

***SOVEREIGN HARBOUR  
BERTHOLDERS'  
ASSOCIATION***

***Newsletter 165***

***Autumn Edition***

***October 2025***

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## What's been going on?

The committee hope you enjoyed your vessel during the summer. Most of us managed to go somewhere and also investigate other marinas.

Whilst we were away a variety of things were going on here back in Eastbourne. Please find a summary below:



More trolleys and ladders were put on order! You should be able to find a trolley near you. Please return it to the bridge-head as soon as possible so that the flow doesn't dry up and everyone can get access to this invaluable mode of transport.

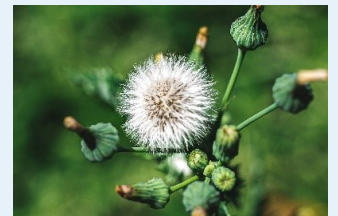
More pontoons have been washed but there are still areas outstanding. We have requested that a more orderly and regular programme be used rather than the patchwork approach which means some parts get forgotten.

The way some of the gates hang is being looked into. The problem seems to be that at very low water the rams don't work properly, particularly when closing.

Food and other recycling opportunities have been introduced in the central harbour. The food waste is mainly aimed at foreign visitors who must dispose of some items separately but all berth holders can use this facility. All bins are clearly labelled to make the disposal as easy as possible.

There have been a few problems with the barriers but we have been reassured that the problem has been dealt with and the situation which was related to a connection problem further down the line has been resolved.

Weeds around the harbour are a constant sign of annoyance as are the signs of peeling paint etc. . Our hope is that now the management team is back to full strength some of these type of issues can be kept on top of. Certainly, it would give the place a more cared for look.



Although the survey for 'Club Wifi' has taken place no further information has been received re having this installed and available to all berth holders.

Following comments from the Association re. the poor pontoon lighting in various locations after the Meta Macs installations, Dan Heckford agreed to do a night time walk of the pontoons making notes and arranging for snagging items and any changes necessary to be actioned.

## Good News!

A PDF version of the local tide tables is now available giving you a better view of this important information over a longer period.

There are more electric stations available in the boatyard. These have been installed along the shed wall and are connected to some moveable power towers thus removing the need for long trailing cables particularly in wet weather.

The footbridge on the outer harbour side of the locks has been replaced (hopefully). It was very rusty with even some holes in evidence so it definitely needed doing.



The old hoist is finally going! At least there will be a few more parking bays available

## Coming soon.....

New light standards in the lock area.

Some more yellow paint hatching is due in some areas near gates. This is to ensure that ease of access through the gates is maintained and provide a much easier exit with a trolley.

Dynamic pricing! The new charges for the coming year have been put up on the website. You should note the changes if you have your boat out in the yard January to April. We are told it all boils down to supply and demand!!

Please also note that the 'Pump Out' fee has risen 50%. We have complained about this as it can only lead to more pollution.

Some of the rusting fittings in the shower cubicles are to be replaced.

## Take action!

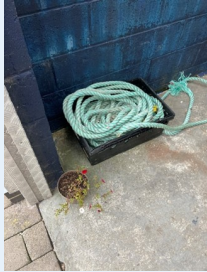
If you see any vessel in the harbour speeding and creating wash PLEASE PHONE THE HARBOUR AT THE TIME. CCTV can be captured and the boat spoken to. Repeat offenders can also be dealt with differently



# Bins at Sovereign Harbour

We really do try to provide suitable waste handling facilities at the marina, both in terms of the number and location of bins and the type of bins on site. But we need your help. Over the past few months, we have seen an increase in unsuitable items left in bin stores (and in bins). This also has a negative impact on our Environmental Accreditations. The easiest way of explaining bins at the marina is to view them as the same bins you have at home.

## General waste



If you wouldn't put it in your bin at home, don't put it in the general waste bins here. You wouldn't put electronics, rope, sheets of wood, insulation, furniture or oil in your bin at home. General waste bin contents are compacted in the lorry in the same way your household bins are.

