



Playing Space – Who needs it?

There is a document on the EBC website, entitled '**Outdoor Playing Space Provision – Supplementary Planning Guidance**'. The guidance provided by this very important addition to the Borough Plan seems to have been totally ignored by those for whom it is intended.

In its introduction, it gives the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) definition of outdoor playing space. 'Space which is available for sport, active recreation or children's play, which is of suitable size and nature for its intended purpose, and safely accessible and available for the general public'.

There are a number of land types which are specifically excluded from this definition, the most notable of which is, 'water used for recreation, except where it forms a play feature of an outdoor play area, such as a paddling pool. The document goes on to say, *'Under this definition, the marina areas of Sovereign Harbour would also not be included, as these are commercial areas for boats, and children would not be encouraged to play there.'*

Chapter Ten of the Borough Plan provides policies for the provision of open space, with particular specifications for playing fields and children's play space.

Policy LE1: *The council will maintain the provision of playing fields at a minimum of 1.21Ha (3.0 acres) per 1,000 of population.*

Policy LE2: *The council will require new residential development of 15 or more dwellings to contain open space in order to meet the needs generated by the new development, at a level which would satisfy the standards, together with a commuted sum for future maintenance. If such provision is not feasible, the council will seek a contribution towards the cost of providing or upgrading such facilities elsewhere in the vicinity.*

These policies have been available for use in development control since October 1993. In the case of an outline planning application, the open space requirements must be secured at the same time as the grant of the outline consent. These policies cannot justify refusal or contributions at reserved matters stage.

On 13th August 1997, the outline planning consent was issued for the development of the north harbour. Condition 21 of this consent was *'That each phase of the development shall provide play facilities for children and other casual/informal space for children in accordance with the Borough Plan standard or as other wise may be agreed by the local planning authority.'*

The reason given was *'in the interest of community development and facilities for children.'*

On 12th August 1997, just one day before this consent was granted, a Section 106 agreement was signed between Sovereign Harbour Ltd and EBC. This agreement acknowledges the requirements of policy LE2, but states, 'The applicant has chosen to satisfy policy LE2 by paying a financial contribution.'

Policy LE2 clearly states that a financial contribution will only be sought if the provision of space is not feasible. On a development that starts from a clean sheet, the provision of the required space clearly **is** feasible. Also, the policy makes no provision for the applicant to **choose** this option.

Even if we accept that this agreement satisfies the policy, which is difficult to even contemplate, we then need to look at what would be a suitable sum of money to compensate for the loss of about 30 acres of playing space which, as prime building land, would be worth many millions of pounds.

The Supplementary Planning Guide gives some assistance with this. Without going into all of the detail, there are some very significant line items.

- £110,000 for a pair of home and visitors separate changing and shower facilities.
- £10,118 per pitch for mowing and white lining.
- £25,848 per changing room for running costs, including cleaning and staffing,

There is very much more, and these amounts are 'per 3 acres, so multiply by about ten!

So how much did Sovereign Harbour Ltd (SHL) pay for the provision of all this very valuable building land? If we look at the numbers above, we could conservatively assume that it would be several million pounds.

The actual sum paid, was just a little over twenty-seven **thousand** pounds paid in two instalments, just a fraction of what is indicated in the guidelines and a real slap in the face for the residents of Sovereign Harbour.

But there is worse to come. Not only were SHL allowed to make this choice, they were also allowed to dictate the terms of how, where and when the contribution would be used.

Three of the clauses in the agreement state,

'The Financial Contribution shall be used by the Council within a period of five years from the receipt of the second instalment by the council.'

(Continued over)

Playing space (cont)

'Any part of the Financial Contribution not used by the Council within the period specified above shall be returned to the person or persons who made the payment.'

'The monies returned shall include interest thereon calculated on a daily basis at a daily rate of 1/365th of the Barclays Bank plc rate in force from time to time from the due date to the date of payment.'

The five year period specified in the agreement has almost expired, the money has not been spent, and planning officers are engaged in frantic eleventh hour discussions, in an attempt to renegotiate the agreement.

It would certainly add insult to injury if EBC were obliged to repay the money with interest.

