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Libby Alexander from SOS-C, centre, with John Nelson, chairman of Chichester Harbour Trust, and concerned residents at Dell Quay

Comprehensive cross-party report 'ignored', says SOS-C

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Residents who have raised concerns about damage to Chichester Harbour from mass development say their views have been ignored.

SOS-C, a campaign to help Save our South-Coast and our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from unsustainable development, produced a report and sent it out to the leader of Chichester District Council, individual cabinet members and other councillors, as well as West Sussex County Council, to challenge Chichester MP Gillian Keegan, three times.

Libby Alexander, speaking on behalf of SOS-C, said: "This

was a genuine cross-party collective report of concerns investigated across the many groups, associations, societies, etc., who value, use and protect this jewel in the crown of the nation's southern coastline and the impending damage that will inevitably occur as a result of mass and unnecessary development.

"This report should have been at least acknowledged. It was ignored."

She praised the 'excellent and comprehensive article' in last Thursday's Chichester Observer, launching our Don't Destroy Chichester Harbour Campaign, and said it was a timely reminder of the threats to Chichester Harbour, as well as Medmerry

and Pagham Harbours and their hinterland.

Libby said: "In the autumn of 2018, SOS-C was formed by a group of residents who were increasingly worried over the growing threats to this sensitive region.

"They began to seek out those that lived, worked and played in the affected area and created a document to give a voice to their concerns."

No replies came and it seemed no one was listening.

Libby said: "So, it was with huge relief to discover that the Observer also were aware of the growing disquiet being expressed, especially in light of the many local parishes that are in the middle of having to re-write their Neighbourhood Plans to

incorporate hundreds of this new housing.

"The writers of the SOS-C acknowledge the need for more housing but were concerned that there seemed to be no constructive policy that took into account the sensitivities of the local area, especially that of our very special AONB of Chichester Harbour and Fishbourne Meadows.

"The only policy that seems to be on the table will eventually lead to the complete coalescence of communities along the length of the A259.

"The density of houses and all the detrimental effects these will have on the surrounding land, together with the lack of

infrastructure, the corrosive effect of the inevitable growth in traffic and the pollution on every level will, inevitably, create long-term irreparable damage to the harbour.

"This document is not the voice of NIMBYs. There is a statutory duty of the government and local authorities to protect the AONB of Chichester Harbour."

SOS-C organised a gathering at Dell Quay on Sunday to demonstrate the level of support. Among those attending were Chichester Harbour Trust chairman John Nelson, Friends of Chichester Harbour events manager Ginny Kidd, residents and representatives of local groups.