



Save Our Shore



Newsletter

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Workshops hailed a resounding success!

Over 30 interested parties attended the Langstone Flood Defence workshop held at the Civic Offices on the 9th March, and most if not all deemed the event a resounding success.

ESCP's staff were on hand to answer technical questions from the 5 tables and table "facilitators" coordinated opinions which were presented after each session to the event "facilitator", Mark Effenberg representing SOS. The meeting was therefore able to gather views from all involved and decide which way forward was favoured by the majority of the attendees. It was not long before everyone realised that no matter how strong their views were "compromise" would have a significant part to play.

Although it was never envisaged that ESCP would agree with all the proposals put forward it was never the less pleasing that the feedback from them was generally favourable. For example SOS felt very strongly that the protection of Mill Lane, Harbour Side and the Spit should be reconsidered with the earth bund being constructed to the west of the area properties rather than on the old Billy Line. There would also be a need to enforce the Spit with rock armour or similar. This would also

safeguard the sailing club and the A3023 from the Langstone harbour waters. ESCP are now to reconsider their preferred option.

There was also broad agreement on how the Ship and its car park should be protected and as such ESCP can now start to progress to the detailed design stage for both the Ship and Mill Lane areas.

Strong views from the floor were expressed regarding the proposed boardwalk, that it did not fit with the Heritage of Langstone. The majority view wanted the existing path repaired and if possible slightly widened. ESCP will now reconsider their initial plans and may well have to seek permission from the Secretary of State to encroach onto Chichester Harbour to facilitate the potential widening.

New proposals so that the grassed area outside Green Cottage would not be enclosed by walling were well received. Providing structural engineers agree that the existing walling along the path is strong



enough there was no objection to these walls being used as the first line of defence. The money saved by not building the boardwalk and new walls could instead be utilised on the slight additional work required to safeguard the Mill Lane area.

Unfortunately broad agreement could not be achieved on the High Street to Old Mill area. Previously the proposed wall on the Quay was deemed by all to be totally unacceptable from both the Heritage and financial damage that it would impose on the Royal Oak. The Royal Oak are adamant that they do not want a wall and are quite prepared to look after their own defences. It would be unthinkable if they were forced to close, they have been in situ since 1550!

The owners of the cottages on the Quay obviously want some form of protection, but it is not as yet known if their properties could act as a first line of defence as they do now. Walls may well need to be strengthened and suitable door/window barriers could certainly play a part.

Workshops hailed a resounding success! *(continued)*

A plan to create a “dry area” using the flood gate across the High St and the walls of the cottages and Royal Oak together with an earth bund behind the properties on the north side of the High St was proposed by the SOS. This plan would also create an “escape route” for the owners of the Mill which will not be benefitting from any other form of protection. As this plan was not universally accepted Lyall Cairns, ESCP, advised that they would go back to the “drawing board” and endeavour to come up with alternatives that would suit all.

It was acknowledged that this area is unbelievably difficult to deal with as there are so many conflicting interests; HERITAGE, SAFETY, RESIDENTS, ROYAL OAK, FUNDING ETC,ETC. Whichever scheme is eventually agreed upon one thing is certain and that is that “Compromise” will have to prevail for the benefit of the community as a whole not necessarily the individual. In all probability a further workshop on the Quay’s will be required.

Having considered the input from the workshops it is hoped that



within the next 6/8 weeks ESCP will advise how they intend to go forward.

We will keep you informed of developments.

Harbour barrage

During the workshop several people questioned what, if any, progress had been made with regard to the Barrage which was suggested at the sailing club meeting in December.

Even though there was some support for such a scheme, and maybe in the long term it may be the most ideal, both ESCP and SOS are resigned to shelving the idea. Whilst there is undoubtedly some justification in such a scheme the current and future climate both financial and environmentally weigh heavily against it. For example:-

A feasibility study by ESCP estimated the cost to be up to **£20 million**. Yearly maintenance and operational costs could be as high as **£1 million**.

The inter tidal seabed needed for construction would need to be compensated for elsewhere at a cost of approx. **£500,000**.

The Barrage would not protect **Mill Lane, Harbour Side, the Spit, The sailing club** or the A3023. Extra funds would be needed. Both Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Natural England objected on grounds of damage to the environment. ESCP’s assessment of the scheme can be viewed at escp.org.uk/community-proposed-options.

In view of the very decisive stance taken by the various statutory bodies

and the lack of funds to proceed, it was SOS’s view to accept what was on offer (£6 million approx..) and use these funds to safeguard both sides of Langstone. Delaying such a decision could well result in the funds being used elsewhere in the Borough and permanently lost to Langstone.

The Quay?

Since the workshops a local resident has floated the idea that one of the many obstacles to the Barrage is the ownership of the Quay, from the High St to the Royal Oak garden.

Quite how this hinders the project he has not made clear and he then suggests that the “Village” should purchase and maintain the Quay. This idea may well benefit those properties abutting the Quay but how the rest of the “Village” (whoever they are!) would benefit is again unclear. As the Quay is a public highway Hampshire CC are currently responsible for its upkeep.

Going forward

Sooner or later final decisions will have to be made if Langstone is to benefit from the funds allocated to coastal flooding.

This does not mean that any ideas that you may have will not be considered seriously by SOS or

ESCP just so long as you realise the parameters that the environment and funding instil. Your ideas please. It is hoped that work will commence early 2022 so time is running out!

