

## **Marine Director's Annual Report 2018**

Good evening everyone and thank you once again for coming to this year's Annual Forum. I would, first, like to begin as always by thanking River Users for the way in which we have been supported over the past year. I would, in particular, like to thank those who have taken the trouble to comment in such a constructive and comprehensive way on developments within the River. I would also like to record my thanks to our Harbour Authority Team. David Shakespeare's organisational skills have been instrumental in ensuring that the ongoing Crown Estate pile replacement programme has minimised the impact on those affected. Our Environment and Development Manager, Alison Fowler, has been engaged across a range of leading environmental initiatives and, inter alia, helped River Users with pre-application consent advice and to interpret developing legislation. Our new Moorings Officer, Nicola James, has hit the ground running. The office and afloat team of Donna Taylor and Charon Baggaley, as well as our regular core patrol officers Andy Melhuish, Brett Winslade, Peter Jennings, Bob Clowes and Nick McKinnon remains unchanged for the moment although Brett will retire this year after 12 years' Service. I am sure that you will join me in thanking him for his efforts here and wishing him and his wife Karen the very best in their future together.

I should like to report first on safety matters. November's routine independent audit of the River's Marine Safety Management System by our Designated person explored the detail of our risk assessments and standard operating procedures. Both had undergone a complete, planned revision over the preceding six months. The subsequent award of a certificate of compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code has enabled the Chairman of the Harbour Board to write as the Duty Holder, to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to confirm that continued compliance. This is good news for River Users; this important process ensures that in practice, as well as on paper, the River remains a safe place for all who enjoy it. This year has also witnessed a revision of our Strategic Vision and Plan documents. These are important because they set out our intent for how we will manage the River over the next three years. Both are available to read now on the Harbour Authority's website. In summary, the review showed that they were both about right and our amendments were minor in nature. I will not report in detail on River Events over the course of the past year, as trends regarding safety have been covered in my regular reports to the Management Committee and Harbour Board. I might only comment that we do continue to see incidents of petty theft around the River, most notably of outboard engines and expensive electronic equipment. We have invested in Closed Circuit Television Equipment over the past year, which

acts to some degree as a deterrent to would-be thieves and also allows us to pass on evidence to the Police for prosecution.

In Governance terms there have been no changes on the Harbour Board. The Management Committee has seen a number of routine appointment changes. Councillor Roger Huxstep has taken over responsibilities as Vice Chair from Councillor Rob Humby. Councillors Fred Birkett, Rod Cooper, Tonia Craig, Pal Hayre, Rupert Kyrle, Stephen Philpott and Lance Quantrill have replaced Councillors Burgess, Fawkes, Cully, Harrison, Pearce and Rice as Hampshire County Council representatives. There have also been some new appointments among the co-opted members. Councillor Jane Rich has taken over responsibility for Eastleigh Borough Council from Councillor Hamell; Councillor Jonathan Butts has taken over as the Fareham Borough Council Deputy from Councillor Swanbrow; Councillor Frank Pearson has taken over from Councillors Weston and Sanders as the Winchester City Council representative. The other positions remain unchanged. I am sure you will join me in thanking those who have moved on for their support over their term of appointment and wish them good fortune. I would also like to welcome those newly appointed. The interest shown by new members in River matters over the course of their induction gives me the greatest confidence that we will be very well supported.

Our financial position last year allowed the Harbour Board to maintain a zero per cent increase to Harbour Dues for the third year in succession. This judgement was made possible by a detailed independent assessment by Opus engineering of the condition of our operational assets and a review of our annual accounts. This year's Asset Review will be placed before the Harbour Board at its next meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. Any decision on Harbour Dues for 2018/9 will then be made in the light of our final accounts at the Harbour Board meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. River users can be reassured that Harbour Dues will continue to be set at a level that is both prudent and matches our ongoing duty to maintain safety. This year, our income streams have been as expected and consistent with previous years. The full report on our Forecast Outturn and 2018/9 Forward Budget is available on our website under the minutes of the Harbour Meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January. I would just like to add that, as usual, Councillor Woodward will be drawing the names for our free tender berths at Warsash and Hamble at the end of this meeting.

