

**Sovereign Harbour Residents Association  
Minutes of AGM of 1st May 2008**

**Committee Member Attendees**

Rick Runalls  
Ian Weeks  
Jan Weeks  
Marj Pratt  
Rod Gochin  
Jane Gochin  
John Teasdale  
Carol Teasdale  
Christine Runalls  
Peter Thomas

**Agenda**

1. Welcome to Members and Introduction of Committee
2. Review of Business
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Appointment of Committee for Coming Year
6. Introduction of New Committee Members
7. Proposal to Make a Donation to the DGH Judicial Review Fund
8. Open Discussion Session
9. AOB

**Item 1**

**Welcome to Members and Introduction of Committee**

Rick Runalls called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees. He also welcomed the Rev Martin Keenan, attending as a guest and thanked him and the Haven School for hosting the AGM once again.

He informed the meeting that the Committee currently has ten members and introduced them to the Association Members present. He also explained that two people had applied to join, which would bring the Committee up to the maximum and that they would be introduced later in the Meeting.

**Item 2**

**Review of Business**

Rick reviewed the Agenda and the business to be discussed. He said that he hoped the meeting could proceed in good time to allow the maximum time for an open discussion.

### **Item 3**

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

See Appendix 1

### **Item 4**

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

Peter Thomas presented the Members with the Accounts and commented that financially it had been a good year. Total income for 2007/2008 was £8933.33 compared to £7824.74 last year. He advised the Members that over the past 12 months Waterlines had been self-funding thanks to the number of advertisers using the newsletter. A query was made as to why the Public Liability was less than last year and it was explained that this was due to apportioning and also a cheaper cost on renewal. He thanked Jon Martin for auditing the accounts. Copies of the Treasurer's and Auditor's reports are attached as Appendix 2.

### **Item 5**

#### **Appointment of Committee for Coming Year**

Rick highlighted that since those members standing for re-election or election for the first time to the Committee did not exceed the maximum of 12 permitted by the Constitution then an election was not required. As a consequence the Committee is appointed for the coming year and a meeting will be held to appoint officers without undue delay.

### **Item 6**

#### **Introduction of New Committee Members**

Rick introduced and welcomed new members David and Marion Currell to the Members and they took their places with the Committee.

### **Item 7**

#### **Proposal to Make a Donation to the DGH Judicial Review Fund**

Rick explained that the SHRA was currently well placed with cash. Although it was still possible that large sums of money may be called upon again in the future to fight further planning applications, etc. the Committee had considered it was appropriate to propose to the Members a single donation of £500 to the DGH Judicial Review Fund. This was seconded by Bert Leggett and the vote was carried overwhelmingly. Rick welcomed this statement of commitment to the future of the DGH.

### **Item 8**

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

Rick began by informing the Members of the existence of the recently set-up Neighbourhood Panel. He explained that it was a Police initiative but that SHRA were supporting it. The forerunner of a Local Action Team (LAT) had been considered, but the difference between a LAT and a NP was that a LAT would be disbanded once their objectives had been achieved, whereas NPs would continue. Regular meetings would take place and two/three issues would be addressed at a time. Jo Roff was the interim Chairman and Jan Weeks the SHRA representative. Rick explained that similarly to the LAT, the focus for the NP would be law and order and anti-social behaviour issues.

Comments were made about the Marina now being under the ownership of Premier and how the outer spit had been cleaned up. The Members felt that SHRA should work with Andy Osman, the new manager and would like SHRA to speak to him and thank him for his efforts. Rick was able to confirm that an initial meeting with Premier had already taken place.

A lively discussion then ensued in respect of the proposed Parish (Community) Council. Rick explained that the petition had been submitted to Eastbourne Borough Council with a considerable excess of signatures over the minimum required. He said that a scope document for the review would be drawn up by EBC over the next 3 months and this would be followed by the review and consultation over the following 12 months. The consultation may include a referendum. As a consequence the decision whether to form a Community Council or not would probably not occur for 18 months. Answering a question from the floor he said that whilst EBC were not under any obligation to carry out a referendum and could refuse to allow a community council, it would be unusual to ignore the wishes of the Community should there be clear support. There followed numerous contributions from Members, both pro and anti a community council, which covered aspects such as costs and bureaucracy, whether such a council could be apolitical, communications and the relationship with EBC and ward councillors.

