

## Hastings Old Town Residents Association

### October 2012 Newsletter

#### Alcohol in Hastings Old Town

This is a challenge for all parties. The Old Town has the highest concentration of licensed premises in the county.

Did you know that in 2010 [ 7 years after control for licensing passed to Hastings Council ] Hastings had the highest number of alcohol related deaths in the country ?

Are you aware of a review of licensing policy being carried out by Hastings Council ? Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> October – contact Bob Brown – [bbrown@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:bbrown@hastings.gov.uk)

In June HOTRA asked for a meeting with HBC and Sussex Police about the unacceptable number of Anti social incidents that happen after some of the big events. The Jack in the Green Bank Holiday seems beyond the control of the Police. For more than 5 years there have been serious disturbances. To their credit the Jack in the Green organisation have responded intelligently and ‘designed out’ potential problems. This year all went well until 5.00 pm. All of the Morris groups and most of the spectators had gone home but a new element appeared. Their behaviour was fuelled by Alcohol. What happened was totally unacceptable.

HOTRA has suggested that the authorities talk to the licensees – including the 3 off-licences – and ask them to adopt a voluntary code. For the 2 hours after Jack in the Green [5.00 – 7.00 pm] only alcohol being consumed by customers sitting eating a meal can be served. By that time many of the businesses will have made their money. The local bye laws are clear. No street drinking. If a pub / off licence want to continue serving between 5.00 and 7.00 then they should employ door security staff. Their job would include ensuring nobody left the premises with drink in their hand. For the 3 off licences they could help ensure that no proxy buying takes place for under- age drinkers.

This year the problems have not been confined to Mayday celebrations. Local people have been troubled by late night noise, offensive behaviour and a re-emergence of car vandalism, especially in the High Street. It is easy to dismiss this as a national problem and hope Westminster does something. The simple truth is that powers exist locally. It is also true that funding for councils and the Police has been cut. There needs to be a clear commitment that residents interests are just as important as those in the Alcohol industry.