



## **Annual General Meeting 27th May 2010**

Haven School Sovereign Harbour  
Doors Open 19:00, Meeting Commences 19:30

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome to Members
2. Apologies
3. Welcome and Introduction of Guests
  - Stephen Lloyd M.P.
  - Sovereign Ward Councillors
  - Neighbourhood Policing Team
4. Introduction of Committee
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Appointment of Committee for Coming Year
8. AOB
9. Introduction of Stephen Lloyd MP

Meeting Ends

# Chairman's Report

## A brief history of the SHRA

Although many of you will already know the history of the SHRA, for those of you new to the harbour, and by that I mean within the last five years, I have put together a 'Brief History of the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association'.

In 2000 a few residents of the then new Sovereign Harbour development got together and formed the SHRA. Its purpose, the same as now, to stop the landowners from over developing the sites, and to try and influence them and the Borough Council to complete the infrastructure that a development of 1,000 homes required. Even then the landowners had promised, a Medical Centre, a Community Centre and open areas and play areas for children.

By 2002 the number of homes had increased to 1,654, and the membership had grown but, although there was a website, it was not widely advertised or well known. It was at about this time that B&Q submitted a planning application to build a 'Mega-Store' on Commercial Site One (now known as Site Six).

Not all the residents thought that the application was a bad idea; in fact some agreed that it would be good for the harbour by funding for the missing infrastructure. Luckily for us the planning committee helped by objections from residents, turned it down, and so did the Planning Inspector at appeal in 2003. Not deterred, B&Q, supported by Carillion submitted a further planning application late in 2004.

This time the residents were galvanised into action, and the 'No to B&Q' group was formed. At this time the SHRA committee (or some of them) again thought B&Q would solve some of the problems and act as a catalyst for the provision of the missing infrastructure. However, the majority of residents disagreed and at the next SHRA AGM in May 2005 the Committee was replaced.

The SHRA in its present form was born.

Its priorities were to ensure residents were kept fully informed of harbour issues, and to expand membership as widely as possible. It was realised that communication was the key and work began on a revamped website and a newsletter, Waterlines, was born. Although it was initially planned that Waterlines would be delivered to members only, the committee decided that, as its priority was to keep residents fully informed, it would be delivered to all harbour dwellings. To reduce the inevitable drain on funds, sponsorship was sought from local businesses through advertising. This has proved to be very popular and, for the past three years, Waterlines has been virtually self-funding. In fact, in 2008, Waterlines made sufficient profit that the SHRA was able to make a £500 donation to the Save the DGH campaign.

In October 2005, Waterlines was used to great effect to galvanise support against the revised B&Q planning application. Because of the huge number of objections, it was necessary for the Planning Committee to meet in the Winter Gardens and the SHRA hired buses to transport residents to the meeting. People power prevailed and 400 residents cheered as the Planning Committee unanimously rejected the application.

In 2006 the inevitable B&Q appeal was submitted and, at about the same time, another planning application was submitted for the 'Five Sites'. The membership had by now increased from a very small base to over 500 member households. Waterlines was again used to great effect and again over 300 protesters were bussed to the Town Hall to hear all five applications rejected by the planning committee. Waterlines was then used to orchestrate a campaign of residents' protests to the Planning Inspector, and directly to the directors of B&Q and Carillion. December 2006 saw B&Q withdraw its appeal.

In 2007 the SHRA raised a petition for

a referendum to form a Community Council that would have given residents a greater opportunity to be actively involved in the future of the harbour, and greater control over the spending of our Council Tax contributions. Although the required number of signatures for the referendum was easily raised, unfortunately at the vote in 2008 the proposal was rejected by a small majority.

By 2010 the number of homes on the harbour has reached 3,700, and a population of approximately 7,800. Because of the high density of the housing, and the over provision of apartments, the harbour population is more transient than most; at least 1,500 homes are either single occupancy, rented or holiday homes, the remainder being second homes or owner occupied.

