



Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association

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Secretary: Julie Downton
Treasurer: Trevor Mason

NEWSLETTER No 5

August 2014

Membership

We are now into our second year of the Association. At the end of our first year we had 314 members, but so far about 50 of them have not renewed their membership. We know that some people have sold their huts or given up their chalet and sadly some have passed away, but it is disappointing that, despite reminders being sent, several people have not continued with their membership. We have been pleased to welcome several new members but if you know anyone who hasn't re-joined, please encourage them to do so, and also please promote the benefits of the Association to owners and tenants who have never joined. The more members we have the stronger our voice when dealing with Suffolk Coastal.

Nearly 50 members have taken the opportunity to use the facility of paying by way of internet banking. It has been quick and easy and made life much simpler for our Treasurer, so many thanks to all those who chose to do so. Thanks too, of course, to everyone who

renewed their membership. Without you we don't have an Association.

You should all have received your membership card and details of all companies that offer a service to our members. Please take advantage of the offers. If your card hasn't arrived, please let us know, using the contact details above.

**Please let us know if you have
changed your contact details**

Our AGM

Over 60 people attended the AGM in June and there was some lively debate and interesting questions. The meeting was followed by a buffet prepared by the wives of two of our Committee members – thanks to Pam and Gill. If you've not been to one of our meetings, we'd be delighted to see you there.

Success (at last) at Manor End

We think that the greatest success of our first year was the installation of toilets and a decent tap at Manor End. We badgered Suffolk Coastal regularly and it eventually paid off.

Particular recognition has to go to our Committee member Carol, who has a hut at Manor End, and was relentless in her campaign on behalf of hut owners.

What have we been up to lately?

We have recently met with Managers of Suffolk Coastal Services (soon to be rebranded as 'Norse'), who have the maintenance contract for Suffolk Coastal, and covered lots of issues with them. They are keen to meet with us on a regular basis and work together for the benefit of our members and the resort as a whole. Matters discussed are reported in this newsletter.

Taking steps

For some time a set of steps at Brackenbury Fort has been out of order. We are told that there was a collapse of a retaining wall towards the bottom of the steps which has been regularly monitored. It is now believed that the area has stabilised and we are told that repairs to the steps are now in the budget to be carried out soon.

Problems with the loos

It had been brought to our attention that several of the toilet blocks ran out of soap and toilet rolls recently. The problem was acknowledged and the Managers apologised for the omission. There had been a problem with the ordering of supplies which we were told has now been rectified. There is also a frequent problem with the loos at The Dip being out of action. We are told that this is often caused because the waste has to be

pumped uphill to the mains sewer and from time to time inappropriate things (such as nappies etc) are put down the toilets which block the pump. Specialist engineers have to be called out to deal with the blockage – hence the closure. If you discover any problems with the toilets, please contact the Suffolk Coastal 'hotline' (see details below) and let us know you have done so, so that we can follow it up. We discussed at length the apparent lack of maintenance to the toilets. There have been some long term sickness issues with staff which have not helped. We stressed to the Managers that their staff who carry out the work are all very willing and keen to do a good job, but at times they are overwhelmed by the demand.

SUFFOLK COASTAL 'HOTLINE'
9 to 5 on weekdays - 01394 444000
Out of hours - 01502 527133

Overgrown undergrowth!

Several members have complained to us (and Suffolk Coastal) about the lack of maintenance to the grass, weeds and brambles, especially at Brackenbury Fort, Brackenbury Cliffs and Clifflands. We brought this up at our meeting and it was explained that they do not set specific dates for cutting back the undergrowth as it very much depends on weather conditions and how quickly the grass etc. grows. This year the growth was particularly virulent as we had a mild winter and warm spring. Next year may be different again. Nevertheless we will be happy to bring the problem to their attention if necessary – please

keep us posted. We also asked whether anything will be done about the rabbits and their burrows at Brackenbury Fort. It is a double edged sword, of course, as some people love rabbits and others consider their holes to be a danger. We are told that consideration will be given to the problem – no more than that.

Replacing of huts on the beach

We have asked that when huts are put back on the beach after spending winter on the promenade, they are placed in such a position that owners can get between huts easily and that there is sufficient space at the rear of the hut to allow maintenance to be carried out.

The tap at Bath Tap

Earlier this year the soakaway at the tap at Bath Tap was repaired which stopped the constant flow of water past the ice cream kiosk and across the prom. However, despite the improvement, there is still some standing water near the tap which does not soak away and appears to be caused by splashing when the tap is used. We have asked if this can be addressed. There is also a problem with standing water on the road behind the huts at Undercliff Road East which appears to have been caused by a drain blocked by sand at the time of the tidal surge. We have asked Suffolk County Council (not Suffolk Coastal this time!) if they will unblock the drain to remove what is clearly a health hazard.

Chalet refurbishment

It is welcome news that the chalets are going to be completely refurbished and renovated this year at a cost of £200,000. We have written to Suffolk Coastal to tell them that we don't expect them to pay for it by putting up our rents by an extortionate amount!

Car Parking at the Cliff

We met with an officer of Suffolk Coastal Transport Dept. about the timing of closing the barrier at the Cliff car park. As a result, they will consider not locking it for a trial period. Nothing is set in stone yet, but we'll keep you posted.

An offer has been received from Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club for hut owners to become 'social members' of the Club which would allow parking there at any time. A permit from Suffolk Coastal costs £55, social membership at the Golf Club is £60 which includes £20 on a top-up card to buy food and drinks. Food for thought for hut owners in that area: let Trevor Mason know if you are interested.

More damage to huts

Damage has been reported to five huts at the Spa site. A timely reminder to be vigilant and to make sure we have sturdy locks to keep the vandals out.

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| <p>Date for your Diary 24th November 2014 at 6.30pm Members' meeting + Quiz Night (more details later)</p> |
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Don't forget that we are on Facebook and Twitter.