## Recycling

Councils ask that recycling is clean, dry and not bagged. Any bags of recycling found in our recycling bins results in Veolia treating the entire bin as general waste. They can't open bags to manually sift through recycling. We are really keen to increase the number of recycling bins on the marina, but cannot yet until the current bins are behaving. When a recycling bin is contaminated, we are charged as a general waste bin (30% more per bin)

## Glass

Just glass bottles and jars. No tins etc. Glass seems to be one of the better behaving bins at the moment.

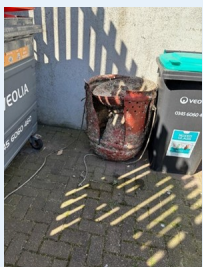
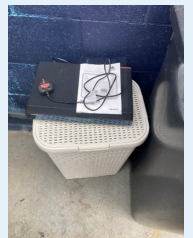
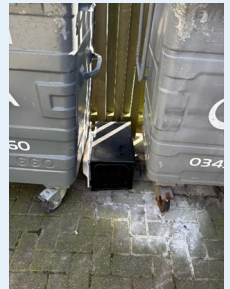
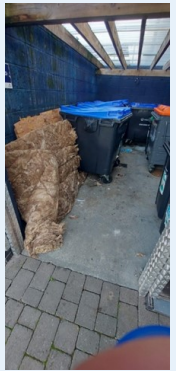
## Specialist and hazardous waste

For reasons of safety, hazardous waste is kept at the boatyard alongside emergency spill kits. There are bins to accommodate routine servicing (oil filters, old oil containers, rags, and batteries). The waste oil tank has recently been replaced, and is accessible to berth holders 24hrs via key fob to the boatyard pedestrian gate. That said, we have removed nearly 50ltrs of oil left in containers in various bin stores so far in October. The problem with leaving oil in bin stores is the increased risk of a spill. Most bin stores have surface water drainage, imagine an escape of waste oil into the drains.

## Food Waste

A dedicated food waste bin is located at Gate 12. By using this facility, we can help reduce general waste and support more sustainable waste processing.

We also have a skip in the boatyard for ad hoc larger items that either won't fit into a general waste bin, or cannot be compacted in the bin lorry. We do not charge berth holders for use of the skip, but we do end up spending a lot of staff time removing large items from bin stores and transporting them to the yard. If you need to put something in the skip, please check with Jill at the Boatyard beforehand. We cannot take fridges, electronics, gas bottles, fire extinguishers, tyres, asbestos or building materials. The [local tip](#) at St Philips Avenue is your only option (although they are shortly due to introduce a booking system), or your local tip if you are outside of Eastbourne. For any further information on waste disposal, please contact us at the Marina Office.



These photos give some context. Thank you for your help and understanding.

Dan, Marina Manager & Amy, Duty Manager

Saturday 22nd November

10.00-12.00

in the lifeboat house by lock control

Mince-pie coffee morning and hamper presentation to the crew ALL WELCOME



Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December

10.00-12.00



Venue yet to be confirmed

Book the date for the next **Ladies Day- 'Buoys and Toys'**

*Course Leader Mark Sawyer will use a set of miniature buoys to help you learn how these can help you navigate the seas safely. Join the light-hearted and friendly group.*