In terms of developments within the River, this year has seen a number of Marinas' and Boatyards' applications for developments within their existing curtilages. Having already been granted Harbour Works' Consent for a reconfiguration of the Marina in November 2012, Deacon's resubmitted to Eastleigh Borough Council

and was refused planning permission in Autumn last year. That refusal has been challenged and the plan is again under consultation at the time of writing. Also granted Harbour Works' Consent for an earlier plan, Premier Marina has reapplied for a minor variation on their plan to alter the configuration at Swanwick. That plan will come before the Harbour Board on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. Clearly, these developments are not welcomed by everyone but the risks associated with each can be reduced to levels that are as low as reasonably practicable, which is why Harbour Works' Consent was granted. For my part, I should like to recognise that these developments do not meet with universal approval and I should like to thank those who took the trouble to comment for their measured approach and constructive criticism. I should also like to recognise the way in which the developer often responds to those comments which are supported by the Harbour Office. Not every application makes it as far as the public domain.

As usual, there have been numerous applications to install single pontoons on pile and fore-and aft moorings at various locations throughout the River. Each of these also requires planning permission and each is considered on its merits from the navigational safety point of view before Harbour Authority approval is granted.

The Harbour Authority continues to provide one-to-one advice for prospective developers and this service has been used extensively again this year. The Harbour Authority also runs the Consents Advice Panel and, although demand has not required a meeting this year, this service, which is recognised nationally as an example of best practice, is still available. The Panel is a chance for people wishing to undertake works in the marine environment on the River to meet informally with consenting organisations prior to an application being submitted and marine consents sought. We enjoy a good relationship with all consenting organisations and would encourage those with aspirations for works to contact us in advance to help interpret regulations that can sometimes seem intricate.

We have enjoyed another imaginative year of sailing, organised by our Clubs and volunteers. Space does not permit a full list of the events supported but I will list some of the highlights. This year's Bursledon Regatta theme was 'Classic Movies' with some fantastic effort being thrown into costume and props. The day saw very warm weather, if little wind for the sailing community and was a huge success, culminating in a most impressive firework display. This year's theme has yet to be decided but the date for our diaries will be Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> of September. The Annual Harbour Master's Charity Pursuit Race for dinghies was again in support of Parkinson's UK and I would like to thank all those who supported the Race. As

well as witnessing another comprehensive programme of World, International and Club-level racing and recreational sailing, we saw the second Hamble Classics Regatta, which attracted an increased number of entries, indicating great organisation and a building international reputation. We look forward to the next Classics on the weekend of the 15/16 September. This year will also see the fourth River Hamble Games which will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> June. Exceptionally, given the tides over the Summer, the Harbour Master's Charity Pursuit Race will take place on the same day and form the sailing component of this exciting event. Entries are open now on the River Hamble Games' website for a variety of sports and I would encourage anyone with an interest in sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding, swimming, rowing, running or cycling to take a look at what is on offer and enter. Harbour Master Pursuit Race forms are available on our Harbour website and in the Office as usual.

We have worked with the Association of River Hamble Yacht Clubs on the revision of our safety code of practice. This important document is aimed at helping Clubs deliver their risk assessments for sailing events in a way that helps reduce the risks to levels that are as low as reasonably practicable. I would also like to advertise the latest edition of the River Hamble Handbook and Directory which was published in February. In addition, our own Visitor Guide provides

specific information for visiting yachtsmen. Look out for an updated version of this useful document with much in it for local River Users in the Summer.

Our management of the mid-stream moorings and the moorings Waiting List, on behalf of the Crown Estate continues. The Crown Estate is, at the time of writing engaged in a programme to replace 27 piles between Bursledon and Mercury. We have been ensuring that those holding moorings are inconvenienced to the least degree possible. Our waiting list remains steady but we continue to look for opportunities to promote movement. Looking at other adjacent harbours' rates, I believe we continue to provide good value for money.

This year has seen an increasing amount of interest from both the community around the River and more widely. Members of staff have given a number of talks and presentations about the management of the harbour at a variety of venues including sailing clubs, community centres, the Womens' Institute and at local Council fora.

As last year, inter-agency co-operation aimed at improving mutual awareness and capability continues to be a relevant safety theme. We have continued our routine cooperation with the Police, UK Border Force and the Southern Inshore Fisheries

Conservation Authority this year with some notable successes. Combined work with Hampshire Police and local Parish Councils has helped manage the problem of anti-social behaviour in busy areas of the river during the warmer summer months. We plan to continue in the same vein this year. We continue to assist both the Police and Border Force in the discharging of their responsibilities on a routine basis.

In August, our three-yearly review of our Port Waste Management Plan was approved by the Regulator, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, as required by The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Port Waste Reception Facilities) Regulations 2003. Following on from our three yearly practical Oil Spill Response Exercise, I and our Environment Officer met with safety representatives from BP Hamble Oil Terminal to update our knowledge of the current terminal use and the control measures in place to counter pollution in the unlikely event of a spillage.

