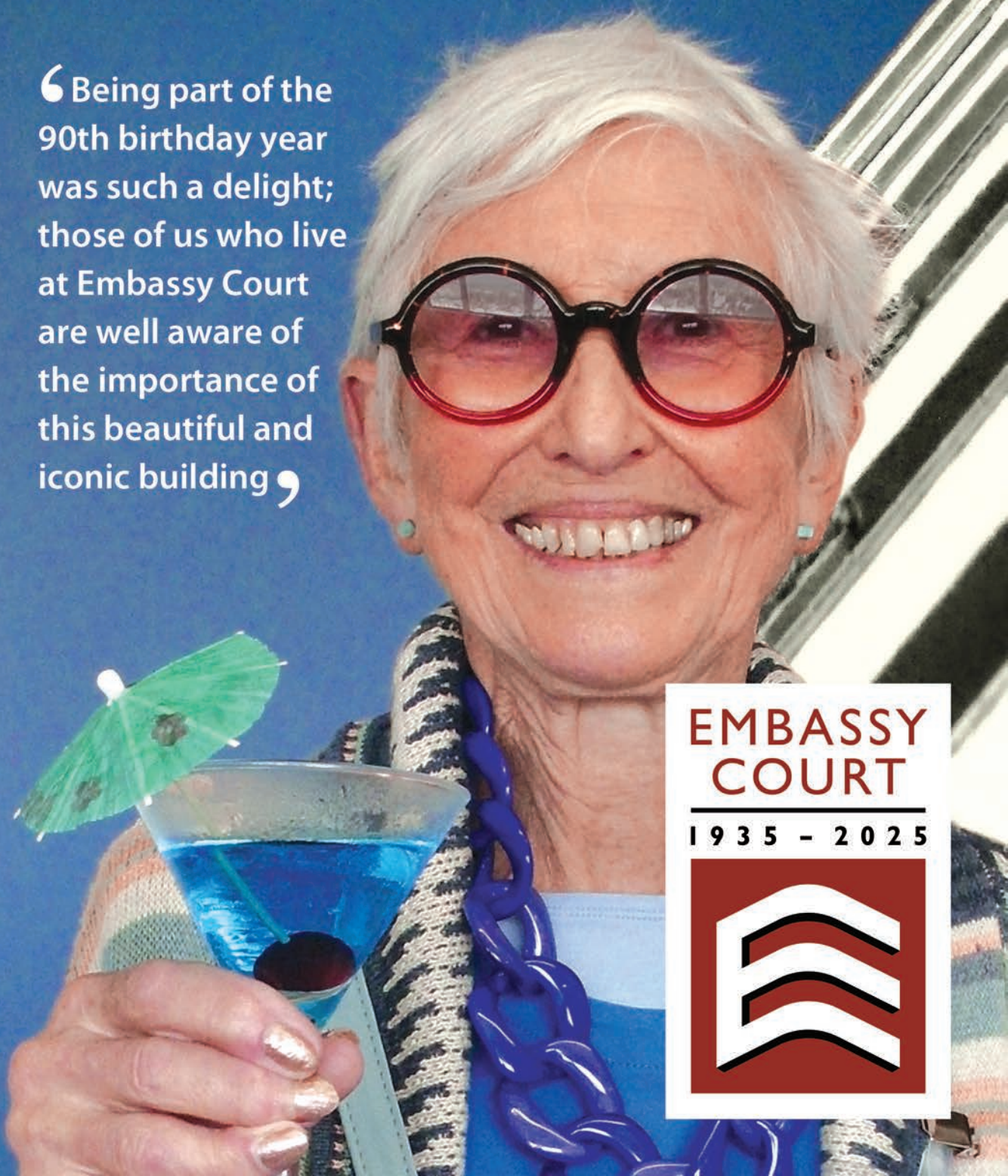


EMBASSY COURT'S 90th birthday

SPECIAL EDITION SOUVENIR

“Being part of the 90th birthday year was such a delight; those of us who live at Embassy Court are well aware of the importance of this beautiful and iconic building,”



EMBASSY
COURT

1935 - 2025



Welcome

by Angie Clapham, Chair, Bluestorm Ltd.



It is a great pleasure to open this special newsletter for Embassy Court's 90th birthday, the culmination of months of celebration.

This has included a celebration party in September 2025 for invited guests, Nick de Marco's exhibition of Embassy Court photographs in the foyer throughout August to December, the children's Lego party in July, special tours of the building, and the banner on the front of the building throughout, stating... **'Modernism: still cutting it at 90'.**

Most Brighton residents know something of Embassy Court's chequered history, beginning in opulence in the 1930s and only just surviving neglect in the 1990s and 2000s.

Embassy Court was designed in 1934 by Wells Coates, Britain's leading Modernist visionary, following his design for the Isokon Building in Hampstead, London. Maddox Properties were the Embassy Court developers and they completed construction in 1935.

We do not have an exact date for the building's opening, but we know that the first guests took residence early in 1936. The building initially flourished as luxury serviced apartments and was a high-end residence all through the mid-20th century. However, by the 1990s the building was in severe disrepair and under threat of demolition. It only survived because of the unstinting efforts of a few heroic people.

Ruth Ozin was one of the founder members of the Embassy Court Lessees' Association who, with this team, initiated legal proceedings in 2002 against the then freeholder Portvale Ltd.

Portvale had neglected essential repairs and thought it would be easy to intimidate all the leaseholders to leave, under threat of court proceedings, a ploy that had worked in four previous forfeiture cases. In the event, the Embassy Court Lessees' Association won their case, and the appeal, to secure the freehold for the leaseholders and become Bluestorm Ltd.

