



**SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of an Environment Committee Meeting held on**  
**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October on at 12.30pm**

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**Present:**

**Chair**                      **Councillor Susan Claris**

**Councillors:**        **Peter Hickman, Kirsty Hogben, Rosa Morris, Tim Prater and Guy Valentine-Neale**

**Clerk:**                    **Gaye Thomas**

1.     **Apologies for Absence;** Cllrs Nicola South
  
2.     **Declarations of Interest:** Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Council’s Code of Conduct and by the Localism Act 2011.- there were none.
  
3.     **Minutes of the last meeting** - that the minutes of the last meeting held on 9th September 2024 having been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed.  
         **Proposed by Cllr Tim Prater**  
         **Seconded by Cllr Rosa Morris**

**4.     Seaside Award and Sea Water Testing**

It was noted that in 2023, a decision had been made not to apply for the Seaside Award due to the Environment Agency conducting sea water testing in the incorrect location— Battery Point instead of Sandgate Beach. As a result, the water quality at Sandgate Beach remained unclear. Additionally, testing conducted by Sandgate Parish Council revealed that, while the overall water quality at Sandgate Beach was generally good, it occasionally deteriorated after heavy storms, making it unsuitable for swimming.

Concerns were raised that the public might mistakenly associate Sandgate Beach’s water quality with that of Littlestone and St Mary’s Bay, where conditions are known to be poorer. To address this, it was agreed that clear and accurate information must be widely disseminated, highlighting that Sandgate is a favourable location for bathers, though with certain caveats. The production of A3 signage, alongside the use of social media, was deemed an effective strategy to provide reassurance and essential information to all sea swimmers, residents, and visitors.

Furthermore, it was agreed that DEFRA/EA should be strongly lobbied to relocate the sea water testing site to a more appropriate area, ideally in front of the Rowing Club. Efforts should also be made to seek clarity regarding the timeline for this decision.

The lobbying process would be strengthened with the support of the Rowing Club, and Folkestone Town Council would also be approached for collaboration, as they face a similar issue with incorrect testing locations.

**Action: Councillor Peter Hickman to liaise with the Rowing Club management & Folkestone Town Council.**

It was proposed that the Parish Council should refrain from applying for the Seaside Award, accompanied by a comprehensive and transparent explanation of this decision to be communicated via the parish website and all social media channels. Furthermore, it was proposed that immediate action be taken to formally engage with DEFRA/EA to request the relocation of the sea water testing site to a more appropriate location.

**Proposed by Councillor Susan Claris**

**Seconded by Councillor Tim Prater**

**Agreed by all.**

## **5. Information**

It was noted that Wednesday, 16th October, had been designated as a "Sprucing Day" within the parish. Councillors Rosa Morris and Susan Claris would join members of the Sandgate Society, SEA, and Folkestone Sprucers at the Sir John Moore Memorial, where they would undertake bulb planting in planters in the parish. All volunteers are encouraged to participate.

Additionally, it was noted that the possibility of creating a wildflower border at Battery Point was under consideration.

It was agreed that the installation of an additional noticeboard on the Village Green, as well as at the new development in Shorncliffe, would be included in the agenda for the Full Council meeting.

It was noted that Councillor Susan Claris would also undertake a review of the contents of the noticeboards at the Boathouse.

## **6. Date of the Next Meeting: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024**