



STANPIT AND MUDEFORD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Hello everyone,

The Committee of the *Stanpit and Mudeford Residents' Association* regret to inform you that we have voted unanimously to close SAMRA with immediate effect.

Members will be aware that SAMRA has suffered a loss of vitality and energy compared with earlier years, primarily due being unable to recruit new committee members, putting strain on long service members who would normally expect to serve for a term of two to three years. This has coincided with a decrease in members attending the membership meetings and failure to encourage those of the younger generation to join us.

With the new Unitary of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council coming into fruition on the 1st April 2019 and the subsequent decision by CBC to create town/parish councils to protect the interests of the town, effectively making Residents Associations superfluous, it was felt that SAMRA's job was done and its time was up.

A whole new chapter for Christchurch and its residents will now begin.

Following the decision of the Committee (made in accordance with the Constitution) outstanding funds of approximately £14,000 that have been retained over the years for any necessary legal advice will be distributed as follows:

Macmillan Caring Locally £1000.
Stanpit Village Hall and Mudeford Wood Community Centre will share the balance remaining after settlement of outstanding bills.

Parishes

On the 2nd of September the Full Council of Christchurch Borough Council voted to create two new Parish Councils bringing the total to four. The reason for this was to bring a further level of democratic accountability following the inception of the Unitary council when the number of councillors representing Christchurch will reduce from 24 to 10.

Stanpit and Mudeford will be part of **Christchurch Town Council** comprising of the following representation:

Friars Cliff - 2 councillors
Grange - 3 councillors

SAMRA Farewell Wishes

A fond reflection of a dedicated Residents' Association

Jumpers & St Catherines - 6 councillors
Mudeford & Stanpit - 2 councillors
Priory – 6 councillors

The officers have already recommended the transfer of Play Facilities, Ancient Buildings and potentially the Mayoralty. Precepts for the service will be over and above the basic council tax. Current estimates are difficult to provide but as examples Burton charge £13.08 and Hurn £27.78. The national average is £45 with a minimum of NIL and a maximum of £360. Dorchester which represents approximately the same number of residents as the new Town Centre has a precept of £189 and employs 9 permanent staff.

Whilst the Shadow Unitary Committee are awaiting instructions from Government it is likely that Christchurch will pay a **higher level of Council Tax** than Poole and Bournemouth for many years. So, a large Parish precept is unlikely to be well received by the residents.

Whilst officers may recommend that various services should become the responsibility of parishes they cannot be forced to take them on. We trust that they will be financially aware enough to weigh the politics of the situation.

SAMRA was formed in 1986 following a dispute with the council over the management of Stanpit Marsh. Large fences were erected across the marsh to control the movements of ponies and the grazing cattle. However, this severely restricted public access antagonising the residents. On a cold and frosty winters day a public meeting was held in the leisure centre with 250 residents in attendance. A gentleman named Ron Williams spoke on behalf of the residents and won the argument forcing the councillors to abandon the scheme and remove the fences. Following his success, SAMRA was born with Ron at the helm as Chairman and his wife as Secretary. Friends and neighbours including Ronnie and Ted Edmund joined to form a committee.

In the early days SAMRA raised funds by holding Car Boot Sales and were also successful in fighting the development of the Sandhills Caravan Park.

Since Ron there have been various Chairman: Sandra Prudom, Andy Glaser, Ron Etherington, Mike Duckworth, Debbie Stephens, Malcom Burton-Smith & Graham Woods. Debbie and Mike having taken on the position twice!

Some of the larger issues tackled were the Avonmouth Development, Harbour dredging, Navitus Bay Wind Farm, saving 2Riversmeet and Mudeford Wood Community Centre and helping retain Druitt Hall. Committee members met monthly over the 32 years to discuss council and planning matters... with many hours spent reading consultations and attending council meetings. We debated our Victorian street lamp replacements prior to switching them off!!

But along the way we did also have some fun hosting events. There was the annual BBQ, held at the cricket pitch, or down the beach, although the most memorable was in 2012 for the Diamond Jubilee which ended up in the Scout hut due to the rain, with everyone wearing crowns! We organised several quizzes, history walks, boat trips, tea-parities and our numerous skittle nights were very competitive especially during the game of *Killer*.

We also held fundraisers including the big Family Picnic in 2005 where the profits were distributed between the three pre-schools, the Big Spring Raffle in 2006 in aid of the Mayors Charity's (Josie Spencer) and a Craft Fayre in 2009 which helped Stanpit Village Hall to buy some new chairs.

At times SAMRA made some valuable donations to assist local groups and causes. Having originally donated £500 for two bricks in the new Druitt Hall in 2009, the money was re-donated to help refurbish the kitchen in the original hall in 2015. In 2013 SAMRA released some of its funds to three worthwhile causes selected by its members. £500 went to Mudeford Infants for their garden project, £1000 to Mudeford Wood for kitchen refurbishment and £1000 was donated to buy a new rescue board for Christchurch Lifesaving Club.

But my favourite donation was the friendship trophies, carved by Albert Raven, for both Mudeford Infants and Junior Schools in 2009. We held a design competition and had to choose the winners from over 140 entries, which Albert replicated. The trophies are awarded to the pupils for a friendly act. How wonderful!

SAMRA would like to extend its thanks to every volunteer – from Committee, Road Wardens, BBQ Chefs to Raffle Sellers who made SAMRA one of the best Residents Associations in Christchurch. Plus thank members and Councillors for their support over the years.

