

RIVER DART COMMERCIAL USERS GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held at Dartmouth Yacht Club on 5th September 2011

<p>Present: P Sheardown (Chair), I Noble, J Robinson, T Morris, J Holman, M Holman, S Norvill, D Ridalls, N Brown, P Chorley, P Smith, R Giles (Harbourmaster), T Hoile, B Hollis, M Smallwood (Minutes)</p> <p>Apologies Becky Taylor, Mark Sharman, Jasmine Hervey, Lorraine Fleming</p> <p>Minutes of the previous meeting One amendment: on page one, under Chairman's Report, replaceMCAs.... with ... MCZs The Minutes were then proposed by Melanie Holman, seconded by Tom Morris, approved by all and signed.</p> <p>Matters Arising The Harbourmaster confirmed that the fee for the Hoodown Development and a SAC within 1000 metres was not significant.</p> <p>Dave Ridalls brought up the question of visitors raising their engines when mooring on the visitor pontoon. This can damage other boats on the pontoon. Rob Giles felt this was a good point and would look into it. It was suggested that signage could be put up and an insert also put into the Dart Harbour handbook next year.</p> <p>Chairman's Report Phil Sheardown welcomed Steve Norvill and Jeremy Robinson to the meeting as new members.</p> <p>He noted his own company was slightly up on last year with the number of trips launched.</p> <p>He reported on the suggestion of a Dartmouth-St Malo sailing ferry. The Harbourmaster stated the people behind this idea had the verbal support of Dart Harbour, however it was unlikely to be operational by 2012.</p> <p>Phil had noted there had been a meeting of the Friends of Dart Harbour, however as he was not on their mailing list, was not aware of the meeting. This was noted by the Harbourmaster.</p> <p>Phil asked about a winter patrol vessel for the Dart Harbour volunteers. The Harbourmaster stated that "The Maid" would likely fill this role and it was licensed to carry 8 passengers.</p> <p>Treasurer's Report Ian Noble reported that the bank balance was £544 at present. He requested annual sub payments from members who have not paid this year. Annual fees paid now by new members would cover 2012 also.</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <p>RG</p> <p>RG</p>
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Harbour Master's Report

Rob Giles reported that although all Dart Harbour moorings are full, there had been a downturn in the number of visitors to the Dart. This was reflected throughout the South West as a whole, with an average downturn of 10%. April of this year, however, was incredibly busy – probably due to the Royal Wedding and the public holidays that month.

Regatta has passed reasonably well and he paid tribute to his staff who had worked very hard over the period, particularly ensuring the commercial quay on the South Embankment remained fully operational. There had been an incident in the river after the Fireworks Display on the Saturday night when a fishing vessel from Brixham had got caught up in the moorings. As a result, the skipper has been banned from entering the Dart for 18 months. Bad seamanship and over-drinking were issues which the harbourmaster took very seriously. In 2012, more measures will be taken and the Police rib and response cars onshore will also be available as back up to the Dart harbour staff.

The Hoodown Development was still ongoing. It would be a most useful facility once completed.

Dart Harbour was looking at replacing the Stoke Gabriel pontoon. Also, creating 12 interchangeable pontoons and improved temporary berthing facilities.

The temporary berths issue now appears to be resolved.

A couple of people had tried to operate on the River without a licence and have been stopped.

Dart Harbour is taking on a National Marine Apprentice, Michael Clarke.

In reply to a question about problems with the Dittisham ramp, the Harbourmaster confirmed that he was waiting for a quote to revamp the whole facility. The slippery surface would be addressed straightaway and he would be monitoring the problem closely.

RG

Speeding Boats

Phil Sheardown stated he had noticed fewer boats speeding upriver this year, however a Dart Harbour vessel patrolling Stoke Reach and Bow Creek Mouth over afternoon and evening highwaters at weekends in the busy season would be helpful. The Harbourmaster confirmed that any boat user receiving 3 warnings would be banned from using the river for a period of time and possibly have their Dart Harbour berth revoked.

Phil Sheardown stated he had noted many transgressions of the lighting regulations upriver.

The Harbourmaster's report was well received.

AOB

Ian Noble reminded members that the three year term of office for the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer would be coming to a close in the New Year. He also commented that the sandwiches were much improved!

The junior dinghy racing over Regatta had been based at RDYC and a question was raised as to whether this had caused any problems with other river users. A comment was made about the marshals and support boats, however the commercial vessels had coped and no formal comment to the Joint Regatta Sailing Committee was felt necessary.

Rowers from Totnes Amateur Rowing Club were reported practising racing starts with up to 8 boats abreast off Stoke Gabriel. Some members indicated they felt some of the rowers were under the mistaken impression they had a right of way over other vessels.

There was an increasing problem at the pick up point at Kingswear pontoon with some users blocking the pontoon landing and refusing to move.

Date of next Meeting: Monday 12th December 2011 at DYC at 1900. This would be a short meeting, incorporating a speaker if possible, and would be followed by a “Christmas Get-together” for all members and their partners to include a buffet and wine.

Jeremy Robinson kindly offered to contact David Dimbleby to ask if he would come to the meeting and address the members for about 10-15 minutes.

JR

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1950.

Chairman Date