

Waterlines

The newsletter of the
Sovereign Harbour Residents Association



Issue 5

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October 2005

Wake up Sovereign Harbour



**The B&Q planning application
will be heard on**

Thursday 13th October, at 4:30pm

**in the Gold Room of the
Winter Gardens**

It's up to you now!

DON'T LET THE DEVELOPERS WIN!

After months of speculation and prevarication, the time has come for the Eastbourne Borough Council's planning committee to stand up and be counted. On Thursday 13th October, at 4:30pm in the Gold Room of the Winter Gardens, they will decide whether B&Q and Sovereign Harbour Ltd will be allowed to ride roughshod over the aspirations of Sovereign Harbour residents, and destroy what little opportunity remains to rescue the concept of 'Sovereign Harbour Village'. Alternatively, they can expose this application for what it is, a cynical attempt to obtain change of use for the land, greatly increase its market value, and swell the already bulging coffers of the land owners.

Sovereign Ward councillor, and chairman of the planning committee, Patrick Bowker, has stood down for this meeting, so that he can support his constituents in fighting this application. We welcome his support, and thank him for it.

Every one of you has a part to play!

If you haven't written a letter of objection, **do it now**, it will still count.

Be at the meeting, if necessary take a day off work, your presence will help the committee to see just how strong our feelings are.

Above all, **don't leave it to others**, it's much too important to be left to chance.

Help to make this the biggest show of **people power** that Eastbourne has ever seen.

So that you don't have to take your car into the town centre, or take a regular bus service, **the SHRA have contracted with Eastbourne Buses to provide transport to the Winter Gardens, and back to the harbour after the meeting.**

There will be no charge for this service. See inside for full details

It's not all struggle and strife, don't forget the Halloween Party on 31st October. See inside for details.

Coach Service to Winter Gardens for B&Q Planning Meeting

As its very likely that a large number of residents will be attending this meeting, parking in the town centre will be at a premium. **Don't take a chance on arriving late and missing the meeting.** The public have been asked to be in their seats by 4:15.

To help you be there on time, the SHRA will be providing two coaches, one for each side of the harbour, to get you directly to the Winter Gardens.

Please try to use the earlier coaches if possible, leaving the later coaches for those who have time constraints.

Coaches for **north harbour residents** will leave from the end of Pacific Drive at 3:00, 3:25 and 3:55, picking up from all stops on the Pacific Drive before going directly to the Winter Gardens.

For **south harbour residents**, the coaches will start, from the last stop in Atlantic Drive, at 3:00, 3:25 and 3:55 picking up at all Atlantic Drive stops before going directly to the Winter Gardens. Coaches will have a notice in the window **'Winter Gardens Only'**

The coaches, will be **free of charge**, and will also be available for the return journey after the meeting.

Will your development ever be adopted?

In the September issue of Waterlines, we touched on the likelihood that no part of the harbour would be adopted until the whole development has been completed. Since then, we have received information that you might find disturbing. In an e-mail to Patrick Warner, Graeme Lake, The EBC's Principal Highway Engineer, states:

"Sovereign Harbour, Area K shall not be formally adopted by the Highway Authority until the main spine road, Pacific Drive is on maintenance. This is because the Highway Authority does not wish to own land that they cannot secure access to over adopted highway.

The delay in the adoption of Pacific Drive is because there is still significant volumes of construction under way in Sovereign Harbour. All heavy construction plant and materials (concrete lorries, HGVs, etc) must use Pacific Drive to access the ongoing construction sites. It is generally acknowledged that heavy vehicles damage roads much faster than general use by cars (one statistic that I recall is that one bus inflicts the same damage to a road as 1000 cars).

Some work was done by the Highway Authority to try and adopt Pacific Drive before construction work was finished. This involved negotiations with Sovereign Harbour Ltd to secure additional money to pay for increased maintenance and early resurfacing of Pacific Drive, but Sovereign Harbour Ltd preferred to remain the street manager for the road rather than find the additional funding required.

It is anticipated that the remaining developments should finish construction within the next two years. At that time, Pacific Drive shall go onto a year's maintenance period before being permanently adopted by the Highway Authority."

He goes on to say:

"Harbour Quay, is similar to Pacific Drive. It remains the responsibility of Sovereign Harbour Ltd until all construction sites accessed off of it are complete.

The Piazza shall remain private. The Developer has not offered it for adoption by the Highway Authority. It is accessed via Santa Cruz Drive and Key West.

Part of Santa Cruz Drive (running up to just beyond Salvador Close) was recently issued a Part 1 Certificate of Completion (footways complete and carriageway up to road base level).

However, there are outstanding issues concerning Key West. There is a bridge over part of the inner harbour in Key West. Before the Highway Authority will agree to adopt this road, it must assure itself that the bridge structure will not collapse. Also, if the Highway

Authority is to assume the responsibility for the maintenance of this structure, it must have the structural design calculations and drawings for the bridge. The Developer was unable to produce these drawings and calculations. Protracted negotiation has been underway, mainly between the Developer and its Consulting Engineer, to provide these drawings. It is frustrating, especially as current CDM Regulations (Construction Design & Management) state that when you design a structure, you must supply as built drawings to the Client and also a method statement for safely dismantling the structure. I am given to understand that the calculations have not been provided and have been passed to the County for checking.

