
THE SENTINEL



Newsletter of the Bembridge and St Helens Harbour Association

No. 43 March 2011

BASHHA 22nd Annual General Meeting will be held on Sat. 19th March at 2.30 pm Bembridge Village Hall

Elections of Officers and Committee will take place. Would you or a friend like to join us? Your Harbour and your Association need you! You would be warmly welcomed.

Donald Biddle, founder Chairman of the **Bembridge Harbour Trust (BHT)** retired last August and the current Chairman is **Michael MacInnes**. We are delighted that Michael has kindly agreed to talk to us after the tea break about the activities and aspirations of the BHT. We look forward to seeing you there.

Chairman's Letter

Dear Member,

Many members attended one of the September **Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)** events. The final plan is at www.coastalwight.gov.uk/smp. Bembridge is in section PDZ3. Public comments are detailed with corresponding responses from the SMP Steering Group. BASHHA commented in particular concerning Bembridge Harbour, Bembridge Point and Foreland.

At **Foreland** residents have been appalled at the waste of public money spent on the only currently permitted ineffective coastal protection below Bembridge Coast Hotel. Periodically shingle is deposited in front of the cliff and coastal drift then moves the shingle along until it reaches the Harbour. **Regrettably, no change is recommended, the only concession is that IWC will meet the Consultants acting on behalf of the Hotel to discuss the findings of their Monitoring plan.**

At **Bembridge Point**, for years, experienced individuals and organisations have maintained that the damaged Bembridge groyne is allowing sand and shingle to enter the harbour where it contributes to the problem of silting. Full repair has been urged. The SMP team comment that **"No public funding is available but SMP Steering Group including IWC, EA and NE would not object to private funding to repair and maintain the groyne in theory. Section 3.3 of Ch.4.4 has been amended to make this clear."**

We welcome this positive change, a reward for all the

efforts made during the EYS and SMP2 consultations. Money still has to be found, but hurdles have been removed! Sincere thanks to all who campaigned for it.

Decision on Harbour Dues finally. See page 2.

The **Balanced Seas Project** continues to make progress. Commercial fisherman Mike Curtis of Captain Stan Fish Store and Alan Deeming of Bembridge Angling Club represented fishing interests at a recent Stakeholders meeting held in Cowes. See report on page 3.

A consultation period on a **Conservation Appraisal for Bembridge** has just ended. IWC is embarking on an island-wide assessment of areas that are worth preserving to give them added protection against inappropriate development. The document can still be viewed at Bembridge Library or the Parish Council Office. Three distinct areas have been proposed – the Historic Core (village centre), the Coastal Edge and the Harbour. BASHHA and BHUG have responded with comments particularly focussed on the **Harbour area**. If approved, Conservation status would help preserve and enhance aspects of our distinctive village for the future.

Annual Subs were due on 1st January. If yours is still outstanding the Treasurer would be pleased to receive it either by post or at the AGM.

*Yours sincerely,
Barbara Clough Chairman*

Harbour News — from BHUG

Harbour Dues. Efforts by the Harbour Company, including use of information culled from the Year Book, to collect back dues continue. 2011-2012 rates have not yet been promulgated but as the outcome of the Public Inquiry (and Minister's decision) was not announced until mid-October, it is assumed that current rates will remain unchanged for at least 12 months. Leaving aside dinghies (sailing and rowing) under 18ft which are exempt, all craft on non-harbour company moorings/pontoon berths are required to pay harbour dues directly to the Harbour Office.

Wade's Pontoon, Fisherman's Pontoon & Bembridge Marina. No new information available although it is understood some essential planking replacement work is being carried out. The b&b "barge" on Wade's (Selwyn) Pontoon no longer appears to be "For Sale".

Inner Harbour Dredging. No new information available; it is to be hoped that the major dredge planned for the autumn/winter 2010 (c10-15,000 m3) will materialise.

Outer Channel Maintenance Dredging. The Management Protocol required to meet the 2009 directive from DfT & DC&LG has recently been signed off. The conditions include levelling off excess spoil after each dredge; dredging only allowed from the Bembridge bank and only to maintain the channel depth & profile established in the 2009 Shoreline survey; and clearly defining the route to/from the Point Gravel Works. Monitoring appears to be largely on trust and regular surveys. A public copy of the Agreement will be put on the IWC Planning website in the near future.