The population of the harbour is becoming ever more diverse with a mix ranging from young singles, to families of varying ages to retired professional people. The SHRA exists for the benefit of all residents; the committee is made up of volunteers, who give their time freely to improve the quality of life for all of those harbour residents, whether they are members or not.

### **The past year's activities**

So now to the report for 2009/10 which, although not as eventful as some previous years, has had a couple of significant milestones.

In April 2009, Rick Runalls resigned from the SHRA committee to stand in the County Council elections. Although the committee supported Rick in his endeavours not a penny of members contributions were used in his election campaign. Rick was incredibly successful in a very short campaign, polling over 800 votes, but failed to take the seat, which was retained by Cllr. David Elkin. Following the election Rick was asked to return to the SHRA committee, which he did.

In June we held an open meeting on Community Travel, attended by about 60 interested residents. It became

clear at this meeting that, although the SHRA doesn't have the resources to operate a Community Bus Service without help from interested parties. It would, however, continue to campaign for better transport services for harbour residents, and the SHRA committee will give its full support to any person or group wanting to pursue this cause.

Following the meeting, and after further pressure from the SHRA, it seems that at long last the outstanding issues concerning the 'Bus Gate', which will provide through access between the North and South Harbours, are close to resolution. We hope to see a much improved bus service as a result.

September 2009 saw the long awaited planning application for the Harbour Medical Centre, which we were delighted to see unanimously approved by the EBC Planning Committee. There have been a few hiccups, but work on the centre should start soon.

November gave residents a chance to have their say on how their local neighbourhood community could be developed, through the Local Development Framework consultation event held at the Haven School. The event, organised by EBC and attended by councillors and officers, was to prepare for the delivery of 4,800 homes in Eastbourne by 2026 through the Preferred Strategies Consultation. Initial indications are, unsurprisingly, that the bulk of the new houses will be foisted on the harbour. The SHRA will, with your support, vigorously oppose any further unsustainable residential development.

Throughout the year other issues have been addressed by SHRA.

A small sub-group was formed to continue our campaign for residents to be represented on the board of the Sovereign Harbour Trust and to obtain greater transparency over the disbursement of funds. Although slow, there has been some progress, and we are hopeful that we will be able to report significant changes. The most welcome aspect is that we have, at last,

met the trustees, and have established the basis for ongoing communication. Discussions are also in progress with the two beneficiaries of the Sovereign Harbour Trust; Environment Agency and Premier Marinas.

Progress, albeit slow progress, has been made on the adoption of residential roads in the North Harbour, which is now substantially complete. The spinal highway, Pacific Drive, has at last come under control of the County Council. Very welcome, but too late for this year's snow. Adoption of the remaining South Harbour residential roads is proceeding under a 'Deed of Dedication' and although, as always, progress is slow, it is hoped that this will be completed in the current financial year.

Representations have been made to Premier Marinas concerning the state of the area to the south of the lock gates (Site 11). The company has accepted that this site requires urgent attention and it is investigating possible solutions. Closer links have also been forged with Premier Marinas, after a meeting with its CEO, Rupert Boissier. Mr Boissier suggested that regular meetings between Premier Marinas and SHRA would be mutually beneficial, a proposal with which we are happy to agree.

The Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Panel has flourished, and the resulting partnership with the Neighbourhood Policing team has delivered real benefits to the community. The Neighbourhood Policing Inspector, Tony Wakefield moved on to pastures new, and was replaced by Insp. Rachel Barrow. Our Neighbourhood team, PC Ed Faulkner and PCSO Martin Hylands are familiar figures patrolling the area and interfacing with the public.

The past year has seen the formation of a new 'Rotary of Sovereign Harbour'. It has already reached its membership target and should become a fully chartered organisation later this year. We welcome the Rotarians to the harbour, congratulate them on the charitable work already undertaken, and offer our support for the work they will

undertake in the future.

Harbour Friends continues to go from strength to strength, as does Harbour Seniors; both of these groups have become indispensable to the social life of the harbour. We offer our congratulations on their respective fifth and second birthdays.

