

SHRA

Sovereign Harbour Residents Association



Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 15 May 2019

**The Haven School
Atlantic Drive
BN23 5SW**

**Doors Open 19:00
Meeting Commences 19:30**

AGM AGENDA

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. Introduction of Guests
3. Introduction of Committee
4. Committee's Report (as circulated)
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Appointment of Committee for the Coming Year
7. Issues Moving Forward
8. Rentcharge Report
9. Local Councillors Q&A
10. Open Discussion

Meeting Ends

Current Committee

Chair	Chris Mepham
Vice Chair	Vacant
Secretary	John Winship
Treasurer	Dilys Iverson
Membership Secretary	Tony Smith
Website & <i>Waterlines</i> Editor	Tony Smith
Committee Member	Penny di Cara
Committee Member	Jan Mortlock
Committee Member	Colin Smith
Committee Member	Vacant
Committee Member	Vacant
Committee Member	Vacant

Committee's Report for 2018/2019

For much of the past 12 months our Chair, Chris Mephram, has been ill which has prevented him from attending committee meetings. Chris has now decided to stand-down as chairman and leave the committee for the time being, so will not be seeking re-election at the AGM. Earlier this year, it was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Roger Green and David Lewis, both members of the committee since early 2017. We are very grateful to Chris, David and Roger for their advice, support and their contributions to the work of the committee. An increasing burden of work therefore falls on fewer shoulders and at least two volunteers are needed on the committee to assist.

Since the previous AGM these are some of the main issues we have been dealing with:

Retail Park

Although a planning application to upgrade the fronts of the retail buildings and the walkways linking them was approved by EBC early last year, nothing further has been heard about this upgrade to the Retail Park other than a new totem sign appearing at the entrance. We wrote to the owners of the Park, M&G Estates requesting an update and bemoaning the proposed closure of the cinema, but they have not replied despite a reminder. We will pursue the matter with EBC, our MP and local councillors.

Bus Link between North & South Harbours

The committee again approached M&G Estates, Premier Marinas, East Sussex Highways and Stagecoach about the proposed bus link between North and South Harbours. In each instance there was friendly interest but no promises.

Premier Marinas

Early last year, following the collapse of overall developers of Sovereign Harbour, the disgraced Carillion plc, Premier Marinas acquired The Waterfront from a Carillion subsidiary. They also acquired the strip of land opposite the entrance to The Waterfront that had been used as a boat sales display area. At the time, Premier stated that "Our aim in acquiring The Waterfront is to provide the support and investment it needs to truly become the heart of what is already a thriving marina." Obviously, Premier will also expect a return on their investment, and are now putting some of their words into action. They have redesigned the logo of The Waterfront, located new billboards at the harbour's road entrance and positioned new signage around The Waterfront area.

In March, Premier Marinas submitted a "minor licence variation" application to EBC licensing which extended the present licence that covers 3 small corner areas of The Waterfront to also cover a new outdoor area at the entrance to The Waterfront that will include part of the previous boat display area and the road area.

We received emails from members both for and against the proposal. EBC received some 50 objections. As a result, the application was turned down but EBC informed us that Premier would be in their rights to submit a "full variation" application, if they so wished.

We also understand that for the scheduled pop-up cinema screening of *Bohemian Rhapsody* on Saturday 27 July, Premier could apply for a "Temporary Event Notice" (TEN); and, low and behold, there is one on EBC's list of such applications for the "Provision of Regulated Entertainment" on the 27 July at The Waterfront, which presumably relates to the screening. These TEN applications are quite difficult to contest as there is no public consultation and it appears that only the police or EBC's environmental officers can raise objections.

Following a useful meeting with Premier, we wrote to them formally on 11 April asking about their actual plans for the organisation of the cinema event. A vibrant and successful Waterfront is good for Sovereign Harbour in general and SHRA is not opposed to occasional innovative and exciting entertainment events taking place at The Waterfront, so long as the needs of local residents are taken into consideration. So, we also asked Premier for assurances that every effort will be made to minimise light and noise interference to residents and that suitable security and crowd control measures will be in place. At the time of writing, we were awaiting their reply.

Premier have other events and entertainments planned for The Waterfront including a pop-up artisan food market, and a children's 'urban beach' and a climbing wall.

Litter

Ownership of the piece of land separating the Retail and Waterfront car parks appears to have been finally resolved with M&G Real Estates accepting responsibility for one half of it. They have already cleared undergrowth and litter on their half. It is believed they have now included this in their regular maintenance schedule.

