

FAIRLIGHT PRESERVATION TRUST – 25th April 2016

Residents will be delighted to learn that another highly significant milestone has been reached in the campaign to construct Stage 3 of the Fairlight Cove Coast Protection Scheme.

On 22 March 2016 the Environment Agency notified Rother District Council, our coast protection authority, that their Board had earmarked funding for the construction of the Stage 3 scheme in accordance with the application made on our behalf by Rother.

Subsequently, on 13 April 2016, the Environment Agency wrote formally to Rother to notify them that the Agency had approved the construction of the Stage 3 scheme as designed by the East Kent Engineering Partnership and in accordance with the application made on our behalf by Rother.

This represents a huge achievement for the Fairlight Preservation Trust which has been at the centre of this process. Of course, success has only been possible with the support of the residents of Fairlight and of Fairlight Parish Council, and as a result of the enormous efforts and outstanding service provided by the East Kent Engineering Partnership.

We would like to thank everyone who has assisted in the campaign and all the various organisations and groups who have so generously contributed to the Partnership Funding of £150,000. This local funding has proved to be an essential ingredient in obtaining approval for the scheme.

We can now at last look forward to measures being taken to fill the gap between the two existing berms.

However, a few important steps are still required to be taken before the works can start. These include the obtaining of a licence from the Marine Management Organisation, a government body which regulates developments along the coastline with specific regard to their impact on the environment. In addition, planning permission must be granted by Rother District Council. The consent of other relevant bodies has now been obtained.

The marine licence application is underway and Rother are progressing the planning application. Public notices regarding both applications will appear in the local newspaper shortly. A Coast Protection Act Notice also needs to be advertised in the local newspaper in due course.

In the meantime the East Kent Engineering Partnership will finalise the drawings and contract documentation for the project. Subject to agreement from Rother District Council, tenders will be sent to six experienced contractors on Friday 29 April 2016 with a return date of Friday 10 June 2016.

Once the above approvals have been obtained and, subject to the completion of the contract formalities and the lead in time required for the rock, it is hoped that work will commence on site mid/late August 2016.

This is great news for Fairlight and for the members of the Preservation Trust. However, until work actually starts we cannot relax our efforts. Timing is now crucial if the construction is to go ahead this summer. Due to the window for rock deliveries, any hold up in receiving approval from the Marine Management Organisation could delay the works until Spring 2017. However, everyone is working hard to meet the project programme and complete the scheme this year.

As residents will be aware a Special General Meeting of the Fairlight Preservation Trust will be held at the Village Hall on Saturday 30 April 2016 at 2pm when there will be a further opportunity to discuss these developments.

Dr Ruth Kosmin