I must record my thanks to the special guests who attended the Embassy Court Birthday Party, and to my board colleagues, and a huge thank you also goes to Maddie Blackburn and the team who have organised the year's celebrations

Bluestorm still had to find a way to restore the building, and contacted Brighton architects, Alan Phillips and Robert Cohen, to find a viable solution. This proved to be difficult at first, however Terence Conran learned of the building's situation and provided support through the architect, Paul Zara.

Under the new leadership of the indomitable Emma Jinks, a successful refurbishment plan came to fruition in 2005 and Emma continued to lead Bluestorm successfully for a further twenty years, until 2022. During those years, many good people, such as Andrew Birds, David Leever and Tony Wells, served on the board and contributed to the building's continued success.

Embassy Court has a goal to support the arts in Brighton and the contribution of Sue Milnthorpe and the late Paul Roberts has been hugely significant in raising our profile in this area. They led many of the projects that you can see in the foyer and the famous cocktail events on the roof terrace. We continue with this mission by housing two artists and two musicians in the basement studios and by conducting tours of the building for the Fringe and Heritage Open Days festivals and hosting various special interest groups – 16 this year.

Our community is also enhanced by a Reading Group, a comprehensive web site, Instagram, Facebook page, as well as various WhatsApp groups where residents can share their interests, including their cat stories!

Our birthday year recently featured in The Argus, Sussex's regional newspaper, on 29th October 2025, as well as my interview on Brighton's Latest TV, see YouTube: <https://youtu.be/OzzLq5A1xY>

I must record my thanks to the special guests who attended the Embassy Court Birthday Party: Peter Kyle, MP for Hove and Portslade and Secretary of State for Business and Trade; Elizabeth Darling, author of the seminal 2012 biography of Wells Coates; and Wells Coates' grandson, Matt Cohn. I also wish to thank my board colleagues, Mark Washer, Gareth Stingemore, Cecilia dell'Orbo, and of course my husband Dave Clapham.

A huge thank-you also goes to Maddie Blackburn and the team who have organised the year's celebrations, with a special mention for former resident, Nicholas Howell, who kindly gave his skills for various graphics, including the co-authorship and design of this newsletter, logos and the banner.

So, what's special about being 90?

by Maddie Blackburn, Chair, Embassy Court 90th Birthday Steering Group

In 1935, the construction of Embassy Court in Brighton was completed. This is now considered one of the foremost examples of Modernist architecture anywhere in the UK and certainly should be remembered in Embassy Court's 90th birthday year! This special edition souvenir newsletter provides a synopsis of Embassy Court's history and some of the events that have taken place over the last year with contributions from residents, past and present.

This elegantly proportioned apartment block was designed by Wells Coates, the leading Modernist architect of the day, Chairman of the Modernist Architectural Research Society (MARS). The block was completed in 1935 and contains seventy-three flats, many with awe-inspiring sea-views.

Over the years, this building has been a hub of activity, hosting countless residents and visitors, as well as for almost two decades, providing public and private tours of the building during the annual Brighton Fringe, Heritage Open Days, as well as prestigious history, architectural and engineering societies and other private tours requested by the public.

From its stunning location and architecture, Embassy Court is an integral part of Brighton's identity. So, Happy 90th Birthday to this Iconic Building and all who live within her!

Embassy Court remains a residential building, with flats owned by leaseholders who collectively manage

We're delighted to celebrate 90 years of Embassy Court's heritage. This building has been a part of so many lives, and we're grateful for the opportunity to share its story publicly

and maintain the property through Bluestorm Ltd., the Freehold Company.

The building's residents are actively involved in preserving its architectural heritage and connecting it with the city through open house tours and events – over 20 in 2025. The tours helped fund the restoration of Edward McKnight Kauffer's surrealist hallway mural in 2018 and the installation of Captain Edward Zeff, MBE's Blue Plaque in 2017. Edward Zeff was also awarded a Croix de Guerre in France. We are privileged to honour this exceptional man and former Embassy Court resident.



We've been excited to celebrate and share Embassy Court's 90th birthday year activities and history with the Brighton Community. To commemorate this milestone, Embassy Court has hosted a number of events and activities throughout the year, some already referenced in the Foreword and others to follow in this souvenir.

Embassy Court's 90th birthday year serves as a celebration of its architectural significance, its journey from decline to glorious restoration, and the community efforts that have breathed new life into this iconic Brighton landmark.





Photograph by Cecilia d'Orbo

Elizabeth Darling

Biographer of *Wells Coates*

Embassy Court's significance rests in its exemplary modernism. For Coates – the exemplary modernist – the architect's job was to create prototypical solutions to contemporary problems, which, universally applied could ensure progress for all members of society.

And what greater problem in the 1920s and 1930s (as it is today) than that of housing.

Harnessing contemporary technologies of building and equipment, the block houses seven types of standardised flat unit arranged in different permutations across each floor,

thereby accommodating different types of people and family units within one building and thus creating a diverse community (think of Brunswick Town's many housing types condensed into one building).

Each flat was carefully planned to maximise space while Coates used

“the stack of cantilevered balconies produces one of the best backs of a building in architectural history”

the properties of the building's reinforced concrete frame to produce the seamless streamlined façade to the seafront while at the rear, the stack of cantilevered access balconies produces one of the best backs of a building in architectural history.

© Elizabeth Darling 2025

Happy 90th Birthday Embassy Court!

Harper Stone, Managing Agents

Embassy Court is an eleven-storey block of 73 flats situated on Brighton seafront. It was designed by the architect Wells Coates and completed in 1935. It is an outstanding example of pre-war Modernism, has a Grade II* Listed status and remains a major Brighton landmark.

