

**Friends Of Eastbourne Seafront
Newsletter
Autumn 2023**



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Number Three – Autumn 2023

Dear Member,

Writing to you is a good time to reflect on how much Friends of Eastbourne Seafront have achieved in recent months.

Your support means a great deal, not only financially but knowing that we have supporters who, like us, want change and an improved seafront. It was good to meet some of you at our recent fundraiser on the seafront.

Our Management Team goes from strength to strength, we work together to make changes, I would like to personally thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm.

As we approach Autumn, we come to the close of our Welcome Team season, we are however establishing our new Gardening Team and will continue through the winter months.

Following the continuing success of our Summer Seafront Guide, Karey and Amanda have been hard at work on the Dog Friendly Eastbourne Guide, funded by Visit Eastbourne following a successful funding application.

We have created a Children's Cycle Track close to the skatepark, and it's a joy to see so many families enjoying this free activity right on the seafront. This was made possible with funding from the John Jackson Charitable Trust. Picnic benches have recently been installed and even a couple of simple benches made by Dave, one of our Gardening Team.

We meet regularly with Cllr Stephen Holt, Councillors, and senior officers, when we raise issues and update each other on our work. We continue to work with seafront businesses to see improvements.

The future is looking positive, but there's still a lot of improvement needed, we would like to see more play areas for children along the seafront, much improved flower beds, benches, particularly along the East end repaired and replaced.

We look forward to major work starting on Redoubt and working with the Council on funding for the Bandstand, we should not be complacent about the Bandstand, there is a lot of major work to be undertaken, which will need considerable external funding.

There have been positive changes to the seafront; bins and benches, graffiti, and damage is reported by the Welcome Team to me and I, in turn report to the brilliant Neighbourhood First, Maxine, who, if she can, deals with it promptly.

We try to hold four members evenings a year, but instead of a formal, members meeting this Autumn, I intend to hold coffee catch ups for our members, an informal opportunity to meet with you to discuss what you would like FOES to be tackling, and to give us the opportunity to update you. Please let us know if you would be interested in coming along to one of these catch ups.

Finally, thank you for your support, it is greatly appreciated. If you want to be more involved in any aspect of FOES, including our soon to be established fundraising group, please get in touch.

Kind regards

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 Eastbourne Borough 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. They have been very supportive, as have Senior Officers and we are pleased 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; Indeed we have seen much activity, by Eastbourne Borough 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.

Membership

We are currently 147 public members and thirteen business members. Forty-seven new members have joined this year and so far, and we have had thirty-seven renewals from last year. Our peak number was 155 members at the end of 2022. Some members who supported us when we were campaigning for the Bandstand to be re-opened decided not to continue. This is to be expected as our focus has expanded to the wider issues of the Seafront. We are also receiving more support from Eastbourne Borough Council and working more closely with other Eastbourne Groups. It is all very positive!

The AGM

On July 26th we hosted our first Annual General Meeting at the Sovereign Harbour Yacht club. Attendance was twenty-seven members present. Reports were given by our Chair, Treasurer and Membership Officer, including updates on campaigns and successes. After each report members were given the opportunity to ask questions to the Management Team.

Election of Officers as required in the Constitution.

The following Officers for the Management Committee were proposed and elected unanimously by the members.

- a. Chair - Gaynor Sedgwick**
- b. Membership Officer - Andrew Denley**
- c. Treasurer - Tracey Horsman**
- d. Secretary - Anne McWilliams**

Projects. Following a question from a member at the AGM, some clarification regarding projects.

Once we identify a project then someone has to manage that project and of course that 'someone' must have an interest and willingness to do so. The next stage is to raise sufficient funds for the project, often running into several thousand pounds. We cannot raise such funds just from Tombola's or membership fees, so we need to find other



sources of funding, including grants. This can be a very time-consuming and complicated process and may involve submitting many separate bids to different organisations. Not all are successful.

In the past twelve months, we have successfully bid for and received grant funding for two: The Childrens Cycle Track and Dog Friendly Eastbourne. The grants received are restricted funds and can only be used for their specific purpose.

There are very many worthy projects that we would very much like to take forward, but it is very difficult unless we have enough volunteers to help out. If you have a project in mind and have the time, willingness, and ability to bring that project to fruition, then please get in touch.

