

**Poole Beach Huts Association General Meeting
East Dorset Tennis Club
4th November 2025**



Minutes

Chairman Bob Lister (BL) welcomed members and guests - Councillor Richard Herrett, BCP portfolio holder for Destination, Leisure and Tourism, Jacqueline Wood, Visitor Services Manager for Seafront and Tourism and Andy Wood, Seafront Operations Manager.

BL said members are expecting a 5% increase in fees next year as per the five year plan implemented by the previous Tory administration however, he was concerned about fees in 2027. He expressed the view of members that more income generated by Poole tenants should be ring fenced to better maintain and upgrade the standard of the beach hut stock and facilities along the promenade including toilets. The water dispensers are now broken and rusty and in a poor state as are most of the showers. The electric BBQs also need protection from sand and weather penetration, most are no longer functioning. He noted the new dog wash facility at Branksome Chine and improvements to safety with new glass barriers and stainless steel posts in front of some huts at Branksome Chine.

BL queried news that the Tourist Information Centre at Bournemouth Pier is being earmarked for potential commercial activity, which was answered later in the proceedings.

BL welcomed new committee members Steph Crombie and Amanda Kampel and thanked them for organising this summer's successful barbecue at Branksome Dene Room. All committee members were thanked for their valued contributions. He also reiterated that a vacancy still exists for a minute secretary to join the committee. Beach Road car park is currently underused due to it being inadequately signed and out of sight due to a screen of trees blocking its location. If appropriately marketed with 'Overflow Parking' signs located in Branksome Chine car park, this facility could generate much needed income for BCP. Later comments from guests suggested that the lower car park will be improved when the top car park is sold.

Guests were introduced ...

Jacqueline Wood

Jacqueline explained her new role as Visitor Services Manager involves managing three teams with responsibility for all beach huts along the entire BCP coastline, the Branksome Dene Room and the Beach Lodges at Boscombe.

The waiting list is now aligned across BCP, allowing Poole residents to apply for a Bournemouth hut and vice versa. Formerly, two offers were made to hut applicants and if not accepted they were dropped to the bottom of the list. Now three offers are made and no drop from the list. Offers now are frequently made after two and five years but can be longer depending on specifics. Short term huts and the Branksome Dene Room are now exclusively booked online. When questioned about empty beach huts, Jacqueline said that four to five offers are frequently made before huts are accepted which can take time. Last year 92 keys were relinquished.

Andy Wood

Andy's role involves responsibility for all areas of beach management including commercial operations and the land train. He supervises 12 seasonal rangers plus senior rangers and liaises with Dorset Police, Cliff management teams on specific issues.

He answered questions regarding the new glass railings being installed at BC... they should be completed by the end of February. There is no plan to work on the upper tier, the lower tier was not safety compliant.

Damaged water dispensers will be prioritised and removed in due course, new taps will also be installed when funds allow. Andy reported that 50 beach huts have been refurbished this year.

He recommended future reports of issues should be emailed to seafrontadmin@bcp council.gov.uk

Councillor Richard Herrett

Cllr Herrett is portfolio holder for Destination, Leisure and Tourism including the seafront. His background is in hospitality and he has previously worked for the National Trust at Studland. He explained BCP is once again facing budgetary challenges while awaiting long anticipated government support for the current Special Educational Needs (SEND) deficit of £180million, which incurs £9 million interest a year! Meanwhile there is a statutory spend freeze on all but essential costs.

He explained that the issue of illegal parking during peak summer periods was raised with government as it creates dangerous situations impacting local residents and restricting traffic movements. This resulted in a temporary measure being introduced during August which doubled the normal parking fine of £35 for prompt payment. Once introduced, this did have a positive affect. Current parking fines are wholly inadequate to act as a deterrent. The existing rates were set in 1991 but despite lobbying on this point, the government is not prepared to increase them on a permanent basis. A report of the summer 'experiment' will be submitted to government with more pressure to support a change. Additional parking wardens have been brought in during peak summer periods to support the parking team issuing fines for inappropriate parking.

Regarding the question about the future of Bournemouth TIC, he explained that due to the current financial situation, BCP is obliged to explore the commercial potential of all its property assets but he insisted the role of the TIC is valued and would be relocated to a suitable location if the plans go ahead. Seafront commercial operations generated £6million profit which will also support the general budget.

When asked about the future of the Blue Flag scheme, he reported that after discussions with Planning he had reached an agreement that sponsors would be acknowledged on future signage and current sponsors would be approached next year to request their continued support.

Cllr Herrett welcomed future enquiries to his email address - richard.herrett@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Pre-requested questions/comments included ...

Q. Weeds and overgrown vegetation including brambles continue to cover handrails at Branksome Dene Chine, this complaint was raised last year - when will it be dealt with?

A. Parks department staff deal with paths, contracts are in place. There are only four full time staff covering the entire seafront and only two on general gardening team. Assurance was given that it would be attended to.

Q. Why is there no longer a lifeguard presence at Canford Cliffs is it a Blue Flag requirement?

A. We pay RNLI to service the beaches and decision was made last year to reduce Canford Cliffs due to relative close proximity of other stations. Could not confirm Blue Flag requirement.

Questions /comments from the floor included ...

Q. Will tenants affected by the construction work at Branksome Chine huts be recompensed?

A. No, terms and conditions state, access to huts for repairs is compulsory, if timescale exceeds a month then it may be looked at.

Q. Motorised bikes are a danger on the seafront, they go too fast and are a serious risk to children does a serious accident have to happen before action is taken?

A. Six staff members were assaulted this year challenging illegal bike use despite all rangers wearing body warn cameras this year.

Q. How many people have been prosecuted for speeding along the prom? There is no deterrent.

A. Very difficult to enforce - Police have more authority but rarely have capacity to attend.

Q. Repeated reporting of damaged UPVC panels on beach hut have failed to be acted on, what course of action will see this repair finally done?

A. Best way to report issues is by email seafrontadmin@bcpcouncil.gov.uk response must be within 28 days.

Q. Beryl bikes are often misused.

A. Please report inappropriate use. BL responded that he has many times but no response from them.

BL thanked all guests for their contribution and members for attending. 26 members attended the meeting.

Committee members 2025

Chairman: Bob Lister

Vice Chair: Janet Coy

Treasurer: Tony Mullins

Secretary: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Julie Snow

Social Secretaries: Steph Crombie, Amanda Kampel

Ordinary members: Yvonne Hartwell, Chris Harris

7.11.25

JMS