

DART HARBOUR COMMERCIAL USERS GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held at Dartmouth Yacht Club on Monday 14th May 2018

Present: John Holman (Chair), Melanie Holman (secretary/scribe), Robert Green (Treasurer), Nick Clarence (Dept Harbour Master), Julian Distin DH, Dave Distin, Stephen Norvill, Norman Brown, Stephen Kilpatrick, Peter Stenner, Andy Osman, Barry Hollis, Ben Morris, Scott Harris, Matt Prowse (SDC), Charlie Horton, Nik Green, Graham Bush, Hal Gillmore.

1. Apologies received; Zoe Briant-Evans, Becky Fry, Beshlie Pool, Mark Cooper HM, Simon Rendle, Mark Strudwick, Chris Craven, Mark Sharman, Andrew Pooley, Julian Carnell, Tom Morris and Perry Smith

2. Introduction from JH - Chairman

Welcome to everyone

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 29th January 2018

These were proposed by Barry Hollis, seconded by Steve Norvill and approved by all.

4. Matters Arising

None to be discussed.

5. Chairman's Report

What a cold, wet and miserable Winter! We were hoping for a nice Spring and then we got two beasts from the East. It is 30 years or more since snow like that was seen at Darthaven. The early Easter was not helpful either but the river seemed to get away comparatively lightly in comparison to other places such as Brixham and Slapton.

Input from the attendees and apologisers;

Castle Ferry; New ferry in use but affected by poor weather in recent months.

Peter Stenner @ TMS; Bad weather has proved helpful to TMS! They have bought the old boatyard in Teignmouth.

Charlie Horton; Has experienced some very cold deliveries.

Dave Distin; Boatyard full and did not suffer with the wind direction during the storms.

Matt Prowse @ SDC; students are now finishing off their courses – good numbers for next year but difficulty in finding workplacements/experience.

Hal Gillmore @ Canoe Adventures; no business in the Winter.

Barry Hollis; plenty of work

Noss report from Andy Osman; Quiet when bridge was shut but they coped.

Not all consent has been achieved for the planned development – overall scheme is still with South Hams.

Norman; Great Bank Holiday

Dolphin Boatyard; East winds not a problem – Natural England very slow with response to plans!

Steve @ Mainstay; still playing 'catch-up'.

Steve Norvill; ok now with better weather

Robert Green; All ok

Perry Smith@ Dart Boats; Behind 2017 at the moment but well ahead of 2016.

Becky @ Blackness; New dinghy and pontoon facility proving successful and a positive if delayed start to the Season.

Tom@ Totnes Kayaks; The Sunday of the Bank Holiday proved better than all of April!

Andrew Pooley @ DSRRB; Tough start to the season but improving.

Beshlie Pool @ SDandCS; Demand for crab remains very high and they are 'on the move' again as it warms up.

Many thanks for all the input.

The British Marine AGM for BMSW was recently held at the Princess Yachts company base in Plymouth Dockyard which provided an opportunity to see some 30-40m yachts in production – heading for China, Cyprus etc. There was a trip to Roscoff afterwards for those who were interested. They have installed a very large Passenger Lift there to help disabled etc to go aboard boats.

Apparently, it is proving to be very hard to recruit craftsmen (should say people, really) at Princess. They do have a good apprenticeship programme but 25% of carpenters are from Poland. And after Brexit?

Walcon Marine have purchased Docking Solutions – a heavier product – and they have a £1m order book which includes work in Dover and Ireland.

Ineos is now sponsoring the next bid for the America's Cup in New Zealand. Two 75ft foiling mono-hulls are to be built. The next challenge begins in 2021.

British Marine are reporting greater participation in activities on the water/boating, which includes canoeing and paddle boarding.

RDYC/RYA recently held a 'Try Boating' day and it proved to be a very successful and well organised event.

The Pirate Weekend in Brixham was a fun time and will have given the town's economy a boost. (The Golden Hind has been recently sold – there is a covenant to say that it has to stay where it is...)

Equally for Dartmouth, the Music Festival proved popular and for both occasions the sunny weather helped.

Darthaven has installed a Filta Bund System to collect waste material after pressure washing – it has proved to need very coarse filters to deal with the weed, barnacles etc.

Very many thanks to Nick Clarence and the DH team for their help in dealing with a 'sinking' boat on Sunday.

