

Support The Protection of Important Harbour Leisure Areas

Since its opening in 1993, Sovereign Harbour development, has expanded across the site to the eastern border of the town. Formerly known as “The Crumbles”, the marina now consists of four separate harbours, a retail park and extensive housing developments.

It is a little known fact, that each of the five apartment developments to the east of the site bordering the beach and traveling north as far as 'bay view park', actually own their beaches, (up to the high water mark), and adjacent to their individual developments. Thousands of members of the public, use these beaches every year for recreational purposes; most believing that the beach are publicly owned.

Sadly, many if those who take advantage of these beaches, abuse them by littering, leaving broken glass from bottles, vandalising signs and plants or allowing their dogs to run free, fouling the beach. Far too many fail to pick up their dogs' faeces.

A consultation process initiated by Eastbourne Borough Council with regard to the potential implementation of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) has particular implications for Sovereign Harbour. However, as so often in the past, the areas proposed to be designated in Sovereign Harbour are limited, and many of the important public areas have not been included.

The most notable exclusions are the curved walkway on the Outer Harbour, the beach path and the Sovereign Harbour beach itself which, as stated above, is privately owned, although the public has free and unlimited access to it. Although responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the beach, the management companies of the five developments are unable to enforce any requirements with regard to anti-social behaviour, such as dog fouling and litter.

The Outer Harbour promenade is unique in that the gardens of properties adjacent to it have exits directly onto it. Residents and walkers are endangered by uncontrolled dogs and cyclists who ignore the cycling restrictions.

The management companies and their relevant directors, want everyone to enjoy the beaches, but also want to educate those members of the public, into understanding that the north harbour beaches are private property and the public are indeed privileged to be allowed to enjoy this safe and beautiful natural asset, which Natural England in 2007 designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).

Because of their unique problems, it is essential that the scope of the PSPO is extended to cover the North Harbour beach and path and the Outer Harbour promenade.

These objectives can only be achieved with the support of Sovereign Harbour residents. We would, therefore, urge you, if you support clean and safe public areas, to take the time to respond to the consultation and make your views known. It is of paramount importance that all residents make known their views on the areas defined in the proposals.

You can take part in the consultation online at:

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/public-spaces-protection-orders-consultation/>

Please don't waste this opportunity to ensure Sovereign Harbour is given equal consideration to the rest of the Borough and ensure that these important harbour leisure areas receive the protection they deserve.

For more information contact: info@shnp.org