

In brief

Age Concern AGM

TOWN Mayor Cllr Stuart Earl will be guest of honour at the annual meeting of Bexhill branch of Age Concern at Manor Barn this afternoon.

Kidney fund

THE envelope collection for the National Kidney Fund, in Dorset Road South, on August 5 raised £31.09, thanks to all supporters.

Disability help

THE Bexhill Caring Community is arranging for East Sussex Disability Association to use their office to hold an Outreach Service on the last Thursday of the month commencing August 26 from 2 to 4pm, for information and help if you are disabled.

They have an information officer, Cliff Bevan, who will be there to offer help.

Lottery grants

LOCAL clubs and organisations who are thinking of providing new or improving existing leisure facilities are being encouraged to apply for Lottery grants that have now doubled to £10,000.

Further details of the Awards for All funding is available from Rother Council's sports development officer Adrian Gayton on

Millionaire developer plans eight-storey luxury complex off seafront



Town centre future

A MAJOR development plan to transform the shabby Sackville Road roundabout area was unveiled this week.

A millionaire businessman plans to demolish the eyesore shops on the east corner and replace them with a luxury eight-storey retail and apartment complex.

Property developer Humayun Khan says his building will echo the De La Warr Pavilion in design style and will open in March 2006 if everything runs smoothly. It's hoped the scheme will breathe new life into a decaying area of the town centre and provide Bexhill with another iconic building. The site is just yards away from the proposed 60-bed hotel retail, office, leisure and residential development on the Metropole putting green.

The Skoda garage site on the roundabout has also been vaunted by Rother leader Graham Gubby as having investment potential, meaning that corner of the town could witness a development explosion.

by **ROB HUSTWAYTE**

In an exclusive interview with the Observer on Tuesday, Mr Khan said: "I think Bexhill has incredible potential for investment and development at the moment and I am amazed nobody has snapped up this site before. I think I am the first of many private developers who are beginning to see the potential of this town. It is unique."

It is the first major town centre development investment in decades and Mr Khan revealed he is also looking at other possible sites, though was unable to elaborate.

The news comes just a week after traders were warned by the Chamber of Commerce that the town centre could die in the next ten years without change and investment.

Mr Khan added: "I am serious about investing in this town and I plan to be here a long time. It's very hard to make money in Eastbourne now and impossible in Brighton but people are wak-

ing up to Bexhill. My emphasis is on high quality and longevity."

The Sackville Road corner building will comprise of underground parking and two large retail units with 19 luxury three-bedroom and five two-bedroom apartments. Mr Khan revealed he is in negotiations with a major high street coffee shop and a pizza restaurant chain to fill the retail units.

The building will sweep around the corner as a nod to the De La Warr's staircases and feature the same clean lines and modernist design principles as the pavilion.

"But it is not a pastiche," he added. "It's very much a 21st century design. We have worked very hard to make sure the appearance of the building will be high quality and sensitive to its surroundings. We have gone for the very best."

Mr Khan was reluctant to divulge the scale of his financial investment, saying only it was "a very expensive business."

He added: "It's an exciting time for Bexhill and I'm glad to be here at the start of it."

Darren Cohen, senior man-



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ager of Ward and Partners estate agents, which are acting for Mr Khan's company, Kingston Homes South East Ltd, added: "This building is badly needed in an area that has been neglected for a long time.

"I think it could provide a

new heartbeat for the town and a new sense of commercial enterprise. It's got to be great news for traders in that area of town. To have this sort of investment sends out a loud and clear message that Bexhill has a lot to offer people from outside. We

could be coming into a very exciting era and long may it continue."

PICTURED above: The Sackville Road roundabout site where the new complex would be built. Below: The adjacent Skoda garage site.