

## **The Combined Consultation for Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 and Southwold Static Caravan Site Redevelopment**

### **Consultation dates 8 April – 15 May**

1. We are delighted to be seeking your views on the future of Southwold Harbour and the Static Caravan Site, drawing together two projects that are critical to the future of Southwold's community and its coastal heritage. As we begin this process, which will seek to shape an exciting and sustainable future for these locations, we invite the community, stakeholders, and all interested parties to contribute their own insight, experience and ideas.
2. The Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 and the Static Caravan Site Revitalisation represent more than just infrastructural changes. They reflect a collective ambition to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of Southwold and surrounding communities. These projects are interwoven with Southwold's rich history and aim to strike a balance between preserving the past and embracing sustainable, forward-looking growth.
3. We recognise the importance of **your** voice in this collaborative effort. Your participation will be crucial to help us develop plans which respect our shared heritage, while promoting innovation. Collectively we must ensure that these areas remain vibrant and integral parts of Southwold's community for generations to come.
4. The Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 element seeks to blend tradition with innovation, ensuring the Harbour continues to be a hub of maritime activity and a focal point of community spirit. Simultaneously, the revitalisation of the Southwold Static Caravan Site aims to create a premier coastal holiday destination that marries modern amenities with the area's traditional charm, boosting the local economy while enhancing both the owner and visitor experience.

Our draft vision is:

**By 2035, Southwold Harbour will aim to be a beacon of heritage-rich, economically vibrant, and community-focused development. The essence of the harbour will be preserved, even as we usher in state-of-the-art facilities and new commercial opportunities. Our aim is to see Southwold Harbour not just endure but thrive, with an increased footfall to the town and a bolstered local economy, ensuring that the quintessential charm of the harbour remains a source of pride for generations to come.**

Currently our Caravan site is operated through the issuing of annual licences to static caravan owners, it has limited infrastructure, limited access to non-residents and limited income to support the wider harbour.

Naturally, there is no single 'correct' way of delivering a project of this scale and importance, particular given how important it is to consider the views and experience of local stakeholders. We are therefore consulting on four operational models for the site moving forwards, noting that any future change of the site will involve future engagement and consultation with the current owners.

**These four options are:**

**1. Continue as is - Annual License:** Current arrangement to remain in place.

- **Advantages.** Keeps licence holder fees low.
- **Consideration.** Limited income to support required investment in site. Limited security as agreement can be terminated with 2 months' notice. Long waiting list for a site. Caravans are not always fully occupied.

## **2. Full Leasing Model**

**Change from licence to lease – potential to increase up to 20 years.**

**Introduction.** Under this model, all caravan plots are leased out on a long-term basis to individual owners. Industry standard terms and conditions within leases. Some site re-configuration will be required.

- **Advantages.** Provides stable, predictable revenue streams and increases income to support investment in the site such as water and electricity connections. Offers operational simplicity and minimal management requirements. Leaseholders could sell lease with ESC's permission.
- **Considerations.** Requires long-term commitment from lessees. Caravans are not fully occupied. Some caravans will require replacement. Likely to be implemented over 2 years.

## **3. Mixed Leasing and Renting Model**

**Introduction.** Utilises a combination of leasing some plots while renting out others on a short-term basis. Industry standard terms and conditions within leases. Some site reconfigurations will be required. Up to 30% of total units on site to be short term rentals, subject to review after 5 years.

- **Advantages.** Maximises revenue potential by tapping into both leasing and rental markets. Offers flexibility in accommodating different guest preferences. Increased visitors to support local economy. Increased job availability to manage site. Will enable existing Caravan site owners to remain on site. Opens the site to more people.
- **Considerations.** Increased operational complexity due to managing both leased and rented plots. Requires effective marketing strategies to attract both lessees and renters. Will increase visitor numbers to the site so will require additional infrastructure improvements/site management.

## **4. Dynamic Renting Model**

**Introduction.** Focuses solely on short-term rentals for all caravan plots, offering maximum flexibility and responsiveness.

- **Advantages.** Provides high adaptability to seasonal demand fluctuations and changing guest preferences. Maximises revenue potential during peak periods.
- **Considerations.** Requires intensive management and marketing efforts to maintain high occupancy rates. May entail higher operational costs due to turnover and maintenance. Completely changes the existing operational model for the site, impacting on caravan owners that have occupied this site for many years.