It was queried as to why the local councillors were not at the meeting. Rick explained that relations had deteriorated considerably between the SHRA and the ward councillors following personal attacks being made in print. They also seemed to think a parish council was a threat and had published misleading information, which was why SHRA had published a special edition to try to set the record straight. Matters had deteriorated further to the point where a recent email had been received from one ward councillor stating that she would not work with SHRA since those it represented were just a part of the ward. Rick referred to his attempts to set up a meeting with the Leader of the Council to discuss and improve what was a potentially destructive situation. These attempts had so far failed. It was against this background that the Councillors had not been invited. Members made it clear that they wanted to be able to put questions and get answers from the Ward Councillors. In future it was proposed that the Ward Councillors be invited to the AGM and this was agreed. Bert Leggett highlighted that the Ward Councillors had received advice from EBC and would not be able to talk about the Parish / Community Council. Bert Leggett, as Chairman of the local Lib Dem Association offered to mediate between the elected representatives and SHRA to try and overcome the breakdown in trust that has come about.

## **Item 9**

### **AOB**

No matters were raised under AOB.

**The meeting closed at 9.10 pm**

**Sovereign Harbour Residents' Association  
Annual General Meeting of 1 May 2008**

**Chairman's Report**

**1) Committee's Vision and Objectives**

The Committee's vision for Sovereign Harbour essentially remains simple. We wish to see the Harbour develop from a housing estate to a sustainable community where residents' reasonable expectations for a safe and peaceful living environment are put first. When we moved to the harbour we were sold our homes on the back of a promise of a village environment, but sadly this ideal was never the objective of the developers, or apparently our Borough Councils of the past. Most of us are now fully aware that poor planning control and a lack of strategic thinking by EBC has enabled developers to build profitable residential accommodation without the provision of social facilities, which are critical to support the development of a sustainable community. Everything the Committee has promoted is targeted at providing a stronger community infrastructure and through this a community spirit.

In summary our strategy still has two facets. Firstly we wanted to develop a Residents' Association that was both transparent and responsive to members' priorities and affective and professional in dealing with local government, developers and other groups with the potential to shape life on the Harbour. Secondly we wanted to influence those organisations with the power to shape the remaining development of the Harbour, to deliver a sustainable community by providing missing social facilities while maximising business and quality employment opportunities.

Cornerstones of the Committee's strategy have been to maximise the engagement of residents across the Harbour by seeking their views and involving them in campaigns, and to maintain a non party political stance.

**2) The Past Year**

- a) We continued with our policy of distributing Waterlines to all residences, rather than just members of SHRA, since this represents our principal means of communication across the Harbour. The feedback we get from this is strongly positive, although it has occasionally drawn a critical response from various groups, but this has been primarily of a political nature. It is worth noting that our continuing policy of selling limited advertising space within the magazine over the last 12 months has almost succeeded in eliminating the cost to residents of its production. We are very pleased with the success of Waterlines.

- b) The success of the SHRA web site continues and allows access to our activities and those of other residents groups on and off the Harbour. Waterlines is widely read from this source and we know that it is routinely accessed by political groups, council officers, Carillion and their consultants, as well as residents.
- c) We questioned whether the monthly ‘surgery’ at Simply Italian was worth continuing given the small numbers of residents who attend, but the Committee decided that it still provides a potentially useful source of contact with residents. In particular it gives the opportunity for residents to meet Committee members face-to-face and share their views and experiences in an informal way.
- d) As the accounts show there has been a small increase in membership this year.
- e) In previous years we have fought successful campaigns against the ‘B&Q application’ and Sovereign Harbour Limited’s (Carillion) five applications to build more high density housing on four of the limited number of development sites remaining on the Harbour. The Planning Committee receiving these applications would have found it difficult to ignore the barrage of passionate arguments from residents, Committee members and other speakers compared with an unconvincing presentation by SHL’s consultants. It was the first real recognition of the needs of our community, but although it broke the momentum of developers, it was just a first step. The challenge from SHRA to EBC and Carillion was that the few remaining sites on the harbour should not be subject to piecemeal development to satisfy Carillion’s agenda. Instead there should be an integrated plan, which encompasses all remaining development land and builds in facilities for residents such as a Health Centre, a Community Centre and open space for sport and play. An overriding principle was to be that no more residential development should be allowed, in line with the cross-party motion passed by the Council following the rejection of the ‘4-sites’ planning application. In the face of opposition two significant decisions were taken by Carillion. Firstly, they chose not to appeal the rejection of their plans by the Planning Committee. Secondly they chose to let the outline planning consent expire, which had allowed them enormous freedom in developing the harbour to their own agenda, and which still applied to remaining development sites.
- f) After the confrontational period the SHRA had gone through with Carillion and to some extent EBC, this situation indicated a change of attitude, which was built upon by meetings on the future development of the Harbour between Carillion, EBC officers and councillors, to which SHRA was invited. Three members of the SHRA Committee have attended these. It is fair to say that we approach these in the hope of achieving something significant for residents, but cannot claim any success at present. It does not pay to lose sight of the fact that Carillion own much of the land involved, while they have sold other

