

AUTUMN 2022

Fairbourne

NEWSLETTER

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As leader of the Fairbourne Moving Forward project, I'm acutely aware of the negative impact that the mention of 'decommissioning' Fairbourne in '2054' by the press and other stakeholders has had on the community. This date, quoted in the Strategic Master Plan (2018), was based on the best scientific evidence at the time. It came with a huge caveat in that it was based on what was known then about rates of climate change. Its intention was to give a broad indication of when the community may be under threat, and to aid planning. As we move forward, it is crucial that we emphasise that this is no more than an indicative date, and that no decision has been made by any authority to withdraw ongoing support to ensure the sustainability, safety and wellbeing of the community.

The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change recently wrote that strategy and interventions should be adjusted in response to new information about sea level rise, alongside other climate risks according to economic, environmental, social, institutional, and technical factors. The Strategic Master Plan is therefore a dynamic document, which will be updated regularly. At present there are two critical pieces of work in progress. As described later in this newsletter we have the Health Impact Assessment (HIA), being undertaken by Savills. In addition, Natural Resources Wales are developing a Strategic Outline Case (SOC). This will involve an asset review based on a broad range of current information, taking into account the legal requirements placed upon us by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Once completed in late 2023 or early 2024 this will set out when and where major investment is needed. Both of these important pieces of work are linked, where the outcomes of the HIA process will produce valuable input for this SOC.

A Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) can never produce exact, definitive dates, but it can offer a good indicator of what might come. It will offer useful evidence on which Welsh Government, Cyngor Gwynedd, Natural Resources Wales and the community can collaborate to formulate future plans and collaborate to respond appropriately to climate change.

Although a non-statutory document, the development of SMPs has been an important part of the Welsh Government's strategy for managing flood risk for a number of years. SMP2 is the first revision of the first generation SMPs which were produced in 2000/2001. In October 2020, the Welsh Government published its second 'National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales' ("the 2020 Strategy"). This reiterates the need for collaboration, forward planning and for wider catchment approaches for managing risk, and expressly draws on the obligations contained within The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the 2015 Act").

FROM THE ARTHOG COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND FAIRBOURNE PROJECT BOARD MEMBERS

When the Fairbourne Project Board was revamped by Gwynedd Council into a more manageable mechanism, just prior to Covid hitting the World, it was suggested that Workstreams were introduced to manage the “five ways of working” as noted within the FCERM National Strategy, in line with the “Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015”.

Huw Williams, YGC, (Gwynedd Council) introduced the idea of an HIA, Health Impact Assessment, at a Project Board Meeting in November 2021. The Terms of reference and a presentation were given at the Project Board Meeting on Friday 12th November 2021.

The Fairbourne Project Board Members agreed unanimously to embrace the idea of introducing the opportunity of a Health Impact Assessment for all Fairbourne Residents. The idea of the HIA is to allow you to “have a say” regarding the impact of the information released in the “Shoreline Management Plan 2”, the Gwynedd Council, “Fairbourne, Framework for the Future” Brochure, and various Village Hall meetings, drop-in sessions, inappropriate and inaccurate coverage by the press, media and academics. All this starting in 2013 after the adoption by GC of the SMP2 and the big storm in 2014 and BBC Wales coverage of the same. All of these frameworks giving differing and, in most cases, erroneous assessments of what is proposed for Fairbourne in the future.

The Arthog Community Council and the Fairbourne representatives on the Project Board would strongly urge all residents to take part in this HIA.

Savills UK, who you may well know, primarily as an Estate Agency, but in fact are a multi-faceted Company, have been retained by Gwynedd Council to conduct the HIA., funded by Welsh Government. It will be conducted in differing ways, face to face, by questionnaire, by group meetings and more. It will be conducted in both Welsh and English depending on residents' preference.

The results of the HIA will then be submitted to Welsh Government via Gwynedd Council with a view to securing funding for an Outline Business Case for Fairbourne.

Whether you, as residents decide to participate or not, it is important that you will have been given the opportunity, to have your say about how this has impacted upon you and your family, your health and wellbeing, whether you have suffered financially, mentally, this will be your opportunity to either vent or discuss. It is important to understand that Savills will not engage in either sea level rise or climate change facts and figures, they are not qualified to do so, their remit is purely to conduct, in a professional manner, the HIA and to listen to you.

All information given to Savills will be subject to client confidentiality.

Results will be shared with Gwynedd Council and Welsh Government, but no specific personal details will be passed on.



Savills have been appointed to conduct a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) with the residents of Fairbourne.

They were selected as being the strongest candidate showing a thorough understanding of the situation that Fairbourne and its residents face

In July the Savills team visited Fairbourne, hosted by the Arthog Community Council to familiarise themselves with the location and the community and to take the opportunity to talk informally with representatives of the village.

What is a HIA?

Our health is influenced by various factors, such as our biological factors (age, sex, genetics), our socio-economic status, physical and mental health, our access to services and resources, and other determinants important to health. HIA is a tool which explores and assesses the potential impact of policies/projects/scenarios on health within communities, and importantly, generates actions, mitigations and initiatives to address the impacts and maximise the benefits.