The building is steeped in history to include a blue plaque in memory of Captain Edward Zeff MBE. Captain Edward Zeff was sent to occupied France in 1942 where he worked for 11 months as a secret agent and radio operator. He was betrayed in 1943 and subjected to terrible treatment by the Gestapo. Thankfully, he was liberated from Mauthausen concentration camp in 1945 and arrived home to his wife Reine at Embassy Court.

Originally the flats were rented out rather than sold to owner-occupiers. Rents varied between £150 and £500 per year – expensive for that time, and similar to the cost of a house in Brighton.

Unfortunately, the building's high-class status declined from the 1970s and it gradually fell into disrepair. In 1997 the then freehold company, Portvale, was put into liquidation when a court case resulted in a demand to spend £1.5 million on maintenance. The Crown Estate Commissioners then took possession of the freehold, but Embassy Court's leaseholders established a company called Bluestorm Ltd. to buy it, which was achieved after another court case.

In July 2003, Bluestorm announced a £5 million refurbishment investment plan and by 2006 Embassy Court had been restored to its original status as a high-class residence.

At 90 years of age this great building requires considerable love and attention. Along with a local firm of surveyors, Harper Stone Properties Ltd. have had the pleasure of maintaining this iconic building for the past 10 years.

Therefore, it is unsurprising that on its birthday the building's south elevation is masked in scaffolding. These works mark the first phase of a three year, million-pound plus project to rejuvenate this reinforced concrete construction with its iconic Crittall-style metal windows.

It is reassuring that Embassy Court is in the safe hands of its resident's freehold company whose enthusiasm remains unabated. Indeed, some of the residents offer guided tours to other enthusiasts. If you would like to learn more then please do visit their website: www.embassycourt.org.uk.

HISTORY

Embassy Court and the rounded corner

by Paul Dennison, Embassy Court Tour Guide team

Following the successful completion of the Isokon building in Belsize Park, Wells Coates was given a free hand in the design of a much larger Modernist residential block, intended as the paramount example of effortless, up-to-the minute, seaside luxury: Embassy Court. As far as architecture goes, this is Wells Coates' masterpiece.

Modernism, of course, is not a style, but rather an ethos, a way of thinking, founded on the principles of scientific innovation and experimentation.

It sets out to break with the Past, rejecting all decorative styles in pursuit of functionalism and pure rationality, applying the power of mass production to achieve individual quality of experience and healthy living. Wells Coates was perhaps Britain's leading Modernist in the 30s, being the chair of MARS, the Modernist Architectural Research Society.

Wells Coates set about the task of designing Embassy Court with customary vigour, designing everything from the use of ferro-reinforced concrete and cantilevered design, at the macro level, to the

micro-details of window-frames, door handles and even the numbering on the apartment doors. The result was a magnificent success: the residential block was fully occupied with the super-rich (and their servants) from its opening, despite the ruinously expensive annual rents.

That it was intended as the first half of a double-fronted building is apparent from its blank Western wall. In fact, it was intended that a series of double-fronted Embassy Courts should dominate the Brighton's western seafront right along Hove Lawns, replacing the Regency structures of Brunswick Terrace and Adelaide Crescent.

The one conceit Wells Coates allowed in his design was the inclusion of a

“If you are in search of a Modernist building look out for the rounded corner!”

single rounded corner at the junction of Western Street and the Kings Road. It was as if he were asking the question “Do we need corners?”. He asked the question at the macro-level, but it recurs in the detail. The main staircase has one corner sharp and the other rounded. Of course, the question of square versus round goes back to Roman times. The Romans favoured square houses and rooms, and indeed square military formations, while the tribes they conquered made do with round huts and mob-like attack.

That Wells Coates included even so small a stylistic device is, of course, against the Modernist Ethos. It is ironic, therefore, that this conceit, this quirk, should have been copied across the globe in Modernist buildings of the 30s and 40s, from San Francisco to Adelaide to Wellington, to such an extent that it has become an identifier for Modernist buildings of that time.

If you are in search of a Modernist building look out for the rounded corner!



Nicholas Howell

In the summer of 1978 when I entered the foyer at Embassy Court to view a flat I bumped into an acquaintance who was a tenant at No 57. She mentioned that her flat would become available as her mother, whom she had lived with, had passed away and that she now wanted to move on.

Having been in the diplomatic service she now worked at a former luxury goods and jewellery establishment in East Street, though in the late 1950s she had started out as a film actor.

As a tenant she had the opportunity to buy her flat from the freeholder, Bovis, at a much reduced market price. Knowing that it could be bought and sold on the same day she offered it to me, and seeing that it had potential I decided to go for it, thus giving me a first step on the property ladder at 24.



In the late 1970s the block still had an aura of style and glamour, evident by the sight of luxury cars parked in the garages, including a Rolls Royce!

It seemed wise to be discrete, even though the deal was all above board. On the day my friend moved out, and I moved in, the formidable caretaker, Mrs Ford, had not been informed and immediately telephoned Bovis who also knew nothing about this so she was requested to decommission the service lift in order to prevent anyone from moving back into the flat!

My removals van was waiting outside and I was only granted access after frantic calls were made to solicitors. However, as Bovis was unable to issue the transfer paperwork in time I was charged a two-week's proportion of the previous annual tenancy rental.

I decorated the flat in the modernist style with pure white walls and matt black finish skirtings, architraves and windows, and preserved the original 1935 fixtures such as the bath, hand basin, and turquoise wall tiling in the bathroom. Sadly, the original kitchen cupboard unit designed by Wells Coates had already been replaced.