interests to Premier Marinas, and in both cases the bottom line will be profit. SHRA will continue with the process as long as it has the potential to meet residents' needs, but is sensitive to becoming just 'window dressing'. However this turns out, the SHRA Committee will continue to fight for residents' priorities, as expressed at the Open Meeting on 24/2/07 and will insist that any plans are presented to Harbour residents to ensure transparency.

- g) The Sovereign Harbour Trust, its objectives, make-up, transparency and the inability of residents to influence the way it uses the funds provided by them remains an important issue for us. As background, the Board of Trustees was set up with 6 seats, 3 of which were filled with Carillion employees or ex-employees while the remaining 3 were allocated to the Environment Agency. Since the EA were not moving to fill these we approached them to see if they would nominate SH residents as alternative attendees. They declined to do this but nominated 3 independent members who took up their seats about 18 months ago. The SHRA Committee met with these independents as a first step in striking up a dialogue with them so we could at least start getting clear feedback on the workings of the Trust. Our hope is that by building this relationship the new trustees will be sensitive to and actively represent residents' interests. It is our intent to continue to fight for proper SHRA representation on the Board of Trustees, however due to the scope of work being undertaken by the Committee this is not an area in which we have been able to make significant progress over the year. There is still a great deal of dissatisfaction with SHT from all residents we speak to, so it must be a target for more attention in the coming period.
- h) The subject of the adoption of roads and foul drains on North and South Harbours continues to be a big issue and although we have no authority or statutory rights to bring pressure to bear we do keep prompting at County and Borough level to get this expedited. The situation on the Harbour varies from area to area. Some takeover of roads and sewers on South Harbour has occurred by the Council and Southern Water, respectively. The expectation is that all the sewer system will be taken over and Carillion have said that they have this in a fit condition for the process to continue. Of the roads that remain unadopted, some have legal agreements in place for this to occur, while for others no such agreements exist, although it is understood that there is a will on the part of the developers and the Council for this to proceed. Recent meetings held between SHRA and ESCC 'highways' and EBC representatives reviewed the situation and it was proposed that a timetable should be prepared against which progress can be monitored. Our expectation is that handover of roads should progress over this summer. Residents will be kept informed through Waterlines.
- i) Thanks to the ongoing commitment of a small group of Committee members the SHRA had representation at virtually every Planning Committee and

Council Meeting. This has enabled a good overview to be taken on Council processes and decisions and has enhanced the standing of SHRA.

