



## Introduction by the Chairman

Dear Hutterers

Welcome to Spring, fellow beach hutterers, hopefully you have had a comfortable winter and are now looking forward to enjoying your hut in more pleasant weather.

Inside this issue you will find an article that will hopefully motivate you to get your cameras out when you are relaxing at your sanctuary on the foreshore.

Many, if not all of you will hopefully have booked your appointment to sign your new lease, and we should be receiving our sealed copies soon if you haven't already. This process takes some time as the head of legal personally does it, hence the wait and why we could not take a copy on the day. It's nice to finally have our leases back, and I know the rents have increased; however, the council could have increased them by more than they did so again, I thank the working group for representing our points so eloquently and the council for taking them on board.

The Council haven't shared anything with us about what they plan to do with those people who for some reason have not signed their leases. We hope to hear from them late spring/early summer and will keep you informed.

A few years ago, we made a commitment to always provide hard copies of the newsletters and asked you to opt out if you would be happy with just an electronic copy. With the success of the Facebook group, and the revamped website, finding relevant content to send out 4 times a year to keep members informed is proving increasingly challenging. This suggests that we should reduce the number of issues we produce, so we have decided to issue a formal newsletter twice a year, once in the spring and again in the autumn.

As costs per issue for printing and envelopes is about £150 and postage is in the order of £350, it costs in the order of £500 per issue.

We will continue to post you the tide tables in the spring, and the AGM papers in the autumn; however, if you wish to receive a paper copy of the newsletter you will need to opt-in as we want to reduce overall costs so that we maintain a fund to represent ourselves in the event of any future issues with leases/licences/unforeseen circumstances. If you wish to receive a paper copy twice a year, please make your request via the website/email.

We would like your feedback on a couple of things:

- ◇ Would you like a membership card? We are looking into how we could produce a digital one for you with key contact numbers.
- ◇ A new traders list is being compiled, as always trader details are on the website; however, we need your feedback on how they performed for you.

Enjoy your time at the beach and the committee and I look forward to seeing as many of you as we can when we are out and about.

**Simon**

## SBHOA MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2026

Membership subscriptions are now due from all paying members. If you are due to pay you will find a renewal sheet with a tear-off remittance slip enclosed with this newsletter. You can pay by Bank Transfer or by cheque. Full instructions are on the sheet. The membership fee has risen for the first time since 2002 due to ever-increasing postage and running costs, but it is still exceptional value at £30 for 3 years Please don't delay your renewal. Your £30 covers your membership until 31st March 2029. Please help to make our job that little bit easier by paying your subs promptly. Thank you.

**IMPORTANT:** Now is a good time to make sure we have the correct email address(es) for you. We've sent out quite a few email newsflashes over the past year. If you've received them, it means we have your correct email address(es). If you haven't, it probably means that we don't have a correct email address for you. If this is the case, please advise us by sending a brief explanatory email to [ianrobbo13@outlook.com](mailto:ianrobbo13@outlook.com).

If you haven't been receiving our emails, it's also worth checking your "spam" or "junk" email folders to see if they've gone in there. This could be because we must send out these newsflashes in bulk, and some email service providers automatically put bulk emails in "spam" folders. If this is the case, you need to change your email settings to accept the email address (above) and our bulk email sending address ([sbhoa2001@gmail.com](mailto:sbhoa2001@gmail.com)) as approved senders.

**ALSO IMPORTANT:** if you've changed your mobile and/or landline telephone number in the past couple of years and you haven't already advised us, please do so now. Likewise, if you've changed your home address. And if you should change any of these things in the future, please do let us know so that we can keep in touch with newsletters, information, or security issues relating to your hut. Please advise us by email to [ianrobbo13@outlook.com](mailto:ianrobbo13@outlook.com). Thank you.

**Ian Robinson (Membership Secretary)**

## UPDATING OUR TRADER LIST

We've reached that time, three years on, when we need to update our very useful list of recommended Traders for beach hut related services. So, we need your recommendations please. You are invited; encouraged even! to let us know if you have received good and worthwhile services from any of the Traders who are on our current list, or if you have a recommendation for a Trader or Service not currently on the list - with their full details of course. We will be contacting all the Traders already on our list to see if they wish to remain there, and we aim to produce an updated list before the Summer.

This will then be emailed to all members for whom we have email addresses and put on the SBHOA website for downloading. We will also produce paper copies for those members who, for one reason or another, are unable to use email or internet.

Please send your submissions to the Membership Secretary, 181 Kensington Road, Southend, SS1 2SZ, [ianrobbo13@outlook.com](mailto:ianrobbo13@outlook.com)

## BEACH HUT SECURITY

Hello all

I would like to start by introducing myself as the new Safety Officer for our Beach Hut Organisation. Having only moved to the area in May 2025 and only acquired our hut in early November 2025 we are clearly newbies to the local beach hut scene. A former keen windsurfer I have now hung up my sails and opted for the tranquility of kayaking and look forward to warmer and sunnier days ahead. Having not been on the Committee for long and newly appointed to the security role following Jo's outstanding work I'm still very much finding my feet. Or should I say treading water.

