

**MINUTES OF THE FORTIETH MEETING OF THE BEMBRIDGE HARBOUR ADVISORY  
GROUP - 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

**In attendance:** Malcolm Thorpe (MT - BHA - Chairman), Fiona Thorpe (FT - BHA), Gordon Wight (GW – BHA), Liz White (EW - Bembridge PC), Alan Deeming (AD - BAC), T Woodcock (TW - BBA), Nigel Bennett (NB - HJ Bennett), John Coleman (JC - St Helens PC), Jonathan Nainby-Luxmore (JNL - BSC), Robin Powell (RP - BHUG), Michael Toulmin (GMT - BHUG) & Mike Samuelson (MS - Bembridge RNLI & Minute Secretary).

1. **Apologies** - apologies received from Jim Robinson (Boatyards) & John Maher (BHYC).
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 & Matters Arising)** - the minutes of the previous meeting were approved. All matters arising are covered elsewhere in the Minutes.
3. **Harbour Report by GW.**
  - a. **Safety & PMSC Compliance** - during September & October, all routine safety and PMSC compliance checks were completed and all is in good order.
  - b. **Channel Navigation and Safety.**
    - (1) Channel buoy 7 broke from its mooring block on 29<sup>th</sup> October and was recovered from St Helens beach. Recovery to relocate block or chain still on-going. LNTM 10/19 remains in force.
    - (2) The new tide height measurement numbers board affixed to the Tide Gauge was removed for maintenance on 19<sup>th</sup> November. It will be reinstated in Spring 2020.
  - c. **Items of Interest.**
    - (1) **PMSC 6 monthly Audit** - the harbour, its policies and procedures were found to be 100% compliant following the 6 monthly internal audit that took place on 5<sup>th</sup> November.
    - (2) **Houseboat Newclose** - after considerable planning, Newclose was safely relocated on 30<sup>th</sup> October. Thanks were extended to all involved, in particular to BAC's Mooring Officer (John Rackett).
  - d. **Staffing - Christmas/New Year** - BHA Operational Staff will break for their Christmas/New Year on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December until Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January. During this period daily site checks will be carried out by BHA (GW - 872828 ext 205 or 07825 155325 (24 hour emergency cover) & BBS (Peter Hudson – 872828 ext 206 or 07826 744029) Operational Managers.
4. **BHA/BHT Meeting.**
  - a. GMT advised he had chaired the initial meeting between 4 BHT Trustees and MT & FT with EW also present. There had been no quick progress but it was agreed that the overriding purpose was to try and build better relations with a further meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The original intention was to discuss the S106 and groyne projects - however all the BHT trustees present declined. Hence the next meeting is to discuss the 'Show us the Books' campaign and in response to a request from one of the BHT Trustees, FT agreed to provide specific examples relating to this campaign.
  - b. EW felt it was a step forward.
  - c. MT expressed disappointment that having provided them with a copy of the latest S106 Agreement, none of the BHT Trustees had actually read it and were relying simply on advice from J Gully.
  - d. JC advised that St Helens PC had received complaints about the 'Show us the Books Campaign' and had removed the campaign posters that had been put on the PC Notice Board. In view of the unintended consequence of intimidation in particular, he stated that in his view the campaign was being counterproductive and should be stopped. This view was supported by the majority of attendees.
  - e. MT drew attention to the total negativity on BHT's website regarding the Harbour. He also restated that they had absolutely no intention of making BHIC Management Accounts available as it would still not satisfy BHT and that he and his staff did not have the time to subsequently answer and deal with any resulting questions.
  - f. GMT summarized that although it was difficult to see where common ground might be found, it was critical that this opportunity was not missed as it may be very difficult to restart discussions if they once fail.

5. **Duver Facilities Review.** MT advised that due to potential further time delays before the new build facilities complex would be available, the decision had been made to re-vamp the current ones to be ready by the end of February. In line with many other Marinas, they would be unisex as a tester for the design of the new complex. MT confirmed that these revamped facilities would still accrue a c£15,000 annual waste disposal bill. The planned new replacement facilities are intended to include a bio-plant that would remove this requirement for disposal of untreated sewage.