- j) In the last 'Chairman's Report' it was reported that the SHRA had established contact with the local constabulary to explore the need and advantages of setting up Local Action Team's. The main purpose of a LAT is to address law and order and antisocial behaviour problems to improve the quality of life on the Harbour. It affectively is a problem solving team where residents work in partnership with agencies such as councils, the police and community groups (for example local authority youth services, crime disorder teams, etc). Any issue or need in a community that requires local people and agencies to work together for the best solution can be addressed through a LAT, which is formed to address a specific issue in a specific area and then disbands. Although the Police have confirmed that in their view problems on the Harbour are relatively insignificant, it seemed worthwhile to encourage attention on the law and order / antisocial behaviour issues to ensure any problems that arise are 'nipped in the bud'. Since then the Police announced they were piloting a new national initiative that promotes the formation of Neighbourhood Panels. Unlike LAT's these remain in place to address law and order / antisocial behaviour issues, focussing on any one time on about three such issues. A Neighbourhood Panel has just been formed for the Harbour and as per the model, is being led by residents but supported by the Police and invited officials able to contribute to solutions, such as ward councillors. I am sure members will join me in expressing appreciation to Jo Roff for taking on the chairmanship of this. SHRA have been happy to promote the Panel and are represented on it. It has no statutory powers, but can access some grants and the funding that results can finance such things as graffiti removal kits. In principle it should be a useful forum and may well complement the work of other bodies such as SHRA and, if it is formed, a Parish / Community Council, in which statutory powers would reside.
- k) There are many people around the Harbour with ideas that bring residents with shared interests together in a social way. Wherever possible the Committee has tried to support these through advertising their activities in Waterlines and in some cases by committee members getting involved themselves. Good examples of initiatives by residents are Harbour Friends, Sovereign Harbour Racing Club, Sovereign Harbour Investment Club, the Harbour Social Club and WI. Our congratulations go to those residents who have developed these ideas and turned them into successful contributors to the community. We would urge you to support them – it's inevitably a case of 'use it or lose it'.
- l) Although it has not been expressed as a major area of interest by residents, we have recently met with ESCC to discuss the possibility of establishing library facilities of some kind on the Harbour. The Museum Act of 1964 puts a requirement on the County Council to provide library services to communities

and these should be within 2 miles. Clearly this puts the Pevensey Bay library within the reach of much of the Harbour. However, ESCC has agreed for one of its mobile facilities to visit the Harbour for half a day a week. This mobile office will have 6 PC's, which access internet and library catalogue databases and will be manned by 3 staff to assist residents in using the machines. Required books and other material can be ordered and collected the following week. This might be seen as a small step, but it is an opportunity for residents to get some free tuition and demonstrate the degree of interest in library services.

- m) The current style of Committee has been around for three years now and we believe we have had a positive impact on those issues affecting residents. However, there will always be limits to our activities since what we achieve arises from our ability to influence rather than from any formal authority or responsibility. Following up a suggestion by a South Harbour resident we have been promoting the possibility of establishing a Community Council on Sovereign Harbour. This would have formal powers and responsibilities with democratically elected representatives and some funds at its disposal. The SHRA has communicated as balanced a view as it can through Waterlines, the SHRA web site, and an Open Meeting held at Haven School. The feedback we got from this was positive and encouraged us to circulate a petition to initiate a formal review and consultation by EBC. In taking the petition around the Harbour we have been impressed by the strength of support for this and as a result were readily able to exceed the number of signatures required. As a consequence we recently submitted the petition to the Council to start the next stage in the process. It must be stressed that although the SHRA Committee are convinced that this is the right way forward to make sure that in future a statutory body exists to promote and protect the interests of Harbour residents, the decision is one for residents. Unfortunately this initiative has become politicised and has been met with misleading claims from its opponents that I have done my best to redress. However, we have to see beyond politics and personalities and remember that what we want is something that works for the Harbour. Clearly it is possible for the Council to resist residents' aspirations, but we hope that they will respond positively to residents' views and put the needs of the community first.

### **3) Thanks**

- Firstly, I wish to recognise the contributions over the last three years of three Committee members who have resigned over the period. Alison Attwood, who worked hard for residents' interests, in particular in improving the Harbour environment and researching the LAT has moved onto the Committee of Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club. Barry Miles, who did a great job in the Treasurer role is taking some time to tour Europe in motor home and barge. Last, but by no means least, Colin White has moved off the Harbour. Colin's role as a senior Police officer prior to his retirement gave



him a challenging view point and he contributed much to our early research on the development background to the Harbour.

- The Committee once again wish to express its thanks to two Harbour businesses who from the beginning have offered us encouragement and support.

**Temple Bird (Solicitors)**- deserve particular thanks for their outstanding commitment to the community. They have for two years generously provided use of their conference room for Committee meetings and have been unflagging supporters of the SHRA. They were the first to take out advertising within Waterlines and the income this has provided over the period has been a welcome contribution to minimising the cost to residents of producing Waterlines.