On the security front, we have started the year strong by meeting to discuss new beach hut security signs, and you can read more about that in the rest of this newsletter. We have also been involved in the removal of 2 stranded/beached boats that were becoming a nuisance and danger to beach and sea users. As fellow 'hutters' we often walk along the beach looking for potential safety concerns including evidence of attempted entry or areas that may present an opportunity to someone (or groups) seeking to gain entry. One area I would like to mention in this newsletter is the use of latches which only come with screws. As per the attached photograph please consider adding a nut and bolt (or more) which usually only takes minutes to fit and can make your hut less attractive to thieves. This is just one security tip; more can be found on the website in the member's area under security. If you have forgotten or mislaid the access password, please let us know. A final suggestion from me which is important at this time of year is please try and check in on your beloved hut during the winter season if you can. You will be surprised how much our wooden doors and shutters have moved and swollen during this wet season that you might find it very hard to open them come Spring not to mention the toll the weather has taken on the locks if not protected by oil or grease. During my first visit to the local beach last year, I saw a gentleman having to grind the locks off his door.



To close, I would like to remind you of our SBHOA security mobile number which is **07399 333296**. This is different to what is printed on your current membership cards. Alternatively, get in touch via the website, Facebook or via our SBHOA email address. If you need to contact me directly my personal email address is: [mgibbo1966@gmail.com](mailto:mgibbo1966@gmail.com)

I look forward to meeting many of you on the beach, in the sea or at our next AGM. Have a great season.  
**Mark Gibson - SBHOA Security Officer**

### NEW SECURITY SIGNS

Southend Beach Hut Owners Association

**If you witness, or notice damage, to any beach hut, please contact our Security team**

**07399 333296**

WWW.SBHOA.ORG.UK  
 Email: sbhoa2001@gmail.com

Southend on Sea City Council

I am sure many of you will have seen the BHA Security sign, which is still displayed on a small number of huts. The signs were printed around 18 years ago and given out free of charge to hut owners. However, over time, many of those that were originally displayed, have since disappeared, either taken down by the hut owner, or have succumbed to the elements. Previously, having signs displaying the emergency contact number, encouraged members of the public to contact the Association if they noticed hut damage.

The committee have decided to update the sign, and once again, make them available to members who would like to display one on their hut. We will also be available to fit the signs (signs will likely be attached using a removable silicone and not screwed). There will be no charge to members, for either the sign, or fitting.

You will hopefully have seen the new sign on our Facebook page. Please consider displaying a sign on your hut. To request a sign please:

- leave a comment on the Facebook post with your hut number,
- contact us by email,
- call the security officer.

We anticipate the signs will be available for fitting in time for the coming season.  
**Martin Pyke**

## Beach Hut Photo Competition

We are delighted to launch a Beach Hut Photo Competition for owners this year. This is a chance to showcase the unique character of our beach huts and coastline - whether it's a stunning seascape, a creative hut detail, or a moment that captures beach life at its best.



### *How to enter*

- The competition is open to all Beach Hut Owners.
- Entries must be photographs taken by the entrant and be a SBHOA member.
- Photos should relate to beach huts, the beach, or coastal life.
- Each entrant may submit up to 3 photographs.
- Photographs may be taken on a phone or camera but must be good quality.
- By entering, participants agree that their photos may be used by the Association for non-commercial purposes (e.g. newsletters, website, or displays).
- Prizes for the best 3 photographs

### *Key dates*

- **Closing date for entries: 30 September 2026**
- **Winners announced: at the AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2026**

Further details on how to submit your photographs will be shared on our Facebook page or via email. We look forward to seeing your entries and celebrating the creativity of our beach hut community.

## **WATERMAN'S NOTE**

Spring is nearly here, and life will soon return to our much-loved foreshore after a very wet and windy winter. Recent rough seas have torn up Bladderwrack Weed ("popper") from the mudflats, leaving a dark tideline along the beach. Prolonged easterly winds have also shifted the sand, piling it against the east side of the breakwaters rather than the west – the usual pattern under prevailing southwesterlies. Normally, the SW wind and stronger west-to-east ebb tide create a steady drift of sand along the shore, moving hundreds of tons at a time.

Years ago, the council regularly replenished Southend's beaches, moving sand back from Shoebury to Westcliff so tidal drift would spread it along the Golden Mile. Occasionally imported, orange-tinged sand coloured the water – and swimmers! Today, maintenance is limited, mainly to protect the area near Ocean Beach Restaurant.

As spring arrives, look out for marine life on the mudflats. You may spot a "mermaid's purse" – a small black egg case from a dogfish, skate or ray. If empty, it's a lovely find; if occupied, place it carefully in a puddle so it survives until the tide returns. Small green or red roe sacs may also appear – possibly flounder or plaice spawn, though they could belong to marine worms.

In May, the sea often turns brown with harmless plankton – once called "Bacca Juice" by fishermen. Soon after, small non-stinging jellyfish help clear the water. By summer, green "salad grass" weed becomes common, and on warm nights the sea may glow blue-green when disturbed – a natural plankton reaction that can even attract fish like mullet or bass.

There's always something happening along our shoreline – we're lucky to enjoy it. **Ian**

## **CONTACT US**

Email: [sbhoa2001@gmail.com](mailto:sbhoa2001@gmail.com)

Tel: 07399 333296 Website: [www.sbhoa.org.uk](http://www.sbhoa.org.uk)