Whenever the provision of the playing space is brought up, planning officers have attempted to justify their predecessors actions by saying that SHL have

provided 42 acres of open space in the form of the marina. But as we've seen, their own planning guidelines specifically exclude the marina as it is a 'commercial area for boats'.

Recent excuses for the failure to adhere to the Council's policy are to include the beach area and the marina walkways in the calculations. The fact is that in this case, as in so many others, harbour residents have been clearly sold short, and those responsible are desperately trying to avoid the fallout.

Despite the recent motion unanimously passed by the Council, Carillion still refuse to enter into direct discussions, and SHL continues to press for a B&Q warehouse that not even B&Q wants. The time has come for our elected representatives to take firm control of the situation and drive through a plan for the completion of 'Sovereign Harbour Village' that, for the first time, puts the needs of residents firmly at the top of the agenda.

Jangling bells

Once again, there will be no SHRA Christmas carols on the harbour. To quote Marj Pratt, "response was overwhelmingly tepid". Our thanks to those who did respond, and our apologies if we have disappointed you.

Even if we had managed to drum up sufficient support, we would still have been unable to proceed. as we would have required a licence from the council, which we would have had to apply for *twelve months in advance*.

It seems that this country has descended into a position where spontaneous action is impossible and even if you plan well ahead, you must have a licence, public liability insurance and have conducted a risk assessment. You might have noticed the absence of firework displays this year!

However, we have heard that the Haven Church will be organising an event and, in any case, they will be holding a 'Christingle Service' in the Haven School on Sunday 17th December at 4:00pm. Look out for the December issue of Waterlines for more information.

Harbour Friends (by Bev Adams)

We had a really successful Harbour Friends weekend. Theatre at Polegate on Friday night, THREE Progressive suppers on the go on Saturday, and a really good night on Sunday at the Yacht Club. There were some 50 of us, including 14 new people, and everyone seemed to have a really good evening. This month we are going to meet at the new Garden Bar - upstairs on the Waterfront next to the New Indian Ganges. Wednesday 22nd November from 7.30pm.

Thinking caps needed for new things to do - had a thought about an evening trip for dinner on the Bluebell Railway, and make it a black tie do, and Haze is going to organize a large Progressive supper. Please let me know if you have any ideas.

If you are looking for new friends and social activities please either turn up, email Bev at adams.associates@btconnect.com. or call Bev on 01323-479797.

'Vets' Football (by Myles Treacy)

The Sovereign Harbour Veterans Football Team had their first taste of tournament football on Sunday 22nd October, at Sussex Downs College.

It was windy, cold and incredibly wet but approximately 14 teams turned up to play. Sovereign Vet's played 4 games and although we didn't win any, we did remarkably well to only concede 13 goals! Or 11, if you don't count own goals. The team sadly didn't score any (unless you count the own goals). This was mainly down to us losing our star player Uwe, after 8 seconds with a pulled muscle in his leg!!

The teams we played against were mainly youngsters and games were played at a very fast pace, so all 11 players played in virtually every game. A special mention should go to Barry, who in one game scored an own goal, in another game conceded a penalty and in the 4th game, managed to get sent off. Well, they do say things happen in 3's don't they? It was also nice to see some WAGS turn up (wives and girlfriends) to support us, or in some cases, to leech at the firemen!

It was a good day out and everyone enjoyed themselves, especially as after the competition, we all dried off and some of us went for a few shandies in Seymoor's on the harbour, where tactics were discussed for our next foray!

If you are interested in joining the football team and social circle, the only requirements are that you are aged over 35, enjoy football and like having a good time. If so, contact our founder, chairman, captain and chief bottle washer, Frank "Debbie" Milmoie at frankmilmoie@btinternet.com or phone him on 07771-610158. Alternatively, there is normally a group of us that go to Seymoor's on Wednesday evenings to discuss team matters and watch the football on television... or cricket... or tiddly winks!

The State of Health in Eastbourne

The next Green Party forum, on the theme of 'Health and Wellbeing', will be held in the Lamb Inn in Old Town, starting at 8:00pm on Wednesday 29th November. All are welcome.

