

**Sovereign Harbour Residents Association**  
**AGM**  
**9th May 2006**

**Committee Member Attendees**

Rick Runalls  
John O'Hara  
Molly Burton  
Ian Weeks  
Jan Weeks  
Carol Golder  
Marj Pratt  
Rod Gochin  
Jane Gochin  
Alison Attwood  
Barry Miles  
Colin White

**Invited Guests**

Councillor David Elkin  
Councillor David Tutt  
Councillor Patrick Bowker  
Councillor Patrick Warner  
Councillor Chris Williams  
Brian Dennis  
Lorraine Dennis

**Agenda**

1. Welcome to Members and Guests
2. Introduction of Existing Committee Members
3. Review of the Evening's Business
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Appointment of Committee for Coming Year – Requirements of Constitution
7. Appointment of Honorary Auditor
8. Proposed Changes to the SHRA Constitution (Presentation and vote by Members)
9. Open Discussion for Members
10. AOB

### **Item 1**

#### **Welcome to Members and Guests**

Rick Runalls called the meeting to order and introduced the attending guests. He also briefed attendees on the presence of a TV camera for the first part of the meeting. This was to provide an article for the BBC's Politics Show.

### **Item 2**

#### **Introduction of Existing Committee Members**

The Existing Committee Members introduced themselves in turn with brief statements on their location within the Harbour and their particular interests and responsibilities on the Committee.

### **Item 3**

#### **Review of the Evening's Business**

Rick reviewed the Agenda and explained that this was the key administrative meeting of the year. This was the time that the existing Committee stood down and offered themselves for re-election. It was also an opportunity for Members to ask questions and for guests to ask and/or answer questions.

### **Item 4**

#### **Chairman's Report**

See Appendix 1

### **Item 5**

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Barry Miles presented the Members with the Accounts and commented that financially it had been a good year. Total income was now £6040.50 compared to £550 last year. Expenditure had been kept to a minimum but the website, PO Box, new notice board and Waterlines comprised the majority of the costs. Waterlines will be more expensive this year as there will be a complete year of issues. He thanked Ian Weeks and Len Pegley for their assistance. Copies of the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.

### **Item 6**

#### **Appointment of Committee for Coming Year – Requirements of Constitution**

Rick explained how the Constitution required an election should more than 12 people apply to be Committee Members. The Committee felt strongly that residents should have the power to challenge them and their positions on the Committee. He informed the Members that no new applications had been made so the current Committee stands and he thanked Members for their vote of confidence.

### **Item 7**

#### **Appointment of Honorary Auditor**

Rick reminded the Members that at the last general meeting he had asked for a volunteer to be Honorary Auditor, stressing that it should not be anyone on the Committee. Len Pegley had kindly volunteered. Rick informed the Members that Len had been very

thorough and proposed he be appointed formally for the coming year. Molly Burton seconded and Members offered no objections.

### **Item 8**

#### **Proposed Changes to the SHRA Constitution (Presentation and vote by Members)**

Rick explained that the SHRA Constitution was the mechanism by which the Association was managed. He explained the changes the Committee would like to make and the reasons for them. He would then ask for a vote and there would need to have a two thirds majority for the changes to be adopted. There was a query from the floor in respect of the Committee having the power to replace inactive or ineffective Committee Members and how they should be removed. Concern was expressed that removal of ineffective Committee Members by the Committee itself could be perceived as unfair. After discussion Rick proposed that this change be withdrawn. It was noted that such removal could be handled through a Special General Meeting if it became necessary, which affectively provided an appeal route. There was a further query on item 16 in respect of the content of a special general meeting and how any additional items could be added to the agenda. Rick said that the proposed change to the Constitution made it absolutely clear that absolute priority would be given to the issue for which the SGM had been called. However, pragmatically it made good sense to maximise the value of a SGM given the logistics and expense of setting one up. The Committee took note of the Members' views and subject to agreed changes to items 9 and 16, the amendments were voted on and overwhelmingly approved.

### **Item 9**

#### **Open Discussion Session for Members**

There was a lively discussion from the floor in respect of the water feature on South Harbour. Rick has met with Barbara Martin who is the Chairperson of the Columbus Point Residents Group. The water feature is currently not being maintained but 369 people on South Harbour are obligated to contribute to the cost of maintenance. The problem has been exacerbated by the recent change of developer. A member suggested the Eastbourne Pond Club have expertise in this area and might be able to help.

Other discussions from the floor included the apparent unwillingness of SH Trust to engage with residents and address their concerns, road adoption, illegal parking by contractors' vehicles, lighting around the harbour, maintenance of walkways and paying exorbitant council taxes. There was also comment in respect of paying for sea defences when the cost of sea defences is paid from central government everywhere else along the south coast. The lack of open space and community facilities was also discussed.

Efforts of Ward Councillors to start freeing up some of the above issues were recognised by the meeting.

