

Steyning Society visit to Embassy Court 21st November 2023



Embassy Court, Brighton

Eleven of us were fortunate enough to be welcomed to Embassy Court on a day when the weather was surprisingly good.

Maddie and Paul, who live in Steyning, welcomed us with an introductory talk in the foyer and a chance to enjoy the replicated 1930s mural.



The Mural

Maddie and Paul are very knowledgeable about pre-war Modernism and they own a beautifully refurbished and furnished flat on the 5th floor, to which we were invited to sit comfortably while we heard about the designer Wells Coates and his amazing career, the initial wealthy inhabitants of these unique apartments and a little of how they lived, and on to the decline of the building to near dereliction. A few residents managed to get the building listed as grade II* to prevent demolition and then an extraordinary journey through the courts, and at extraordinary cost, the refurbishment

and improvement in safety issues. There was so much to hear and take in.

We went to the top balcony to look out at amazing views, and appreciate the height of the building which is only dwarfed by the Brighton i360.



View from Top Balcony

We then went into a small museum, housed in what was the original water tank area, full of pictures of the damage to the concrete building in its declining years, people, artifacts etc. There was also a tiny kitchen, rehoused from Brighton Museum, which had once been in Embassy Court. We finished the tour at the back where we were able to look into one of the few garages and, looking upwards, to really appreciate the design and architecture of this fascinating building.

Our thanks are due to Brian Lavery who organised this, as well as to Maddie and Paul who in addition to welcoming us into their flat, and sharing their enthusiasm and knowledge, kindly shared some of Paul's birthday cake with us! Future visits will not be so fortunate!

There is an excellent website to explore. As this is a private block of apartments, visits must be booked and are limited to 12 people. Five of our group came in by bus, which is a relatively easy journey.

MCT