Houseboats. No new information; no sign of it appearing on the IW planning sub-Committee Agenda. If it is eventually heard, the best we can probably hope for is the requirement for the works to have been completed before the additional houseboats are allowed on site.

Harbour Liaison Group/Harbour Management Plan. The updated Management Plan was issued in late October; the action plan Appendix has still to be produced. A Newsletter is expected out soon.

Bembridge Harbour Trust. Continue to give priority to monitoring any movement on the sale of the harbour.

Bembridge Lifeboat Station. The new boat and offshore station are operating as planned. The official naming of the new boat (hopefully by a member of the Royal family) will be on 10th August (during Cowes Week). Work on the inshore boathouse is being held up pending decisions on the Public Toilets at Lane End.

Eastern Yar River & Coastal Strategy & Shore Line Management Plan. No new information on EYS; all the coastal recommendations have been subsumed in the SMP. Notwithstanding IWC budget cuts/constraints, it is understood that some work will be undertaken on St Helens Duver wall this year.

Public Inquiry into Bembridge Harbour Dues — Decision

I imagine that everybody is now aware that the findings of the Public Inquiry into Harbour Dues found in favour of the Harbour Company. The Inspectors report was very critical of many aspects of the Harbour Company but he nevertheless decided that the figures we submitted suggesting that the costs shown by the Harbour Company that should be met out of harbour dues were too high were incorrect. He therefore amended the costs down so that they virtually equalled our estimate of the income from harbour dues. In other words, although he agreed that our estimated figure for the income was correct – at a figure substantially higher than the BHIC figure – he did not agree with our estimate of the costs and reduced our figure to a level that more or less matched the estimated income. On the basis that the costs and income are equal he argued that the level of harbour dues is correct and therefore could not be considered unreasonable.

This was a very disappointing result and seemed a poor reward for all the hard work that was done to oppose the level of harbour dues. The only comfort is that that BHIC have been criticised on a number of counts, and if nothing else will certainly have to be more careful in future in accounting for the revenue from harbour dues.

Robin Powell, Chairman, BHUG

Reprieve for BHIC

“The Bembridge Harbour Improvements Company has this week won eight weeks' breathing space from moves by the taxman to have it wound up in London's High Court, it has been revealed.

The winding-up petition brought by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs was adjourned for 56 days to give the company a chance to consider a company voluntary arrangement as a solution to its debt problems.

Had the company been compulsorily wound-up over the undisclosed tax debt, it would have effectively handed over the firm's affairs to the official receiver. His job would have then be to do his best to ensure the debts were paid off by selling any assets available and then bringing business to a close.

Bembridge harbourmaster Chris Turvey declined to comment.”

from IWCP 2011:02:25, p.45

We understand that the Harbour, having been taken off the market at the end of last year, is now back on but with a different Estate Agent. We had heard that the new agents were Humberts Leisure Ltd but a search of their website does not come up any information. I will let you know if/when we find out any further information.

Mike Samuelson Hon.Sec. BHUG

Based on extracts from March report to BHUG committee supplied by Mike Samuelson, Hon.Sec. BHUG

Solent area Balanced Seas Marine Conservation Zone Project

Local sea users and marine experts met in Cowes on Monday 7 February to discuss the potential for future Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) to protect nationally important marine species and habitats in the Solent area.

The recommendations for MCZs may take socio-economic issues into account and so the proposals for south-east England are being developed by the Balanced Seas Regional Stakeholder Group. The group has wide cross-sector representation, including commercial fishing, yachting and other water sports, recreational sea angling, nature conservation, ports, renewable energy and other industries and interests. The process involves a conscious effort to minimise socio-economic impact although the guidance produced by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), on the principles, criteria and species and habitats to be protected, must be adhered to.

The Solent has been discussed at several Balanced Seas meetings over the last year, and stakeholders have provided extensive information. Four broad areas of interest have been identified.

1. ***An area around The Needles***, which is hugely rich in marine wildlife, due to the diverse seabed habitats which support rare species such as stalked jellyfish and Peacock's Tail seaweed, the latter found only in the Isle of Wight, Dorset and Devon.

