

## **DRAFT**

### **Hastings & St Leonards Coastal Users Group**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

### **East Hastings Sea Angling Association 1800 hrs**

Present:

Paul Carter, East Hastings Sea Angling Association, Chair  
Christine Boulton-Lane – West of Haven Beach Users Association, Vice Chair  
Chris Richards – Hastings Adventure Golf  
Yasmin Ornsby, Hastings Fishermens Protection Society/Stade Partnership  
Di Cooke – Hastings Voluntary Lifeguards  
Laurence Bell, Hastings Rowing Club & White Rock Hotel  
Andy Davey – RNLI  
Hugh Richardson – RNLI  
Sarah Milne - RNLI  
Anne Scott – Old Hastings Preservation Society/Fishermen's Museum  
Nick Fawcett – 1066 Board Riders  
Alan Dodge – Shipwreck Museum  
Suzan O'Sullivan – Shipwreck Museum  
Cllr Karl Beaney – Hastings Borough Council  
Cllr James Bacon – Hastings Borough Council  
Aaron Woods – Hastings Borough Council  
James Cook - Protector  
Kevin Boorman – Hastings Borough Council (notes)

## **1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES**

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised that the charity committee papers had not been published yet. Kevin confirmed that he was only told at lunchtime on Friday that the charity committee was being delayed as some of the papers had not been ready to publish. Kevin expected the meeting to be held in the last week of September and would circulate the papers as soon as they were published.

Post meeting note :- the charity committee meeting will now be held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September.

Apologies were received from - Paul Joy (HFPS), Cllr Judy Rogers, Cllr Andy Batsford, Abbie Williams and Sarah Crosby (HBC)

## **2 FEEDBACK ON ISSUES ARISING SINCE LAST MEETING**

Paul said he was disappointed that there were still issues around the Stade fun fair. Chris advised that he had met the Stade Amusements tenant recently and he had again confirmed that the Heras fencing would be removed, and the footpath to the east of the boating lake between the beach and the seafront reopened. Chris had been told that this work would be completed during the coming winter.

### 3 MEMBER UPDATES

Laurence advised that members of the rowing club had reported problems with broken glass on the beach, and sea water quality was an issue.

Laurence also confirmed that they had been given notice to quit their café at St Mary in the Castle ('SMIC') following the decision of the trustees of the charity that runs the venue to 'hand back the keys' to the council. The White Rock Hotel had run the café since 2016. There was some discussion around SMIC, and the impact of its closure both as a venue and on the appearance of the seafront. There was general support from CUG for the venue being kept open.

Di reported that the voluntary lifeguards had celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, and successfully completed a channel swim relay on 5<sup>th</sup> August.

Chris reported that his earlier optimism for the year, reported at the June meeting, had faded, and adventure golf numbers in the summer had dropped off considerably. He was hoping that the development of his site, creating the indoor course, would now start in September 2023.

Anne said that Old Town Week had been really good, with all programmes being distributed, for the first time in many years. Tush and Pat Hamilton's talks had been very popular. Ann also advised that Old Hastings Preservation Society would be 70 in December.

Alan reported that Shipwreck had had a reasonable year, not as good as 2021; signage to the attraction was a real issue. Kevin explained that new signage had been installed last year. Kevin also advised that events could be publicised free on the visit 1066 Country website, using the link at the bottom of the home page.

There was some discussion about lifeguarding and water safety initiated by the RNLI reps. Sarah asked for more signage to the lifeguarded beaches, and the question was raised as to whether Rock a Nore and/or the fishing beach should also be designated bathing beaches and lifeguarded. It was explained that both of these were working beaches, used by the motor boat and yachting club and the fishing fleet respectively, and we should try and encourage swimmers to use beaches that were already lifeguarded. Kevin also pointed out that there were already three lifeguarded beaches in Hastings, but none between Hastings and Camber, and there may be a stronger case to put lifeguards at Pett level/Winchelsea Beach.

Sarah said the RNLI were undertaking more training in winter, with a Swim Safe initiative being launched in the autumn, and Call for Help sessions being provided.

Hugh reported that the lifeguards service had been 'manic' over the summer, one of their busiest ever, with a huge increase in the numbers of people on the beach and in the sea. Disappointingly there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour and abuse directed towards lifeguards across the region.

Andy said that the lifeboats at Hastings had also had a busy year, already exceeding their 2021 launch figures. There had been a big increase in launches to people with mental health issues, and also of false alarms with good intent. Andy also raised concerns about beach levels and gradients, the inshore life boat now cannot launch on the west side of the harbour, meaning all launches now have to take place from the fishing beach.

Nick said board riding was increasing in popularity, with up to 50 in the group. They were having to look at using other beaches as it was so busy in Hastings. Nick noted that they had now had some very high quality riders, with some being sponsored by equipment manufacturers/retailers.

Paul noted that the angling club was in difficult times with energy prices increasing very fast; they had agreed some prices in advance and until 2024, but they would struggle with uncapped energy prices. But they were working hard to keep the club open. On a more positive note, the club's junior section had 'exploded' in popularity, they had almost become a victim of their own success, having to turn people away.

Christine raised concerns about continued SW activity around the beach huts, Aaron explained the position and said that this would be partly covered by the presentation. Christine also raised concerns about delivery drivers in Castle Street, acknowledging that it wasn't directly a coastal users' issue (but did impact on visitors' perception of the town).

#### **4 ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED**

##### **Beach movements/profiles, Hastings**

Several members aired their concerns about beach levels and the gradient of the shingle, which had also been raised on previous occasions. Aaron offered to circulate beach data, showing problem areas. This will inform the next coastal protection and beach recycling work. Aaron made the point that stormier seas were resulting in more frequent and more severe interventions, with 25 000 – 30 000 tonnes of shingle being moved at a time.

##### **East/West of Haven**

Christine reiterated her concerns that SW were 'not playing ball' and felt that they were behaving in a cavalier fashion in respect of their latest works. She thanked Aaron for all he had done.

##### **Southern Water issues**

Kevin gave an update from Southern Water on their works (summary attached to these notes).

Christine felt that compensation should be given, and HBC should be pressing for that.

Aaron explained that there were currently issues with the Pelham Place outfall which was blocked by shingle, and this was causing problems with water from Alexandra Park (the outfall carries the park stream under the town centre) not being able to flow properly. We were continuing to press SW to sort.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

After some discussion it was agreed that in future if charity committee meetings are postponed then the preceding CUG meeting would also be postponed, to allow the charity committee papers to be properly discussed by CUG.

An extra meeting will; be called to discuss SW issues if necessary.

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed

Meeting closed at 1930.