**The meeting closed at 9.50 pm**

## **Appendix 1.**

### **Sovereign Harbour Residents' Association Annual General Meeting of 9 May 2006**

#### **Chairman's Report**

#### **1. Committee's Objectives and Vision for the Harbour**

- As we set out at our election a key objective of the Committee was to increase the engagement of residents in the Harbour's future and a key principle of the way we would work would be transparency to SHRA members in our dealings on their behalf.
- Above all was our wish to bring the Harbour together into a community rather than it existing as a large housing estate. There are good and bad things about the Harbour but it needs an overall sense of identity. A difficult issue with inadequate facilities to bring people together and service the social needs of residents, and sadly an apparent failure to recognise the shortfall by developers and our Council through the years.
- As residents we must stay focussed in the coming year and we can expect some hard 'battles' to get what we need and have a right to. However, there is much to be encouraged by as membership numbers swell and mark a growing engagement in the issues that will shape the Harbour's future.

#### **2. The Past Year**

- We introduced a newsletter available to all residents on the Harbour, not just SHRA members as a priority. We did some soul searching on this – after all it is SHRA members that provide our income through subscriptions. One might ask why committed residents should subsidise their less committed neighbours. However, a community of over 3500 homes desperately needs a way of communicating and although the internet offers some help people do not always have access. The Committee concluded that Waterlines had to be available to all residents, but to minimise the impact on SHRA income we have achieved a good level of additional income through advertising, without making it overly intrusive.
- Membership has increased steadily over this past year to around 470 and as of tonight the 2006/7 membership numbers have again risen and now stand at over 500.

- The monthly surgery we run at Simply Italian continues to draw residents with particular issues or who just want to talk through what we are doing and how they see the Harbour's problems and future.
- We have concentrated heavily on planning issues for the remaining Harbour development. One might question whether picking up issues such as this is really what one would expect from a residents' association, but let me assure you that it has been absolutely necessary in the Committee's view. I think it fair to say that the SHRA Committee has a presence at virtually all EBC Planning Meetings and Council Meetings open to the public. In addition we have struck up a sensible and challenging dialogue with the Council over planning issues affecting the Harbour.
- We do not have a monopoly of 'good ideas' and have sought to work with other groups and residents wherever appropriate. Never more so than with the 'No to B&Q' actions group where a number of the current SHRA committee came from. Although we resigned when we became part of the SHRA Committee our common interest ensured a close liaison between the groups and with the active support of residents this was successful in helping to convince the Council Planning Committee that the B&Q proposal was inappropriate for Eastbourne. We never felt that the application was anything more than a vehicle to achieve change of land use for the benefit of the developers without contributing anything to SH residents' or the Borough Development Plan and gladly the Planning Committee rejected it.  
I am sure that 'No to B&Q' would join me in saying that this was your victory and I would like to thank everyone who attended the Planning Committee at the Winter Gardens. The Planning Committee were left in no doubt what residents thought of the B&Q proposal and what their mood was.
- Another area we have been trying to develop is contact with residents' groups associated with the different developments and areas around the Harbour. We have written to those of which we are aware and I have had some responses. This is an area I have yet had a chance to take forward but it will be an important issue for the next Committee and is another way of drawing the Harbour together and providing mutual support without the local identity of these groups being affected.  
If there is anyone here from a local residents' group then please make yourself known at the end of the meeting so we can include you in future discussions.
- A very significant issue for us has been and still is the Sovereign Harbour Trust - its objectives, make up and the apparent lack of transparency in the way in which it disposes of residents contributions. The Board of Trustees has 6 seats – 3 occupied by employees or ex-employees of Carillion and 3 further seats allocated but not yet taken up by the Environment Agency. Letters have been written to the Secretary of the Board seeking a seat or seats for representatives of Harbour residents without success so far. Although I'm

awaiting feedback from the Secretary who had agreed to put my latest request to the spring meeting of the Board I am not holding out much hope given the response to previous letters.

- To better understand and influence the process we have written to and recently met with the Environment Agency whose only interest is the money provided to them by the Trust to support flood defence work. We see little justice in being the only coastal development we know along the South Coast who has to pay the lions share towards maintenance of flood defences when other areas are funded from central government.
- Since the business of the Trust is not really open to residents' scrutiny it is hard to be convinced that it is run in a way appropriate to a charitable trust. Without achieving access to the business of the Board of Trustees the Committee may be faced with little alternative than to approach the Charities Commission for an independent view.
- Although calls on our time restrict other work we have been trying to influence several smaller but nevertheless important issues across the Harbour. For example, one of the Committee has successfully persisted in getting improvements in the provision of dog waste bins. We have lobbied over the delays in roadways being brought up to standard and taken over by the Council, which is now getting more focus. This is undoubtedly the best thing for the Harbour and we have been impatient to get this moving. After all we get no discount on our Council Tax bill so the sooner the Council takes over responsibility for the roads, and all that goes with this, the better. We are also sensitising the authorities to problems arising from a small number of antisocial residents on the Harbour who are prepared to make neighbours lives a misery, and in one case we know of, to bully and harass an elderly lady. I hope instances such as this remain rare but with this volume of high density housing pushing people together, conflicts are always possible when people act thoughtlessly.