ST. ANNE'S VETERINARY GROUP

6 St. Anne's Road, Eastbourne, BN21 2DJ

1 Antrim Court, Pembury Road, Langney

1 Gorrington Valley Road, Willingdon

15 Downland Way, East Dean



Tel: 01323-640011 Fax: 01323 738060

www.stannesvets.co.uk www.eastbournevet.co.uk

The Sovereign Harbour Trust

During October, SHRA committee members met the three new trustees of the Sovereign Harbour Trust nominated by the Environment Agency.

The SHRA attendees took the opportunity to convey to the trustees the anger and frustration felt over the way in which the Trust had been set-up, and the refusal of the Carillion appointed trustees to explain how the Trust's income, which is 100% provided by harbour residents, was distributed. They also expressed their concern at the Trust's failure to publish detailed accounts.

Furthermore, the trustees were informed that the refusal of the Trust to consider the appointment of resident trustees was a major concern, and added considerably to the perception that the trust was operating against the best interests of residents.

The trustees explained that their duty was to ensure that the sea defences were adequately maintained, but that they have been told that they have no responsibility for the harbour and marina maintenance, other than to forward the funds collected from harbour residents on the behalf of Sovereign Harbour Ltd. SHRA members expressed the view that the two parts of the trustees duties could not be separated and trustees must take responsibility for all aspects of the Trust's operation.

Overall, considering that all previous requests to meet trustees had met with refusal, everybody who attended the meeting, which took place at the Pevensey Bay Offices of the Environment Agency, felt that it had been very productive. The SHRA members welcomed the assurances of the new trustees that they would do everything in their power to make the operation of the trust, and the distribution of its funds, more transparent.

SHRA members agreed to provide the new trustees with a current list of residents' concerns and it was agreed that a further meeting would take place when the trustees were more settled in their role. It was hoped that a future meeting with *all* of the trustees might soon be possible.

Sovereign Harbour Investment Club

Harbour resident Sam Sweiry would like to hear from other residents who would be interested in forming an investment club in Sovereign Harbour Village.

Sam said, "I have recently retired from a full time business and I would like to make friends with like minded people to share in the fun of forming a low risk "Sovereign Harbour Investment Club "(SHIC).

74 Seaside, Eastbourne.

Opening times: Tuesday - Saturday from 6pm

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www.shra.co.uk/lucifers

Ideally, we would have one club divided into two sections – possibly one for ladies and one for gents, to compete on equal terms. This will be good fun, and hopefully lead to long friendships."

Sam has found a website www.proshareclubs.co.uk that prospective members can visit for more information.

If you are interested, or would like more information, please e-mail Sam at shinvestclub@aol.com

Sustainable Communities Bill

Wouldn't it be great if people had the power to take real control of the locality in which they live. Wouldn't it be great if, when the planning committee said 'No to B&Q' that was the end of the line. Wouldn't it be great if, when residents said, 'No more flats', and the Borough Council agreed with them, developers had to accept the decision. Wouldn't it be great if the government could actually be forced to put its policy of devolving power to the local level into practice.

Before the last General Election, the Government introduced the 'Sustainable Communities Bill', which was intended to address these issues and effectively bring 'Power to the People'. However, this Bill was not included in the Labour manifesto and was dropped from the legislative programme after the election. This Bill would have empowered citizens and councils to drive government policies in their areas; it would have given people real power, not just 'consultation rights'.

A campaign has been mounted inside and outside of parliament to get this Bill into law. So far, 359 Members of Parliament, over half of them, have signed the parliamentary motion entitled 'Early Day Motion No 641' in support of the Bill, including David Cameron, Menzies Campbell and Nigel Waterson.

On Thursday 23rd November, the Parliamentary Private Members' Ballot takes place, and the seven MP's who top the list will each choose a Bill to adopt. The Bill they choose will depend to a great extent on the amount of lobbying they receive so write to your MP asking him/her to adopt this Bill, in the unlikely event that he/she should they be successful in the ballot or, if unsuccessful, to lobby the winners to influence their choice.

Also, keep a look out for the results of the ballot and write to the successful members urging them to adopt the Bill. We will publish the names of the successful members on the news page of the website.

