



Friends Of Eastbourne Seafront News Letter

March 2023 – Number Two

Dear Member,

It has been just over a year since our formation; who would have thought that we would have come so far and achieved so much?

Thanks to the support of you, our members, we have campaigned to get the Bandstand repaired and we are delighted that on 28th April the Bandstand will re-open once again for a 'Queen' tribute show. It will be restricted seating and there is a great deal still to do but it's a great start.

Do get your ticket if you haven't already, it's going to be a great night. The seafront team have produced an exciting and full program of events and our thanks to them for that.

It's been a thrill to meet so many great people who have volunteered to join our Welcome Team, my thanks to them, and I look forward to seeing them on duty helping visitors from Easter onwards.

Our sincere thanks to the John Jackson Charitable Trust for funding the seafront cycle track for children. Our first funding application. Thanks to EBC with whom we have been working on this initiative.

My sincere thanks to our Management Team, Executive Team and to you, our supporters. If you feel you would like to get more involved in the running of the organisation, please get in touch. Together we can and will continue to make a difference to our wonderful seafront.

Gaynor Sedgwick

(Director and Chair, Friends of Eastbourne Seafront)

Who are we?

The Friends of Eastbourne Seafront are a Not-For-Profit Limited Company which comprises like-minded individuals who want to campaign to preserve the attractions along the length of Eastbourne Seafront and fundraise to ensure improvements and new initiatives where we can.

We work as closely as we can with the council, encouraging them to bring their focus back onto those areas that both residents and the very many visitors to Eastbourne can enjoy for years to come. We have been working closely with our MP Caroline Ansell as well as councillors from both parties, including Cllr Swansborough, Cllr Robert Smart and Cllr Josh Babarinde. They have been very supportive as have Senior Officers and are heartened that we now have a rapport with the council who agree that we only have the vested interests of Eastbourne, as a tourist destination at heart, and they have responded very positively; we have seen much activity, by the council, in many areas of the Seafront to restore and protect what had previously been in danger of being lost.

If you have been to any of our Members meetings you will have enjoyed some very positive talks and discussions covering many topics from the Wish Tower to long-term Sea Defences. Please continue to support us at these meetings, it sends out such a strong message.

Urgent Appeal – Treasurer needed.

We are in urgent need of a Treasurer. The role will entail keeping accurate records on membership payments, donations, grants and expenditure. We will provide a Laptop and appropriate software for the work to be completed.

If you have any accounting or book keeping experience and would be willing to volunteer your skills and time, please contact Gaynor@friendsofeastbourneseafront.org.uk

Membership

We now have an Executive Team and Management Team. The former deals with new initiatives and the running of the company, and decisions made in that team are then brought to the Management Team for discussion and approval.

Membership has grown steadily over the last year, and we now have 145 individual members and eleven business members, and we are indebted to all of you who have willingly paid to become members of the FOES. The annual subs you pay allow us to continue our work and this money contributes towards the running costs.

From May of this year, and on the first anniversary of your membership, we will be contacting you again to request that you will continue your on-going membership and pay the £10 fee (£25 for a business). Without your subscriptions we wouldn't be able to launch effective campaigns, so please consider renewing and perhaps even encourage your friends and neighbours.

Successful initiatives and campaigns take time and effort and we are always looking for help, so if you would like to be more involved with the day-to-day running of FOES, for example, you may have transferrable skills or are willing to volunteer some of your time to help organise and run meetings, then please do get in touch.

Christmas 2022 and the FOES Santa's Grotto



Over three weekends last December we set up and ran a Santa's Grotto on the seafront. In the mornings, it was exclusively for owners and pets, (Santa Paws), and in the afternoons it was for Children, (Santa Claus). For a fee of just £5.00, each pet and/or child was ushered by an Elf into a magical grotto to meet Santa Claus and Mrs Santa. Those who had booked on-line were given time-slots but equally many pets and children were accommodated if they just turned up and paid at the marquee. No time-limit was set and even though a few very small children seemed at first a little frightened, all of them emerged beaming and clutching a present. If you compare the price and the excellent quality of our gifts to similar Grotto's, we were extremely competitive and we were frequently asked by accompanying adults if we were going to hold the Grotto next year? (December 2023). We will, of course, be planning to do just this.

We heartily thank all of you who came along to help set up and support the day's events in sometimes particularly challenging conditions!

Our Work Continues.....

The Bandstand

As many of you will have noticed, work on the Bandstand is very much underway and for some weeks now the entire structure has been festooned with scaffolding, tarpaulins, and corrugated roofing whilst beneath, engineers repair the roof, bandstand floor and make preparations for better protection for the performers. When will it be finished? Well, the intention is that it will be open on April the 9th for the Eastbourne Silver Band to play but we are assured the bandstand will definitely be open for a 'Queen' Tribute Show on Friday 28th of April. After this inaugural show there is a packed agenda for shows at the Bandstand and will include the popular 1812 Proms and Fireworks starting on the 3rd of May.



