

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) Harbour Commissioners
Minutes of a Meeting of
The Yarmouth Harbour Advisory Committee
held at the Harbour Office,
on 9th June 2009 at 0900 hours

PRESENT	Sylvia Mence, Chairman	Royal Yachting Association
	Ron Goodridge	Yarmouth Town Council
	Mike Hayles	Commercial Fishermen's Association
	Julia Bridgeman	Yarmouth Business Association
	George Cameron, Vice Chairman	Freshwater Parish Council
	Marigold Morphy	Yarmouth Sailing Club
	Malcolm Thorpe	Royal Solent Yacht Club
	Valerie Cooke	Totland Parish Council
	Steve Wartman	British Marine Federation
		Chief Executive/Harbour Master
IN ATTENDANCE	Chris Lisher	Commissioner
	Tim Francis	Minutes Secretary
	Sarah Humphries	Estuaries Officer
APOLOGIES	Sue Hawley	Wightlink
	Jon Matthews	Yarmouth Business Association
	Danny Arthur	Deputy Harbour Master
	Charlotte Beeby	

The Chairman welcomed Tim Francis, newly appointed Commissioner responsible for the environment who was in attendance and Julia Bridgeman of the YBA substituting for Danny Arthur. Thanks were due to Steve Wartman for his time on GAC/YHAC who would soon be leaving the area.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of YHAC held on 14th April 2009 were approved.

A. Operational Update

1. Matters Arising

1.1 Yar Bridge Works

Works are now complete and took a total of 5 weeks.

1.2 Changes To Improve Ferry Traffic Flow

Members were concerned about aspects of the recent changes:

- the entrance/exit road to the Harbour Office needs a white road marking to highlight that is a two-way road
- signage on the main road for this new two-way road should be checked
- the "pinch" point now created outside Bridge Road car park is causing delays for all traffic

Works within the current Wightlink marshalling area are due to commence this month.

2. Deputy Harbour Master's Review

A total of nine piles have now been replaced. There has been much discussion regarding which material to use (steel or wood) and the decision to use steel was made. The harbour suffers from Accelerated Low Water Corrosion (ALWC) which is actually a microbe which attacks the steel and produces an orange bloom. It is present in some areas of the harbour but not in others. Current advice on how to deal with this problem is limited but suggests the use of anodes. The cost effectiveness of this being investigated.

The Old Gaffers Festival seemed to go very well for the harbour, with 110 Old Gaffer boats moored. There were fewer incidents reported. This year. The CE/HM has however written to Wightlink regarding the serious problems resulting from only two instead of three ferries in operation on the Saturday. This resulted in both unbooked cars and hundreds of foot passengers being stranded in Lymington. Members echoed their dissatisfaction with the service during one of the busiest weekends of the year.

3. Wightlink New Ferries

Jon Matthews was unable to attend the meeting as he was involved with the trials in Lymington of the Emergency Berthing Barge for slipways. He had sent an email report to the Chairman:

- The Judicial Review (Lymington River Association v. Defra and Wightlink) has been deferred until October
- Discussion with Natural England on mitigation for the effect of the new ferries on Lymington River continues
- Essential maintenance work at Lymington berth will take place in late June
- A statement from Wightlink's marketing department had explained that the decision to run two, not three, ferries on the Saturday of the Old Gaffers Festival had been based on the previous year's figures. The good weather and rumours that this could be the last year for the Festival, due to the withdrawal of IWC's financial support, had resulted in higher than usual numbers. Until additional seasonal crews are recruited it was only possible to run three ferries on a limited number of occasions, based on the previous year's statistics

The Committee judged this response from Wightlink's marketing department to be unsatisfactory. There was concern that Wightlink did not appear to be proactive in resolving issues such as this which have serious repercussions on Yarmouth. Members would write individually to Wightlink.

4. Safety

No issues to report.

B ADVISORY ISSUES

1. Matters Arising

1.1 Revised Constitution for Advisory Committees 12/01/09: Clarification of Item 10.3.

Following clarification from the Commissioners, the Committee agreed to request that the Commissioners omit the words 'or the organisations entitled to representation on the Committee' and reissue the document.

2. Harbour Revision Order

The Chairman outlined the background to the HRO and the meeting of the former GAC with Gus Lewis, the RYA Legal and Government Manager, in April, held because GAC had objected to the HRO in line with the views of the RYA. As its concerns had now been addressed, the RYA had withdrawn its former objection. Gus had described some of the agreed changes and pointed to the substantial gains from the RYA point of view:

- An independent adjudication procedure for disputes between YHC and objector(s) to any proposed General Direction.
- The range of consultees to proposed General Directions had been widened.
- Article 18 (Power to designate parts of harbour, etc) was now subject to Schedule 3, i.e. the same procedure of public consultation as that of General Directions.

The April meeting had discussed the introduction in the HRO of a "zone", i.e. the bathing area off Norton Spit, for the safety of swimmers and environmental protection of the Spit. According to the Commissioners, this had been in place for some seasons without complaint. The RYA's view has been clarified since the meeting: "on the basis that the proposed area was small, shallow, seasonal, there was no slipway or other access point from the shore to the sea within the proposed area, vessels would be permitted to enter the area in an emergency and the impact on yachtsmen and other boaters was likely to be negligible, the RYA should not object to the Commissioners' proposals in this case."

Any organisation represented on the former GAC could write to the DfT expressing its concern about the bathing "zone" issue.

