

WARD REPORT - OLD HASTINGS - JANUARY 2011

COUNCILLOR JOHN HODGES (cllr.john.hodges@hastings.gov.uk or 445540)

Once again physical activity on the pier has been non-existent, in contrast to the mass of legal and administrative tasks that continue in support of its return to the people of Hastings. We continue to await news on our application for grant funding regarding both the temporary gallery, and the pier itself. One piece of good news was the decision by the Planning Committee to allow the erection of the temporary gallery adjacent to the old White Rock Baths for a period of three years. This is intended to act, amongst other uses, as a visitor's centre providing the continuity between the old pier, and the erection of a new one and will provide a focal point for all of the ensuing activity. Fund raising continues unabated, with a volunteers day planned for early February and the Party on the Prom coming off next month.

It has now been agreed that the TRO for the 20mph limit throughout the Old Town (A259 excepted) will be drafted next month, and will include the two way operation at the top of the High Street. I would expect this change to be operational before mid Summer. The orders for the pedestrianisation enforcement of Courthouse Street have now been issued, and some test borings have been performed. I have followed up the lack of progress at the Sussex Arms junction with our County Councillor, and I will keep you informed of progress. The request to limit parking to a short stay time cycle at the south side of Mount Road adjacent to Ashburnham Road has been agreed by the Planning Committee, hopefully this will lead to increased vehicular business in this area. I still await the erection of the warning sign on the A259 above the Sacred Heart School, I am assured that it is imminent. One piece of good news for some Clive Vale residents has come from Amicus. After a lengthy campaign against them I have at last had agreement that a footpath will be laid along Lodge Road to provide safe and dry access for those residents who live in the Barley Lane/Boyne Road area, to the bus route, doctors and schools that are sited in Harold Road and beyond.

I continue my fight to resolve the ongoing problem of aesthetically sympathetic lighting replacements in parts of the Old Town. In an effort to finally resolve ESCC's apparent lack of understanding on this issue Dick from HOTRA, Anne from OHPS, and myself are planning a walkabout that will enable us to list

every lamppost that should be given this level of consideration when replacement is contemplated. While talking about lighting I have followed up again the need by ESCC to remove the unwanted lamp standards that continue to serve no useful purpose around the area of Winkle Island. I have also pursued the need to resurface Winkle Island, its surface is currently non-uniform in the extreme, and it would be a tremendous aesthetic enhancement for it to match the new walkways that will be provided across the road, adjacent to the Jerwood Gallery. Any works carried out at Winkle Island should also include the straightening of the kerb to facilitate an easier parking operation. Similarly there remains a most important need to resurface and designate the Rock a Nore car park, which would result in a significant increase in parking availability in this part of the Town.

Regarding the continuing complaints about the siting of the bottle banks at the bottom of High Street, I have been given assurances that they will be located away from human habitation, across the road in the area of the new Community Centre once it is practical to do so. The collapsed sewer in George street will not now be repaired by a conventional trenching method, but will be relined, from man hole to man hole. This means that pedestrian access will be maintained in the George Street shopping area at all times, and similarly vehicular access for loading can also be arranged. At last week's Traffic and Highways Committee it was confirmed that none of the proposed changes to residents parking in the High Street would happen. It was also agreed to implement the single line changes to Rock a Nore, and the resiting of the coach drop off points from outside of the Cutter to outside of the Albion. This move significantly reduces unwanted fumes for diners in this part of East Parade, while the distance from coach to business at the Albion end is greater by the width of a pavement and a road. I continue to pursue Stagecoach/QBP in the hope that one of the bus lay bys at the top of the Bourne could be given over to parking. Similarly we are talking with the Stables Trust to explore the possibility of including their own car park, during the day, in the list of available parking facilities within the Old Town. The requested changes within the Old Town that are unlikely to be progressed at this juncture are the provision of a pavement between George Street and the end of the raised pavement at the bottom of the High Street, the removal of the raised pavement outside of the Old Town Hall, and any possible usage of Southern Water property for increase parking in Rock a Nore.

I visited Rocklands Lane last week and was satisfied that our own council has taken all reasonable steps to prevent speeding in this area. Should these problems by an inconsiderate few recur, then different methods of control will need consideration. Once again some issues with the lights at the junction of the Bourne and Rock a Nore have been referred back to ESCC, I will keep you informed of any progress.

I am also pleased to report that a change of usage has now been agreed for the old Newey and Eyre building in Roebuck Yard. The new occupants will be Autism in Sussex, a charity that will now provide five additional jobs in the area, besides giving the opportunity to autistic people to learn a skill that will prepare them for a job in their own right. A site meeting with the Police, the responsible Director, and myself is scheduled to take place in Croft Road to assess progress against existing complaints, and to understand if there is more that could be done to reduce criminal activity in the area. Some progress on adult social care has been made with an agreement to continue the provision of care for the next two years, for elderly persons classified as having substantial as well as critical needs. The questions posed on the provision of care, via the Isabel Blackman model, to all of those who are identified as likely to benefit from such a scheme, continue to remain unanswered. There is more work to be done in this critical activity, before a clear and acceptable way forward can be guaranteed to those in need. I continue to be involved in numerous issues of private case work, and remain committed to help any of you with life's problems that fall within my gift.

Kind Regards, John Hodges