

## SECTION PLUNGES INTO SEA DURING STRUCTURAL REPAIRS



■ Collapse - a section of Clacton Pier plunged into the North Sea and (inset) the hole left on the deck after the incident

# Part of Clacton Pier collapses into North Sea

A SECTION of Clacton Pier collapsed into the sea during structural refurbishment work.

Part of the historic structure, built in 1871, collapsed while works were being carried out to the outside ride deck, which is currently closed to the public.

Clacton Pier said work was taking place to put in a new area of concrete decking when the section collapsed.

It said a limited section was being cast in the far corner of the deck. The aim was ensure the wet concrete being laid would not result in undue structural movement to the existing deck.

Pier director Billy Ball said as this was taking place, excess movement of the piles caused four bays of the existing slab to fail.

He said: "Site personnel were carefully monitoring the

By **JAMES DWAN & GEORGE KING**

pouring of the concrete when the collapse happened and everyone was evacuated from that particular area which is now fenced off."

So far around 4,000 sq m of such work has been carried out and this area involves 140 sq m.

Mr Ball added: "As part of our ongoing commitment to ensure the pier remains safe and serviceable, we go to extensive lengths to analyse and calculate the integrity of the existing structure before constructing any new attractions. "Our structural engineers are currently assessing the situation."

The affected section of the ride deck was a part of the area which had been set aside for the new Looping Star ride due to be opened in the spring.

One seafront worker, who did not want to be named, saw the section collapse on Friday.

"The first bit fell down at about 10.30am," he said.

"I was just sitting on the seafront talking to a bar owner and then a second larger section fell down at about 11am. It sounded like thunder."

"There were workmen on the pier at the time and they all ran away as it collapsed.

"There were quite a few people around and everyone stopped to watch what was happening. It was quite shocking to see and made quite a noise."

The 140sq metre section which collapsed is near where the Stella's Revenge roller-coaster was previously positioned. The thrill ride was recently dismantled as part of an ongoing project to reinvigorate the landmark with new attractions.

## MP's Cabinet reshuffle

JAMES Cleverly has been replaced as chairman of the Conservative Party.

The Braintree MP has taken up a ministerial role in the Foreign Office and Department for International Development following a Cabinet reshuffle by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Mr Cleverly described his seven months as chairman as a "pleasure and privilege" but described his new appointment as "exciting beyond belief".

Colchester MP Will Quince retained his role as minister for welfare delivery during the Government's cabinet reshuffle.

He said he was delighted to be asked to continue working on the delivery of Universal Credit.

## Police appeal to find men

POLICE are on the hunt for three men who they want to speak to in connection with alleged drugs supply offences in Clacton.

Anthony Faulkner, 48, was last known to be living in Clacton, while Jack Horlick, 20, has links to the town and Dagenham.

The third man who Essex Police want to interview is Mark Browne, 42, who has links to Jaywick.

Call Clacton CID on 101.

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