At some point in the history of the block, flats 57 and 67 had the main bedroom and dressing room severed and transferred to the neighbouring flats, 56 and 66, leaving the second bedroom as the only bedroom which was tiny, measuring 8ft 3in x 8ft 6in!

In the late 1970s the block still had an aura of style and glamour, evident by the sight of luxury cars in the garages, including a Rolls Royce! Many of the flats were weekend homes, and some corner flats were occupied by Saudi families, as could be detected by the strong aromas of middle-eastern food wafting around the building!

The common parts received a facelift in the 1970s when the swing doors at the entrance were replaced with ordinary aluminium doors, the foyer walls were draped all around with full-length curtaining in a vibrant red, yellow and brown design, lifts were lined in orange melamine with doors painted to match, and on the wall at the back of the foyer was the original architects drawing of the block.

After a year or so I decided to move having found the flat too restrictive, but it has left such happy memories. In 1979 I visited Oxford to see an exhibition about Wells Coates by Oxford Polytechnic, and I kept the poster until recently donating it to the Embassy Court archives.

I was very sad to see the block decline in the 1990s, so I was delighted when the residents took ownership of the freehold and, particularly, when it was fully restored back to its former glory by Conran Associates.



Alice, Paul and Kit



It's not a village you need to raise a child, but a modernist building. This place, a concrete beacon of a home, is more than a structure – it's what helped raise our child. When asked to draw her home, she doesn't sketch the flat, but the entire building, a canvas of her childhood.

The sun's light is a tireless presence, marking the passage of each day. In the pre-dawn quiet, its first rays pierce the west-facing windows, casting a peach glow on forgotten mugs and to-do lists. It's a silent signal that a restless night of feeding and comforting has ended, offering a quiet promise of a fresh start.

As the sun sets, the east-facing windows fill the kitchen with a pinky-orange glow. This is the moment for the baby's bath in the sink, a moment of calm that, as she grew, gave way to rinsing muddy wellies after low-tide explorations.

The building's walkways became her own thoroughfare – first for a trike, then a bike, and now roller skates. She glides back and forth, a moving shadow past the windows and lives of our neighbours. The slow lifts, a vertical artery through the building, provide a gentle collision of lives. Their mirrored boxes offer an

unsparing reflection of the day – a smear of toothpaste on a shirt, a head of unbrushed hair – a silent friend ensuring we are ready to face the world.

This building, this towering presence, is the village that raised her, the silent guardian of her childhood

The building's 11 floors of concrete and rebar have given our child a front-row seat to the natural world. In the winter months, the starlings' murmurations rush up the west side in the morning light.

The wind's howl through the building's cracks connects us to the elements, and in the summer, the roof terrace serves as our own bird's nest. It's a lookout to the tides and a private audience with the sun, a place

to be wrapped in its warmth, and during the pandemic, a place to breathe when it felt like the world was closing in. As weather systems collide, we watch lightning strike the sea and see people below battle the wind tunnel our monolith creates.

On Bonfire Night, the open back of the building transforms into a private viewing platform. We sit on the open stairs, watching fireworks light up the sky from Worthing to the racecourse.

The appearance of a Christmas tree in the foyer signifies the start of the holiday season and the daily hunt for chocolate decorations. Her first slinky became a new way to interact with the building, as she spent hours in the stairwells coaxing the spring to cascade down the giant steps.

This building, this towering presence, is more than concrete, Crittall, and glass; it is the village that raised her, the silent guardian of her childhood.

Valerie and David

It was a sunny day in 2003. I had come from London to give a lecture to a Brighton psychotherapy group. The sea was sparkling and the sun transformed the rows of elegant regency homes.

David and I both had fond separate memories of Brighton and as we sat in the sun I said, "wouldn't it be amazing to live here". David transformed my fantasy into action. "We can!", he said. And the flat was chosen and had an offer accepted on it the same weekend.

My main interest had been Regency flats but I longed above all for a seafront flat. What was instantly remarkable was that each room had a side view of the sea whilst the lounge itself provided a panoramic view with wall-to-wall sea and sky.

I fell in love with the view from the lounge and the curved door and so did our grown up children. And then grandchildren were born who also fell in love with it.

“As we sat in the sun I said, “wouldn't it be amazing to live here”. David transformed my fantasy into action. “We can!” he said”

Slowly I appreciated the modernist design whilst David built up a library on the subject and as an inventor and troubleshooter in his own right (silencing submarines, the first smart phone, a smart helmet, Heathrow tunnel collapse) enjoyed joining the board.

I had the covid team, the book group and writing group to join. This made for a creative and warm community. Many of my books in the 22 years



since were written in Embassy Court including two novels – the second due in Easter.

David enjoyed the investigations on water ingress carried out by the new board and felt proud to hand over his modernism library as well as the magnificent large Lego model of Embassy Court which can be seen on tours.

David now has mixed dementia and sadly can't access the balcony but is able to enjoy seafront walks whilst grown up grandchildren now come with their friends!

Emma Jinks

Former Chair, Bluestorm

Once into the new century I found myself inside the building for the first time and, looking past the rust and failing render, the appeal was evident.

The large light windows framing the view of my beloved sea, the easy-care of the internal lines of the structure, the little remembralls of the luxury living of historic previous residents created a heady and very desirable mix.

There's a certain and distinct joy in getting behind the scenes of large, historic buildings – rooms that the public won't see, places to store the packing trunks of the original wealthy residents, windowless bank vaults, staff bathrooms with original ceramics, formerly functional rooms now with new potential.