6. **Bennett's Planning Application.**

a. MT drew attention to the recent application (19/01367/FUL) for continuing the use of NB's Aggregate Works for a further 3 years and asked for BHAG members to support it as an essential part of the outer harbour maintenance operation. NB confirmed that the application was identical to the previous one.

b. In the brief discussion that followed NB advised that there had been increased erosion of the western (channel side) bund over the last few years due to a change in the wave action. He thought this would reduce post the Groyne repair and the two access gates installed. He also accepted that whilst this bund looked untidy, the herras fencing filling the gaps was necessary for security reasons as over the last 12 months, his plant had been vandalised on at least two occasions. However, he did agree to keep the area as tidy as was practical. Finally, MT & NB confirmed that they were in discussion over the renewal of the 'yard' lease.

7. **South Channel Entrance/Exit.**

a. MT had asked for feed-back on formally marking a channel to the south of St Helens Fort. It was agreed that it would be an alternative route and not a replacement. Both sailing clubs identified racing marks and areas that could cause potential interference. GW advised that he regularly hears concerns from visiting yachts to Bembridge because of the 'bar'.

b. Having advised that if it was to go ahead the new channel would only be marked within the area for which BHA was responsible for, MT agreed to circulate a new diagram for further consideration.

8. **Dredging.**

a. MT advised that due to unforeseen circumstances, the previously announced autumn dredging programme using 'United One', had been aborted, however he had secured a dredger master, insurance and was finalising chartering a hopper barge for dredging the Marina & BBS channel to commence at the start of April 2020 and taking circa 3 weeks to achieve 2m below Chart Datum.

b. JNL advised that BSC was finalising an agreement with ML Dredging to dredge the BODA Pool commencing 12<sup>th</sup> April. It was expected to take 14 days. Although there was an outside chance that MLs plant could be available earlier, there is the need to avoid Easter and the early May Bank holiday. GW requested that he be invited to any local meetings with ML Dredging.

c. MT advised that 'United One' was going to be used by NB in the New Year to dredge out the sand spit between 6a & 8 Channel marks - the material would be deposited as far east of the channel as possible to be subsequently removed by shore based plant at LW. Yellow buoys would be used to mark the temporary spoil area.

d. NB confirmed that he had no plans for further dredging outside the channel to the east of No 8a and 10 Channel marks as he had not found it practical to use the holes he had dug previously to backfill material as originally intended.

c. GW advised that the trot moorings would be re-established earlier than normal to provide temporary alongside berths for boats relocating while the Marina is dredged. MT confirmed he would be discussing this with Natural England. JNL advised that the Illusion National Championships were over the weekend of 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> March.

9. **Members Reports.**

a. **Bembridge RNLI (MS)**

(1) October had been very quiet with two 'shouts' in November, the first involving Wightlink's Victoria of Wight and one involving one of the Guard Vessels for the IFA2 cable laying project.

(2) The new RNLI CEO, Mark Dowie, has initiated a nation-wide appeal ('The Perfect Storm') to

highlight the shortfall in available funding.

b. **BHUG (RP)**

(1) Having ascertained from MT that there was no change in the current 'limbo' position, RP advised that whilst the Groyne sub-Committee was still in existence, no further action or expenditure on the Project is being taken.

(2) In response to a question by RP on the green septic tank located next to Houseboat Plot 23 (Rijnstroom IV), MT advised that he understood that planning approval had recently been granted so action to install it could be expected soon.

(3) In response to a question about the boundaries of the Solent 'Category D, Classified Waters' (MSN 1776 (M)), MS advised that the eastern boundary was a line between the spire of Holy Trinity Church Bembridge and the spire on the church in West Wittering. The western boundary was a line from Hurst Castle to the Needles.

c. **BSC (JNL)**

(1) Moving forward with the Groyne project to reduce the egress of sand into the harbour remained a high priority.

(2) An advanced copy of the 2020 programme could be downloaded from the Club website. (<https://www.bembridgesailingclub.org/2020-bsc-club-programme/> )

d. **St Helens PC (JC)**

(1) The election of a candidate for the vacant slot on the PC was on the same day as the General Election - Joe Robertson had resigned and it was planned to co-opt rather than elect a replacement.

