

SEAWALLS NEWS SHEET August 2023

S.O.S. Save our Seawalls P.O.P. Protect our Path

HERITAGE, HABITAT & AMENITY IN BALANCE

The Seawalls on-line petition is one year old. It currently has over 3,400 supporters and grows daily. There are a further 235 on the written version – thank you everyone for your support.

This popular path, between Wade Lane and Langstone Mill, is used by over 100,000 people a year. Unfortunately, due to Storm Eunice in March of 2022, the seawalls are fast eroding and parts have already collapsed onto the shore.



The Victorian walls keep the Mill Pond safe from being overwhelmed with sea water which would cause the retaining dam to be breached. As home to many species of birds, including egrets, cattle egrets, ducks, swans and heron; loss of the Mill Pond would be an act of **gross ecological vandalism**. The seawall also protects the English Coastal Path, in the direction of Wade Lane and losing it will destroy access to one of the most iconic views of Southern England.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy have commissioned an independent consultant to produce a technical report into the sea defences. It is expected that the report will be available in the Autumn 2023. We know there is £60,000 available for temporary repairs ... but WHEN?

The following is a quote from Councillor Alex Rennie, Leader of Havant Borough Council: “Whilst we are constrained by national agencies in our ability to protect the seawall, nevertheless we have been exploring every option to address residents’ concerns about the seawall and the Mill Pond. Our hands are effectively tied by frameworks dictated to us from a national level. Because we are in disagreement with key stakeholders doesn’t mean we will not continue to work with them to the best of our abilities to secure the best possible outcomes for the harbour and our residents.”



Photo: Compass Photography

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To make the path safe for families now and for future generations.
- We need immediate intervention to protect the Mill Pond and retain the renowned egret and heron colonies.
- Retain the biodiversity of the Mill Pond.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We need **YOUR** help to secure a long term solution. Many people and organisations are involved in finding a sustainable solution. Please Find us on Face Book and share on social media.

- * Please sign the on-line petition. <https://www.change.org/p/coastal-erosion-at-langstone>



- * Write to the local M.P., Mr Alan Mak and to Local Councillors.
- * For further information, go to: <https://havantcivicsociety.uk>

NOTABLE DATES AND ACTIONS IN THE PAST YEAR

March 2022: Storm Eunice caused the seawalls to collapse.

August 2022: The on-line petition was set up to gauge public support, head counts proved that in excess of 100,000 people per year use this footpath.

September 2022: The base of a Memorial bench was being eroded by the seas and was removed.

October 2022: “We’re in the media!” A half page article was printed in Portsmouth News.

November 2022: A consultant from GROUNDWORKS360 surveyed the walls and his suggestion to repair the entire stretch of wall was costed at £400,000 and would last 100 years.

December 2022: A photographer took drone footage of the path and surrounding area.

January 2023: Written confirmation that £60,000 would be available for temporary repairs.

April 2023: PUBLIC MEETING at Langstone Sailing Club, full to capacity with 50 turned away.

Comment by Cllr Lulu Bowerman; “Rights of way officers visited the site by the Mill Pond and that section of path will be repaired.”

May 2023: PEACEFUL PROTEST MARCH held, from Havant to Langstone Mill. Almost 200 people attended as well as local press – further media reporting.

August 2023: Meeting at the site of the collapsed walls and the Mill Pond. Attended by LVA members and Ann Briggs; CHC Chairman, Dr Richard Austin and ecologist Peter Hughes.

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest - this is the designation for Chichester Harbour, of which Langstone is part.

SINC – Site of Importance for Nature Conservation – This is the designation for the Mill Pond but doesn’t prevent it from being lost, despite its historic, amenity and educational value.

Thank you for taking the time to read this News Update on the Langstone situation. For comments or suggestions please contact: seawalls.langstone@gmail.com