Evidently such simplicity of Modernism comes at a cost and the complications of building clean lines in an era at the start of concrete

“I look at buildings with new eyes having held Embassy Court's hand through a moment in her 90 year history”

construction combined with the divisive needs of commercial property against private residential ownership had meant the building had paid a high price in very evident decay.

And bringing the building back from the brink is a project of pure discovery, the precise colour choices of an architect in his pomp, the craft of hand-making specifically designed terracotta tiles, the period font and the ugly story of the man who invented it, the creamy newly applied render emerging from behind the scaffold covers.

I look at buildings with new eyes having held Embassy Court's hand through a moment in her 90 year history. They are majestic, needy, packed full of curiosities, a holding place for humans in transit – love, joy, fear, pain, loss – marvellous really.

Cynthia

I moved to Embassy Court at the end of 2012 and what a delight that was! Whilst I still divide my time between Staines and Brighton, Embassy Court has, and will always have, a special place in my heart. It feels like home.

Around 2012, I sold our large family house and bought a smaller house near Windsor and decided to buy a small flat with the leftovers. I had always wanted a seaside flat in Brighton and I immediately fell in love with Embassy Court!

“people living at Embassy Court are exceptionally friendly and pleasant”

The Estate Agent was less than enthusiastic about Embassy Court, given the building's chequered history of water-ingress and social issues, and tried to encourage me to purchase a flat elsewhere. I did not give up, however, and here I am today in this wonderful Modernist Building.

Initially, my flat needed a lot of renovation. I couldn't obtain a mortgage and had to buy the flat outright. Fortunately, I was able to afford to both purchase and lovingly

restore the property. I'm roughly the same age as Embassy Court: I think we both still look rather good for our years! And whilst it only took nine months to create me, it took rather longer to construct Embassy Court. I've always admired Embassy Court's lines and hope that mine are comparable!

I have always loved Modernism and it's a travesty that this style was curtailed during and after the second world war. Modernist architecture is such a delight to see on the Brighton seafront. I think it's special to live in a listed building, although it can also be annoying and challenging.

I wanted to have an ensuite bathroom and change the door in my flat but the planning department would not permit this. Although the building requires regular attention and building maintenance, I am thrilled it was not pulled down.

During my life I have not always been lucky with neighbours. Embassy Court changed all of that. The late



Michael King was a truly, wonderful neighbour, coming to my rescue when I had either locked myself out or mislaid my keys. The people living at Embassy Court are exceptionally friendly and pleasant. I'm not sure if it's smaller flats or apartment blocks that encourage friendliness. People who live and love this building are generally empathetic.

We have a lovely Reading Group that meets monthly, a wonderful maintenance manager and team, and delightful Katia who all support us in the building.

What more could I ask!



I fell in love with Embassy Court in the 1990's really, love might be too strong a word. I was charmed by her, fascinated by the decay, by the extreme oddness of the architecture, by the curious way the windows appeared blank from the seafront.

Vicki and Tony

We have both lived together at Embassy Court for 16 years. Vicki has always been a fan of Modernism as well as Art deco so, visibly, this building felt and remains simply magnificent.

Luckily, we bought a corner flat on the first floor which still has the original curved door from the hallway to the living room and has a simply fantastic, sea view. In addition, the Embassy Court community is extremely welcoming and we have made some very good friends here.

We have especially enjoyed events within the block. Opening up the roof terrace during the Brighton Fringe Festival to guests and serving cocktails remains a memorable highlight.

“it's both the building and the residents that continue to delight us and we just love living here”

The gorgeous mural in the entrance hall is a constant reminder of this building's outstanding history.

Overall: it's both the building and the residents that continue to delight us and we just love living here.





A spokesperson from Embassy Court said:

‘The building has been a part of so many lives and we’re grateful for the opportunity to share its story publicly’

We look forward to the 100th birthday celebrations!



The 90th birthday special event

A celebration of the building took place on the 20th September between 11am and 1.30pm in the hallway, roof terrace and one of the flats.

Around 60 guests gathered to hear speeches by Angie Clapham, Chair of Bluestorm Ltd, Peter Kyle, MP for Hove and Portslade, Elizabeth Darling, historian who wrote the seminal text about Wells Coates and Matt Cohn (Black), the grandson of Wells Coates; the latter who created this and other Modernist buildings in the UK.

Guests and residents also had the opportunity to view a photographic exhibition in the ground floor foyer by Nick de Marco KC of Embassy Court and other Modernist Architecture. Guests were invited to attend a series of mini tours in one of the flats. The sun shone and guests and residents shared some fruitful discussions on the roof terrace over a glass of wine, a Bluestorm cocktail, and canapes.