## Sovereign Shines!

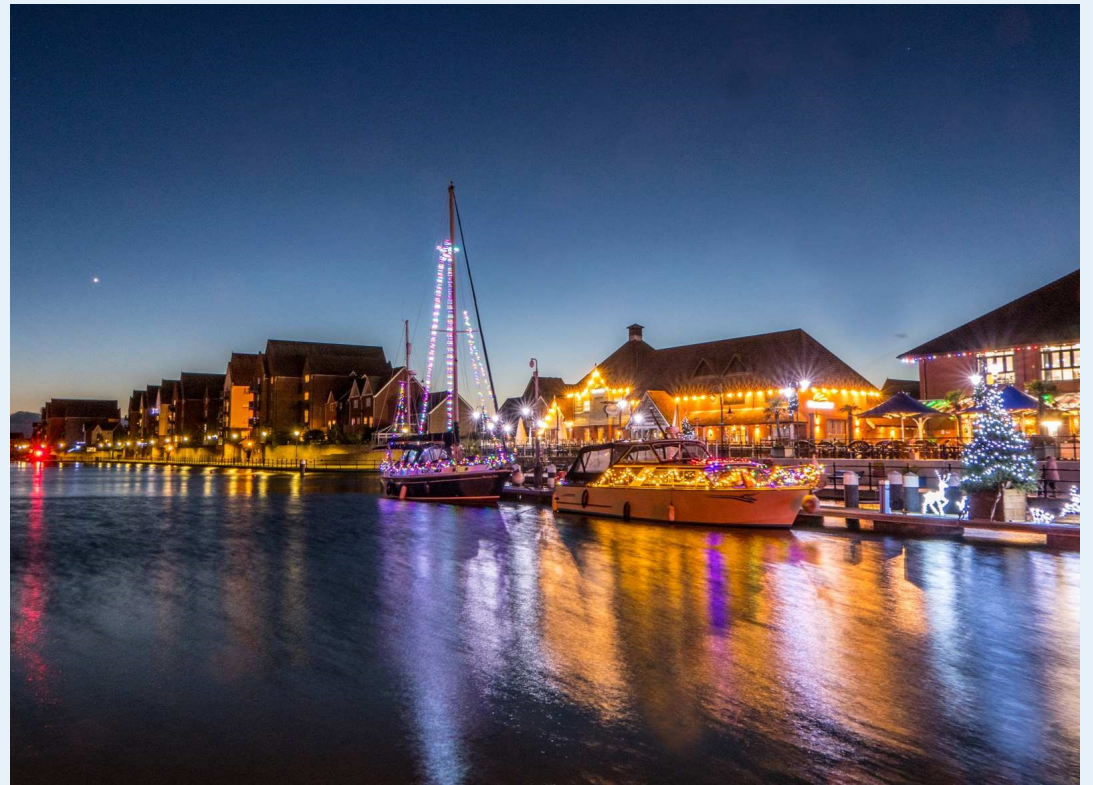
I am pleased to report that Santa has confirmed today that he will be visiting Sovereign Harbour Waterfront again this year. He was most disappointed to have had to have cancelled last year due to the bad weather.

We hope that as many of us as possible can light up our boats to welcome him.

There will be the usual competitions with the best boat receiving a free lift and relaunch (up to 14m in length). Boats that enter will have a £5 top up on their electricity account.

Watch out for further details.

Gill Clare, G25, Morning Mist





## The Autumn Boat Jumble

Although Membership Secretary, Jeremy advised us that 'We are guaranteed the best weather that the sunshine coast can offer at this time of the year!' we were a bit disappointed and felt he had put the mockers on the event. At least it didn't rain!!



Several 'booters' came along including one member who had travelled back to Belgium to get his sale stock! They all did good trade and went away happy with their takings for the day. Other members were thrilled with their purchases and went off happy with life jackets, a s/s liferaft cradle, rope springs, boat parts, fenders, electrical bits and goodness knows what else.

The social interaction went on a pace especially around the coffee station which had been provided on this occasion by Tate Marine. Donations were offered and we will be giving the money collected to the Eastbourne Crew for their own tea and coffee fund.



There are not many boat jumbles that have entertainment on tap but member Tony, who was selling a very sound propeller, brought along his ukulele and practised singing along to a variety of tunes as attendees wandered around.



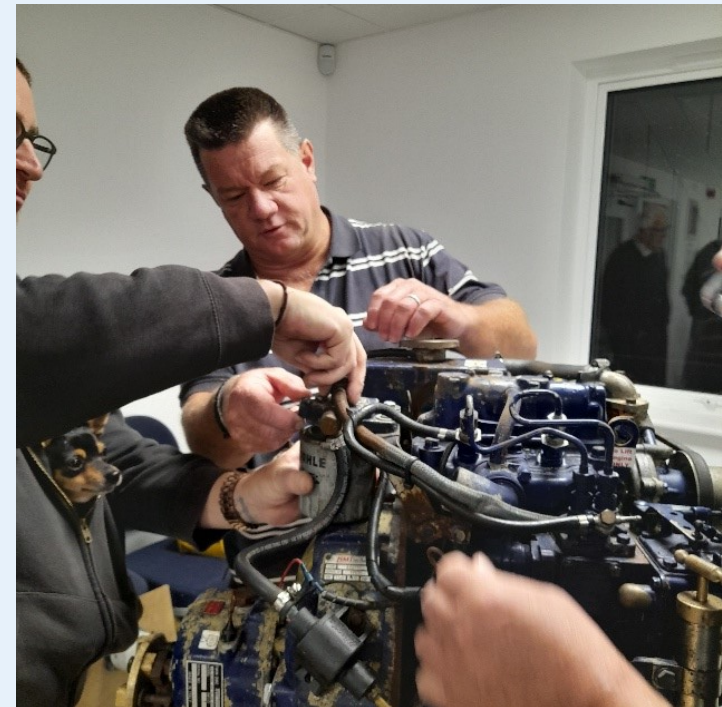
All in all, a good time to catch up and grab a few bargains! Look out for another next Spring

