

Sovereign Harbour Residents Association

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Letters

- We welcome your views and will publish them without fear or favour.
- We reserve a right of reply, and we welcome others' comments.
- We will not publish abusive, discriminatory or anonymous letters.
- Opinions expressed are those of the letter writer and may not reflect the opinions of SHRA. SHRA accepts no responsibility for them.

Please [click here to email us your letters](#) or post them to us (see [Contacts page](#)).

Note: Generally, letters and messages received by SHRA will not be published on the web without your express permission.

NEW! 03 July - Letter sent to The Herald by Stewart Mitchell as a follow up to his letter of 6th June (see below) to EBC's Leader, Councillor Tutt

Dear Sir,

I enclose copies of the three letters I wrote on 6 June 2010 to Cllr. Tutt, Leader EBC, Stephen Lloyd, M.P. and Robert Cottrill, Chief Executive EBC.

To date I have received no reply from any of them.

This is of course disappointing but not entirely surprising. Here I am, a fully paid-up contributor to the beauty of Eastbourne and I should sit back and be grateful for all the benefits I reap for being a member, albeit on the edge, of this wonderful town. What right have I to expect to live in a 'Sustainable Community' in the 'Town Within a Town' that Sovereign Harbour has become? Why do I keep on about the absence of community facilities, that there are no open spaces, play areas, community centre and so on and so on? Promises to do something about it? What promises? Oh - those!

I should just shut up and do it the Eastbourne way – be grateful for what I have and allow hundreds of other dwellings to be built, so that they too can enjoy living on the most overcrowded housing estate of modern times.

If I sound disgruntled, it is because I am – and I am not alone!

Yours sincerely,

Stewart O Mitchell.

NEW! 25 June - Letter about plans for more housing at Sovereign Harbour sent to the Eastbourne Herald by South Harbour resident Marj Pratt

Dear sir,

In the beginning, when The Duke of Devonshire's estates and Tarmac, (now Carillion) conspired to create Sovereign Harbour they were abetted by the unbridled enthusiasm of Eastbourne Borough Council. The commercial interests of the first two spawned a couple of spin offs, the development of the marina and the



Sovereign Harbour Trust. Both of which take money directly and indirectly from local residents.

As the number of dwellings expanded from the original 500 or so, to over 3500 no effort was made by EBC to curb the development or to demand payback in the way of viable infrastructure. In fact, since 2004, local politicians have supported a large development by B&Q, more excessive housing, and commercial developments on the Harbour frontage which would blight all open views.

It was only following huge pressure from local residents that the politicians jumped on the bandwagon and these proposals were dropped and the SHRA secured a landmark, cross party motion that "no more dwellings" would be allowed to be built on the Harbour. This really was a remarkable achievement because it established the principle of sustainable development over commercial greed. However, we should not be surprised to learn that our own ward councillors and EBC are now trying to override this agreement.

Time and again our "representatives" have stood in the way of popular demand. From delaying the creation of a Health Centre, squandering resources on election gimmicks such as the £10,000 from the devolved budget and now by supporting the "*Local Development Framework; Core Spatial Development Strategy*". In other words, let's dump more housing on Sovereign Harbour.

It is a flawed and discreditable strategy on many levels, not least because it was created to appease the policies of a now defeated government. Can someone please breathe the breath of sanity upon it and put it out of its' misery?

And is it too much to hope that our councillors will for once do their job without strong pressure from a few activists who care passionately about the future, or will they simply confirm that they never learn from the past?

When our elected representatives emerge from the raw sewage of party politics and demonstrate that they have commitment, talent and the guts to stand and face the landowners, when our Council Officers demonstrate their competence and clarity, there may be a chance that Sovereign Harbour can move forward and the residents can enjoy public open spaces and the kind of facilities that the rest of the people in Eastbourne take for granted and for which we all pay dearly.

If, however, they continue on their present course, like castaways clinging to a deflated dinghy, we can wave goodbye to our investment in Eastbourne and watch it disappear into the sunset aboard Carillion's golden galleon... again.

Yours sincerely,

Marj Pratt

19 June - Letter to SHRA from South Harbour resident Carole Penney about Midnight Charity Walk

I see that there is an objection for the 'Midnight Walk' raising money for cancer from the SHRA. Is this the committee or the members? I certainly wasn't asked how I felt about it!!!!

Shame on you SHRA and the Harbour Rotary Club. This is a fund raising exercise where by lots of women give up their time, staying up late to raise money for people they may have lost or are losing someone.

I felt quite embarrassed reading the letter. How do you know what kind of noise there will be??? We in the houses on the Strand are often awake at that time because of the noise of many drunken people coming from the late night pubs and restaurants on the Waterfront so would probably not feel it a problem if the March were to come along there.

Why can't you wait and welcome the event and if the 'noise' level is too much for you to bear then you will have something to moan about.

Your comments are really fitting in with the description that has been given to

Eastbourne, 'it's full of oldies'. I for one will be supporting the March and welcome a bit of excitement on the Harbour.

Carole Penney

[Member of SHRA]

[Response from SHRA](#)

To say that there is an objection from SHRA to the Midnight Walk is to overstate the case. When the organisers chose to engage us, the harbour section of the route had already been decided and, as we felt this was unnecessarily close to a large number of residential properties, we expressed our concerns.

It is a fact that the only residential areas affected by this walk are in Sovereign Harbour and, as there will be no roadside collections, we could see no reason why the route could not have been restricted to the seafront, and adjacent open areas.