(2) The village Christmas tree was in place opposite the Vine; it was hoped that it would not be vandalised as it had been last year. The launch of this year's 'Angels of St Helens' was on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

(3) Shared funding with IWC and Island Roads to resolve the continual stream of water by the bus stop at the top of Station Road has been agreed.

(4) Action to stop the increasing number of vehicles parking on the Greens is being taken.

(5) Hopefully IWC will accept the PC's recommendations on the recent Consultation on the Protection of Public areas which was primarily about walking dogs. An 8 week public consultation is expected in the New Year. Horses are not mentioned. AD advised that NE had identified dogs as the main source of bird disturbance, so they might well seek to limit dogs on the beach.

(6) There was now an AED/De-fib by the Public Toilets on the Duver. Training to include the Staff & older children of St Helens Primary as well as other Stakeholders was planned.

(7) Although the Disabled toilet on the Duver remained accessible, the Male & Female toilets were shut for the winter; minor maintenance was planned for the Spring.

(8) Some upgrading of seating on St Helens Old Church Green (which is leased off IWC) was planned for the Spring. NB: The IWC are responsible for the Seamark.

e. **HJ Bennett (NB)** - nothing of further significance to report to Paragraph 8c & d.

f. **BBA (TW)**

(1) A Christmas event at the Coast Hotel was planned.

(2) Planning for the 2020 Bembridge Guide was under way. Sue McLagan would be grateful for art work asp. Although he did not know the planned publication date, he agreed to feed-back that it was essential that it is available before Easter.

(3) He is retiring as the Hon Sec of the BBA at their next AGM in April.

g. **BAC (AD)** - John Rackett was now the sole point of contact for BAC moorings.

h. **Bembridge PC (EW)**

(1) The sale of the old council office building (No 5-7 High Street) had now been completed.

(2) Although not many people had attended the recent Consultation Day, it had been judged

successful. Responses to a questionnaire were being consolidated.

(3) Island Roads are planning on re-modeling the corner opposite the Pilot Boat Inn in the New Year to make the exit from Station Road safer.

- i. **BHUG (GMT)** - nothing further of significance.
  - j. **BHA (GW)** - nothing of additional significance. On behalf of JM he outlined the BHYC's Christmas Party on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December that is targeting the local community to start at 12:00 and is aimed at parents and children; the second part, aimed at adults will start at 18:00.
  - k. **MT & FT**
    - (1) **2020 Promotions** - promotions to encourage Clubs from the mainland and the north coast of France to visit Bembridge are in hand.
    - (2) **Harbour Dues** - action (25% surcharge) against boat owners who still had not paid their 2019 harbour dues is being taken. AD recommended that this should be publicized so as to encourage future timely payment by those who think that they can get away without paying.
    - (3) **BHAG Minutes** - are available on-line through the Harbour website.
10. **Any Other Business.**
- a. **RSPB Closure of the Footpath from the Houseboat Car Park to the Old Railway Line & Extension of the Railway Line Footpath to the South of Bembridge Boatyard, BMS etc** - MT advised that both matters remained on-going.
  - b. **Seabuckthorn on Bembridge Point** - to be actioned. MS advised that he had not yet had a bonfire to burn up the summer growth that he had pulled up.
  - c. **Secrets of the Solent** - nothing of significance to report.
  - d. **MCZ - Bembridge** - MS advised there were still a few patches of seagrass in the southern part of the bay, it did not appear as dense as it had been during the summer along Priory Bay. AD advised that IFCA had declined to have any responsibility for policing anchoring in MCZs and that MMO had done nothing so far about control measures for anchoring in the Solent.
  - e. **Day Dawn** - MT advised that the owner of Day Dawn was in discussions with the MMO to agree disposal arrangements prior to a replacement houseboat arriving. He added that the experience gained when Xoron was broken up showed that a floating boom around the vessel to contain all debris is essential.
  - f. **Robin Powell** - as it was his last meeting, FT extended BHAs gratitude to RP for his support and wise council as one of the original members of BHAG and gave him a present in thanks.
12. **Next Meeting** - 09:30 on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at the Harbour Office.

The meeting ended at 11:45.