A Fundraising Group - as mentioned by Gaynor, is in the process of being set up.

Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us.

gaynor@friendsofseafont.org.uk

Our Work Continues.....

The Bandstand

The Bandstand is very much open for business and is thriving with a packed agenda of events taking place. A number of us from the FOES went along to the first Show after the reopening and danced the evening away to a 'Queen' tribute band.

The first phase of the repairs are now complete, including a brand new, (and safe), floor with sliding doors that can be open or closed to suit the performers in any weather. Lighting behind glass panels that had been previously covered up for several years are now back to their former glory and display an array of colours when lit. Much of seating has been refurbished but unless further external funding is obtained it may be some time before the colonnades are repaired so we understand that these will be covered-in for the foreseeable future.

External Funding will need to be found for further major works on the Bandstand. Council Officers have suggested that they would like to partner with FOES to secure funding.

Minor work will be carried out during the winter. Gaynor has discussed with EBC the current appearance of the Bandstand, extending the bar in the main arena and improvements to the bar on the middle tier. The walk around the Bandstand is closed as it is too dangerous to use, due to the crumbling pillars. In the meantime, however, Gaynor, and other Gardening Team volunteers have been regularly weeding the flower beds at the base of the Bandstand!



The Welcome Team



In April we saw many volunteers take to the seafrost resplendent in their colour-coordinated Polo shirts and jackets to welcome visitors to the seafrost. This amazing Welcome Team has been welcoming visitors, chatting to people along the seafrost, signposting and informing since Easter. At the end of September, they will be hanging up their blue jackets until next Easter. Not only have the Welcome Team been appreciated by all those they talk to, but they also

report anything that is damaged and of things to be put right along the seafrost. For example, they reported all the black signposts that were pointing in the wrong direction or to places no longer there! This resulted in Gaynor liaising with EBC to eventually getting them all updated or removed. The team have dealt with lost children and medical emergencies and have been out in all weathers remaining cheerful and thus a great asset to FOES and to Eastbourne.



We will be recruiting again in January for volunteers to join the Welcome Team.

Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us.

gaynor@friendsofeastbourne-seafront.org.uk

The Gardening Team



The Gardening Team has been recently established in response to a desire to see some of the seafrost beds and borders weeded and cared for. We started with the Bandstand beds, which had knee high weeds and continue to maintain them; we cut back the brambles and weeds from the cycle track and continue to do that too. We tackled the RNLI beds next, and recently received sponsorship from The Beach Shack, which will enable us to add plants to the beds which have been weeded. We are a team of seventeen, and really enjoy gardening, chatting to the public who really appreciate our work and the lovely beds looking good again. Ideverde are the contractors EBC use, but we consider what we are doing truly compliments their work.

We continue to work with EBC and Ideverde to see improvements to the sloping borders, particularly around Bistro Pierre, which have been sadly neglected for years.



Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us.

gaynor@friendsofeastbourne-seafront.org.uk

Seafront Lighting

Regular visitors to the Seafront, (especially in the evening), may have noticed that we have new lighting along the seafront. To the west of the Pier new lamps have been installed and commissioned and also new festoon lights have been installed. Work will soon start to the east of the Pier. Using LED Luminaires, the lighting is much less prone to damage by vandals, is cheaper to run and will last far longer than the old incandescent lights. Once again we are indebted to Mark (from the FOES), Bob Cookson, Cllr Swansborough and Cllr Smart for getting this work underway.



Children's Cycle Track



You may recall from the last newsletter, that FOES has been working with the Council on a new children's cycle track on the large area of tarmac next to the skate park.

Having secured the funding from the John Jackson Charitable Trust, we worked to firm-up the design of the track and the costings. We also gained agreement from the council that they would issue the purchase orders for the work, rather than

FOES. In this way the project would be exempt from VAT, which effectively gave us additional funding to spend on the scheme. The additional funds has paid for all the old fencing to be removed and new fencing erected along the sea front. We were also able to incorporate three children's painted games, such as hopscotch, into the layout.

In July a team of us, (Gaynor, David, Anne, Andrew, Yana and Sally), worked hard in the heat to clear brambles and weeds from the area around the track in time for the formal opening which was made by Caroline Ansell MP and afterwards a speech was given by Cllr Holt – Leader of the Council.



