

Consultation Comments

Organisation	Address	Comments
Minster-on-Sea Parish Council	Love Lane, Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 2LP	<p>Minster-on-Sea Parish Council is happy with the process for advertising the chalets. Members are also happy with the selection process feeling that the 'first come first served" approach is sensible.</p> <p>Its concerns about the consultation process have been resolved by the Borough Council's decision to agree to its request to add the consultation to its website and extend the deadline. However, Members want the net cast wider in future so that the consultation is not weighted towards only those supportive of the scheme. Its failure to include the Parish Council as a previous stakeholder is a sore point. To prevent this happening again, may I suggest you add Minster-on-Sea Parish Council's name to the list of stakeholders so that its views can be considered as part of any future consultations.</p> <p>Regarding the financial process, members believe that allowing 'ownership' presents certain difficulties and will open the floodgates to speculative investment. Members would like the Borough Council to maintain overall ownership of the scheme. They see this as a protective measure and view any "selling off of these assets" as not being in the best interests of the public or indeed of the organisation itself. Maintaining ownership would provide a guaranteed stream of income from the beach hut rental agreements and ground rent fees which could be reinvested in the locality to improve facilities such as the Whitehouse public toilets etc</p> <p>Although the Parish Council is happy with the majority of the conditions of tenure, it feels that one of the conditions is open to abuse. In this case, condition 2.7 "to use the beach huts between the hours of 05.00 and 23.00" is considered excessive. Members understand that the planning permission related to Minster Community Centre (55 New Road, ME12 3PT) which is itself a temporary building allows usage between the hours of 08.00 and 22.00 on Monday to Friday and from 09.00 to 21.00 on Sundays and Bank Holidays and believe that restriction of hours would work well in this location.</p> <p>Members are happy with the enforcement arrangements and agree that the Seafront Manager is best placed to oversee this.</p> <p>Regarding the master plan, based on your response, it is worrying that there appears to be no real plan. The lack of an agreed limit on the number of huts and non existence of an established cut off point supports this view. May I suggest that these issues are immediately reviewed in an open and transparent discussion with the Parish Council.</p> <p>For all of the above reasons, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council asks that the decision for expansion is postponed until such time as the Borough Council has acted on the Parish Council's recommendations. This includes maintaining ownership and creating a sound structure limiting the numbers and establishing the exact cut off points in Minster. If the Borough Council can guarantee that these recommendations are included in the expanded scheme and a better more protective structure is in</p>

		place to prevent abuse then Minster-on-Sea Parish Council will support it.
Vintage Vending	Licensee of Former Lifeguard Hut, The Leas	Yes that would be good news if it was possible to do a second phase of beach huts. I have only heard positive comments about them, and they certainly add some charm to the seafront. I suppose that there is a waiting list of over 300 people speaks for itself!
Sheppey Tourism Alliance / Sheppey Matters	N/A	Thank you for the email and letter and I think another 15 Beach Huts in Minster is a splendid idea. From a tourism point of view any improvements will attract day visitors but also being a resident of Minster and walking the promenade regularly I delight in these beautiful surroundings which are definitely enhanced by the beach huts.

Members of the public in support:

No.	Comments
1	I believe this project is a fantastic idea and progressing well with ever growing interest from many people.
2	The beach huts are fantastically successful. When we walk the dog on the Leas, people are buzzing round the huts and the occupiers are constantly being asked how to get one. And now they are being painted, they really look the business. They should certainly attract more visitors and the café must be seeing extra trade. I would recommend that if a significant number are built, it may be worth building more facilities like toilets and kiosks at that end. Only downside, the little car park is always full now, even at 20.00! Well done to whoever had that bright idea for regeneration.
3	I walked my dog there and saw them for the first time and I thought they were being built very well, and what a fantastic idea! I have only just moved to the Island and knew what fantastic wildlife you had to offer, but the more I explore, the more I find, and blow the island's trumpet!!!!!! I think the Island of Sheppey is so undervalued by residents, and I do tell them to open their eyes and look properly!
4	They look very impressive.
5	I visited your beach for the very first time yesterday. I found it clean & tidy, well manned by your friendly lifeguards, and I was absolutely enchanted by the memorial seats, the exercise machines and to totally top it your new beach hut scheme. Reminiscent of the Brighton beach huts. A big congratulations, I can see this being a great success, and will follow the development with interest.
6	Love the huts, but where are the nearest toilets? I guess next to the White House - too far away.
7	I live in Sheerness and during a recent walk to the Leas in Minster, noticed the new beach huts. I think this is a fantastic idea and would certainly be interested in finding out more about them.
8	I visited Minster Beach for the first time this week and was impressed how clean the area was. I particularly like the beach huts which add a lovely splash of colour and friendliness. It gave the beach a family feel with children on bikes and families enjoying their time at the beach. I will now be a regular visitor.
9	I would like to see more beach huts in Minster. However, I think that there needs to be toilet facilities at that end of the Leas as well as on The Broadway. Also I would like the ability to rent a beach hut for a shorter period of time e.g. a week, this would give more people the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful facility.
10	Congratulations, the beach huts look wonderful. I hope we see many, many more of them. They have brightened up the end of the Leas.
11	As a sea-front resident, I fully support the plan to extend the huts; it enhances the area and helps make the front more attractive to residents and visitors alike. I was originally concerned that there might possibly be some element of vandalism, but fortunately, this appears to be totally unfounded

