

# RIVER DART COMMERCIAL USERS GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held at Dartmouth Yacht Club on 24 September 2012

ACTION

**Present:** J Holman (Chair), B Hollis, T Hoile, M Holman, N Brown, J Smith, R Giles (Harbourmaster), C Lambert, F Choudbury, S Oakey, J Robinson, S Kilpatrick, S Norvill, P Sheardown, N Hockaday (Chairman, DHNA), P Smith, M Smallwood (Minutes)

*Presentation by David Marino from The Duchy of Cornwall*

**Apologies** Alister Harbord, Andrew Pooley, Becky Taylor. Jamie Mathys, Tom Morris

**Minutes of the previous meeting** These were proposed by Tony Hoile, seconded by Ian Noble, approved and signed.

## **Matters Arising**

It was confirmed that the issues relating to a Canoe business operating from Totnes had been sorted out quickly by the Harbourmaster.

It was agreed to leave the Modified Dart Harbour Membership Selection Panel Protocol as it is. It was also noted that at present, the Non-Bens Stakeholder Group did not exist.

## **Chairman's Report**

John Holman reported on the following:

The season had started with an invitation onto the Fairmile which was leading the procession on the River Dart to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This event had gone very well and had been excellently organised.

The J80 Worlds had proved a draw for visitors and Dart Harbour had done a superb job in running much of the organisation; many comments had been received saying the J boats wanted to return to the Dart and other Championship organisations had approached Dart Harbour wishing to hold their events here.

The Squib Nationals had again been a successful event, with good facilities ashore.

Try a Boat Day had resulted in 300 people trying out boats and had been a successful two day event.

The river had been much quieter than had been hoped for this year; the bad weather, Olympics etc, playing a part. He understood the train company had had a good summer, but the ferries had not been as busy as had been expected.

In January 2013 the Lower Ferry will be shut on both sides for refurbishment of the slipways which are being raised by approx a foot.

The Res Nova had been sold and had been moved from the river for

refurbishment.

The DHNA maintenance works at Hoodown were progressing well.

John had attended the Southampton Boat Show and reported on feedback received: very few new motor boats were being sold, however sailing boats, such as Beneteau, had done well, with some first time buyers back in the market.

Dartmouth Regatta had been a great success, although numbers were down, with good sailing weather for the competitors.

He had attended the SDC Apprentice Awards. The College seemed to be going from strength to strength and was an asset the area could be proud of.

South Devon Marine was re-setting its objectives. If anyone was interested in reading these, then John had a copy which he would forward on.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Barry Hollis reported that income was healthy, but it would be good to encourage more members to join. Latest bank balance was circulated.

### **Harbourmaster's Report**

Rob Giles confirmed that Dart Harbour was a tenant of The Duchy and had a good relationship with it. Part payment (being a proportion of DHNA's income) was made at the beginning of April and then the balance in the autumn each year. He also took the Land Steward and David Marino on the River once a year.

Hoodown Phase 1 Development was now finished: It has a 65m long jetty, 10 ton crane and can lift all Dart Harbour's fleet and carry out all maintenance of pontoons, buoys, etc. It was hoped 8-10 pontoons would have maintenance carried out on them before Christmas.

On top of the events during the season mentioned above, the Harbour Authority had overseen four open water swimming events and two filming events.

A new Stoke Gabriel pontoon had been fitted and was proving very successful. There had been nine cruise liner visits during the year, down on last year, but bookings are increasing for 2013/14. Two super yachts had also visited.

Dart Harbour felt it now had the right number of commercial and leisure berths and were not planning to increase these.

About 8-10 licences were issued each year to boatmen. The test is run by South Hams Council, with consolidation from Dart Harbour; it was anticipated the procedure would become easier for applicants in the future.

He would be attending the next Commercial Fishermen meeting and would ask for a report from their Chairman which he forward on to the RDCUG Chair.

RG

Dittisham Bridge and Pontoon – Rob was looking at a project to carry out improvements on these and hopefully they would be ready for next season.

New navigation lights were being ordered shortly. Two port laterals and a starboard lateral will be fitted in the New Year.

It was understood that South Hams were planning to carry out refurbishments to the Upper Ferry slipway.

Visitors to the River had been down by 15% this year, with very few motor boats visiting. Other harbours had reported a similar reduction.

The Harbourmaster met regularly with South Devon Marine who are keen to encourage commerce in the area and on the River Dart. It would be worthwhile for RDCUG members to look at their website.

In reply to a question, Rob confirmed that the DHNA were very mindful of the costs that commercial people on the River incur and the DHNA would try to keep any rises in costs within inflation.

Rob stated there was a vacancy on the Board as from 26<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

**AOB**

Concern was expressed about speeding in the River. The Harbourmaster asked members to “name and shame”. He stated that new ideas were being worked on to counteract this problem.

Colin Lambert was pleased to report that Franje was now back in the River and he would be operating a charter business from her.

South Devon College was looking for work experience for some of its high performing students. If anyone could help, please contact SDC.

It was agreed the NCI would be asked to come and give a talk.

MH

**Date of next Meeting:** 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at Dartmouth Yacht Club, 1900.

Chairman ..... Date .....