Members have complained to us about the litter around all of the Retail Park's perimeters. We will raise the matter with Asda and M&G Real Estates. Early this year the local councillors held a litter pick near the Asda roundabout and plan to hold another one in due course.

Community Centre

It is regretted by the committee that this AGM has had to revert to The Haven School. The attempt to hold it last year in the new Community Centre was disastrous as the building was not ready and we were let down by the PA system not turning up. We had hoped to hold it in the centre this year, but we couldn't take the risk of further delay. The Committee

has repeatedly, without success, pressed Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) for an opening date. A seemingly never-ending succession of reasons for non-opening has been proffered. We do however know that managers (Wave Leisure Trust) have been appointed to run the centre and are taking bookings from organisations who wish to hold regular meetings as and when the facility opens. There has been some progress lately with the new path now surfaced and new fencing and signs erected. Perhaps it may even have opened by the time you read this. The proposed charges for the large hall range from £20-£25 an hour for community use, to £40-£50 per hour for commercial use. All plus 20% VAT.

Fishing Quay

Plans for the construction of a new fishing quay located behind The Harvester have been approved. Phase 1 of this project is the construction of a new two-storey building to fillet, store and sell fish, with further storage and offices on the upper floor. The works are scheduled to begin on site this month.

Port Moresby Place

Last July, with one dwelling left to sell, EBC finally enforced the planning condition concerning the provision of the public open space adjoining this North Harbour development. Unfortunately, this meant that the sale of the final property could not go ahead until the open space was completed. The buyer of the property was prevented from finalising his purchase for more than four months and was put to great inconvenience and expense. It seems to us to be quite wrong that a prospective resident should have suffered the most because of other people's failings. The open space is now almost complete and is an asset to the area, although it awaits adoption by EBC; the sale of the final property went ahead just before Christmas.

Site 11 (by the lock)

The uneven, undeveloped land on the South/West side of the locks makes access to the lock bridges difficult for wheelchair users and prams. A meeting was held with Premier Marinas to discuss improvement. A large problem is the steep bank, which is relatively unstable, aggravated by the need to bring in a heavy crane for lock maintenance. Premier Marinas have said they will look in to this soon to see what may be done to improve access in the area for everyone, perhaps by adding some additional concreted areas and smoothing the pathway beside the sea wall.

Rentcharge

Although we continue to doubt the legality of the Charge (doubts that were supported by a Counsel opinion), at the moment it needs to be paid because failure to do so could have serious consequences.

As we have previously reported, we are currently pursuing an alternative line of enquiry. Members may have deduced from the rentcharge flow chart on the SHRA website (www.shra.co.uk/pdfs/Rentchargechart.pdf), that the Harbour Charge is structured in such a way that any reduction that might be secured against the Environment Agency's "SW Charge" would only result in a pound for pound increase in Premier Marinas' "Marina Charge" - in short, a futile effort. Far better to focus our work on the Marina Charge component.

The Marina Charge is intended to cover both routine and longer-term harbour maintenance and repairs. It is important to bear in mind that such future costs are technically unlimited and so the Marina Charge component is not fixed. By contrast the "SW Charge" is indexed linked and thus is a reasonably foreseeable amount.

SHRA member and retired Chartered Legal Executive, Stuart Bannerman continues to research and work on aspects of the

rentcharge issue, but, as we've said before, the nature of this work must remain confidential at present. We can say that it is proving to be more difficult and is taking longer than we would wish to obtain and verify some of the information we require, but progress is being made. Stuart will provide an update at the AGM.

Earlier this year, SHRA wrote to the Sovereign Harbour Trust asking that they make the following improvements to the administration of the annual rentcharge.

1. Increase the stated period for payment from 14 days to 28 days.
2. Provide an option to pay the rentcharge by instalments (say half-yearly or quarterly).
3. Work with Premier Marinas and Pevensy Coastal Defence Ltd (PCDL) to provide much more detailed information to support the expenditure claims.

The Trust replied to us saying that to achieve a new payment structure it would be necessary to enter an individual deed of variation in respect of each of the residential properties, and for those deeds then to be registered at the Land Registry. This would cause significant expense and disruption, both for homeowners and the Trust (the Trust's costs would be passed on to residents). This seems to be a permanent barrier to making any changes to items 1 and 2 above. On Item 3, the Trust told us the Premier Marinas would be in touch with us to discuss the matter. At time of writing, we await their approach.

Dog fouling

There has been some improvement and EBC has posted Dog Control notices in those areas where dogs are now required to be on leads. The residents of Wimblington, a village in Cambridgeshire, were so frustrated with the problem of dog poo not being cleaned up they created an online map whereby

instances of dog spoiling are publicised with the hope of persuading owners to mend their ways.