The April meeting had instructed the Chairman to inform the Secretary of State:

1. That the objection by the former General Advisory Committee to the HRO dated 14 March 2008 may be treated as withdrawn in line with the RYA's withdrawal of objection; but that
2. In the view of the former General Advisory Committee the HRO has since undergone such change that the revised document should now be subject to public consultation. I will bring this to the attention of the new Yarmouth Harbour Advisory Committee.

As the time limit for objections has now passed, YHAC decided to take no further action.

The CE/HM reported that some other objectors had withdrawn their objection in line with the RYA but some had not responded to date.

3. Planning Applications

3.1 SW Corner Development

Planning permission has now been granted. This includes the extension to some of the pontoons. The Commissioners have agreed mitigation with Natural England. A member requested a copy of the proposed plans and the CE/HM confirmed that he would make these available on the notice board in Reception as soon as possible.

3.2 Reception Area

The majority of work in the Reception area is now complete. This includes the introduction of new sofas, a hot drinks machine, a new spinner in the laundry area and an improved area where harbour users can go online. YHC are still trying to iron out some problems associated with the fuel berth and the new tills and are currently in discussion with the contractor regarding this. Planning permission for the proposed extension to the underneath of the balcony to try to improve the view from Reception to the fuel berth has now been granted but this has not progressed as there are problems with the building regulations. This is being investigated as it may be that the associated costs will prohibit the work moving forward.

4. AGM 27th April 2009

The CE/HM offered to run through the computer slides from the AGM containing details of the Harbour's finances to members of the Committee who were not present at the meeting in April. This was done at the end of the meeting.

5. Events

There will be a marquee on the Green for most of the month of September. There is wedding scheduled for the first weekend, a mid week lunch party and a possible charity event for 'Toe in the Water' for the following weekend. The plan was also to hold a food festival for the third weekend of the month but this is looking less likely due to lack of funding from the IW Council.

The Chairman distributed copies of the 'Guide to Yarmouth' booklet amongst the Committee. This booklet was produced by Wightlink as a goodwill gesture to Yarmouth businesses and it is anticipated that this may be something that will continue year on year. 40,000 copies have been produced. The CE/HM suggested that some copies be brought over to the harbour office and be placed inside the Harbour Guide booklets that have also just arrived for visiting yachtsman. The YBA representative outlined recent discussions with the Harbour about the possibility of holding some kind of a Christmas festival in Yarmouth at the beginning of December. The YBA wish to be proactive in their relationships with Wightlink, the Harbour and the Town Council in order to introduce events in Yarmouth that will be successful every year.

6. CE/HM Report

6.1 New Commissioners

There are now three new Commissioners – Tim Francis who is responsible for environmental issues, Belinda Walters who will be dealing with legal matters and James Howe who will focus on Health & Safety.

6.2 Oil Spill Exercise

There has recently been an oil spill exercise for all office staff. Previously such exercises only involved operational staff and it was felt that this needed to be extended to ensure that admin staff were also fully prepared for such an incident.

6.3 Town Quay Piles

The piles on Town Quay are due for replacement and this is scheduled for some time in September this year and should take approximately two weeks.

6.4 Repairs to Linkspan

There remain some snagging issues with the Linkspan and these repairs are scheduled to take place in October during spring tides. During this period of time, the ferry will have to dock at the emergency slipway for approx 2-3 days, using the barge.

6.5 South West Corner Development

Now that planning permission has been given, applications for the following licences are being processed:

FEPA (2 licences), Flood defence, and Capital Dredging.

The borehole work in the car park is exploratory work for the Development. Work could begin in October. The application for grant funding for a maximum of 50% of the cost will be made in July with a decision expected at the end of September. The Commissioners will then decide whether to go ahead.

The Committee raised the issues of manoeuvrability in the area of the Bridge and the proposed development, which had been raised previously by GAC members and their organisations. There was also concern to see the up-to date plan of the development as sent to Planning. The CE/HM reported that, in view of the concerns, an independent Risk Assessment had been commissioned and its report had only just arrived in the office. Agreement was reached:

- that YHAC members would have copies of the Risk Assessment report emailed to them unless it was very lengthy and meant hard copies would be preferable and available from Reception. This may not be sent until the CE/HM's return from leave at the end of the month.
- A copy of the large-scale plan would be posted on the Reception Notice Board.
- If a special meeting was required to discuss the report and plan, this would be held on 28 July at 0900, as the next scheduled meeting was not until 8 September. The Chairman would inform members.

6.6 Harbour Guide

The new Harbour Guide has now arrived and is available in Reception as is the latest Yarmouth Harbour Newsletter.

7. Environmental Matters

There was nothing to report.

8. Any Other Business

A member raised the issue of Rallies booked for a Bank Holiday Monday arriving in the afternoon so that berths were empty at lunch time when crews could have been using local businesses. The CE/HM explained that it is a balancing act as the booked rallies are far more likely to come than the short stay visitors and bring greater income to the harbour, and that Yarmouth is unique in that it has half of its berths available to visitors, many harbours being for residents only. People also like the certainty of being able to book. Another member pointed out that sailing is dependent on the tides so introducing a standard time window when boats were able to arrive/depart would just not be practical.

9. Date of next meetings:

Tuesday 8th September, 13th October, 8th December.

Possible 'special' meeting scheduled for Tuesday 28th July at 0900 to discuss the South West Corner Development.

The meeting ended at 11am.