



David Maslen  
Maslen Estate Agents

## New horizons

This is our sixth issue and with it I am delighted to announce the opening of our second office in Woodingdean. We are looking forward to the future and being able to spread our wings.

A very warm welcome to our new readers who live in and around Woodingdean. As I have mentioned in the past, we really do want to help in the community wherever we can. So if you or your organisation have an event planned for the future - a fête, Christmas bazaar or country ramble for instance and would like to publicise it, please let us know in good time and we will do our very best to include it in our next issue of BNnews. Our Newsletter is published 4 times a year.



## History on our doorstep

The Brighton Racecourse has been a part of the lives of Brightonians since the early 1780's. Then, the seaside track was a favourite during the summer months and the annual festival at the beginning of August quickly became established.

Bygone days at Brighton Racecourse

The Racecourse was patronised by the Prince of Wales, later to become the Prince Regent, who loved the town so much that in 1786 he bought a farmhouse on the Steine and the next year began building the Brighton Pavilion on the site.

During Brighton's peak the August festival traditionally brought to a close the Sussex Fortnight of racing at Goodwood and Lewes. Brighton came to a standstill, with race trains making the journey from London and electric trams bringing the crowds up Elm Grove to Race Hill. Attendances topped 20,000 in the glory years of the 1950's and reached 23,000 for the Wednesday of the festival in 1957.

The Brighton Cup was instigated by the Prince Regent in 1805 and was originally run over 2 miles. In 1879 The Brighton Cup was won by Isonomy, the best horse ever to run at the course and one of the best horses of the nineteenth century. Another of Brighton's greats

was Park Top, a mare owned by the late Duke of Devonshire who twice won the Brighton Challenge Cup in 1967 and 1968.



The course's unique layout and its very fast surface appeals to certain horses yet is a hindrance to others. With its twists, camber and downhill stretch Brighton is certainly a course which attracts specialists - horses who come to their best at Brighton.

## Market Trends

Despite the doom and gloom in the papers and the inevitable changes in the property market, properties are still selling well and buyers are taking a keen interest. I personally believe that the current market is much better as it is less fraught - buyers have more time to look around and do not have to make snap decisions. For sellers it is also less scary. They are not being pressurised the second their house goes on the market, giving them more time to evaluate their next purchase.

As I have said many times before, the key to the market is to price sensibly. Providing you do, your property will still sell in a reasonable space of time. Although there is more to choose from, competitively priced properties will sell.

## What's on!

Some local events scheduled during the next few months

- 10 Oct **Hip and Knee Walk**  
Charity Walk Ellipse/Seafront
- 31 Oct **Postcard Fair**  
Brighton Racecourse
- 6 Nov **Spooky Ghost Walk**  
Meet Brighton Town Hall
- 6 Nov **Southern FM 'Big Bang' Fireworks**  
Brighton Racecourse.
- 7 Nov **RAC Veteran Car Run**  
return to Madeira Drive
- 7 Nov **Toy Fair**  
Brighton Racecourse
- 13 Nov **Sussex Symphony Orchestra**  
7.30pm. St Bartholomew's Church.
- 21 Nov **10K Road Race**  
Race from Brighton to Hove and back - Seafront
- 27/28 Nov **Rock & Gem Show**  
Brighton Racecourse
- 4/5 Dec **Woodland Craft Fair**  
Brighton Racecourse
- 5 Dec **Santa Fun**  
Chestnut Tree House Fun Run - Seafront General
- 8 Dec **Trinity College of Music Symphony Orchestra** 7.30pm.  
St Bartholomew's Church
- 11 Dec **Esterhazy Chamber Choir**  
Christmas Concert - 7.30pm  
St. Bartholomew's Church
- 12 Dec **West Sussex Fun Run League Relay** - Hove Park
- 12 Dec **Sussex Symphony Orchestra**  
Grand Christmas Spectacular - St Bartholomew's Church

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

# Stamp Duty Land Tax

by Julie Adams - Dean Wilson Laing

Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) replaced Stamp Duty on Land in the UK from 1st December 2003. After more than 300 years Stamp Duty on Land was perceived by HM Land Registry as outdated and not suited to the development of e-Conveyancing and relatively easy to avoid.

