

# Re-imagining Newhaven Board

## Minutes of Meeting

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025

10.30am to 12pm via MS Teams

### Attendees:

#### Chair

- Chris Ketley (CK)

#### Community, Education and Business Representatives

- Alison Turner (AT)
- Annie Lorys (AL)
- Andrew Tucknott (ATu)
- Dave Collins-Williams (DCW)
- Mike Shorer (MS)

#### East Sussex County Council

- James Harris (JH)

#### Lewes District Council

- Lisa Rawlinson (LR)

#### Newhaven Enterprise Zone

- Michelle Connors (MC)

#### Members of Houses of Parliament and Lords

- Janet Whitaker (JW)

#### Guest Speaker

- Sophie Missen (SM)
- Stephen Honey (SH)

#### Secretariat (provided by Lewes District Council)

- Anna Salmon (AS)
- Bryn Mabey (BM)
- Dan Fairbrother (DF)

#### Apologies:

- Andy Hill (AH)
- Ben Anderson (BA)
- Christine Robinson (CR)
- Duncan Kerr (DK)
- Graham Amy (GA)
- Ian Fitzpatrick (IF)
- James MacCleary (JM)
- Ken Dry (KD)
- Nick Backstrom (NB)
- Penny Shimmin (PS)
- Rob Cottrill (RC)
- Sophie Sneddon (SS)
- Zoe Nicholson (ZN)

## **1 Welcome, Introduction and Apologies**

CK welcomed Board members and guest speakers to the meeting.

The Chair informed members of Dick Shone's resignation and thanked him for all his contributions to the Board.

## **2 Minutes of Last Meeting held on 19.09.25**

The minutes were agreed.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared.

## **4 Eastside Recreation Ground update**

SH presented an update on the Eastside Road Recreation Ground project. The previous play area looked dull and lacked lots of play equipment due to unsafe items being removed over time. Newhaven Town Council (NTC) consulted local residents to ask whether they would like the play area renovated, and if yes, what would they like it to contain. The survey concluded the vast majority of residents were dissatisfied with the current play area and nearly all responses stated they would like it to be refurbished or replaced.

Contractors started on site mid-August and the play area was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025. The opening event was attended by local families. The new play area is very well used and has been positively received by residents.

## **5 Newhaven Square update**

SM provided an update on the complex Newhaven Square project which is delivering two GP practices, a pharmacy, an improved leisure offer, a Creative Hub and a refurbished car park.

Key dates:

- November/December 2025 – breaking through at first floor level to the Seahaven building and installing a link bridge to connect the old and new buildings
- December 2025 – Seahaven first floor refurbishment commences\*
- Spring 2026 (TBC) – Seahaven ground floor refurbishment begins\*
- May 2026 - Chapel Street surgery completed
- August 2026 – Full project completion.

\* these works are separately funded.

SM presented indicative interior visuals of the new spaces with the chosen colour schemes selected by the tenants. SM shared photos to illustrate the progress being made on site.

Chapel Street surgery:

- Final ceiling finishes are taking place
- Glazed screens and doors are currently going in
- Furniture, fittings, storage and sinks are starting to go into the consultation rooms
- Progress is going well in the building.

Quayside surgery:

- Internal walls completed
- Doors are going in
- Wall and floor finishes taking place over the next two months.

Improved leisure offer:

- Two new exercise studios are being created
- New gym
- The new link bridge will connect these new areas with the existing Seahaven building
- Once the ventilation equipment has been installed, the contractor will start to fit the doors, windows and internal finishes.

AT asked what level of improvements are planned for Seahaven? SM explained the works are being carried out in two phases. The works on the first floor will create a rehabilitation gym, new showers and toilets\*. The second phase is currently being designed and is expected to include refurbishment of the changing rooms and existing reception area.

## **6 Re-imagining Newhaven Programme update**

AS summarised the status of the Re-imagining Newhaven programme:

- 4 projects have already been delivered
- 4 are in the process of being delivered this financial year
- 4 will be delivered next financial year and are on schedule to complete throughout 2026.

AS referred to the two progress documents which had been circulated to the Board: The Quarter 2 dashboard and the Re-imagining Newhaven progress report. The progress report contained an overview of achievements, risks and key dates. A further report will be provided at the end of financial year.

Business Grants programme:

- Round 2 is now fully allocated
- £198,066.50 of grants
- 18 businesses receiving grants in this round
- 3 businesses left to submit claims
- 21 new jobs created so far, this is likely to increase to 25 jobs.

Fish Processing Plant:

- By the end of this quarter, they are aiming to have more containers rented out.
- Plans to install a Live Lobster Holding Unit. Looking at options for selling live lobsters, a premium product that commands a high price.
- The window for applying for Marine Management Organisation (MMO) funding closed before any of the local fishers were able to submit a bid. The early unforeseen closure of the MMO funding after waiting so long for it to open had a big impact on the fishers who are already facing difficult times.