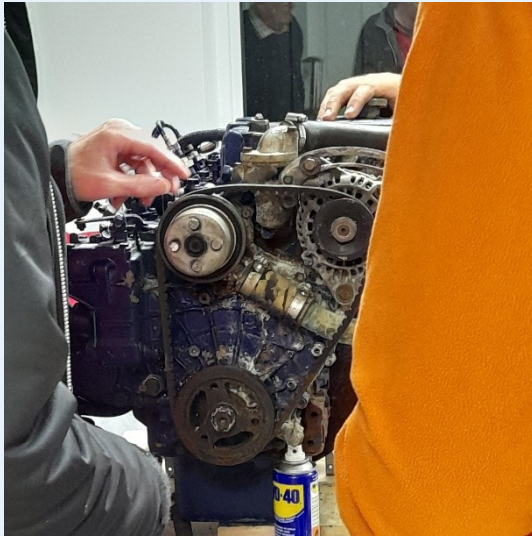
# The Hands-On Engine Courses

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October saw the Association try out a new venue and a new course.

The Fisherman's classroom was all set up with a dead engine and a variety of parts, spanners and aids. Guy Emery, Coxswain and Senior training Officer at Eastbourne Lifeboat Station and James Wishman, Senior Station Technician talked those assembled through a variety of scenarios that could happen to any berth holder.

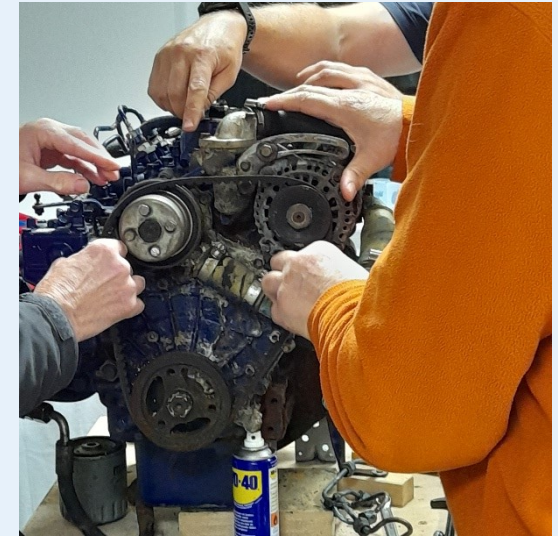
The first task was to change a fuel filter - either for regular maintenance purposes or one that could have become blocked during a passage. The fuel system was explained and then a demonstration took place. Anyone present could then have a go themselves on the dead engine or on a board to which the fuel filter housing was fitted.





The second scenario involved the drive belt. What to look for and how to test the tension was explained and then again .....Have a go! Nothing to worry about if you happened to make a mistake. This was the practice engine!

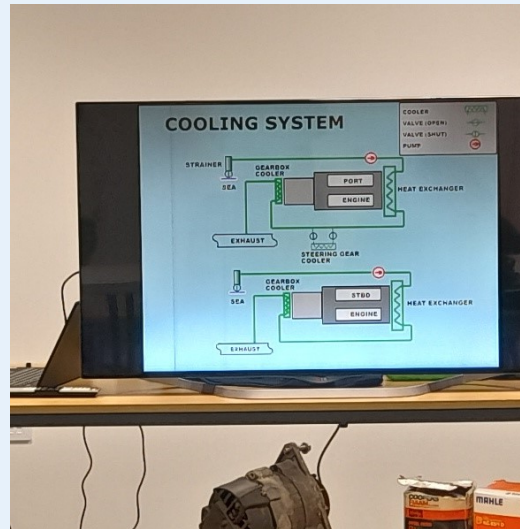
The final situation focussed on the cooling systems and how to deal with the problems that could occur as well as tips for fitting impellers.