	thus far. Consequently, I wish to endorse the plan to provide another 15 huts.
12	<p>Delighted that the beach huts have not been vandalised - I think they add a lovely addition to The Leas so the more the merrier.....but, we also desperately need a toilet this end, a lot of elderly people visit here and to have a sign saying <u>Toilets the other end of The Leas</u>' is ludicrous in this day and age, I have had quite a number of people knock at my door and ask to use the toilet, I live alone and sometimes I refuse, which, I find myself feeling mean and cranky.</p> <p>A pay as you enter toilet would suffice and I may point out that I remember the toilets near The White House in 1946 which is almost 70 years ago so it is not before time we had new ones. I have written to you before regarding this matter and nothing has ever been done or acknowledged.</p>
13	I myself have no objection at all about extra beach huts being erected. They are well out of view of my property and others in the Leas and possibly they will bring more money into the area. I just hope they never extend to the point they are directly in front of any property in the Leas.
14	So long as beach huts are not being built in front of houses bought for their sea view, it does not matter. So in this case we are all in favour.
15	I completely support this. You need to do more of this sort of thing for Sheppey.
16	<p>Thanks for your letter containing information regarding the additional beach huts.</p> <p>I have lived along the Leas for the last 47 years and remember all of the original beach huts which were situated in front of the Playa. I think the addition of more beach huts is an excellent idea, and believe they should continue, more towards the beginning of the Leas.</p> <p>It would be even better if toilets were available and possibly some sort of cafe to serve these huts and all the tourist that flock to the Leas every summer and in fact most of the year round. These huts are low enough as not to affect the views of the houses along the Leas.</p> <p>The Leas used to have parking on the cliff top, before the sea wall was constructed, chains in between each of the wooden bollards and a red tarmac road. The small sea defence, at the start of the Leas was decorative, unlike the concrete eyesore that is there now.</p> <p>Bring on any and all of the improvements you can.</p>
17	I am in favour of the continued building of the Minster beach huts. They are a welcome addition to the seafront. My only gripe is that I did not jump in at the beginning and buy one for my family.
18	<p>I'm pleased the council are going to build more huts as there is a demand for them, and it is a great scheme!</p> <p>The new lot should be built with a beach hut gap of one or two hut lengths away from the first lot because to preventing fire risk spreading from one lot to another, the backs of the huts, the long grass/ straw should be kept cut for a greater distance up the slope, to stop fire from dried hay/grass from potential fire risk if the grass caught light and with the prevailing SW wind from blowing fire onto huts. The plan shows the proposed huts from continuing on from the first lot or phase, but think it would be wise to consider the gaps as above!</p>
19	I feel the beach huts bring a much needed colourful lift to an otherwise overgrown unkempt part of the beach. I am rather puzzled that if there is a waiting list of over 300 people, why only 15 additional huts?