2. ***The inshore waters between Yarmouth and West Cowes*** where the coarse sand, gravel and shingle seabed hosts rich communities of small burrowing animals. Newtown Creek contains important rocky outcrops and oyster beds and Bouldnor Cliff has significant geological interest.

3. ***The area between East Cowes (Norris) and Ryde*** contains some of the best seagrass beds in the Solent and a substantial area of undersea mud, rich in worms and bivalves (mollusks with two shells joined at one edge). The rare Tentacled Lagoon Worm, a seemingly obscure but important part of the diversity of Britain's marine wildlife, is found in Wootton Creek.

4. ***The waters off Bembridge and south to Sandown Bay are perhaps the most diverse area of all, with seagrass beds, rocky ledges and reefs that are home to seahorses, lagoon worms, stalked jellyfish and rare seaweeds.***

Stakeholders should understand that many activities may be able to continue within an MCZ. The activities allowed will vary depending on the features for which the MCZ is designated and the types and intensity of activity that the features are sensitive to; activities will not be restricted unless they damage the designated species or habitats. The protection levels will be identified site-by-site through stakeholder group meetings.

The participants at the Cowes meeting discussed potential boundaries for the Solent sites and the various activities that might be affected. The stakeholder groups will soon start discussing management measures. In addition work is now starting on the Impact Assessment, which will contain an analysis of the socio-economic costs and benefits of each proposed MCZ.

The information and opinions gathered at the Cowes meeting will go toward the ***third progress report that Balanced Seas will submit to the national Science Advisory Panel on 28 February. This will be available on the project's website in early March.*** The final recommendations will be submitted at the end of August 2011. A public consultation will be held after the recommendations from all four MCZ projects have been submitted to Defra in November 2011.

For further information about Balanced Seas and the Marine Conservation Zone Project, visit **www.balancedseas.org**. The report of the Isle of Wight site meeting will soon be available on the website.

Taken from Balanced Seas press release 2011:02:10.

Know Your Harbour 18

We were delighted to welcome **Martin Woodward MBE** as our speaker. Martin's collection had outgrown his Bembridge premises compounded by lack of parking space. Transfer of the Maritime Museum and rebuilding premises at Arreton was a massive challenge! We were amazed as we saw slides of the transformation taking place. Renamed ***The Shipwreck Centre***, the interior has been specially designed to show off artefacts to their best advantage, and provide adults and children with a fascinating experience.

We were then treated to wonderful slides and entertaining accounts of Martin's challenging climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro and subsequent marathon cycle ride from North to South New Zealand to raise funds for the new ***RNLI Bembridge Lifeboat*** and the ***IW Historic Lifeboats Trust***. It was a brilliant and inspiring evening for which Martin was warmly thanked and was presented with a cheque and further donations from attendees.

Annual Subs

were due on 1st January. If yours is still outstanding the Treasurer would be pleased to receive it either by post or at the AGM. You may like to consider becoming a Life Member.

Presentation of Anti Litter Award to BASHHA by CPRE (IW) Chairman, John Langley. 18.09.10



photo courtesy of Noel Stimson

Dates for your Diary 2011

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 19th March in Bembridge Village Hall at 2.30 pm, Speaker – Michael MacInnes, Chairman BHT

Beach Spring Clean

Saturday 7th May at 10 am. Meet Tollgate Café, Bembridge Point or Hovertravel Works, The Duver. Gloves and stout shoes essential. Bags provided. At your own risk please.

Bembridge Street Fair

Monday 30th May 2 – 4 pm. BASHHA Publicity Stall. Offers of help to man the stall warmly welcomed

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Bembridge & St Helens Harbour Association 2011 Membership Application/ Renewal

I/We wish to apply for membership of the Association and enclose a remittance as follows:

Ordinary membership	Annual £5	Life £50
Family membership	£6	£60
Reduced membership	£4	£40
Donation		

Name(s)

Address

..... telephone

Email

Signature date

Subscriptions may be paid at the AGM, or to the Hon Treasurer, Rod Bowman, 1 The Brambles, Foreland Farm Lane, Bembridge PO35 5QH. Personal information supplied by you will be treated in confidence and will not be supplied to any third party.