All types of engines were discussed including petrol and outboards and the questions (and answers) flowed throughout.

During each session there were useful tips about purchasing spares and how many to carry. Ditto places where you could send fuel and oil samples for analysis. Reference was also made to our local go-to man at 'Tankbusters', should you unfortunately end up with the dreaded diesel bug!

Both groups who attended either the morning or afternoon sessions were then invited to visit the engine room in the All-Weather Lifeboat, Esme Anderson to see the massive engines in situ.



Our thanks go to Guy and James for the time they willingly gave up. We all hope for a safe passage without the need to call for a lifeboat. There may be occasions where we can either prevent a breakdown or even try our hand at a minor fix depending on weather, location and access.

## The Pop-Up BBQ

Can you believe it? It didn't rain!! In fact it was quite a pleasant 20 degrees and ending up with the sky blue and the sun shining! Almost 50 people attended the Pop-Up BBQ which was arranged for Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August. The West Harbour terrace saw a good mixture of members and their families turn up to take advantage of the coals being ready for grilling their fayre. Sausages, burgers, kebabs, drumsticks, halloumi and freshly caught mackerel (baked in tin foil) amongst other things all cooked beautifully on our sophisticated BBQ. The aroma of 'fried' onions also wafted in the air as the tin foil plates acted as a frying pan. A variety of salads had been prepared to accompany the main ingredients and everyone tucked in at their leisure.



The chatter amongst the crowd created a very friendly atmosphere in between, and around, cooking and eating. The chance for new members to meet others, the chance to pick brains on a variety of tech topics and the chance to find out how cruising plans had gone was taken and accompanied by smiles and laughter.

Once the foodies had finished, the duck race took place. There was only a little wind and the remains of a marina top-up created a wind against tide situation. The ducks were hand picked by participants who had to remember the number found on the underside.



They were then placed in the starting grid (a massive bag!) and the rules explained. Shortly afterwards they were unceremoniously launched into 'the cut' to begin their journey accompanied by a members' larger than life model!

The incoming water from the top up caused the ducks to become confused and they set off initially in the wrong direction but they were soon back on track with the aid of the wind and a bit of water flapping by a committee member who then raced to the finish line to catch them in a large net.



The 'owners' of the racers cheered on their duck in the hope of becoming a winner whilst the two race marshals waited to retrieve the floating participants.

The guardians of the first three ducks to arrive were awarded prizes. Well done to Savannah (22) , Roy (15) and Chris(17). It was a great fun way to end the event but many stayed on into the early evening just relaxing and chatting.



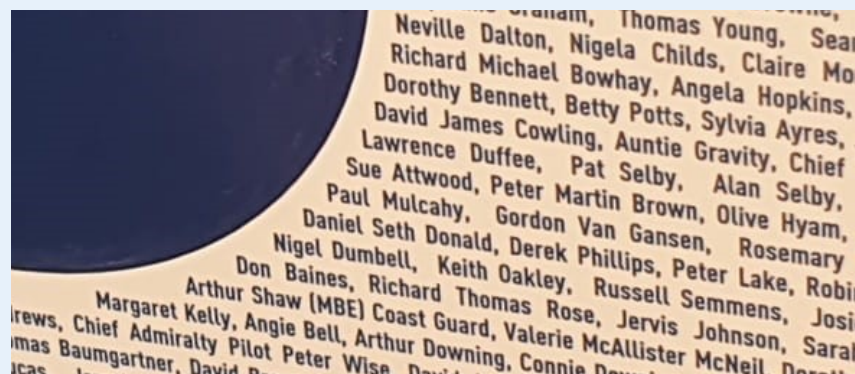
Thanks go out to the committee members who all played a part in making the event a really enjoyable success.

## Remembering Nigel Dumbell- Membership Secretary for many years

Many members were very sad last year to hear of the death of long-term member of the Association, Nigel Dumbell. Best known probably for his long and dedicated stint as Membership Secretary, Nigel was a regular around the harbour and often seen giving help associated with his other voluntary work with the RNLI's Water Safety team.