Photographs by Alison Cooke

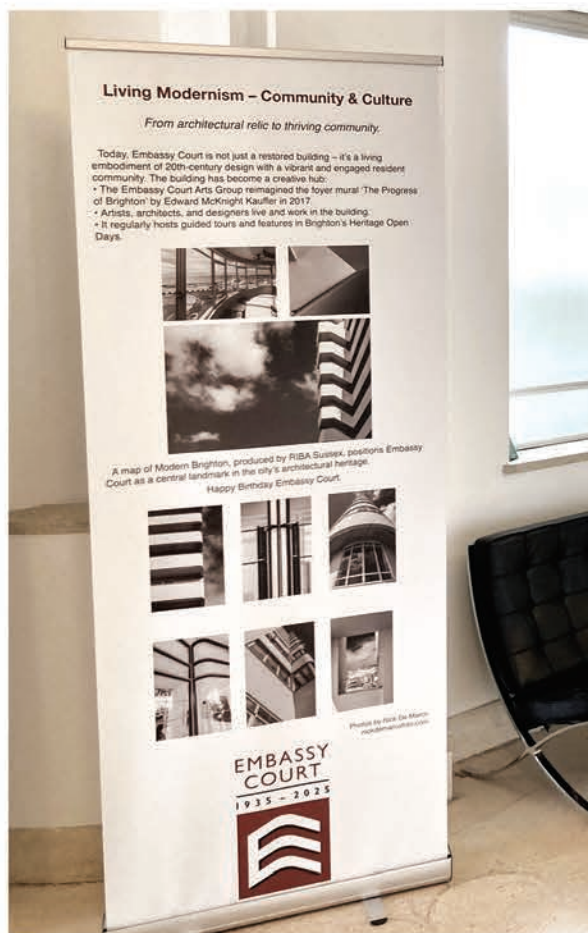


THE SPEECHES



THE TOURS





Left: Nick de Marco's exhibition of photographs in the foyer; above: Kit, Alice, Cecilia; below, left: Maryanne, right: Dave; bottom, left: Nicholas, Warwick, Patrick; right: Katia, Juliana



Cats can only live in Embassy Court with prior permission of Bluestorm Ltd. During the Covid 19 pandemic, residents realised that they had some feline, as well as human neighbours. Several cats subsequently featured in a dedicated Cats of Embassy Court Newsletter 2022. In 2024, Ash Rashland created the Embassy Court Cat Club WhatsApp group which has around six human and eight feline members. In the spirit of feline affection, Ash has contributed the following story about his own Bengal Embassy Court flat mate, Milla.

Milla

by Ash Rashland,
Administrator of the Embassy Court Cat Club and 90th Birthday WhatsApp groups

So, you think you want a Bengal?

Let's start with what's a Bengal. They are a hybrid breed of cat, developed in the 1970s by mixing an Asian leopard cat with a domestic breed. They retain some aspects of their wild ancestry, such as their larger size, (a typical house cat weighs about 3.5 to 4kg, whereas a typical Bengal can be 8 or 9kg for a male. Milla is 6kg, which is about average for a Bengal girl), very athletic with lean muscular bodies.

Take her introduction to house plants. I have a lot of them, and everyone told me they would NOT survive a Bengal! Early signs were not hopeful. She took a shine to a palm plant and would take huge delight in launching herself into the middle of it or pulling down the fronds to play with... then sit there looking totally innocent with a look that said:

‘I don't know how it happened dad, but it looks like someone's been messing with your plant. You should investigate!’

Fortunately, except for that palm, which sadly did not survive Milla's interest, she soon learnt that house plants are not toys and generally leaves them alone.

Very vocal, (Milla has opinions about EVERYTHING!) and a love of water. She has joined me in the shower several times, thinks nothing of going outside in the rain to stomp in puddles and play with the bubbles! Milla's favourite meal is fish, although she's also a prolific hunter. Her bird count is well into double digits, and we live in a block of flats with a balcony! Luckily (especially for the birds) she's all about the hunt and doesn't seem to know what to do with her catches, once she's caught

them so she brings them to me to (presumably) dispatch for her.

It's like living with a Golden Retriever! She gets very annoyed with me when I "accidentally" let the birds go, after checking them over for injuries. Even when she's up to mischief, it's done with so much fun and cuteness that makes it impossible to get annoyed with her.

I knew Bengals are a high energy breed and felt bad about keeping one cooped up in a flat, even with a balcony. So, I trained her to wear a harness and started taking her out for walks. This went so well that we don't even bother with the harness anymore and she walks with me all over the building (especially the roof terrace), several times a day.

But first, there were a couple of other things to establish. One was the idea of "me" being the safety point, so if something scared her, she would come to me for protection, rather than just run off. This was done by getting her used to spending time on my shoulder, which she took to so well that my son started calling me Long John Silver, because of the ever-present cat shaped parrot on my shoulder!

She would sit on my shoulder to watch me cook, prep her food, or pretty much anything I was doing. She also jumps up onto my shoulder when I come home, to give me head rubs and nose boops, whether I want them or not! And of course, she will jump up onto my shoulder if we're at a park and a dog happens along, which was the whole point of this exercise.

The other thing was getting her used to the car, so it's fun rather than trauma. This worked too and she loves to lay on the dashboard and watch the world go by, before settling down in her carrier next to me. It means we can visit my son's house, and she gets to play in their garden too.



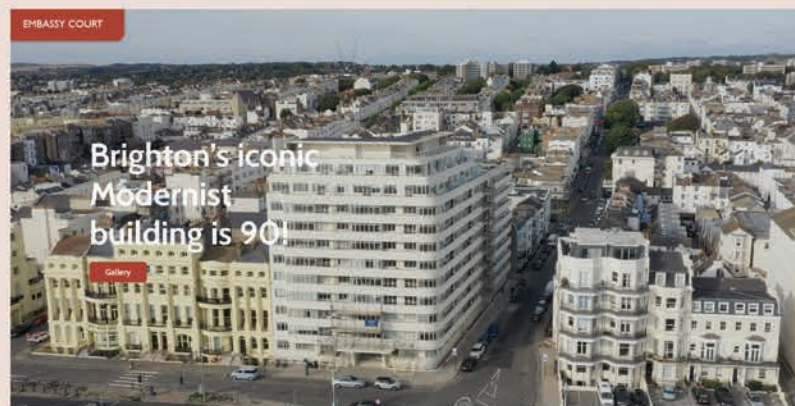
Another aspect of life with a Bengal is just how bright (and determined) they are. Sure, this means they're great fun to play with, but it also means they get bored easily and a bored Bengal is a recipe for mischief!