In August we were able to purchase two picnic tables that were installed by Dave (from the Gardening team), Mark and Andrew. Dave has since gone that extra step further and has built two more benches and these have since been installed. It is heartening to see how much the cycle track is being used and enjoyed by young children and their families.



The Hustings

In early May, shortly before the local elections, it was suggested that the Friends of Eastbourne Seafront arrange and chair a Hustings, (a meeting where election candidates or parties debate policies and answer questions from an audience). We contacted all the political parties in Eastbourne and had candidates from the Liberal Democrats, Conservatives, Labour, The Green Party, Reform and UKIP. Because of insurance the audience was limited to eighty attendees, and this was made up of representatives from very many action groups in Eastbourne each of whom were invited to submit questions concerning Eastbourne. Of course, time-constraints meant that we couldn't possibly ask *all* the questions submitted so we categorised the questions and then invited nominees from each attending group to ask a single, but pertinent, question. None of the candidates were forewarned of the questions to they were really on the spot! In the two hours available, each candidate was given the opportunity to present their party and objectives and then each was asked to answer the questions posed. Gaynor, (from the FOES), chaired the meeting in a most professional manner, keeping control and ensuring that questions and answers remained on topic. The meeting was a great success with both the candidates and the invited audience.

Dog Friendly Eastbourne

We recently applied for a grant from Visit Eastbourne and were successful in obtaining funding to run a new project to show Eastbourne as a Dog-Friendly town. This project is being run by Karey who, working with Amanda Ripley, (amandaripleydesigns.co.uk), is producing a guide as to where residents and visitors may take their pet dogs in Eastbourne. Currently, there is no all-in-one guide available for residents and visitors to Eastbourne.



Chatsworth Hotel 5th November In November, we shall be having a stall at the Chatsworth Hotel at an event to promote Dog Friendly Eastbourne where we will be selling Dog Merchandise, handing out guides and raising awareness of the Friends of Eastbourne Seafront. The event has been organised by the Chatsworth Hotel with funding from Visit Eastbourne and in collaboration with a National Dog Friendly magazine. This is a major achievement for Karey and the FOES, and we must once again extend out thanks to Karey and Amanda Ripley for their outstanding work with the Guide.

Redoubt

One million pounds has been allocated in the EBC budget for removal of the Colonnades and associated work. This work will not be carried out until next year. In the meantime EBC are working with English Heritage and specialist engineers on what work can be undertaken. EBC are in the process of fitting sufficient power cables. EBC do not



think there will be sufficient funding to undertake all the work necessary. They will remove the aquarium and open up the entrance to provide vehicle and disabled access.

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!



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

Please do consider signing up to Easyfundraising. It **costs you nothing** at all but if you allocate the Friends of Eastbourne Seafront as your chosen recipient then we receive a small percentage of your payment, from the seller, of anything you purchase.

Eastbourne Lottery

We now have a page on the Eastbourne Lottery! The Eastbourne Local Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in Eastbourne. All good causes supported by the lottery will benefit Eastbourne and its residents. Tickets for the lottery cost just £1 per week, with a top prize of £25,000!

By selecting Friends of Eastbourne Seafront when you play, then we will get a percentage of the money, which will go directly to our campaigns.

To play the lottery go to this website:

<https://www.eastbournelocalottery.co.uk/>

Seafront Fund Raiser - September 4th

In September, (postponed from July), we held a fundraising event at the Bandstand where we held a Tombola raffle, sold books, and promoted the Friends of Eastbourne Seafront. From 10 am until 3 pm we had a steady stream of visitors and all the while serenaded by the marvellous and talented Vocalize! Just as we opened our stall we were then treated to the drums of the Steam Punk procession as they marched past our stall. It was a long day for the volunteers, but we managed to raise a little under £500 for FOES.



Thank you to everyone who took part.

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!

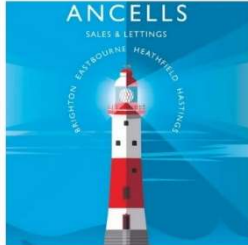
For more information and videos on our work – then go to our own website:

WWW.FRIENDSOFEASTBOURNESEAFRONT.ORG.UK

Our Business Sponsors

We need new members and business sponsors to keep our campaigns going, so we thank, again, all our members and the following Business Sponsors:

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