So far as general residential transactions are concerned, the rates are the same. The charges are 1% of the purchase price if the price is £60,000 - £250,000, 3% if the price is £250,000 - £500,000 and 4% if the price is over £500,000. If you are buying in a disadvantaged area (these areas are specified by postcode by the Inland Revenue) then SDLT will be nil for any properties with a purchase price of up to £150,000.

The form which must be completed in order to obtain the SDLT Certificate has grown from one page to six pages! The responsibility for sending the stamping form is that of the purchaser himself. The purchaser has to sign the form personally (and the purchasers solicitor or agent cannot do it on the purchasers behalf) and this must be sent to the Stamp Duty Office within 30 days of completion or else a penalty will be incurred.

In the event that the Land Transaction Return is not forwarded to the Inland Revenue within 30 days of the purchase with all of the information required completed on the form then the Inland Revenue are entitled to charge interest on the unpaid TAX and interest on the unpaid penalties. There will be a flat rate penalty of £100 where the Land Transaction Return is forwarded to the Inland Revenue after 30 days but within 3 months of the purchase and where it is submitted over 3 months after the date of the purchase then the penalty will be £200.

Generally speaking, the purchaser's solicitor will accept responsibility for

completing the form although, as this is strictly the purchaser's obligation some solicitors may charge an additional fee for doing so and it is best to check whether this will be the case at the outset of the transaction.

In order to complete the form the purchaser, or his solicitor will require some additional details from both the vendor and the purchaser himself. The vendor's new address (after the sale has taken place) must be entered onto the form, as must the purchaser's National Insurance Number. At present, it is only possible to enter one National Insurance Number for the purchaser even where there are two individuals buying the property jointly. This was a mistake when the form was initially drafted and it is likely that new forms will be drafted in the not too distant future in order to correct this mistake.

Once the form has been completed and sent with the cheque for the SDLT Payment to Inland Revenue, the Inland Revenue will send back a certificate showing that the Stamp Duty Land Tax has been paid and this must then be forwarded to the Land Registry who will not deal with the registration of the transfer unless they have this certificate. Even if the purchase price is less than £60,000 (or £150,000 in a disadvantaged area) the form must still be completed and forwarded to the Inland Revenue so that the appropriate certificate can be obtained.

Where a new Lease is being created, then Stamp Duty Land Tax will also be payable on the rent due under the terms of that Lease but the calculation for this is extremely complicated and in most new residential long Leases, the Stamp Duty Land Tax will not be affected as the ground rent is generally speaking relatively low and such will not attract Stamp Duty Land Tax.

Contact: Julie Adams - Dean Wilson Laing  
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## £350,000 to be spent on Hove Library

Major works to considerably improve Hove Library are to start early next year. As well as structural work to remedy faults with the roof, stonework and wiring etc., improved customer facilities and security measures are also planned.

## Beer Festival

The first weekend in October saw the return of the ever-popular Hanover Beer Festival. Run by the Community Association and now in its 17th year it was, once again, a resounding success. 'There's a strong community feel,' says the event organiser, 'You don't have to be a hardened ale drinker to enjoy yourself!' Last year's move into the great outdoors was repeated with the aid of some crossed fingers and a light tarpaulin and for those in need of sustenance in a slightly more solid form, additional nourishment was supplied by Mohammed of The Spice of Goa restaurant.

The Festival relies heavily and most gratefully on the goodwill of many local businesses and the association would like to offer its thanks to David Maslen for his continued support.

## Brighton gets its first 24-hour bus service

Brighton and Hove Bus and Coach Company have introduced a day and night service between Hove Station and Brighton Marina. The No. 7 route is to operate seven days a week - every 7 minutes from 8am to 5.30pm and every half hour during the night.

