

HENGISTBURY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (HENRA)



Minutes of the Members Meeting held on Wednesday 5th February 2025 in St. Nicholas'

Committee members present: Abigail McMullen (Chair), Nick Clarke (Treasurer), Colin Baker (Secretary), David Freed, Pat Butler, Sean McMullen, Deborah Bergson, Ray Hatchard

Attendance: ~ 100



1. Opening remarks from Abi McMullen, HENRA Chair

Abi welcomed everyone and provided a summary of what has been going on in the local area since our last meeting (when it was lovely to see 140 people at the carol evening in December, which raised £100 for Southbourne Food Bank). Please continue to support our generous prize donors and the local shops we value so much on the Broadway: ***Hengistbury Local; The Riverside; Captain's Club; Stewarts; Backdoor Shoes; BH7 Beauty; Chloe's Upholstery & Patchwork; Waitrose; Solent Meads Golf and Hall & Woodhouse.***

Also in December, Sobo Beach were given permission by BCP to continue operating the venue until October 2026, but the music must stop at 10pm.

Although we are fortunate to live in a predominantly safe area, there has been a recent break-in at St. Nicholas', a theft of copper from an unoccupied bungalow on Broadway which resulted in a serious gas leak, some suspicious behaviour in Rolls Drive and a person detained in Wick village.

Just over 200 households have already signed up on the new membership platform, but around 150 households are yet to renew. Members are encouraged to subscribe via the link on HENRA's website. It's quite simple and takes only a couple of minutes, but if you need help, just talk to anyone on the committee and we will register you at the next meeting.

2. Local Policing

Police Officers Sarah and Ollie addressed some of the incidents mentioned by Abi, stressing the importance of reporting crimes, anti-social or suspicious behaviour by calling 999 or using the non-emergency number 101 as appropriate. Dorset Police's Contact Us page gives more information about reporting to them: [Contact us | Dorset Police](#).

Ollie remarked that fewer burglaries occur in premises with CCTV and whilst dogs are undoubtedly a great deterrent, domestic CCTV is relatively simple to install, and good systems can now be purchased for under £100.

The Southbourne day of action held in conjunction with Trading Standards and BCP licensing had been successful in seizing several counterfeit goods, and three prolific shoplifters in the local area have recently been detained.

3. National Coastwatch Institution – Peter Ellis

Peter Ellis, Presentation Coordinator at the NCI Hengistbury Head Watch Station was introduced by Peter Holway, the Hengistbury Head Watch Station Manager.



Peter gave a very interesting and comprehensive talk, explaining that NCI watchkeepers are the “eyes along the coast” for HM Coastguard. The Hengistbury Head volunteers maintain a watch from Barton-on-Sea in the east, 12 miles out to sea through Christchurch and Poole Bays and across to Swanage and Durlston Head in the west. Already this year the local watchkeepers have logged 4 incidents.

Between 2 and 4 watchkeepers are on duty every day, and the Hengistbury Head station has an incredible 105 volunteers who operate 4 and 3 hour shifts throughout the year. Full training is provided before anyone qualifies as a NCI watchkeeper and such is the popularity of the Hengistbury Head station that there is currently a waiting list of 50 people who would like to get involved.

For more information on NCI and the Hengistbury Head station see: [Hengistbury Head – EYES ALONG THE COAST](#) and the Facebook page **NCI Hengistbury Head** which has lots of up-to-date information and photos from their observations. For anyone in difficulty they are on VHF Channel 65, call sign Hengistbury NCI.

4. Southbourne Community Council – Chris Knight, Sobo Forum



Chris Knight discussed whether the communities of Southbourne, Wick, Tuckton and Hengistbury Head should have their own Community Council (as does Christchurch and Highcliffe). HENRA's chair and secretary are part of the 20 strong lead group which is exploring the opportunities that forming a Community Council might afford the residents of the area.

One member was surprised HENRA members hadn't heard anything about this until now, but it was explained that the possibility had only arisen recently within BCP and Bernadette said that whilst this has been known by some for a while, it takes time to create a team and produce information. Although the lead group has registered an interest with BCP, we are at an early stage in the process, which (if it is decided to go ahead) would be implemented in 2026.

A summary of what Community Councils *can* do (1 of 2)

1. **Voice** for an area, to protect and improve

- Consulted on changes, especially planning applications, with legal powers
- Can set up a "Community Plan" shaping an area through planning policy
- Two-way communication between residents and "powers that be"

2. **Investment** and a better environment

- Receive and distribute grants, plus raise funds through a "precept"
- Run services (or top them up), e.g. crime prevention, equipping playgrounds
- Own assets for public benefit e.g. parks, allotments, community centres

A summary of what Community Councils *can* do (2 of 2)

3. **Community building** and civic pride in where we live

- Support local events, and taking pride in our area
- Support and promote voluntary groups and networks of local people e.g. run websites, emails, notices, volunteer recruitment
- Provide a focal point to protect and celebrate what's good in our area

Some Community Councils do very little ... just the "voice" of the area, others are very active. It's down to locals to decide.



Several members asked relevant questions, dealing with the legal framework that would be required to set up a Community Council, the cost to householders and the likely benefits which would ensue. Chris encouraged anyone who wants to get involved to contact him at chrisknight@ntlworld.com and stressed that all views are welcome both for and against.



5. Ward Councillors' Q&A with Bernadette Nanovo

A new format for 2025 was used for this segment with HENRA's chairperson Abi McMullen posing questions to the ward councillors on council initiatives, plans for the future and current issues in the HENRA

area. In the hot seat this month was Bernadette Nanovo.

Prior to the Q&A session, Abi read out a statement from Steve Hale from GSJP (Regency Living's civil engineering contractor) regarding the traffic management actions being implemented on Wick Lane (Steve was scheduled to be at the meeting but had cancelled due to ill health). Despite the reassuring nature of the statement, one member was vocal in his dismay at what he perceives is a lack of support from BCP Highways Department in addressing the dangers posed by heavy goods vehicles travelling to and from the Marina Court construction site.

Topics addressed in the Q&A included: Modifications to the planning permission granted to the developers of the Southbourne Crossroads car park (people can object if they are so inclined); The government hasn't included the Heart of Wessex combined authority (which would have seen BCP join with Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire) in phase one of their devolution plans, which Bernadette commented might be a positive owing to the tight timescales imposed by the Government; Twynham school's plan to change the nature of their 'feeder schools'; and the expectation that the development of Broadwaters in Wick will take place well after completion of Marina Court.

6. Closing Comments

Abi thanked everyone for attending and looked forward to HENRA's next meeting on Wednesday 5th March when Peter Christie, Capital Projects Manager for South West Flood & Coastal, will be talking about the recently completed Long Groyne Project at Hengistbury Head.



Meetings and events

- ▶ Friday 7th February - Let's meet together, 2pm at in St. Nicholas church hall, afternoon tea and advice from the fire brigade on fire safety in the home
- ▶ Monday 10th February - HHO 7pm at St. Nicholas'
- ▶ Wednesday 5th March: Long Groyne Project
- ▶ Sunday 16th March: HENRA's sand clearance
- ▶ Wednesday 2nd April: Southbourne Life Saving
- ▶ Sunday 13th April: Litter Pick, Solent Beach car park
- ▶ Wednesday 7th May: AGM and Tom Hayes MP

