

## Appendix 1

### Beach Hut Policy – Consultation 2023

- Consultation took place between September 2023 and November 2023.
- There was a total of 29 returns, summary and responses are tabled below.

Summary of Comments	SBC Response
"I would love to see many more built".	Thank you, we do have a phase 2 plan which will commence for consultation once phase 1 is complete.
"I very rarely see any of the existing huts being used. It does seem the beach huts at Minster are not occupied very much across the Summer. People who buy them don't even live on the island then don't use them but rent them out".	We have had a number of responses along these lines. Owners and lease holders of the huts can use them at their leisure.
"If owners can't demonstrate regular use, they should be made to sell them on".	Thank you, measuring usage is virtually impossible and as such this would be difficult to monitor so will not be taken forward at this stage.
"The owner agrees to maintain the hut in keeping with others locally. Failure to comply with these requests could result in the hut being taken back into Council ownership".	*Thank you, this will be considered as part of the consultation feedback review  Licences for hut owners or renters do require regular maintenance and we inspect them periodically.  Generally, when we remind them, maintenance is undertaken. Removal of a hut would only be considered in severe cases.
"Could I suggest that some of any new beach huts have disabled access".	Thank you, we have undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment of both locations.  Minster does not lend itself to disabled access due to the sea wall. Leysdown could be considered to have a different approach. We will begin to collect disability information as part of the waiting list application process.
"I fully support this Beach Hut Policy as part of the area's regeneration".	Thank you and noted.
"I would suggest that the rental of a beach hut is limited to a certain number in a party, to avoid excessive noise and distraction to other huts nearby. Perhaps no more than 8 people"?	Licences do require owners or annual renters of the huts to abide by a strict set of rules.  The terms and conditions for shorter lets will include similar conditions with responsibility laid on the named person on the booking.
"Great policy, well written. The only amendment I'd make is to add that, if necessary, repairs/graffiti removal etc did	Thank you, we will review the suggestion in line with any future policy reviews.

not take place within the specified time, SBC reserve the right to complete the work and levy the license holder <sup>2</sup> .	
"I like the idea of people being able to rent some of the beach huts for a shorter period. Being able to book for a weekend or week would make the beach huts more accessible for all. It would be good to be able to rent the huts for the day".	Weekly rentals are being considered as part of the phase 1 project.  We have also considered daily rentals but feel we are currently not in a position to offer these at this time due to the cleaning requirements in a short time in between hirers.
"I would love to see at least 10% of any new developments gifted to local primary schools, community groups such as Scouts etc"	*Thank you, this will be considered as part of the consultation feedback review
"Why don't you have them set up like the Boris Bikes where you pre-register and use your credit or bank card to access, and possibly pre hire on the website so they will get used".	Thank you for the suggestion. This is not a consideration at this time but something we could consider going forward
"Make more available but for local residents only first"	*This is something that is being considered as part of the policy review.  Adding a preferential weighting for Swale residents is something we will ask Councillors to discuss.  Huts are currently allocated via the waiting list with Swale residents currently occupying 71% of the huts.  Huts will be offered at the current market value.
"Short leases 2 years max then reapply if still a resident and council taxpayer".	We do not provide leases for the huts. Owners or renters sign a licence for access to the ground the hut is located on.
"Discounts given to local families, charities and local educational organisations. Increased use of the beach may lead to filling missing lifeguard position and gain the blue flag badge back".	We already have a precedent of working with a local charity and would consider any applications individually.  We are working with our lifeguard contractor (RNLI) to increase local recruitment.  Blue Flags are awarded on a wide range of criteria, not just limited to football or beach huts.
"Thank you for at last directly consulting with us regarding beach hut policies".	Thank you, all feedback is helpful to us
"Maintenance of the toilets is now a joke. When the attendants were doing their job, they were amazing, an asset to the area. We had waited so long for these toilets. Now, due to council penny pinching, they	This is useful feedback. The Council was required to make a number of savings to services and the provision of toilet attendants was reduced. We placed an attendant in the toilets when they were first

<p>are no longer doing this. The toilets soon become dirty and abused. On a busy weekend people were complaining about them. Considering the large number of people, you are trying to attract to the area, surely the toilets need to be immaculate”.</p>	<p>installed to monitor activity and footfall, particularly during the week, did not warrant a full-time presence. We are entering a new contract for public toilets this year and will assess whether additional visits by a cleaner during the day during busy periods are required.</p>
<p>“The majority of owners stick religiously to the high standards set. But the remainder are looking very run down and neglected”.</p>	<p>This has been noted and owners/renters are contacted to address any issues.</p>
<p>“Maybe include a beach hut specifically for selling refreshments along the leas”.</p>	<p>Thank you, there are already commercial lettings that are a key part of our visitor economy framework.</p>
<p>“In order to ensure that those on the waiting list are not by-passed, the licence should include a clause that existing owners have to offer their hut for sale to the SBC waiting list first”.</p>	<p>There is already a clause in the majority of licences for this to happen and the process has been followed for a number of huts.</p>
<p>“What nonsense to build more beach huts at Minster Leas. The existing ones are an eyesore and hardly used. I suggest councillors visit the site on any sunny day you never see more than 2 or 3 in use. And usually none. Please do not waste our money on extending this white elephant eyesore”.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments which will be shared with Members.</p> <p>The Beach huts help to bring in much needed income for the Council to use to support other council services.</p>
<p>“I would like to object to the proposal to increase the number of beach huts along Minster Leas. I do not feel that there is a proven need for additional beach huts as even on a hot, summer weekend only 3-4 are regularly in use”.</p>	<p>Thank you, we have nearly 300 people on the waiting list for huts and as such believe there is a high demand for additional huts.</p>
<p>“Starting a scheme for weekly rentals is misconceived as those hiring would have no interest in the upkeep of the huts or the tranquillity of the area and would cause problems not only for their neighbours but all users of the Leas. Weekly lets will lead to more BBQ’s, music, litter and noise”.</p>	<p>Licences do require owners or annual renters of the huts to abide by a strict set of rules. The terms and conditions for shorter lets will include similar conditions with responsibility laid on the named person on the booking.</p>