

## **HANNAH ST CLARE'S STATEMENT AT THE PUBLIC INQUIRY**

My name is Hannah, I live in Seabrook and I am 14 years old.

A short while ago, I wrote to Folkestone and Hythe District Council and invited the Councillors to walk along the banks of The Royal Military Canal and see why this unique place is so special from a young persons point of view.

How many do you think bothered to reply – yes, you guessed it – all Green, Labour and Liberal Democrat Councillors, but just one patronising response from a Conservative Councillor. It's a shame certain members of the Council don't listen or bother to respond to the young residents of the area.

As you will have noticed, I am young and only have a small voice – but do not underestimate the "small voice" of the young and teenagers – this is OUR future and OUR heritage you are deciding upon during this Inquiry, and the future of the roadway.

Let me tell you why I wanted to speak today. I treasure this special place, particularly the area that runs along the Canal on the south side. This is where I have grown up. It is a place to watch the seasons turn. As a child I fished for tadpoles, saw kestrels hovering overhead, swallows dipping down to drink from the Canal in summer, grass snakes swimming in the water, sparrowhawks sweeping low in search of prey, and in the early evening bats darting overhead. I've even had the privilege of seeing a badger along this very path – all from the south side of the Canal, the very pathway that if Princes Parade is moved down to run along, will be lost forever. The wildlife will not stand a chance, covered in concrete, cars, noise and pollution, the peace and tranquility of the Canal gone.

Please, please consider very carefully OUR future, and that of generations to come, when you make your final decision. This decision is so important - it's not something that can be forgotten, forgiven or replaced – it will be lost forever – for what – A ROAD?!

Thank you.