It was our view that although we fully supported the objectives of the very worthwhile children's charity, we felt that we could not support the chosen route.

Since we expressed these concerns, there have been some changes that reduce the likely disturbance, but this could still be significant. For example, the section of harbour walkway along the North Harbour passes very close to about 400 residential properties; the homes of people of all ages, some, no doubt, who will be going to work the next day. The fact that you suffer night noise disturbance doesn't make it right that others should also suffer.

You ask how we know what kind of noise there will be; we don't know, but having been approached, we were obliged to make a judgement. We acted in what we believed was the best interest of our members, that is what they elected us to do. We might have been wrong, only time will tell.

If, as seems likely, this walk becomes an annual event, we must hope that the organisers engage us early enough in the process that the charity can gain the maximum benefit with the minimum disruption to people's daily lives.

[14 June - Copy of letter sent to MP Stephen Lloyd by South Harbour resident Mary Tobias, about plans for more housing at Sovereign Harbour](#)

Dear Mr Lloyd,

Congratulations on winning your seat in what might be the most interesting Parliament for yonks. I write with a more parochial issue.

I am a member of SHRA and have received an e-mail suggesting that no council member opposed the building of more houses in the area of Sovereign Harbour.

I do not and have never understood the planning permission given to the company building those dreadful high rise buildings in the middle of the harbour.

What is also too difficult to take on board is that the council will not oppose any further development of this area... When the roads are unmarked and irresponsible car owners park where they like, and we have too few medical services to service the area and too few schools to accommodate further development.

Yours

Mary Tobias

[Stephen Lloyd replied to Mary's letter \(above\) on 20 June](#)

Hi Mary,

Apologies for the delay in replying to your email.

As promised at the public meeting that I had with SHRA a couple of weeks ago, I will be opposing any new development and have notified the Council accordingly. To be fair to them what I would flag up is:

- a) These 150 or so dwelling encompass the whole of Sovereign ward.
- b) They are the maximum number to built in this area upto and including 2026.
- c) The Borough Council tells me that part of any agreement with a developer, if any of the properties where to be in the Harbour, no building could take place until a community facility was established first.

I might add that the demand for local authorities to provide this type of housing in the South East, was from the previous Government. None of us are sure at the minute how the Coalition Government wishes to proceed.

With best wishes

Stephen

Stephen Lloyd MP
Eastbourne & Willingdon Constituency

6 June - Letter sent to Councillor Tutt, Leader of EBC, by North Harbour resident, Stewart Mitchell about *The LDF Core Spatial : Development Strategy Report* that threatens the Harbour with more home building.

Dear Cllr. Tutt,

LDF – Spatial Development Strategy

When you kindly visited our home in November 2008 you assured us that you fully recognised the failure to date, on the part of Eastbourne Borough Council, to ensure that Sovereign Harbour was provided with the social amenities it required to enable it to develop as a sustainable community.

You promised to apply your energies and those of your colleagues to ensure that we got what had been promised for many years.

You also agreed that the Harbour had been grossly over-developed and, indeed, there is a cross-party agreement that there shall be no further residential development in Sovereign Harbour.

Imagine my dismay to read the report to Cabinet 26 May 2010 on the *Spatial Development Strategy* and, in particular that you were part of the Senior Members Group which saw the report through to Cabinet.

The report emphasises throughout the requirement on you to provide 'sustainable communities' and you propose to dump yet more dwellings on a township that you accept is already unsustainable as a community because you have failed to provide the social infrastructure that is essential to its wellbeing.

The argument, presumably, is that along with the 150 dwellings will come a community centre and open space. – BUT it will be of a size suitable for that 150 group only. The needs of the nearly 4000 homes you have allowed to be built will, yet again, be ignored.

Am I losing a little faith in your promises of support? I think so!

What is surely needed is for the Council to use its power of compulsory purchase and acquire from Carrillion the land required for the amenities we need and to insist that they, Carrillion, fund the developments from the huge profits already made in the building of such a large housing estate.

S. Mitchell
Sovereign Harbour

Stewart copied his letter to Robert Cottrill, EBC Chief Executive and to Stephen Lloyd MP, with the following covering letters

Dear Mr Cottrill,

I enclose a copy of the letter I have sent to Cllr. Tutt.

I need only add that I have previously made a complaint to the Local Authority Ombudsman about maladministration in the Council. This was rejected because decisions had been made by the Council too long ago for an investigation to be made.

Your Officials, supported no doubt by many Councillors, appear determined to continue with a programme of gross overbuild in Sovereign Harbour. I will hold you to account if the cross party agreement on no more dwellings in the Harbour is breached.

May I suggest that you turn your attention to honouring promises made to residents about the provision of the social amenities we so badly need in order to develop a Sustainable Community.

Dear Mr Lloyd,

Congratulations on your victory. I hope you enjoy a happy and successful time in Parliament.

I enclose a copy of the letter I have sent to Mr Tutt at EBC. It says it all and explains in some measure why residents in Sovereign feel so isolated from the obvious plottings being hatched by Carrillion and the Borough Council.

It seems that no stone will be left unturned in order to cram Sovereign Harbour with yet more dwellings, regardless of the fact that a new township has been created with none of the social infrastructure that has been promised and is so sorely needed.

You promised to help. Here's your chance!

[Archived letters...](#) (subjects include Trust charges, Harbour heros and road gritting)

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