



# Big turnout to view first draft policies for Shoreham Beach Neighbourhood Plan

Approximately 200 Shoreham Beach residents attended the recent Have Your Say Days to comment on the first *Draft* Policies for the Shoreham Beach Neighbourhood Plan. A group of community-spirited volunteers - Shoreham Beach Neighbourhood Forum (SBNF) - have been busy co-designing the Plan for the past two years through regular engagement with local residents and community groups.

The Plan gives communities a chance to influence the future development of their neighbourhood for the next 15 years and everyone who lives or works on Shoreham beach is free to participate. Around 400 members have now joined SBNF and have the opportunity to take part through face-to-face public events, dedicated working group meetings, online discussion forums, social media and a dedicated website: [www.shorehambeachforum.com](http://www.shorehambeachforum.com).

The latest public consultations were held at The Harbour Club on the evening of Thursday 6th October and again on Saturday 8th October. Both events were well attended. Saturday's event was particularly lively, with a diverse range of attendees from toddlers to pensioners and houseboat owners to yacht owners. All attendees marked their residence on a map, and the organisers were pleased to see a good turnout from all areas in the designated Plan area. The Port Authority, Friends of Shoreham Beach, AECOM, The Environment Agency and Adur District Council were also represented at the event.

On Thursday James Appleton - Adur & Worthing District Council Chief Planner - explained that when approved, the Neighbourhood Plan will “sit alongside the Local Plan for the District”... “both are legal documents which have to be taken into account when the Planning committee makes decisions on planning applications.”

A resident asked the crucial question “...will the Plan make any difference to decisions.” Professor Mike Gibson - the Forum’s planning consultant - pointed out that there is clear evidence of examples where appeals by developers are turned down by the government. Due to proposals being in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan. However, James Appleton was very positive about the progress of the Shoreham Beach Plan to date.

Neighbourhood Plans are on the increase across the country. They offer an important opportunity for residents and local businesses, to help shape both the development and conservation of their neighbourhood. Shoreham Beach has changed a lot over the years - and continues to grapple with the ever-present pressure to regenerate and develop, alongside wanting to conserve its unique landscape and somewhat eclectic nature. This year alone sees developments at Ferry Road, Tidal Wall improvements and commercial opportunities at Beach Green. James Fuller from the Environment Agency gave a detailed explanation of the timing of the tidal wall works and took questions from the audience.

SBNF Chairman Dawn Clenton-Spary: “We think it’s really important local people - of all ages, here - have a chance to positively influence how the area develops in the future. We are really encouraged by how many people have got involved with the Neighbourhood Plan so far - and the brilliant ideas they’ve put forward for The Beach.”

The Forum’s Working Groups presented a wide range of proposals. Including the designation of Local Green Spaces to give additional protection from unwanted development; the provision of an indoor community facility in the proposed café development; a Neighbourhood Design Review Panel - to provide professionally informed residents’ comments on planning applications (for development on the Beach). Together with a video showcasing a ‘future Shoreham Beach’ - focusing on transport issues and opportunities. Friends of Shoreham Beach contributed to the exhibition to emphasise the vital importance of the Local Nature Reserve.

Independent - government funded - urban planning specialists AECOM (commissioned by the Forum) presented “What if...” options for: the future of Beach Green; a new school site; parking solutions; allotments and housing.

What next? The Have Your Say days generated over 100 pages of comments, feedback and suggestions. The various working groups of the Forum will now analyse the feedback and use it to refine the draft policies and objectives. All exhibition materials have now been uploaded to the website and there will soon be an online survey to give those who did not have a chance to attend the public events to also have their say. The accompanying video, entitled Shoreham Beach: then, now, future?’ was produced by local eco-designer Mike Whelan. it is a collection of suggestions

made by local residents which have been brought to life through the use of computer graphics in order to 'prototype' the ideas in a virtual tour of the area. Mike Whelan said: "it was great to see younger residents engage with the process through watching the video - they started to understand the potential benefits of the Plan and how they could contribute. One young girl excitedly told me the video had given her an idea and she went on to draw various plans on our activity sheets." The video will be updated to incorporate some of the feedback and suggestions gathered at the events before being published to the website.

After the online feedback process is complete, the Forum will prepare what is called the 'Pre-submission Consultation Draft Plan.' Which by law will be required to be open to public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks before it is submitted to the council officers. After checking that the Plan meets all legal requirements and has been properly prepared, the Council organises a second 6 week public consultation. Before arranging for an Independent Examination by an 'approved planning inspector.' The final stage is a yes/no referendum, with all those living and working on the Beach eligible to vote. The approval of the Plan will require a majority of votes cast.

More information at [www.shorehambeachforum.com](http://www.shorehambeachforum.com)

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