Without legislation such as this, corporate bullies will continue to use their muscle to ride roughshod over the wishes of ordinary people. **Need *must* be put before greed.**

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www.naturalfitnesscentre.co.uk

Temple Bird

Solicitors

27/28, The Waterfront,
Eastbourne, BN23 5UZ

e-mail: legal40@aol.com

Tel: 01323 479888 Fax: 01323 479999

Natural Fitness Centre wins award

At the Eastbourne Business Awards, 2006 event, held at the Grand Hotel on 27th October, Alison Mitchell of the Natural Fitness Centre was presented with the Runners-up award in the Professional and Service Business of the Year category by former international athlete, Kriss Akabusi. Our congratulations to them.

Support your local team!

Harbour resident and former SHRA committee member Brian Dennis is now the manager of Eastbourne United Football Club. There are also several other harbour residents on the playing and coaching staff of the club and they are always on the look-out for new players and support staff, at every level.

Brian wrote to Waterlines as follows: "We have had a good run of results since 28th August, winning five games and drawing one of our Sussex League matches; our only recent defeats have been in cup matches. We lost to Croydon FC in the 2nd round of the FA Vase, a game we should have won, and were well and truly beaten by Mile Oak in the Sussex Senior Cup. In our 'RUR' cup match, we beat Lancing 5-2. We have been named 'Team of the Month' for Division One of the Sussex League and are now 6th in the table with a game in hand, which could take us to 3rd place."

Brian goes on to say, "We could do with more supporters, and it would be great if harbour residents would adopt us as their team. We are playing good, exciting football, so come along all of you."

Planned fixtures include:

Sat.	11 th Nov.	(H)	Oakwood	3:00pm
Sat.	18 th Nov	(H)	Hassocks	3:00pm
Tue.	21 st Nov.	(A)	Sidley	7:45pm
Sat.	25 th Nov.	(A)	Crowborough	3:00pm
Tue.	28 th Nov	(A)	Three Bridges	7:45pm

See the SHRA website for more information.

Candidates be warned!

In the October issue of Waterlines, we warned you to beware of candidates for the May 2007 Borough Council elections attempting to take credit for all the good work done by the SHRA and others. We thought that, as in the last elections, they would not be able to resist. We hoped they would listen but, sadly, and almost inevitably, they haven't.

What makes this even more unacceptable, is that some candidates are trying to get involved in areas in which they have very little knowledge and clearly don't understand, in particular the Sovereign Harbour

Trust. In so doing, they could very well be putting future negotiations at risk.

After eighteen months of hard work, members of the SHRA committee have finally established a dialogue with the SHT Trustees. This blatant attempt to curry favour with harbour residents is in grave danger of inadvertently undermining our efforts, and will certainly damage their support across the Harbour.

If rectifying the injustices of SHT is going to be a long term commitment, then we would of course welcome their support as long as they work in concert with us. However, if this is just a convenient local issue in the run-up to elections, thereafter to be discarded, then their intervention is unwelcome.

After the October issue of Waterlines, we were accused of being political. Perhaps we were, but we make no excuses for it. However, we were not being *party* political, nor will we be. Whatever the situation, *and whatever the party*, we will accept any *genuine* offer of support and will give credit when it is due. However, we will also be critical when we feel it is appropriate. Candidates, you have been warned!!

Be a good neighbour

A number of harbour dwellings are second homes and, at this time of the year, many of them are much less frequently occupied. Also, it is the time of the year when many people take a Winter break in sunnier climes. It is also a sad fact that the harbour seems to be a magnet for every leaflet dropper in the town. This combination means that the incidence of 'mail hanging out of the letter box' is on the increase and this is a good indication to the criminal element that nobody is at home.

So, if you notice mail hanging from a neighbour's letter box for more than a day, please take the time to push it right through. Hopefully, they will do the same for you in similar circumstances.

Marina mums

The next meeting of Marina Mums will be in Simply Italian on the Waterfront, from 11:00am – 12:00am. on **Monday 27th November**.

If you would like to go along, or would be interested in future events, please contact Sam.

Phone or text: 07949-687996

Or e-mail: marinamums@yahoo.co.uk

Members Surgery

The next members' surgery will be held at Simply Italian on the Waterfront on:

Saturday 2nd December

from 10:30am until 11:30am.