In Fairbourne' context, the HIA will help investigate the health and wellbeing impacts of living with climate change, and help explore the opportunities and potential solutions for our community in context of our environment, social and economic circumstance.

It will form the foundation of an Outline Business Case (OBC) that will be presented to the Welsh Government.



The Savills HIA team will re-visit Fairbourne to engage with the community members in November, through overlapping engagement methods including drop in sessions, questionnaires and structured discussions. The objective is to capture your experience, concerns and support the development of bespoke solutions tailored to the community of Fairbourne. Be sure to say hello!

A brief synopsis of work carried out by NRW in recent years.

NRW undertook shingle replenishment works in July 2020, hauling 22,000t of beach shingle that had accumulated to the North of Fairbourne. The work took around six weeks to complete and regraded the beach to better withstand wave impacts which will reduce coastal erosion and flood risk to Fairbourne.

NRW begun a beach monitoring programme in 2021, working together with partners such as Gwynedd Council and Wales Coastal Monitoring Centre to assess coastal erosion and beach movements in Fairbourne. The work is also progressing to set trigger points along beach profiles to instigate beach replenishment works.

NRW has also progressed with the Fairbourne asset management plan, identifying areas NRW need to prioritise with regard to flood defence maintenance and improvement. The work also links to the beach monitoring programme by to setting trigger points along beach profiles to instigate beach replenishment works.

NRW is also developing an initial assessment to identify conveyance restrictions along the Afon Henddol.

Since the release of the last newsletter, works to reinforce the rock armour at Friog Corner, following the storms of 2013 and 2014, are now complete. The defences have been tried and tested a number of times since and while there was some initial concern on seepage, further works to help resolve this have also been completed



FAIRBOURNE AMENITIES TRUST

By Mike Scott

The Amenities Trust was formed in July 2017 to save the two Public Toilets from closure. This followed the announcement by Gwynedd Council that they were unable to keep them open due to cutbacks. Our local Community Council were also unable to supply the funds to keep them open.

Leaving the village with the possibility of no public toilets resulted in a committee being formed and to work with Gwynedd Council for a means of keeping them open. This was vital as the village is a magnet for visitors especially in the Summer months.

The Trust were successful in obtaining two 99yr leases from Gwynedd Council in April 2019. During the preceeding 2yrs, donation boxes were put outside both sets of toilets as well as in the local shops and businesses.

We approached local businesses and major suppliers to the village for donations and all were very willing to support our quest to save the toilets from closure. Both sets of toilets were decorated inside and out once the leases had been granted by using the donations that had been received.



We applied to Gwynedd Council for a grant to help us build a disabled toilet within the curtilage of the present toilets in Station Road. Grants were received but due to the Pandemic the building was not completed until September 2021. To compliment the whole toilet block, the Fairbourne Art Club is presently painting the front of toilet block depicting the local scenery.

The toilet block on the Sea Front has had a new roof and new windows fitted to replace the old and outdated ones. In 2021, window boxes were added to the exterior of the building to brighten the frontage and improve users 'Wellbeing'.

Future improvements to both toilets include light sensors being fitted so not to rely on the present 'timer' system, and also updating the washing facilities at Station Road. Both sets of toilets are cleaned daily by volunteers as well as opening and closing them daily. We are also constantly getting comments on Social Media as to how grateful people are for 'keeping the toilets open and in such excellent condition'.



If these toilets had not been saved from closure by the committee, Fairbourne would have lost out to the thousands of visitors that visit the village. This would have affected the shops and local businesses. House prices would also have fallen with home owners not getting the price they were looking for.

What is really heartening is the size of some of the individual donations whether they be received via the donation boxes or by BACS payments direct into our bank account. Our BACS details are Sort Code 52-30-32, Account No 37115251

Many users are visitors from the Midlands and the North West on a day visit to the village, who express their surprise at the high standard of cleanliness within the amenities. First time visitors who come for a safe swim or play on the beach could be faced finding no toilets in the village. They would then have to find alternatives by going to another town or village where there were 'open' toilets. It is a situation which would be detrimental to the village and to the local area. Another strong reason to save the toilets from closure.

Information leaflets are left in each set of toilets explaining to users of what plans the Trust has for each respective toilet and explaining as to what their donations are being spent on which. This gives them a sense of ownership of the toilets.

Fairbourne is a beautiful and vibrant village and as long as users of the toilets keep donating to keep them open throughout the year, it will encourage generations to continue to visit the area knowing that the village has so much to offer especially having clean and well looked after toilets and also a 'sewage free beach'.

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Sign up for flood alerts:

[https://www.fws.environment-agency.gov.uk/app/olr/home?
style=NRW&lang=en](https://www.fws.environment-agency.gov.uk/app/olr/home?style=NRW&lang=en)

Or you can sign up by calling the 24-hour Floodline service:

Telephone: 0345 988 1188

Type talk: 0345 602 6340

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