Managing Director Roger French says, "The new service should benefit everyone, not just visitors to the Marina. Hotel and catering staff who work shifts and residents that need to catch early trains from Hove as well as those returning late". It's a welcomed service improvement for hospital visitors and patients too. Taxi fares can add considerably to costs for those who have to make frequent visits.

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# Valuation Versus Value

Estate agents' market valuations are usually free, and because of this, it is very tempting for prospective sellers to invite a number of agents to comment and then select the agent that suggests the highest likely sale price for the property.

However, we advise caution on this issue. Some agency valuers are paid a bonus on the number of new instructions they secure, irrespective of the saleability of the property offered for sale at their suggested value. The easiest way for an estate agency valuer to win a seller's business is simply to suggest a flatteringly high figure, but many people who fall into this trap live to regret it.

One of the problems is that most people have only a cursory idea of what estate agents actually do and, just as importantly, what values they cherish and what service they offer. Ironically, it tends to be the cheaper, untrained or inexperienced agents

who quote the highest values, yet it is the well-trained, experienced agents who have the skills to secure the best prices for their clients in the shortest time.

So when selecting your estate agent, by all means invite several to comment on value, but then choose the agent who demonstrates mastery, and who actually has a marketing plan in place, along with superb post-offer follow-up facilities.

Additionally, find an agent that you like! One who has the integrity to offer straight-talking advice and who uses superb communication skills to keep you informed every step of the way, before, during and after the sale, thereby minimising the stress of moving.

In estate agency, a high valuation does not always indicate a good value service!

## BRIGHTON - NEWS IN BRIEF

### *South East in Bloom*

Brighton & Hove has won a silver award in the city category of South East in Bloom. Kemp Town Village has been awarded a bronze in the best urban community after also scooping a bronze last year - the first time it entered the competition and Rottingdean won a silver-gilt award in the coastal resort section and were also winners in their class: 'Best Small Coastal Resort'.

Judges who visited the city in July were impressed with the efforts of the council's City in Bloom working group and the communities and businesses that helped with the entry.

"Thank you and congratulations to every single person who has played a part in this year's campaign. This award is a tribute to all their skill and hard work", said environment councillor Gill Mitchell. "It's a terrific achievement and one that we can all be proud of."

## Snapshots of Woodingdean

Woodingdean dates back to before the Stone Age and there are clear signs of Iron Age, Roman and Saxon occupation.

Mostly farming land, there was little change to the landscape until the early 1900's. In fact, it was during the period between the 2 World Wars that the development of Woodingdean began in earnest. Building land was extremely cheap, even by the standards of the day and bungalows began to appear just about everywhere. The first real housing development known as 'Wick Estate' began in 1919. Small 2 bedroom 'Shacks', as they were known cost between £100 and £200.

In the late Twenties, the Downs Hotel in Warren Road was opened. It was the largest building in the district. Built in the popular mock-Tudor style, it had two bars, bedrooms, a garden and tea rooms. It has been added to over the years but its



appearance remains almost unchanged with its name still on the roof and still at the centre of the community.



Falmer Road Garage - 1929

1930 saw Woodingdean included in the Brighton boundaries and with it, a dramatic increase in the population. In fact, it's around this time that the premises now occupied by Maslen Estate agents would have been built.

During the following years new roads were constructed and it is interesting to note that during and after the war, some of the houses built at Farm Hill were constructed with the help of German prisoners of war.

Today, Woodingdean is home to over 9,500 people.

If you are interested in the history of Woodingdean there is an excellent publication available by Peter Mercer titled 'The Hunns Mere Pit'. The book should be available from the library. We are extremely grateful to Douglas Holland for the use of his pictures.

### **Community Responsibilities**

We are delighted to continue our relationship with Downs Infant School. Earlier this year we provided financial support for the Schools Auction of Promises and have more recently covered the cost of printing their next years calendar. Whilst talking of sponsorship and with the opening of our new Woodingdean office, we have sponsored the Woodingdean under 9's Football Club, and Woodingdean Bowls Club. We look forward to continuing our relationship with both clubs and wish them every success in forthcoming matches. We have further donated £100 to Woodingdean Swimming Pool.