JW asked if the MMO could be requested to reopen the funding round. LR stated it was a short funding window but hopefully there will be future funding opportunities announced.

JH suggested discussing lobbying for funding with James MacCleary. ACTION: AS to follow up with James.

Fort Road Recreation Ground:

- 5th September - works commenced on site.
- The Cricket Club have successfully secured £130,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to internally fit out the cricket pavilion.

- £65,000 grant from Veolia has been successfully secured which will assist with development of the Community Orchard/Garden and enable courses to be offered on gardening and sustainability.
- Works have commenced in levelling and topsoiling the area. Bird and Bat boxes have been commissioned ready for installation.
- The planning amendment application for the Shakespeare Hall cladding was approved in October 2025.
- Play area design workshop with Seahaven Academy took place in October. This consultation will help inform the procurement and tender process.
- The project will be completed in April/May 2026.

AT asked if the Veolia grant had been secured on a national or local level? See link to information about the Veolia Environmental Trust grant scheme: [Funding - Veolia Environmental trust](#).

MS asked for an image of the new outdoor gym and whether they would withstand the coastal weather? The equipment will be confirmed in March and the concerns previously raised by the Board regarding the durability of the equipment have already been taken on board.

Landing Stage:

- Demolition of the old structure commenced on 19/07/25 and completed on 23/08/25.
- Piling commenced on 21/08/25 and is finishing this week:
  - River wall – 39 sheet piles
  - Combi wall – 33 tubular piles and 39 sheet piles
  - Intermediate piles – 24 tubular piles (19 as of yesterday morning with remaining 5 to be installed by the end of today).
- Steel works will commence mid-December.
- Pontoon installation is planned for mid-February.

Newhaven Fort:

Exhibition tweaks this quarter and will be completed by end of January, things that have been broken or have not been fit for purpose and additional interpretation being installed.

Activities this quarter:

- Repairs and replacement metal works around the site e.g. handrails, drain covers, gully grills.
- Remaining CCTV coverage is being installed.
- Cabling going down into the archive which will enable everything to be archived.
- Digitickets will be installing two new tills in the shop to help control the use of annual passes by enabling photographs to be taken of each adult pass holder.

53,050 visits to the Fort this year (including return visits) from 15 February to 2 November 2025. In 2023, the Fort received 18,054 visits. Up until 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2,854 school children had visited the Fort since it opened in February (these stats do not include all the schools visiting in November which is a very busy month for schools).

CK asked how many visitors were forecasted? The business case forecast 35,100 visitors in 2025/26 following the investment/intervention. Therefore, the number of visitors is significantly higher than the forecast.

Restaurant and Community Destination:

- The project team are currently reviewing the tenders for the main contractor.
- LDC has conducted robust national marketing of the new off plan restaurant to attract a tenant for the new premises. The closing date for Expressions of Interest was 31<sup>st</sup> October, several expressions have been received and are currently being evaluated.

Wayfinding and Public Realm Improvements:

- Both major sub-projects (Transport Interchange Hub and Town Centre Streetscape Improvements) have completed RIBA Stage 3.
- The projects hit delays during RIBA Stage 3. This added to the need for an extension into 2026-27.
- The scope of the sub-projects was confirmed during Q2, and the cost plans now meet the project budget.
- The Newhaven Interchange Hub planning application will be determined by the Planning Committee in December.

## 7 Government Strategic updates

Devolution

- The government has formally agreed to move forward with creating a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) for East Sussex, West Sussex, and Brighton & Hove.
- Sussex has passed the legal tests and is now in the implementation phase.
- The first election for the directly elected mayor is scheduled for May 2026 (there has since been an announcement regarding the delay of this election).
- The Mayoral Authority will have strategic powers over transport, housing, jobs, economic growth, public safety, health, and climate action, with significant funding devolved from central government.

## 8 Any other business

BM provided an update on the Local Government Reorganisation. Government have launched a consultation on the proposals for the Devolution Priority programme. Organisations and individuals are encouraged to respond by 11<sup>th</sup> January 2026: [Proposals for local government reorganisation in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, and West Sussex - GOV.UK](#)

AT requested a set of example responses for stakeholders. ACTION: AS to circulate to Board members once available.

BM provided an overview of the next Re-imagining Newhaven newsletter: [Re-imagining Newhaven | Latest News | Friday 28 November 2025](#)

LDC will be going out to consultation on the next stage of the Local Plan. Feedback can be provided online or at one of the many events which will be held.

Dates for your diaries:

- Next Board meeting is Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30am
- Landing Stage site visit on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at 1pm.