### 3. Thanks

- For the Committee it has been a sometimes frustrating but nevertheless rewarding year. Above all the Committee on behalf of residents, would like to recognise the encouragement and contributions from local businesses, notably:

**Temple Bird** - provision of an office for our regular meetings and support through regular advertising.

**Simply Italian** - for allowing us the use of their lounge for our monthly surgeries, and other residents space for social gatherings.

We also wish to thank you and other residents who give us encouragement and help us in many different ways, from the delivery of Waterlines to facilitating other initiatives on our behalf.

It is no secret that we have had our ups and downs with our elected representatives when we felt that the interests of residents were being neglected. However, I believe that relationship has improved and I would like to welcome the recent support given by our ward councillors in the press over social issues that have arisen and on removal of graffiti and applying pressure to get roadways taken over by the Council. Additionally the dialogue with EBC in general is improving to the benefit of all.

#### **4. Things We Would Like to See Taken Forward**

- As far as planning is concerned – more of the same.
- Carillion's ambitions for Commercial areas 1 and 2 are unchanged and involve getting a change of land use to push the value of their land up irrespective of the wishes of residents or the good of Eastbourne. We heard late last week that Sovereign Harbour limited (Carillion's subsidiary) have appealed against EBC's rightful rejection of their plans for a B&Q. Disappointing as it might be that greed is still overriding the wishes and needs of residents as well as the views expressed by national and local elected representatives, we were fully expecting it. Don't despair the fight will be taken forward and SHRA and EBC are working together for a successful outcome.
- Increased efforts to engage with local resident organisations for mutual support.
- Encouragement of residents in undertaking social events and advice with facilitating them. Two examples of very successful initiatives take by residents are 'Harbour Friends' and 'Marina Mums' – these have helped to bring residents and mothers with young children together.

**Sovereign Harbour Residents Association**

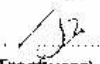
**REVENUE ACCOUNT for the Year Ending 31st March 2006**

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2005/6</u>	<u>2004/5</u>
Subscriptions	4262.50	555.00
Income from Advertising	1750.00	-
Bank Interest	28.00	-
	<b><u>£ 6,040.50</u></b>	<b><u>£ 555.00</u></b>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2005/6</u>	<u>2004/5</u>
Presentations	70.00	-
Printing / Publications	3528.35	316.65
Stationery	537.22	14.00
Internet Cost	126.76	-
Membership Cards	310.35	27.93
Hall Hire	97.50	100.00
P O Box Fees	54.00	-
Transport Hire	150.00	-
Miscellaneous Sundries	42.07	29.40
Bank Correction	2.50	-
	<b><u>£ 4,918.75</u></b>	<b><u>£ 487.98</u></b>
<b><u>Excess of Income over Expenditure for the Year</u></b>	1121.75	67.02
<b><u>Balance Brought Forward at the Beginning of the Year</u></b>	1318.66	1251.64
<b><u>Balance Carried Forward at the End of the Year</u></b>	<b><u>£ 2,440.41</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1,318.66</u></b>

**Balance Sheet At 31st March 2006**

<b><u>Current Assets</u></b> - Cash at NatWest Bank Current A/c	1322.41	1318.66
Cash at NatWest Bank Reserve A/c	4528.29	-
<b><u>Total Current Assets</u></b>	<b><u>£ 5,850.70</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1,318.66</u></b>
<b><u>Current Liabilities</u></b> - Prepaid Subscriptions	3410.00	-
<b><u>Total Current Liabilities</u></b>	<b><u>£ 3,410.00</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>
<b><u>NET CURRENT ASSETS</u></b> - held for Revenue Account	<b><u>£ 2,440.70</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1,318.66</u></b>
<b><u>REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b> - Balance at the end of the Year	<b><u>£ 2,440.70</u></b>	<b><u>£ 1,318.66</u></b>

Certified that I have laid before the Hon. Auditor all books and papers of the Association's Financial Affairs for the year ending 31st March 2006

Signed.....  ..... Date 27/3/06  
**B.R Miles (Treasurer)**

I have examined the foregoing accounts of the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association in accordance with the requirements of the SHRA Constitution. In my opinion they are in order and present its financial transactions in respect of the year to 31st March, 2006. I have verified the balances held by the Association on that date. The figures for the previous year to March 2005 were not examined by me.

Signed.....  ..... Date 27/3/06  
**L.C Pegley (Hon. Auditor)**