Milla learnt to open doors quite early on, so she'd go in the kitchen, go in the cupboard where I kept her treats, grab a bag, then have the cheek to bring it to me to open for her, which I do as it's easier than cleaning up, if she was left to tear the bag apart! I started keeping her favourite treats in jars, but she learnt to open screw tops too, so I must find jars that are too smooth for her to be able to get a grip on, or keep it in the fridge, which she can't open, yet.

Finally, Bengals are climbers, so you better provide them with things to climb, or they'll find their own! Life with Milla (she just turned 4) has been a delight. So full of love and laughter. We go on daily adventures. I've had to break up fights with seagulls, scare off crows and warn clueless starlings. She considers most of the building as her territory, but after patrolling the top 4 floors every day, she loves to come home and have cuddles and be a princess in her home.

So, if you have the temperament to enjoy having a cat that needs / requires / demands a lot of your attention, then you really should consider getting yourself a Bengal.

Embassy Court website



A revised Embassy Court website was launched in 2010, built from two separate websites, embassycourt.co.uk for corporate material and embassycourt.org for the Friends of Embassy Court's involvement with the arts.

The colour theme was blue with a look to emulate the shape of the building and the cantilevered staircases. Much of the historical and architectural content was written by the late Paul Roberts with technical support from Sue Milnthorpe and David Leever.

By 2022 the Board felt that the website could do with an update so commissioned Silverback Studios to present a more modern look and feel. A new theme was chosen with tomato red as the signature colour, reflecting the Embassy Court entrance sign and railings.

Drone footage was added to the home page to give a more engaging look as well as links to our social

media. All the material on the history, the architect, the people and the bibliography was ported over to the new site together with additional updates, new photographs and quotes from visitors.

In addition, we added important information for current and prospective residents on the various restrictive covenants, plus an up-to-date Residents Handbook and the latest building safety information.

Many visitors and prospective owners find our website through Google Maps and contact us to book a tour or for information about life at Embassy Court. Just today, we have received the following message: *"The website is incredibly comprehensive and sends a strong message as to the current / future care for and management of the building".*

Angie Clapham
Chair Bluestorm Ltd.
www.embassycourt.org

Embassy Court tours

For over a decade, Embassy Court Leasehold Volunteers have conducted tours of the interior and exterior of Embassy Court.

There is a mixture of tours as stated in the Foreword. Tour Groups can accommodate up to 12 individuals. This is a walking tour of the building lasting around 90 minutes. These may be booked online at

<https://www.embassycourt.org.uk/tours/> or via the annual Brighton Fringe Festival or Heritage Open Days, through their offices.

The Tours include information about Wells Coates, the building's history and how it was rescued and saved by leaseholders. It starts in the front foyer, and includes a visit to an individual flat, the roof terrace, the

Embassy Court's WhatsApp groups

During the Covid pandemic 2020-2021, Embassy Court, like many other residences and communities globally, created WhatsApp groups (WAGs) to facilitate communication when face to face communication was over time forbidden, absent and/or socially distanced.

Embassy Court currently has around six WhatsApp groups; one for leaseholders, another for residents, a reading group, cats group, out-of-hours fire alarm group and the 90th Birthday group. The basic ethos of all the Embassy Court WhatsApp groups is devoted to improving the quality of life at Embassy Court, by strengthening community links, highlighting shared problems, issues and pleasures, making creative suggestions, or asking for practical help.

Its mixed membership, including renters and owners, has a capacity to speed up and facilitate dialogue, alert everyone about specific matters in the building, reduce printed paper traffic and costs, initiate creative ideas and provide mutual support.

Most of all, these groups aim to enrich life in this iconic apartment block. By joining Embassy Court's WhatsApp groups, you consent to follow their guiding principles and to engage in their ethos. The custodians review the WAG principles annually.

Bluestorm Ltd, Rachel Gilles, Alice Usherwood, Ash Rashland, Maddie Blackburn

Administrators of the above Embassy Court WhatsApp Groups

tank rooms – the latter which accommodates an original Wells Coates kitchen, an expanding archive collection, some plans, artefacts, pictures – and the opportunity to purchase some merchandise before finally visiting the rear of the building and saying farewell.

The Embassy Court Tour Guide Team

Embassy Court Reading Group

The Embassy Group Reading Group/ aka Book Club first met in 2018 and have continued to meet monthly, either face-to-face or via (zoom, particularly during the pandemic).

There are 12 members of whom around eight regularly meet around one evening a month for about an hour and a half in one of the member's flats. Each member chooses a book over the year to read and discuss with everyone.

There is an expectation that all attendees have read and are able to discuss the book. Whilst drinks and nourishment are provided in a social and a friendly ambience, the emphasis is on the read and the social chat and banter usually follow on after the scheduled meeting. A synopsis of the book is noted after the discussion.



At the end of each year, members vote on their favourite read. Twice a year, usually in December and July, the reading group hold Readers' Choice evenings. Each member is invited to speak for around five minutes on a good read, essay, poems, etc of their choice, within a convivial setting, whilst sharing supper and drinks. This aims to mark the changing seasons or to celebrate the end of or

to welcome a new year. In November 2025, a former Embassy Court leaseholder, Emma Jane Unsworth, introduced her new book *'The Slags'* and generated a lively discussion.

Angie Clapham and Maddie Blackburn

Chairs of the Embassy Court Reading Group

Embassy Court Newsletters

Both Bluestorm Ltd. and the Residents Newsletter team periodically produce digital and occasionally paper copy newsletters for leaseholders and residents.

Their emphasis differs. Bluestorm Ltd. updates leaseholders on important business aspects related to building, plans and maintenance, but also feature, special activities that take place within Embassy Court.

