's honour follows a series of improvements completed in 2010 to create an excellent public facility and enable the car park's visitors to feel more secure. These include better lighting, a complete redecoration for a brighter look, repairs, safe entrances, better access for less mobile people or those with young children, fire safety improvements and measures to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Cabinet councillor for environment Geoffrey Theobald said: "It is unusual for a local council to beat the private sector car park companies in these awards. As a result of this investment the car park is being used much more and we're getting a better return for the council taxpayer. At the same time it still offers better value for money than many privately run car parks in the city."

Did you know?

Churchill Square

Churchill Square shopping centre is set on a nearly 16 acre site of shops, houses and pubs which were demolished in the 1960s. They themselves had been built on, what were, the West Laines.

The concept of a major new shopping and entertainment centre for the town was first discussed in 1935.

Brighton Corporation's original redevelopment plans would have retained a number of the now-lost streets, including Grenville Place and Upper Russell St.

In 1960 the Corporation called upon the services of Sir Hugh Casson, designer of the 1951 Festival of Britain. His recommendation was for a wholesale redevelopment of the entire area. The Corporation took his advice and held a competition for the design, subsequently won by Taylor Woodrow.

Approval was given in January 1963 for a 15-acre redevelopment, designed by Russell Diplock.

18 streets were demolished, including Artillery St, Cannon St, Grenville Place, Wellington Place, Upper Russell St, Milton Place (including two 17th century cottages) and Clarence St.

Work on the main part of the Churchill Square site commenced in 1965.

More than 70 shops were open for business, including big name retailers, such as Sainsburys, Tesco, Barclay's Bank and British Home Stores.

During the 1980s, most businesses saw a steady decline in trade, and the Square itself had become dilapidated and rubbish-strewn.

In 1991 Standard Life bought Taylor Woodrow's leasehold. Despite wanting to hold onto the freehold, Brighton Council - needing funds for other services - sold it to Standard Life for £17 million.

The company produced plans for a completely renovated and covered shopping 'mall'. The council gave its approval and the £90 million redevelopment began in January 1996.

The new Churchill Square opened on September 4 1998, consisting of 83 shop units, half a million square feet of floor space and 1,600 space car park.

Churchill Square was named as the best designed shopping centre in the UK by British Council of Shopping Centres and in its first three years, Churchill Square attracted more than 35 million visitors.

Former factory building brought back to life

A former factory redundant for over 10 years is to be brought back into use as a multipurpose sports facility and office space.

The former Flexer Sacks building in Wellington Road, Portslade will feature a climbing wall, reflecting the increased popularity of climbing as a sport. The development will also include a gymnasium and modern office accommodation. The building is currently empty and partly derelict.

Development plan saves historic hospital

An historic hospital building in Brighton has been saved after an agreement between council planners and developers who own the site.

The city council's planning committee have given permission for redevelopment of the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital in Dyke Road.

Developers Taylor Wimpy will preserve the main Victorian building on the site.

The old hospital building will be converted into 20 flats, while another 100 new environmentally friendly homes will be built on the site in three blocks.

All other hospital buildings will be demolished to make space.

Officials said the agreement was the best chance of saving the hospital and stopping the site lying dormant for years.

Developers have also agreed to pay £182,000 for outdoor recreation facilities in the area, plus almost £170,000 for extra education services for the locality.



Want to Beat the Cowboys?

BUY WITH CONFIDENCE

Rip-offs, scams - consumers are right to be wary when buying goods and services. The Buy With Confidence scheme is an initiative by the Trading Standards Service in Brighton & Hove, in conjunction with other services in the South East to help businesses comply with the law.

The Buy With Confidence Scheme brings together a list of gardeners, plumbers, builders and many other types of business who have been individually checked for trustworthiness and compliance with consumer protection laws. In fact Maslen Estate Agents have been members from the very start and were the first estate agents to be recognised in Brighton & Hove.

Each applicant is individually checked and is only accepted onto the scheme when they pass stringent checks.

If you have a problem with a member of the scheme they are required to deal with any complaints in a fair and equitable manner. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the Trading Standards Service will attempt to assist in reaching a solution.

And now the Brighton and Hove Trading Standards Buy With Confidence scheme has reached a milestone as South Downs Flint has just become its 100th registered member.

South Downs Flint is a family business specialising in handmade flint blocks for use in new builds and walls as

well as repair work. Dave Lockyer, an experienced bricklayer with more than 20 years experience of the trade in partnership with David Willoughby said: "Now, more than ever it is important for our clients to have independent reassurance that we are a trustworthy business and the 'Buy With Confidence' scheme gives them the reassurance they need."



Maslen Estate Agents mortgage and moving day event a great success



We know just how daunting the prospect of first time buying can be, especially when the whole process is new to you and you are not even sure how much you can borrow, or if you will be able to afford it.

So that's why our Mortgage and Moving day event was a great success with positive feedback from vendors and buyers alike.

The day was specially designed to address all the concerns of the first time buyer. Potential buyers were able to pre-book advice sessions with our dedicated independent mortgage advisor and a solicitor from Woolley Bevis Diplock to answer any questions they had. There was also a chance to view homes that fall within the £250,000 property tax break throughout the whole day.