**Simply Italian** - have also been supporters of the SHRA for the period this Committee has been in office. They routinely allow us to use their lounge for our monthly surgeries, and provide space for other residents groups to hold social gatherings and meetings.

We also wish to thank those members who have provided assistance in circulating the Community Council petition, given regular help in distribution of Waterlines and general encouragement to the Committee. We do, however stress the need for ongoing material help – the Committee can't do it all themselves.

#### 4) **Priorities for the Coming Year**

- Development of the remaining sites to ensure we get the community facilities we need, the commercial viability of the harbour is enhanced and quality job opportunities are provided.
- To continue consulting with residents to discuss the pros and cons of a Community Council. We have offered to work with EBC in the formal review and consultation required by the official process.
- Renew effort on establishing open communication with the new trustees on the Board of Sovereign Harbour Trust and through this to make more transparent the business of the Trust.
- To assist in running the Neighbourhood Panel and its communication with residents.
- More of the same.

If the present Committee is re-elected, SHRA committee members will continue to work hard to take forward all these key areas, but we are a small group and there is a lot to do. We welcome support from other residents who, while they do not wish to become Committee members, may have an interest or experience in a particular area and would like to provide some additional help. Your support will be most welcome.

R.H.Runalls  
28 April 2008

**Sovereign Harbour Residents Association**

**REVENUE ACCOUNTS for year End 31st March 2008**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2005/6</b>
Subscriptions	4349.00	3765.00	4262.50
Income from Advertising	3975.00	3840.00	1750.00
Donations	0.00	90.00	0.00
Bank Interest	224.62	129.74	28.00
The Crumbles Story	384.71	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>8933.33</b>	<b>7824.74</b>	<b>6040.50</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Presentations	0.00	0.00	70.00
Printing / Publications	0.00	500.28	3528.35
Waterlines	3709.00	3577.68	0.00
Stationery	277.12	485.90	537.22
Internet Cost	126.76	126.76	126.76
Membership Cards	248.59	227.62	310.35
Hall Hire	85.00	105.00	97.50
P O Box Fees	48.20	56.15	54.00
Postage	66.18	2.52	0.00
Insurance ( Public Liability )	99.75	358.05	0.00
Transport Hire	0.00	445.10	150.00
Miscellaneous Sundries	129.15	40.00	42.07
Telephone	93.69	227.11	0.00
Gazebo, Banner, eqpt, Software	0.00	1400.74	0.00
Bank Correction	0.00	0.43	2.50
Depreciation	111.48	0.00	0.00
The Crumbles Story	384.71	0.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>5379.63</b>	<b>7553.34</b>	<b>4918.75</b>

## Expenses

<b><u>Excess of Income over Expenditure for the Year</u></b>	<b>3553.70</b>	<b>271.40</b>	<b>1121.75</b>
Balance Brought Forward at the Beginning of the Year	2711.81	2440.41	1318.66
<b>Balance Carried Forward at the End of the Year</b>	<b>6265.51</b>	<b>2711.81</b>	<b>2440.41</b>

### **Balance Sheet At 31st March 2008**

---

#### **Current Assets**

Cash at Nat West Bank Current a/c	3997.62	3009.07	1322.41
Cash at Nat West Bank Reserve a/c	9682.65	6458.03	4528.29
Prepayments	209.14	0.00	0.00
Computer	b/f 0.00		
	purchases 364.84		
	less: depreciation -111.48		
	c/f 253.36	253.36	0.00
<b><u>Total Current Assets</u></b>	<b>14142.77</b>	<b>9467.10</b>	<b>5850.70</b>

#### **Current Liabilities**

Prepaid Subscriptions	1880.00	3345.00	3410.00
Cheques Issued not cashed	0.00	792.00	0.00
<b><u>Total Current Liabilities</u></b>	<b>1880.00</b>	<b>4137.00</b>	<b>3410.00</b>

NET CURRENT ASSETS Held for Revenue Account	12262.77	5330.10	2440.70
<b>REVENUE ACCOUNT Balance at the end of the Year</b>	<b>12262.77</b>	<b>5330.10</b>	<b>2440.70</b>