6. Hon Treasurer's Report

It is Minuted that Robert Green has been appointed Treasurer to the DHCUG (previously known as River Dart CUG) and is to be the Primary User of the Bank Account. He has taken over officially from Jeremy Robinson since the AGM in January.

Proposed by Ben Morris and seconded by Steve Norvill.

All members have now paid up and the balance stands at £1,809.65.

7. Harbour Master's Report (provided by Deputy, Nick Clarence)

CUG update from DHM – 14/05/2018

General news

1/ Good start to the season and looking at our figures visitor number are up compared to this time last year.

2/ Yacht taxi reduced fares seem to have been well received and we are aiming to have two yacht taxis on duty during peak times, including Fri/Sat and Sunday evenings.

3/ River Officers have started their summer working routine with a slightly changed rota. They are working until 2300hrs during evenings in the week finishing with the YT drivers, to avoid lone working. River Officers are finishing at 1845hrs on Fri/Sat and Sun evenings with two yacht taxis on duty after that finishing at 2300hrs. One yacht taxi driver will handle any visiting vessels coming in. The harbour office hours remain the same.

Facilities/Pontoons

1/ Temp seasonal pontoon is installed at Dittisham (southern end this time).

2/ Temp trial of modular pontoon (t shape) is being trailed for a week at Double steps to help alleviate the tenders/dinghies overcrowding issue. Approximately for one week and then it will be moved to Stoke Point at Stoke Gabriel as a trial for a ferry landing pontoon.

3/ 6 x replacement LWL pontoons are on order (from last year's capital spend) and should be delivered within the next few weeks. Expected to install them at the end of the season to avoid disruption to berth holders

4/ Fisherman's Pontoon grant funding application submitted to the Coastal Communities Fund. Proposed new heavier duty pontoon, water, power, lighting and some improved storage etc

5/ Dartmouth grid remains out of use until an agreement has been signed between SHDC and DHNA. HM endeavouring to find a way forward with SHDC. Hoodown Grid (owned by DHNA) remains in use for small vessels of certain type. Bookable at the harbour office. Conditions apply.

6/ Double steps – new small passenger boat operator has started running. HM has confirmed will be reviewing the licensing arrangements and fees for all commercial vessel use of alongside/walk ashore berths in Dartmouth as there appears to be a significant amount of disquiet about operations on these berths. All operators are reminded to operate in safe fashion and within their licensing arrangements. They also all need to try and help each with landing and pick-ups during busier periods on this facility. In particular operators need to remain with their boats when alongside.

Navigation

DHNA have installed 4 x port hand lateral beacons (unlit) at Totnes to mark the underwater ledge around Vire Island. In consultation and approval with our other stakeholder group (ARDUC).

Re-location of several navigation marks in the higher reaches of Bow Creek and around Ashprington Point to more accurately identify the main channel.

Safety

There have been letters received about speeding episodes.

The RNLI have reported some engine failures.

Throttle cable broke on a Lower Ferry.

Petrol has been reported as being stolen.

The leaking boat.

8. A.O.B.

1. Double Steps; Concern has been raised by members about the safe use of these steps as there is an increase in the number of operators who use them. They are being monitored. NC
A debate will begin as to how best the steps can be suitably and safely used/shared. How many businesses can be accommodated there? JD

2. New Steps that have been installed opposite to Sharpham; Concern has also been raised about the appearance of steps on property owned by Mr Andrew Reid who put in a retrospective planning application for them and has been building a barn above.

On this issue, it was agreed that the Chairman would be writing to South Hams/DH Board with comments from the members.

A letter was also requested to be sent to DH concerning excessive light pollution from the new White Rock development and its impact on the otherwise dark skies of the river.

3. There will be a 'blue light' conference on the 13th June. NC

4. Plymouth Uni are doing a project on Juvenile sea bass to promote better understanding. NC

5. Various cruise ships are expected to visit the river (see website for details) NC

6. Zoe Briant-Evans (DH Representative) has been unable to attend various meetings and this has been due to issues beyond her control. She has confidence in Julian Distin to be a 'voice/listener' in her place and wishes to express her disappointment that she has been unable to be present more often. If a member wishes to contact her then she can be reached through the DH office. JD.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

9. Date of next Meeting Monday September 24th at DYC 19.00 tbc

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20.50

Chair Date.....