Workshop Feedback

LYALL CAIRNS, Head of the Coastal Partnership, has told the SOS group that he thought it was a great workshop, where we met all the objectives we set at the start of the day. He felt that everyone had had the chance to get their voice heard thanks to the way that Mark Effenberg successfully facilitated the day. Although at times there were polarised views, Lyall said that he was confident that the ESCP could work together with the community to find the right solution that 'reduces flood risk, protects the buildings against coastal erosion and respects and enhances the amazing heritage, character and landscape we all love in this area'. The ESCP team will be pulling together a summary report and developing a programme for the next steps over the next six weeks and SOS anticipates that this will be available on the ESCP website and form part of another newsletter.

Comments from those who attended

Kevin Edwards, whose house backs onto Langstone Harbour also wrote saying that the workshop was a useful and hard working day. He thought that the design of the bund for West Beach, an amalgamation of earlier designs, was excellent, as it would link into the Harbourside scheme and ideally connect with the existing Sailing Club defences.

Kevin felt that the ESCP's brief to reduce flood and erosion risk excluded any emphasis on heritage. The letter goes on to say that the historic waterfront is of national importance and that the authenticity and integrity of the buildings could be destroyed by a careless design. 'I would suggest that the seawall, which is in poor condition, is repaired whilst the buildings it protects, essentially those seaward of the High Street floodgate, would be outside of the ESCP flood protection zone. Essentially, they are coastal properties and with a propensity to flood! This could be mitigated by offering support to make these properties appropriately flood resilient.'

'A bund wall would be needed from the point of the High Street flood gate, to run along the northern side of the properties in the High Street, so as to prevent flood water creeping behind these cottages. It would also provide emergency access for the benefit of the properties within the flood zone'

Looking further ahead Langstone and the upper half of Chichester Harbour could be made into a Tidal Lagoon, to prevent the flooding of historic residential areas in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 'For now, however, it is important that we are united on the present proposals, in order to continue acquiring the required funding to reduce the flood and erosion risk to Langstone and the only vehicular access to Hayling Island.'

Extract from Kevin Edwards letter
Havant Road, Resident

Insights from workshop

Well facilitated (tight, open minded and not overly controlling eg rip up the rule book and learn as we go along attitude).

Explore options, give people an opportunity to develop ideas and greater understanding of everyone's positions and limitations eg difference between refurbish and maintain (ESCP only maintain what they do) quays etc potential only for 5 years lifespan and potential danger of erosion in short term. There was a lot of support for a 'sausage' to protect the village. Excellent presentation on the funding and complexity of stakeholders involved whilst balance (heritage / protection / cost / stakeholders requirements / standards) was a key discussion -protection came across as a priority.

Different
Complete understanding and definition of the facts and assumptions eg the threat over 50/100 years and the projected heights and volumes of the sea and air pressures - in order to really explore the COST/VALUE propositions there was an outstanding idea to explore the 'sausage' options further.

Best wishes
Debi Garrod
Quay resident

Langstone Study Collaborative workshop 9/03/2020

- Very well organised
- Very well prepared for
- Good materials produced - maps etc
- Well-attended by villagers and other interested parties
- *Very well facilitated* by Mark Effenberg who kept everyone to the very tight timetable extremely well.
- Despite there being extremely strong feelings on this subject, there was no unpleasantness and no aggression displayed.

It remains true that what we knew before we began *ie* that it is impossible to reconcile the fact that we want the historic and aesthetic qualities of the old village preserved at the same time as protecting it from rising sea levels are irreconcilable.

Cecily Hughes
High Street Resident

High Seas at *Mill Lane*



Photo by Ann Griffiths

Unlike Chichester Harbour the above picture illustrates the effect a strong south westerly storm has on the vast waters of Langstone Harbour meeting the current inadequate Mill Lane defences.

Fortunately the Spit, Hayling Bridge and the Sailing Club offer protection to the Langstone foreshore which as a result normally only suffers from rising waters. See pictures on the left.

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Some things...
never change!



These photos could have been taken in the past few weeks, but were actually taken in 1999.

Photos by Martin Murphy

West Mill

Bill and I have lived at what was originally called the 'South-West' Mill for 47 years. When we moved into Mill Lane there were only eight occupied houses.

West Mill has stood the test of time. Built over 250 years ago, the original miller owned 52 acres of land around the miller's cottage... including the Langstone Farm and the land that the Ship Inn is built on! Gradually the land was sold off and now we have just two acres left, which is a lot when it comes to mowing the grass! A six story working water mill stood on our back lawn. And many other buildings as well. Two huge water wheels drove the machinery when the mill damn sluice was released.

Ships mooring in Langstone Harbour would load rowing boats with sacks of grain that would be rowed up the inlet to the mill and offloaded, then ground flour would be taken back to the ships for distribution nationwide. There are stories in local history books of smugglers being guided back to the village across the Southmore by a lantern left hanging in the porch at the front of this house!

In the early 80s, Bill and Julian Howard became founder members of the LVA. and over the years we had many Village Events in our garden, sometimes including the field opposite us in Mill Lane!!

In about 1982/3 the end room of our barn was empty, because at that time, Bill hadn't seriously started his artistic career. A bar was set up there and the Sysons lent their collection of '45' rpm discs for a disco. Unfortunately they were misplaced in all the clearing up... but found 30 years later and returned.

There were many sore heads in the morning! One lovely young couple, who shall remain nameless, rang me at about 3am or so in the morning and said they thought they'd left their baby in our garage, in his pram! I popped down whilst they waited on the phone and sure enough there he was, sleeping peacefully. We have many happy memories of those early days of the association.

Because the inlet comes right up to our garden people say "you must get flooded?" Then when we tell them, 'no, we've never been flooded' they look at the walls and channels that the Victorian Engineers created and understand how much thought went into protecting the property, but fears of rising water levels are changing attitudes. The Wind and Water Mills in Langstone are an integral part of the Village's history and if we need to take steps to protect our properties and our heritage, let's join and all do it together.

Bill and Helen Bishop March 20

