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Ainsdale Civic Society

Recipient: Margaret Carney, Chief Executive of Sefton Council

Letter: Greetings

We ask Sefton Council to have winter vehicular access to Ainsdale Beach reinstated

Ainsdale Beach is a popular recreational beach which is unique because it one of the very few in the UK that permits parking on the beach and has done for more than a century with no problems. This allows access to everyone and throughout the year many drive onto the beach just to sit and relax and enjoy the views, watch the sunsets and the various activities taking place it also means that the less able are able to drive straight onto the beach. Many horses train on the beach, in fact this was where Red Rum did his training and horse boxes need access as well as boat trailers, wind surfers etc. Recently Sefton Council have announced that they will be closing to beach to vehicles from 1st October 2015 to April or May 2016. They say that due to budget restraints they are unable to manage the beach effectively and because of anti social behaviour despite Merseyside police having just announced that anti social behaviour is the lowest it has been for a long time, especially on Ainsdale Beach. This undemocratic decision was taken without any consultation. It was taken against the wishes of our three elected members. They represent Ainsdale residents and their wishes have been ignored. Southport is a seaside town and Ainsdale beach has been a unique offer to visitors for generations. The opportunity to park on the beach is a valuable tourist attraction and the car parking areas must be maintained for a full 12 month period, if it is not maintained for 6 months, then that will negate any maintenance that was carried out during the previous 6 months. Our fear is that the consequences of this will involve a major cost in the restoration of the car parking areas, then any savings made could be wiped out and this may result in the decision to preclude all vehicular access permanently and the fiscal repercussions could have a severe impact. Ainsdale beach is an amenities beach and it is vital for tourism. If this decision is upheld, then the car parking area is likely to change over the six months and it is probably that the full car parking area will not be available in the future. Once visitors realise that the beach is closed, they will leave and it is inevitable that they will not return and this could have major implications for the town.