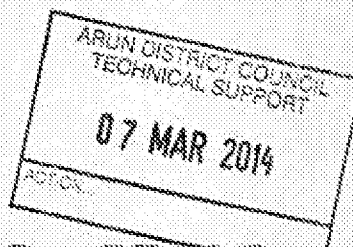


To Simon Davis,
Planning officer,
Arun District Council,
Civic Centre,
Maltravers Road,
Littlehampton

MARCH 6, 2014



Planning application AW/336/13. Russell Hotel, Bognor Regis

Dear Mr Davis,

We have enclosed Press cuttings relating to the Russell Hotel and they illustrate the considerable support we have from local people to save The Russell Hotel from Closure.

These Press cuttings show over 700 signatures. Action for the Blind were handed these last year by MP Nick Gibb but have, apparently, mislaid them.

As you will see, there is great support for this hotel in the area.

Paula Campbell



Save the Russell Campaign Group.

Campaigners hand petition to town's MP

By RUTH ANDERSON
 Bognor Regis Reporter
 Email: ruth@bognorregis.com

THE town's MP has thrown his weight behind campaigners battling to save an Aldwick hotel.

MP for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton Nick Gibb was handed a 700-plus strong petition on Monday by supporters of the Russell Hotel who want to stop its closure.

Mr Gibb said: "I have received a lot of letters from a lot of local people who are very upset and concerned about the closure of the hotel."

"Clearly this is an important facility for the blind and partially sighted people visiting the town but also residents as well."

"The hotel is a safe place for those who are visually impaired and it also has a safe access to the seafront."

As well as its special features for holidaymakers, the Kings Parade hotel has a swimming pool used by local residents.

Many have been referred there by their GPs.

Mr Gibb said: "The pool, as I understand, has been specially adapted to make it easier for elderly users and those with mobility issues to get in and out thanks to sloping steps, and it is also



Paula Campbell and MP Nick Gibb with the petition

PHOTO BY GUY ARIEL FOR BGR

warmer than a usual pool.

"Exercise is so important for these people and this facility gives them a safe place to do it."

Mr Gibb said he fears the hotel's owners may have underestimated the amount of residents who use the facilities.

Mr Gibb, who originally opened the hotel, has also written to the hotel manager and chief executive of

Action for Blind People.

"The petition will now be sent to Action for Blind People's headquarters. I know the campaigners are aiming to reach 1,000 signatures."

The 40-bedroom hotel for blind and partially-sighted visitors is due to be sold by Action for Blind People this October to another charity, Livability, to convert into a residential home.

The hotel was the first in England to be built for blind and partially-sighted people when the current building was opened in 2003.

Regular user Joan Lambert said: "I use the pool once a week, it used to be two but I can't manage that anymore."

"The pools is really important to the local residents - and people who use it."

Hotel's guests stage protest at its closure

SCORES of users of a threatened Aldwick hotel staged a protest outside its front door yesterday.

Some 30 guests of the Russell Hotel and visitors of its facilities took part.

The 40-bedroom hotel for blind and partially-sighted visitors is due to be sold by Action for Blind People this October to another charity, Liveness, to convert into a residential home.

Among its regular guests is partially-sighted Graham Garner, 58, and his wife, Rosemary Garner, 55, from Stockport. Mr Garner, whose sight was damaged by a brain haemorrhage, said: "We are disgusted the hotel is closing. We have fallen in love with the place.

"We have been coming down here for six years. It's the only place we can go where the people are so friendly. I also feel sad for the people who work here."

Totally blind Roger Masterman, 60, from Coed Ely in South Wales, is on his first visit to the hotel.

He said: "I knew that at least one of the Action for Blind People hotels would close once the charity merged with the RNIB.

"It happens to be this one. I fear it could be the thin end of the wedge. The RNIB are closing lots of facilities."

As well as its special



Users of the Russell Hotel protest about its closure.

C130862-1

features for holidaymakers, the hotel has a swimming pool used by Bognor Regis area residents. Many have been referred there by their GPs. Its regular users include Anne Brisley, 75, of Honeyuckle Drive, Nyctimber.

She has been to the pool for an hour three times a week for five years. "The water aerobics keep me going. When I came here, I

couldn't lift my right arm. Now I can raise it high above my head.

"It's the same with my ability to walk. All of us who come here have got aches and pains," she said.

Protest organiser Paula Campbell, of Barrack Lane, Aldwick, said the hotel's customers had been ignored. "Bognor needs quality hotels like the Russell," she said.

"The closure is a great injustice to the thousands of blind and partially-sighted people who rely on the facilities. The pool is used by hundreds every week for therapy and vital relaxation."

The hotel was the first in England to be built for blind and partially-sighted people when the current building was opened in 2002. It has some 30 members of staff.