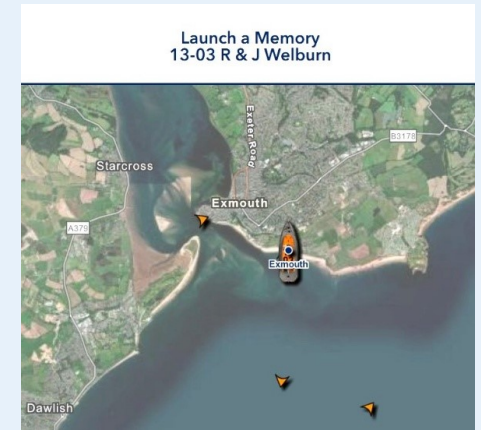
After consulting his family, the Association decided to remember him with a 'Launch the Memory' donation to the RNLI. This meant that his name would be part of the decals on an all-weather lifeboat. At the time this happened to be the Exmouth lifeboat but as one of Nigel's sons lived near Falmouth it wasn't as distant as might be.

Throughout the process the family were kept in touch by the Poole Headquarters and eventually the great launch day happened this summer. The family sent us some photos of the event and also presented the Association with a magnificent fridge magnet.





I recently checked on the link given and found a report of one of the most recent launches that 'Nigel' had experienced!



**02-09-25 At 14.39hrs HM Coastguard requested the launch of our All Weather Lifeboat 13-03 R and J Welburn to a RIB taking on water in two metre waves off Langstone Rock.**

The volunteer crew of the Exmouth RNLI lifeboat, *R and J Welburn*, launched quickly towards Teignmouth, from where the rigid inflatable boat (RIB) had departed earlier. The sea conditions were challenging with a moderate westerly wind generating a slight to moderate sea state. The RIB, which was bound for Exmouth with eight people on board, became overwhelmed by the waves and began taking on water. The ingress of water also caused the engine to develop issues.

Arriving on scene, the volunteer Exmouth RNLI crew found the boat's crew of eight bailing water out of the boat. The casualties were feeling the cold and six of them were not wearing life jackets so, the decision was made by the Exmouth RNLI crew to take them off the RIB and on to the warmth and safety of the Shannon class lifeboat. The remaining two casualties aboard the RIB had, in the meantime, managed to restart the engine and turned back towards their mooring at Teignmouth. The volunteers of Exmouth RNLI followed the RIB back to Teignmouth to ensure their passage was safe and to deliver the six casualties aboard the *R and J Welburn* safely to shore.

All eight casualties from the rib arrived back in Teignmouth cold, but unharmed.

Exmouth RNLI Coxswain, Andy Stott, said, "Despite the spells of sunshine yesterday, the westerly winds were making conditions on the water quite challenging. The RNLI would always advise checking the weather conditions carefully before setting out into open water. Also, it is important for all water users to wear life jackets as they will keep you afloat if you find yourself in the water. Fortunately, we were able to get to the casualties yesterday before this happened."

The Exmouth RNLI Shannon-class lifeboat and its volunteer crew of seven returned to the lifeboat station where the boat was washed down and re-fuelled in readiness for the next call.



## Airbourne - but not what we predicted

We've been going out for Airbourne, weather permitting, for 25 years and we can almost guarantee that that particular week in August is going to be wet, windy and cloudy. If you're lucky there may be one fair day when you can really sit back and enjoy the show.

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025 was one such day, lovely and warm, a gentle f2 SW breeze, flat seas and a clear, blue sky. One of the best days I can remember. Perfect!

The jet skis were out (don't mention the jet skis!!) The anchorage was busy with people soaking up the sun and the show. Jumping in the water to cool down, laying on airbeds in the water to relax whilst enjoying the entertainment. Power boats, sailboats, dinghies, kayaks, so many out there enjoying the day.

Morning Mist was there along with her crew of two plus three passengers all with cameras and long lenses. Rather than anchor we drifted slowly under power, with me at the helm (no camera) through the anchorage down towards Holywell and back making sure to avoid the exclusion zone.

Our visitors were enjoying viewing Eastbourne from the water and when an interval was announced I suggested that we motored along to Beachy Head to view the light house. Yes they said, that would be great.