Easterbourne 2023

'*Easterbourne*' is a new 'Friends' initiative to really show-off what is spectacular in Eastbourne for visitors and residents alike. Working with other groups in the Town we have events over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend to highlight the best of Eastbourne. Over the four-day weekend, the Friends of Manor Gardens and Gildredge Park will be opening the Hermitage Folly in Manor Gardens. On Easter Saturday from 10 am The Natural Therapies and Fitness Centre will be open for free taster classes. They have kindly said that any donations they receive will go to the FOES. From 11 am until 3 pm the FOES will be hosting a Rabbit Trail around the Redoubt and some Secret Stone Painting to the sound of music provided by the singing group



'Vocalize'. If you head down to the Lifeboat Museum at 11 am you can join, (for £5.00), a 90-minute guided walk along the promenade and learn more about the history of Eastbourne. On Easter Sunday the Eastbourne Silver Band will be playing at or near the bandstand from 3 pm. The Friends of Meads Parks will be at Helen Gardens from 11.30 am selling home-made cakes, Bubble Wands and Windmills for children. The Thatched Kiosk will also be open for drinks and snacks. On Sunday and Monday the Friends of Motcombe Gardens will be opening The Motcombe Dovecote where you can learn more about this item of heritage and also what recent archaeological digs have uncovered.

The Dotto



We are pleased to announce that the Dotto will be running again this year following the intervention, (and nagging), by Gaynor and Karey to Stagecoach. Indeed, last year was so successful that Stagecoach have agreed to run the ever-popular Dotto train daily from April the 1st to the 16th and then at weekends until May the 29th and thence forward daily until the 1st of October. Again, if it was not for the FOES intervention and encouragement then this family attraction may have been lost for good!

The Redoubt

The Redoubt is, as most are aware, an Historic and Listed Napoleonic Fort originally built to defend our shores against a French invasion. Of course it has not been used for any military purpose since the Second World War and up until a few years ago was open to the public boasting a Model Village, a quite spectacular Aquarium, café, cinema, and military museum. Sadly, all these attractions have now gone and what is left is in a very disappointing state. The council have given us several reasons for its decision to close the Redoubt, mainly citing health and safety but not able to back this up by any evidence. The FOES have therefore submitted a proposal for reopening the Redoubt for a variety of activities for at least ten weekends this year. To date, feedback on this has been very favourable; indeed, we had a tour of the Fort last November with council Officers, two councillors plus representatives from other Eastbourne Action Groups and there is considerable support to reopen the Redoubt. We have also garnered support



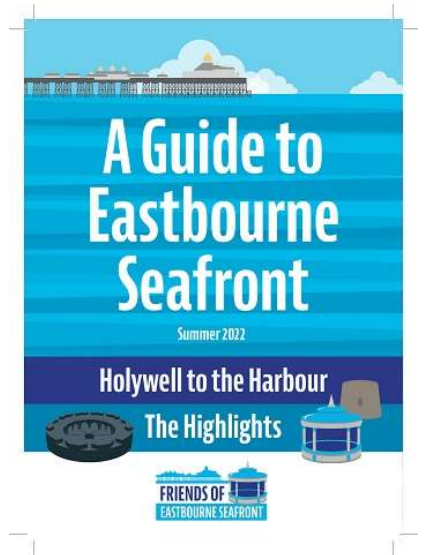
from Conservative MP Caroline Ansell and the Lib Dem party candidate Josh Babarinde, and we hope soon to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can realise our ideas. In the meantime the council will carry out the necessary demolition work of the colonnades and further remedial work on the Redoubt to render it safe.





Our Pocket Size Seafront Guide

Last year we produced a pocket-sized Seafront Guide which was handed out by our members when campaigning for the Bandstand. This was very-well received and so this year we have decided to produce an updated and improved copy which will include additions such as a full list of events on the seafront. This will be made available at our meetings, any other events we are represented at and also distributed by the Welcome Team Volunteers. Our research indicates that many residents and visitors alike only really know the promenade between the Pier and the Wish Tower, yet there is much more to see in Eastbourne – and not just on the seafront. If you were to ever visit the new tourist office in Eastbourne, (it's in the Welcome Building adjacent to the Congress Theatre), you wouldn't find a guide quite like it, so this really is a first-class initiative to get the message out there that we care about Eastbourne and its heritage. This Pocket Guide has been very well-received, and all due credit must be given to Karey Whitmore and Amanda Ripley (www.amandaripleydesign.co.uk) for their dedicated work. We also thank all our sponsors, again, without whom this guide would not have been possible.



The Welcome Team

Gaynor and Karey have been busy recruiting and training our new Welcome Team. Starting on April the 8th and running through until the end of summer, the Welcome Team will be on duty in their logoed uniform on strategic points along the seafront. They will be answering questions, giving out information and directing visitors as needed.

All members of the Welcome Team will have training, tours, and guided walks to ensure that they are all fully up-to-speed with Eastbourne's attractions and heritage.