# EMBASSY COURT

Bringing a new lease of life to a 30's classic

The eleven-storey block of private modern flats known as Embassy Court, completed in 1935, was once the gleaming white home of the rich and famous. It was designed by Wells Coates, one of the pioneers of the Modernist Movement of art and design, who is also well-known for his revolutionary Ekco Bakelite radio cabinets.

The plan for Embassy Court was dictated by both the residents' potential enjoyment of their seaside location and Wells Coates' dedication to Modernist ideals. An ocean view, whether direct or oblique, was provided for all living rooms and main bedrooms. Some private balconies and communal terraces were also arranged to capture the feel of sun and sea.

Amazingly for the time, the flats were only fitted with electrical equipment. This included space-heating through embedded ceiling coils, water heating through an electric thermo-storage system and built-in electric fireplaces in every living room as well as built-in refrigerators in the kitchens. Luxury was the order of the day with the introduction of Britain's first penthouses, a first class

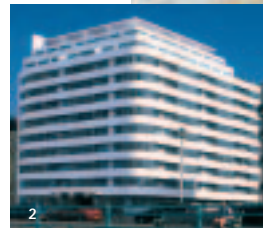


ground floor restaurant and a doorman. Unfortunately, the block of flats previously coveted by celebrities saw severe

decline in the 1990s, mainly due to legal wrangles over the freehold. Residents gained control from property developers in 1998, forming the leaseholder company Bluestorm Ltd, which has recently seen new additions to the shareholders and board of directors.

Sir Terence Conran's group was hired to assess the situation and suggest a way forward. Due to the state of the building, estimates for repairs to the concrete facade, windows, lifts, heating and water systems are estimated to be around £4.2 million (about £60,000 per flat). Residents are largely supportive of the refurbishment plans, though it remains to be seen if they will be able to shoulder the sizeable cost. Due to the potential valuation of the property if repaired, the current chair of Bluestorm Ltd, Emma Jinks, has managed to woo the support of High Street bank Barclays to offer mortgages to individual leaseholders.

The first phase of basic restoration work started in June 2004.



Embassy Court -  
1. Dilapidated and unloved  
2. How it will look after restoration  
3. As it looks today

## The Woodingdean team

Highly qualified and enthusiastic the Maslen Estate Agents - Woodingdean team are dedicated to first class estate agency.



Nick Wall, who has just returned from honeymoon in Sri Lanka after his marriage to Josie, heads up the Woodingdean office ably assisted by negotiator Victoria Carroll (pictured above).

Nick, who has worked with David Maslen since the business opened in January 1999, began as a trainee negotiator at the Lewes Road office - working his way up to senior negotiator and now heads up the new office.

Nick and Victoria together with the administration staff are committed to providing high levels of service and support for all their customers, buyers and sellers alike.

## ...and at the Lewes Road office



*Andrew Mercer joined us this summer as an Office Junior, straight from school, having just successfully passed all of his 9 GCSEs. He is very keen to pursue a career in Estate Agency and since working with us has attended intensive weekly in-house training courses. Andrew's role is to provide back office admin support to all the negotiators and Janette.*

## Did you know? - Queens Park

- 1: Queens Park was named after Queen Adelaide, wife of William IV, 12 years after it was first built!
- 2: The lake was used during World War 2 to test the waterproofing of military vehicles!
- 3: The 'Pepperpot' has had many uses over the years including an observation tower during World War 2, an artists studio, to print and publish 'the Brighton Daily Mail' and sadly a public convenience!
- 4: The clock tower was built in 1915 after £1,000 was left by local tradesman William Godleye in his will, apparently because he was pestered by children in the park for the time - all the time!
- 5: Over 80% of the park's trees were lost in the storm of 1987!
- 6: The Egremont Place arch was restored in 1997 by Neil England who left his signature on the stonework, 'a rat'!