That was when it all went wrong. Within a minute of increasing the revs to leave the anchorage a strange alarm started to sound. One that in the fifteen years of having this engine we had never heard. Engine off, Dave down to the engine whilst I pulled out about half of the genoa. Temperature ok, oil ok, not gas alarms nor carbon-monoxide.

Nothing for it but to return to Sovereign Harbour under sail but we were running down wind towards the pier through the anchorage with people in the water plus all the anchored boats. Fortunately, there was sufficient space that allowed me to gybe and turn away from the anchored boats.

The weather was so kind that day, the wind perfect allowing us to run back to the harbour and gybe before sailing in. I had already telephoned the marina (no radio call here) to advise them of our situation and that we may need assistance in entering the lock and getting on to our berth.

Entering the outer harbour, I reduced the sail and eased it, ready to let fly and control our speed. Meanwhile Dave hadn't been able to identify the problem and was prepared to try and start the engine once we were past the outer breakwater and sector light, lined up for the lock. The office telephoned, we were too busy and away from the phone to answer but the subsequent radio call assured us that they were waiting to receive us.

I have to report that, much to my relief but also disappointment the engine started, quickly followed by the alarm, and we were able to crawl into the lock under power where we were greeted by not only Dan but Ava, Peter and Kevin. Why was I disappointed you may ask? I was all ready to test my sailing skills and sail our 11.7m boat into the lock.

Thanks to the marina staff on a busy day for their support. It was very much appreciated. By the way, there was no way would I have tried to sail her into our berth, nor would they have let me.

And the problem?

Next day, with help from Eddie on Hurkur, the problem was tracked down to a failing alternator which has now been rewound, and we are back up and running.

I know magazines have articles where they say what would I have done differently. I'm not sure there was a lot we could have changed, the weather was our biggest ally on the day had it been different we were very close to the lifeboat when the alarm sounded. Now we know what that alarm sounds like but hopefully we'll never hear it!





### **Meet the People; Alex Mele, Duty Manager**

Alex only started in his new role three months ago and successfully completed his probationary period in mid-August.

As part of the three-member Management Team he seems to have fallen comfortably into the role of customer care currently and has been pleased to have already resolved some outstanding problems. He openly admits that you see what you get but I am pleased to report that that is a lot of enthusiasm and a will to get things done. He believes respect is a most important quality and would ideally like to be your best friend.

He is ideally suited to this area of his overall management of the harbour due to his previous roles in the Sussex police force where he served for 7 years. Through that he met a wide variety of people and problems and it is variety that drew him to the job at Sovereign Harbour.

Alex considers himself to be a problem solver and is currently enjoying all aspects of the duty manager role which includes meeting berth holders and visitors, walking around the harbour, dealing with contractors and solving issues that arise. Having only been in the role a short time he truly hasn't found a least favourite aspect but anticipates things may be different in the winter not only from the colder weather but also from the fewer comings and goings. He sees this as possible time to catch up on a few outstanding jobs.

Keen to undertake various training courses to become more efficient around the marina he has chosen to learn how to handle the tractor and hoist so in October you may well find him moving plant and the like around the boatyard area. He has opted for this as he believes if no one else is available he will be qualified to respond to emergency incidents at all hours of the night and day thus helping the clients effectively at a time of stress.

To counter the demands of the job he endeavours to keep a good work/life balance and can often be found on the river bank pursuing his favourite hobby of fishing. He is happiest with a rod in his hand, is flexible enough to enjoy all variations of the sport and has for sure caught some whoppers in the past! Last year he holidayed in Scotland and enjoyed some salmon fishing. Since arriving at Sovereign Harbour, he has found a sea fishing colleague on the staff and hopes to go to sea to see what he can achieve out in the Bay.

Other things that interest him include history and he has spent lots of his time researching both world wars. He is currently reading about Winston Churchill and was absolutely fascinated by his recent visit to the warren of narrow tunnels where the nation's railways were coordinated, and where Prime Minister Winston Churchill secretly took refuge at the height of the Blitz. He would recommend this experience to anyone.