The initiative has been very well received by the council, local groups, visitor attractions and businesses and to date almost forty volunteers have been recruited. We believe this will be a real boon to our Seafront activities and as ever, we must give our appreciation to all those who have assisted and supported this initiative.

If you would be interested in knowing more about joining the Welcome Team then please contact Gaynor. gaynor@friendsofeastbourneseafront.org.uk

Seafront Lighting



There have been frequent comments posted on-line about the state of the seafront lighting. Although some preliminary work was undertaken last year, we took up the mantle again and have been liaising with Bob Cookson, Colin Swansborough and Robert Smart who, with Mark from our Management team, undertook an audit of the lighting. With the help of Robert and Colin, action has been swift and already improvements have been seen. In the

longer term, the Council will be replacing all the old incandescent light bulbs with modern Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting. This latter solution is cheaper to run, (15% in fact), easier to maintain and will last much longer than traditional

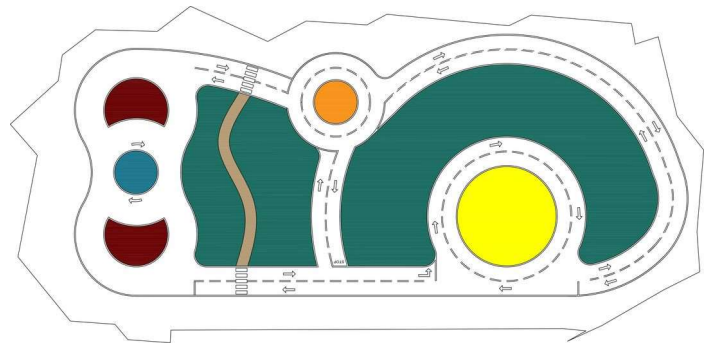
glass filament bulbs. Currently we are awaiting a decision whether the lighting strings will be straight or festoon. Our canvassing indicates an overwhelming preference for festoon, but we must await the council's decision.

Children's Bike Track



Just to the west of the new Skate Park is a patch of tarmac, the original Skate Park that has not been used for some time. The FOES decided that this would be an excellent place to create a Children's Bike Track; somewhere where younger riders can improve their bike-riding skills and learn a little road-sense at the same time. We contacted Eastbourne Borough Council to ask if we could use the site for this purpose, and they agreed, so we sent them our proposal. The Council agreed to this proposal and Mark and Gaynor have since worked with council

Officers to cost-out the work and we subsequently applied for separate funding. We are incredibly pleased to announce that we have been successful in securing a grant for from the John Jackson Trust. The grant will allow us to engage a contractor to paint the track, (as in the picture). We will continue to work with the Council to provide seating, waste-bins, and new fencing. We are indebted to Mark and Gaynor for tirelessly working on this initiative to make it all happen.



A Murmuration of Starlings



Have you ever watched the glorious Starling murmuration around the Pier at dusk? So many people stop in the area near the pier to watch that the Friends of Eastbourne Seafront think it would be a good idea to make this a feature of our promenade, so we are looking at putting forward a proposal to the council for Murmuration Point. A dedicated space on what is currently the roof of the Beach Bar, (see picture), that will have telescopes for public use, decorative railings and benches featuring Starling murmuration's, disabled access and interpretation boards giving further information on this phenomenon. If the council accept our proposal we will then be looking for grant funding. Watch this space.....!



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Fundraising



Have you ever used Easyfundraising? Easyfundraising is an on-line application that will donate funds to nominated causes every time you shop with your favourite brands, and it doesn't cost you a penny!

Go to:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

Sign up and permit the app to be added to your Web Browser then nominate Friends Of Eastbourne Seafront as your chosen recipient for funding. Then, when you decide to shop online, access the chosen web site via the Easyfundraising page, (e.g. Amazon.co.uk), and then for each purchase you make, a small percentage will be donated to the FOES. **If we can get fifty people signed-up by March the 17th we will then get £1 for every person over that fifty, so please don't delay – sign up today!**

A Date for your Diary

Please come along to the Membership meeting on **Wednesday 26th April at 7.30 at the View Hotel**, Eastbourne. We will be having a presentation **by Alan Wenham** which we expect to be very entertaining and informative.

Alan is a highly experienced public speaker and has a wealth of knowledge on Eastbourne and the surrounding areas.

Social Media

Our Facebook groups **Save Eastbourne Bandstand and Friends of Eastbourne Seafront** have amassed over 1700 members between them. Thanks to the lovely Kelly Ancell who has volunteered to take on our social media we now also have a Twitter account **@FriendsEBNSea** and an Instagram account **friends_of_eastbourne_seafront**. Please do follow us – big numbers sends a strong message to those in power!

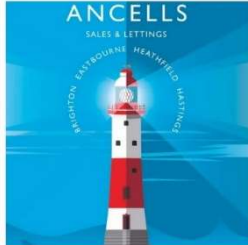
For more information and videos on our work – then go to our own website:

WWW.FRIENDSOFEASTBOURNESEAFRONT.ORG.UK

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