The Harbour Authority has continued to run the important Hamble Estuary Partnership, which provides a valuable network for a wide variety of organisations with an interest in the River, as well as support the Solent Forum and its various sub groups, where we presented the findings of last year's Saltmarsh study.

In terms of enhancing the environment, I will highlight just a few of the topics covered this year. The Harbour Authority has supported Sea View 2027, a DEFRA project, aimed at improving the Solent and Sussex coast. Sea View assesses how various initiatives are contributing to an increased understanding and improvement of 'health indicators' such as shellfish fishery and waters, marine litter and Special Area of Conservation conditions. The next step will be to agree a vision for Southampton Water, which includes the Hamble, that embraces the aspirations of all users of the Estuary.

The Harbour Authority is a member of the Technical Group of the Solent Forum's 'Beneficial Reuse of Dredgings' project. This project compliments and builds upon the work we undertook for our Hamble Saltmarsh study with the aim of realising a practical project to beneficially reuse dredged material within the Solent system rather than disposing of it at sea, as well as opportunities for smaller scale saltmarsh improvements.

Along with other local stakeholders representing commercial and leisure maritime user groups, heritage, archaeology and the environment, we have also been supporting the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's 'Secrets of the Solent' project. The project is seeking a £600000 grant from the Heritage Lottery

Fund, with the aim of inspiring local people to become involved in protecting the unique habitats and heritage of our local Marine Protected Areas. We expect to hear the outcome of the bid imminently

The Solent Oyster Restoration Project aims to redress a reduction in the Solent's native oyster population, which has declined dramatically from what was once one of the largest oyster fisheries in Europe. Not only are these shellfish a good source of food but they also provide a first class indicator of water quality. Trial brood stock cages have been deployed at various locations within the Solent. The Blue Marine Foundation, along with Portsmouth University, whose project this is, aims to produce juvenile oysters to repopulate the seabed populations across the Solent. We now await the results of a baseline survey conducted in the River last week before discussing next steps.

The product of the Harbour Authority's sponsorship of a PhD study into the evaluation of the spatial variation in the dissolution of sacrificial anodes in the Solent is now available. The study had a focus on the Hamble Estuary and we have produced a leaflet with the findings that is available from the Harbour Office and on our website. Copies are also available here tonight and I hope you will find them informative.

### **Key findings :**

- Some boat owners were found to be using the wrong anode type. Zinc anodes are designed for seawater environments, aluminium for brackish and seawater, and magnesium for freshwater.
- Some boats have more anodes fitted than necessary which not only increases cost but also adds to the already relatively high levels of dissolved zinc found in the estuary.
- Faster anode decay was seen in some locations compared to those moored elsewhere in the estuary. Anode corrosion will be quicker in areas of higher salinities at mouth of the Hamble to around Mercury bend, typically 50-60% wear in a year. At Bursledon lower salinity occurs so expect less wear to zinc anodes.
- Sacrificial anodes do not corrode quicker in the Hamble than in other estuaries. Salinity and stray currents do cause localised variation in anode decay, and this is seen beyond the Hamble.
- The pH of between 7 and 8.5 observed in the Hamble is not sufficiently varied to cause varied anode corrosion.

- Anodes are the biggest contributor of zinc to Hamble, with 6.95 tonnes/year released from the 3,000 vessels. The highest zinc concentrations occur around Bursledon in areas of higher boat density.

### **Hints and tips:**

- Sacrificial anodes are designed to last 1 year with normal wear typically being 40-60%. It is recommended they are replaced yearly.
- For anodes to protect the cathode (hull or metal item on vessel) they have to be in physical contact or connected via a wire.
- Some boat owners in the higher reaches of the estuary may find aluminium anodes benefit them as more brackish conditions occur. Aluminium anodes will not only help lower zinc levels in the water, but they last 1.5 years instead of the one year of zinc anodes, and this means a more stable anode wear maybe observed. Magnesium must not be used in an estuary like the Hamble as it will corrode within months and once corroded has the potential to cause detrimental corrosion to a vessel.
- Stray currents due to common earth wire in marina power supplies can cause more corrosion. Fitting a galvanic isolator breaks current flow or unplugging when not aboard vessel will limit corrosion.

- Salinity and stray currents should not cause an anode to corrode completely in a year, if this is the case seek advice from a marine engineer as there may be an issue with the vessel such as a wiring, or use of wrong anode type.
- If you continue to experience any anode issues contact an anode supplier who will be able to advise on type and size of anodes for your vessel .
- Appropriate use of anodes will help reduce zinc concentrations which are currently very close to the limit allowed under Environment Quality Standards.

I hope very much that River Users will have found this report useful and would welcome any questions that may arise either now or at any stage direct to the Harbour Office.