Following on his research of the World Wars he then turned to the Vietnam war and was lucky enough to make a visit to the country and amongst other activities undertaken spent a day at the 'Killing Fields' where he hired a metal detector. He was about to give up after a hard day of finding absolutely nothing when the device started beeping. He was lucky enough to dig and find a personally engraved zippo lighter which he was allowed to keep. He has it kept safely as a treasured item.

Travel also fascinates him and he has visited 45 countries and has only two continents left to visit. He has plans to visit South America later this year and then has only Antarctica left! (He has already researched possible options and prices for this!!)

Being a bit of a 'daring-do', he likes each day to be different and challenge him. To summarise a few of his most dramatic antics he has been in an enclosure with five tigers (and stroked them all!!), he's held tarantulas, done a bungee jump, travelled on the tallest, fastest zip wire in the world and managed an excursion on the last trip of the British Airways/Air France Concorde flight.



Keen to develop his own character he realised he was often lacking in confidence and decided to challenge himself by appearing on television. Subsequently he was selected as a contestant for the latest series of the popular 'Deal or No Deal' programme. This involved spending three weeks in a posh hotel courtesy of the television company with three episodes being filmed each day. Initially he was terrified but subsequently appeared in twenty-seven episodes. Having watched other contestants turn down medium sized deals in the hope of winning something better he opted to take a chance and won a fair amount which paid for his holiday and a bit more.



Needless to say, the experience improved his confidence and he is proud to have saved the videos of his performance for his children to show their children who will share these with their children and so on down the line. He is keen that they learn his family history (having lived in Italy until he was nineteen, and thus is bilingual), his character, his mannerisms and see him as a man who worked hard to better himself as well as someone who enjoyed life.

Being new to Sovereign Harbour he has many aspirations and realises that organisation and hard work are the key to achieving this. He is very proud to have received emails from customers already saying that he is really doing a good job having sorted out their issues efficiently. They made his day!

Obviously, he would like the marina to be a tidy, pleasant place to be but also one that provides value for money. He's certainly up for the challenges that Eastbourne will bring!

Welcome Alex! We wish you every success in your new job.

## Membership Corner

### Remember the Members' forum

An SHBHA Facebook group has been set up to give a forum where members and the committee can interact. It is a private forum, only for members of the Sovereign Harbour Berth Holders Association.

It is intended to be used for the following (which should have a link to sailing!):

- For Sale / Wanted
- Help wanted / offered
- Lost / found
- Polls to gauge support for proposed SHBHA events
- Sharing of useful information
- Upcoming events
- Feedback to the committee

Everyone is welcome.

How do you join the group?

You will need a Facebook account. Search Facebook for *Sovereign Harbour Berth Holders' Forum* or browse directly to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/shbha>. When you request to join the group, you will be asked for your membership number and to confirm that you agree with the group rules. I approve your request and you're in!

### Are your membership details up to date?

We use email for all correspondence with members so it is essential that email addresses are kept up to date. If you are no longer using an email account, it isn't always obvious as I don't necessarily get a bounce-back email. If you haven't received any emails from SHBHA recently, please send an email to:

[membership@shbha.co.uk](mailto:membership@shbha.co.uk)

containing your name, membership number and your latest email address so I can make sure we have your latest details.

Jeremy Hinton

## **We need your help!**

Could you spare a little time to join the committee who meet about every 5 or 6 weeks in the Board Room which is in the Main Harbour Office. Meetings start at 19.15 and end no later than 21.00

Help at any events and courses is also welcomed.

It could be you we are looking for, especially if you were able to become the minute secretary!!

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” (-Helen Keller)

**Come on board!**



## The SHBHA Committee Members 2025

Chairman & West Harbour Rep: Sue Sydney (WS17) *Sovereign Star*

Vice Chairman: Gill Clare (G25) *Morning Mist*

Membership Secretary & NW Harbour Rep: Jeremy Hinton (NG11) *Anyia*

Minute Secretary: Vacancy

Treasurer: Sarah Price (F38) *Supernova*

Newsletter Editor: Jeremy Woolley (N) *Queen of Santana*

NE Harbour Rep: David George (NZ06) *Solara*

Main Harbour Rep: Damien Roper (F25) *Myrtle*

Committee members are welcome from the membership - please contact us via  
<http://shbha.co.uk>)