Objections from members of the public:

1	In the summer Minster sea front is very congested, with insufficient parking for cars. The addition of even more Beach huts would make the situation intolerable, and indeed dangerous if there is no increase in safe parking adjacent to the huts. All those who use beach huts have to travel by car, no one who lives within a short walk would need a beach hut in order to have the amenity of the sea front. Each additional beach hut means yet another parking space.
2	We have received your circular about the beach huts in Minster. You invite us to get in touch if we would like further information. Quite frankly, we don't know where to begin - or how to frame the questions that we need to be answered. And in many ways we feel there is no point, since we are never consulted about anything in advance, and have no opportunity to put our views forward. The

fiasco of the beach huts will destroy the natural unspoiled nature of the area. Reading your letter was the first we'd heard about the beach huts. We have never been consulted. We were not invited to the focus group in September 2012, nor did we know anything about it. We have many reasons to oppose the scheme. However, what is the point of listing our objections? The huts are already being built, so it is a fait accompli. Your Borough Council strapline next to your logo is 'Making Swale a better place'. We do not agree that this is the case in relation to Minster and the area surrounding The Leas. The second strapline, at the bottom of the letter, says 'Have your say - help shape Swale', bears no resemblance to our experience. There has been no information, no consultation, no dialogue, nothing at all.

The first beach huts have been erected, and we could not expect you or any other non-resident of the Island to realise the immediate detrimental effect to the area which we know will go unnoticed in time. The footpath from the end of Seathorpe Avenue car park - a popular viewing point- down to the beach has long offered a rare, if not unique, uninterrupted view of the Sheppey shoreline in both east and west directions. Even with the erection of the first huts this has been lost. We are confident you will take this into consideration during any reviews of this trial.

Thank you for your letter dated 18 July advising that you are considering introducing up to 15 further huts – an increase of 75 per cent – and attaching a plan of proposed positioning. You will no doubt remember that residents of The Leas were not extended this courtesy regarding the initial huts, and that the first letter we received on that occasion arrived on the day work commenced!

Once again we assume this is in fact another fait accompli, as you have only invited us to comment if we are in support – and we are not! – or alternatively raise questions. We would merely ask if you have our previous correspondence on file – we can provide copies if not – and whether this will be included as part of the report going to the Council's Cabinet meeting on 10 September. We otherwise presume you have previously satisfied yourselves about parking, toilet facilities etc.

We would, however, take this opportunity of reminding you of the Council's strapline – "Making Swale a better place". The Council did not make Swale a better place by allowing a few self-serving and self-interested parties exclusive access to part of a public space. In the reported excitement and enthusiasm for what is still claimed to be a pilot project, it went unnoticed that a unique unspoiled and uninterrupted view of the shoreline from the path to the promenade from the Seathorpe Avenue car park would be lost. We would implore you and your officers to take a walk from the car park at the top of Seathorpe Avenue down to the promenade, to see how irreparably the exquisite natural shoreline has been ruined.

Can we at least ask for reassurance that any future beach huts for the other 285 people on the waiting list will be restricted to this area, and that the green area in front of houses on The Leas will be left to be enjoyed by everyone – tourists, local visitors and residents – as at present?

Other comments:

1	<p>My husband and I had a most enjoyable afternoon at Minster beach yesterday and, after lunch at the little cafe we decided to walk down the hill to look at the beach huts. We do not venture down to this area much as my husband is disabled and I am not able to walk too far myself. The beach huts looked wonderful and when we saw your notice asking for comments on this 2 year pilot scheme I thought I would offer you our ideas.</p> <p>As I have said, we have mobility problems and I am sure lots of elderly of disabled people would love to either buy or hire a beach hut themselves but would be prevented from even considering it due to the steps leading up to them. Our suggestion would be to have a hard path BEHIND the huts and a door to the rear to gain access. This would, of course, restrict the amount of usable space for those not requiring this access but a day bed, table etc could be placed in front and it kept permanently locked if not required.</p> <p>I value your time in reading this comment and would welcome your response in the near future please.</p>
2	<p>I have by chance read of the consultation on the above matter via the Minster Parish Council minutes. Would you please clarify what public notice has been given regarding this consultation, as the</p>

	residents of Minster deserve a full and proper opportunity to have their say.
3	Can you tell me please whether the Council will consider a draw system to make it fair on people, as at the moment it does appear that a lot of builders and business people seem to have acquired the ones that are occupied at the moment. I personally believe that if, names were drawn it, would be a much fairer system, perhaps this is something you can put forward to management.
4	Concerns for his grandchildren about the slope.
5	Enquiring if there are to be any new public toilets near the beach huts.
6	I understand from the current local paper that there's a public consultation which is due to finish next Thursday. Can you tell me why you consider it reasonable to conduct a public a consultation during August, when many people are away on holiday?