We also say goodbye, to one of our most passionate sponsors, Rob Endicott of Quayside Dental and Health Centre. Rob has sponsored Waterlines on and off for almost five years, but has had to sell his business and leave the harbour due to ill-health. We hear that Rob is now recovering well, and I'm sure you will all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery and the best of luck for the future.

This month committee members met with the new Chief Executive of the Borough Council, to discuss further development of the remaining sites and the provision of the missing social infrastructure.

The SHRA committee met earlier this year with council leader, Cllr. David Tutt and Stephen Lloyd, who was then the Liberal Democrat Parliamentary candidate. We also met opposition leader, Cllr. David Elkin and Nigel Waterson, who was then our MP. Both meetings were meaningful and productive, and paved the way for future cooperation.

The 2010 General Election saw the election of Stephen Lloyd as Eastbourne's MP. We look forward to continuing the excellent relationship we have already established with Stephen, and to working with him in the future. We are very encouraged that Stephen has identified harbour issues as one of his priorities, and that a meeting to discuss them has already taken place.

Our commiserations to our outgoing MP, Nigel Waterson, and our thanks to him for the past support he has given to the harbour. We wish him well in his future plans.

At the centre of any community is its School, and we are pleased that this

year we have made ever closer ties with the Haven School. As reported in Waterlines, the SHRA has presented an award to the school; 'The Sovereign Harbour Residents Association Community Award'. The award will be presented to the pupil or pupils that the school feel have made a contribution to the community in some small way.

## **The coming year**

The coming year is likely to be crucial to the future of the SHRA. The most pressing issue is likely to be planning.

It is widely expected that very soon Carillion will be submitting Planning Applications for further residential building on the Harbour, which will be vigorously opposed. Carillion will undoubtedly argue that social infrastructure can only be funded by the profits of residential development. Living in the real world, we understand this, but the funding has already been provided by the profits gained from over twenty years of unrestricted development. We call on Carillion, as an act of good faith, and with no preconditions, to donate the land on which we can build a Community Centre. Only then can we look to raise the funds required to build and equip it.

Our ability to contest further development has been greatly compromised by the very flawed consultation on the Local Development Framework and the Central Government requirement for an additional 4,800 homes to be provided in Eastbourne by 2026.

Nobody wants additional housing in their community, and the consultation was cleverly designed to give residents of the other Eastbourne neighbourhoods the opportunity to dump the requirement onto Sovereign Harbour. It also allows the Borough Council to use the additional housing to secure the social infrastructure that is missing without having to challenge the land owners or to provide funding. Although the report allocates just 150 homes to Sovereign Harbour, be under no illusion that this number will expand exponentially once Carillion is allowed to get its foot in the

door. Be under no illusion too that the Borough Council will put the interests of harbour residents before those of 'Old Eastbourne', experience shows the reverse.

The constant struggles against developers and local government over the past five years has, inevitably, taken its toll, and some of the longer standing committee members are feeling the strain.

The SHRA has become an essential participant in all harbour issues and it is essential that this should continue. Some of the committee members have indicated that this could be their last year in office so, if there is to be a seamless continuation of their work, it is essential that new blood must be found soon. If you feel you have the necessary skills, and can guarantee to provide the time, we would be delighted to hear from you. The SHRA has achieved so much and has so much more to do; with your help we will continue to go from strength to strength.

We are all privileged to live in such a great location, even though there are a few problems. The campaign for improvements in the harbour infrastructure and the protection of the environment in which we live will continue, and we will continue to chip away at the barriers that have been put in our way. We are sure that, with perseverance, our aspirations will eventually become realities.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank you all for your past support and look forward to your continued support in the coming year. I'm sure you will all also join me in thanking the volunteers who deliver Waterlines to your door, come rain or come shine



**Jan Weeks**  
**Chairman**  
**SHRA**

Why not make more use of the SHRA website  
**[www.shra.co.uk](http://www.shra.co.uk)**

Visit the 'News' page for up-to-date information of what's happening on the harbour. Why not make the SHRA website your home page?

Did you know that you can download every past issue of Waterlines?

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