The Residents Newsletter was initiated in 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic and provided important links and information about the pandemic, supported by the Embassy Court Covid Advisory Team (CAT). It also covered special events during the year; such as Halloween, the end of year festive season and special edition newsletters. The latter have included a special tribute to Emma Jinks, former Chair of Bluestorm Ltd., and posthumous tributes to individuals who made significant contributions to the Embassy Court Community; Paul Roberts and Michael King.

Bluestorm Ltd., Paul Dennison, Valerie Sinason, Maddie Blackburn
Newsletter Teams

Maintenance Team

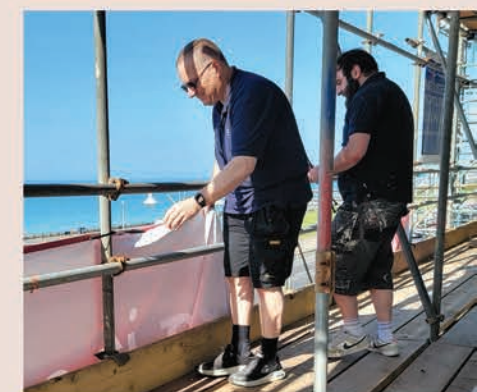
In 1936, Embassy Court was not just home or a summer residence to the rich and famous but to around 40 staff; a number of whom had accommodation on site.

Like many country houses in England at that time, the presence of maids, butlers, servants, concierge etc. was incorporated into the architectural design of the buildings with separate lifts and entrances to the flats for servants and employers.

After the war, there were fewer rich people with maids and staff residing in Embassy Court. From the 1970s, one full-time caretaker was employed who essentially had the day-to-day domestic responsibility for the common parts of the building, with ad hoc external contracted cleaning support.

Today, Embassy Court has a more diverse, resident population and has a very small maintenance team; essentially two full-time staff with subcontracted, additional cleaners.

The maintenance team work full-time Monday to Friday (8am-5pm) with an out-of-hours service in the evenings,



weekends and bank holidays, covering emergencies and security only.

The building manager undertakes repairs, painting and maintenance duties throughout the common parts of the building throughout the year. Flat owners are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of their own apartments. Out-of-hour fire alarm duties are covered by resident volunteers.

Our maintenance team is highly valued and much appreciated by residents. The building manager not only keeps a watchful and attentive eye on the building but on the well-being of those who live within it. The building could not survive without Steve and Leo.

Maddie Blackburn

Halloween

During 2020, before Halloween, an Embassy Court resident suggested in a residents newsletter:

"Happy haunted season, Embassy Courters! If people would like to join in decorating their inside balcony windows for Halloween, it would be a great and safe way to embrace the Autumn spooky festivities".

There was an immediate response.

A ginormous spider and her spiderlings appeared outside Flats 14/15, the door of Flat 22 had an impressive make-over, and Dracula popped into Flat 53 and took time to be removed! Since 2020, every Halloween, a prize is offered for the best Halloween door and costume entry.

The prizes are awarded on 1st November each year! The winners are notified via the WhatsApp group or a written note through their doors.

Congratulations to flat 45 in 2025 for winning the best door decoration for 2025.

Maddie Blackburn



Build a Lego Embassy Court

In July 2025, ten children and their parents or guardians met for tea and drinks in one of the flats, hosted by members of the Embassy Court 90th Birthday Steering Group.

The children were tasked with building a Lego copy of Embassy Court. For one hour, the children worked either in small groups or individually at small tables constructing their neo-Modernist masterpieces!

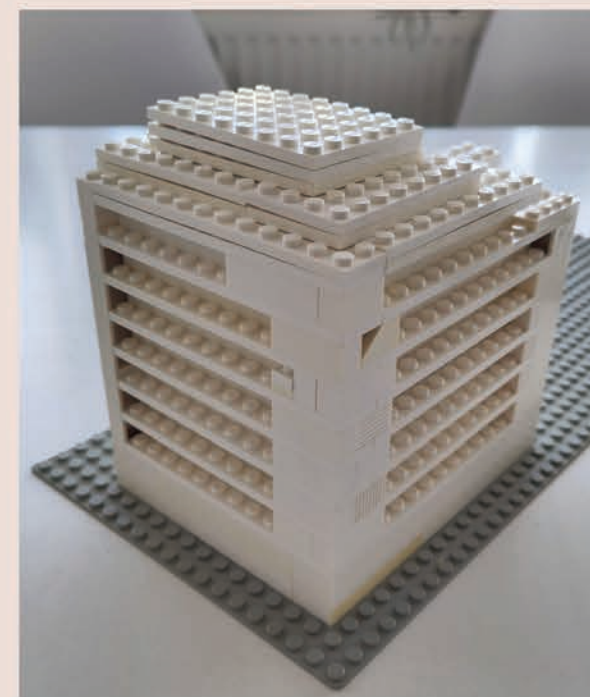
David Leever, a retired engineer and his wife Valerie, psychoanalyst, writer and retired child psychotherapist,

both who live in Embassy Court, judged the competition. Annan Schroeder, age 13 was the overall winner. Valerie and David said "that this competition was tough but that all the children had worked hard to create a Modernist masterpiece".

Maddie Blackburn



Above: David, left, and Steve and Leo, right, with the Lego model made by David being moved to the Tank Rooms.





*Tata (back parapet), Milla (top of stairs), Kissa (stairs parapet), Gary (back turned), Emma and Purdie (striding), Thyme (foreground).
Photomontage and booklet design by Nicholas Howell. Printed by Scantech.*