The SHRA committee sought further information about the map and discussed doing a map for Sovereign Harbour. To be effective such a system needs people in various areas of the harbour to regularly post sightings and updates to the website. It would also need someone to take charge of the map and run it. If you think such a map for Sovereign Harbour would be a good idea, and if you are interested in administrating such a map, please get in touch with us. There is a link to the villager's map in the following Daily Mirror article:

www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/villagers-create-online-doodoowatch-map-12162024

Communication with Members

Most of our news or updates are announced first on the SHRA website. The site is updated at least a couple of times a week and contains masses of info about the Sovereign Harbour community, the history of the harbour and a gallery of photographs submitted by SHRA members. It attracts around 3,000 visitors a month. The site was moved to a new internet hosting company last year that has halved our costs.

For major or urgent announcements SHRA's *MailChimp* email distribution list is used to contact members and subscribers. You can subscribe to the list from the SHRA web site (www.shra.co.uk/waterlines.html) or by emailing the membership secretary (membership@shra.co.uk).

Waterlines, our digital (on-line) newsletter continues to be produced every second month. Subscribers are notified of its publication by email.

Pages from *Waterlines* are also displayed on the SHRA noticeboard located on the wall outside Seasons bistro at The Waterfront.

SHRA Finances

A summary of the SHRA financial accounts for financial year 2018/19 (1 April 2018-31 March 2109) is attached to the end of this report. With thanks to Paul di Cara for his scrutiny.

Membership

Over 90 new members were signed up in the financial year 2018/19.

To the Future

During the coming year we expect to be...

- 1 Scrutinising and responding to planning applications where appropriate.
- 2 Monitoring the progress of building work on sites 1 & 7c, and any future work on the still-vacant development sites, to ensure public open spaces are provided in accordance with the 106 agreement and that general planning regulations and environmental issues are fully considered.
- 3 Monitoring progress on the completion and opening of the community centre. When it opens, keep an eye on its management and use and whether its proposed hourly charges are in keeping with promoting growth in its use.
- 4 Pushing for the regeneration of the retail park and helping to solve the problem of litter.
- 5 Continuing our investigations into the legality of the rentcharge.

6. Making sure Premier improve access across the area beside the locks that leads to the South Harbour curved prom.
7. Looking out for publication of the anticipated 'Safe Walking and Cycling Strategy' document.
8. Continue to press for a cross-Harbour Bus Link.

Thanks

Our thanks to Stephen Lloyd MP and Councillors David Elkin, Penny di Cara, and Paul Metcalfe and former councillor Gordon Jenkins for their assistance. We also thank officials at EBC, Premier Marinas and elsewhere for engaging with us on various issues.

We are very grateful to our sponsors, Sanders Property Management, Ginger and Sanders, The Travel Concept, AP-it, Sovereign Mortgage Brokers and Homes4Sail, for their valuable support which has allowed us to operate the SHRA website and produce *Waterlines* at little cost to members.

Finally, I must thank you all for your continued support and good wishes during my illness. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with the new Chair if you wish to bring any Harbour-related issue to our attention chairman@shra.co.uk

Chris Mepham Chair SHRA

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	2018	2019
Nat West Bank Current Account	2,434	2,364
Nat West Bank Business Account	6,504	7,512
PayPal Account	127	460
Equipment Assets	0	0
Prepaid Expenses	0	0
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	£9,065	£10,336

CURRENT LIABILITIES	2018	2019
Accrued Expenses	0	160
Other	0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	£0	£160
NET ASSETS	£9,065	£10,176

REPRESENTED BY:

	2018	2019
Net Fund brought forward	9,257	9,065
Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	(192)	1,111
NET FUND C/F	£9,065	£10,176

Prepared by:
Dilys Iverson
April 2019

INCOME

	2018		2019	
	£	£	£	£
Advertising	750		900	
Membership fees etc	1,063		863	
Bank Interest	0		8	
TOTAL INCOME		£1,813		£1,771

EXPENDITURE

	2018		2019	
	£	£	£	£
Insurance	890		101	
Assets written off/ donated	556		0	
Website	214		120	
Computer Software	20		103	
Printing	110		255	
Telephone	72		0	
Hall Hire	66		0	
Documents	39		0	
Stationery	16		17	
Postage	22		64	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£2,005		£660
EXCESS (DEFICIT) OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		(£192)		£1,111

Prepared by:

Dilys Iverson

April 2019