Additional complications exist with Key West beyond the bridge. The original Developer was a firm called Prowtings. They were bought out and became Westbury Homes Ltd. Westbury Homes may decide not to offer land for adoption, which previously Prowtings indicated would be adopted."

Once again we see the interests of residents taking second place to the interests of Sovereign Harbour Ltd. In order that sHL may maximise it's return, thousands of harbour residents must wait several years for the harbour to become part of Eastbourne.

What is most disturbing is that the EBC will not adopt any development until it is completed to the required standard. By the time the council gets round to considering adoption, many developments will be up to ten years old and in need of refurbishment. The developer will be long gone, the sub-contractors will now be trading in their mother's third cousin's daughter's name, and who will be left to pick up the bill for bringing the development up to standard? You've guessed it, the residents. The alternative is that the whole harbour is left to decay into a wasteland.

There is a scandal of monumental proportions lurking just around the corner, and it will not go away. The implications for the whole town are enormous, it must be tackled **now**. The tragedy is that nobody, over many years, has exercised the controls required to prevent this situation arising. It would seem likely that there has been negligence and/or incompetence by public officers and/or representatives throughout this period. It would also seem likely that the only mechanism that will get to the root of the problem is a Public Enquiry. **Who will have the courage to initiate it?**

Halloween Party at Simply Italian

Come and join us on 31st October for an afternoon and evening of fun and games



Fun starts with a 'Trick or Treat' kids party, from 4:30pm until 6:30pm

There will be a meal, with drink and desert, and there will be prizes for the best costumes. All this for just £4.95 per head.

Children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult



For adults, there will be a buffet meal, but drinks will be extra.

The cost will be just £10.50 per person, but **MEMBERS** will get in for a silly price of just £7.50.

With the current half-year membership at just £5.00, how can you lose?



Then, at 8:00pm, it's time for the grown-ups to have some fun. Why not dress-up for the occasion, let's see lots of monsters, ghosts vampires and sexy witches.

There will be music and games and prizes for the best costumes.



We look forward to seeing you all on the night.

Don't be late, once the restaurant is full, the doors will be closed

Don't be disappointed, buy your tickets in advance from S.I

Members' surgeries.

Don't forget the monthly members' surgeries at **Simply Italian** on the Waterfront.

Future Surgeries from 10:30 to 11:30 on Saturday:

5th November 2005 and

3rd December 2005

Photographic competition

The photographic competition is now closed. The response was excellent, and the standard was high, thanks to all of you who entered.

It's now up to the judges, who will be coming to a conclusion within the next couple of weeks. The winners will be notified as soon as the verdict is reached. and we will publish the results in the November issue of Waterlines, on the website, and on the notice board.

'Reliable Tradesmen' list

We have received a few responses to our request for reliable tradesmen (or women) for our list, but would like a few more. Unfortunately, due to lack of space, we will be postponing this item until the next issue.

Chairman's footnote I hope this Newsletter finds you well and galvanised to support the interests of Sovereign Harbour residents at the EBC Planning Meeting of 13 October. Whether you are from South or North Harbour, and whether you feel that B&Q affects you directly or not, the issue is one of our voices being heard. There will be many issues similar to this over the years that will affect some of us more than others but we must make our views heard. If we don't, our interests will always take second place to those of 'business' and government, local and central.

As a final issue I wanted to briefly update you on an important concern to all Harbour residents – that of

Sovereign Harbour Trust (SHT). I'm sure you've come across them – you pay around £200 to them each year. This represents well over half a million pounds of residents money annually. The Memorandum of Association of SHT states that its particular objective is *the preservation and protection of human life and property by the provision and maintenance of sea defences at Sovereign Harbour, and to advance the education of the public in all matters relating to the environment and the preservation of SH and its surrounding areas.*

The SHRA Committee felt it was appropriate for residents to be directly represented on the Board of SHT, and I wrote to its Secretary on 29th May seeking clarification of several issues, not least of all access to Board minutes, and advice on how we could get a seat on the Board of Trustees. This currently has six seats, three of which are occupied by Carillion employees, or ex-employees, while the other 3 are allocated to the Environment Agency (EA), reflecting the focus on flood defences. The maintenance of these by the EA's contractors accounts for around 70% of our contributions.

A reply was received from the Secretary on 8th September. This essentially said that as with any company, records of directors' meetings are private, so we don't have access to these. In addition it suggested that the contractual relationship with residents might make it appropriate for a resident to be a trustee, but this should not be taken as a statement of the position of the Board of Trustees. In short not particularly helpful, but don't worry I'm not giving up on this and will continue pressing SHT for representation. I am also seeking support from the EA. We will keep you informed.

Rick Runalls

