
THE SENTINEL



Newsletter of the Bembridge and St Helens Harbour Association

No. 46 October 2012

Chairman's Letter

Dear Member,

The last six months have been eventful. New owners Malcolm and Fiona Thorpe and all with an interest in Bembridge Harbour were delighted when the long awaited **dredger** finally arrived on 29 May 2012 and started work. The Thorpes have been keeping lines of communication open through their monthly On the Wind newsletter and the biannual Bembridge Breeze. Matters of common interest or concern can be raised with the Bembridge Harbour Advisory Group (BHAG), on which Robin Powell represents BASHHA and BHUG. Houseboat owners have separate meetings. *See page 2*

Successful **Beach Cleans** took place in April and September. We were awarded another Certificate for Litter Picking in the harbour area and £100 cheque by CPRE and were featured in the County Press. We were pleased to donate the cheque to Bembridge Community Library as BASHHA does not have charitable status.

The completion of the splendid **St Helens Duffer wall** by Island firm Imphouse Ltd. was celebrated at a grand Opening Ceremony performed by Bilko Dyer on 30 July, attended by the contractors, IWC representatives, members of the St Helens and Bembridge Coastal and Harbour Working Group and others. *See page 4*

An application to create a **Village Green on Bembridge Point** was made by Mary Chappell in 2001 supported by witness statements. Amendments were subsequently made to reduce the area involved, excluding any former car parks and mineral extraction works and a few recent extras. However a decision may finally be determined by a special IWC committee this autumn. Watch this space!

People may have observed that for some time the Bembridge Point area has needed improving to make it a more attractive entrance to the Village Centre. After the Spring Beach Clean this year it was decided to propose a **Bembridge Point Tidy Up** project. This was submitted

to the Parish Council for approval and support and was passed on to the Village Partnership. *See page 3.*

BASHHA now has a majority of Life members but many **Annual members have overlooked paying their 2012 subs.** We do need this money, and we hope the arrival of the Sentinel 46 will serve as a reminder and prompt action. In future we will send out reminders in January.

The **2013 Annual General Meeting** will be on 16 March at St. Helens. See brief report of the **2012 AGM** on p.4.

Marine Conservation Zones consultation phase starts in December, but since the NE/ JNCC recommendations concerns are emerging. *See p.3-4*

I am delighted to tell you that **Martin Woodward** has kindly agreed to give our next Know Your Harbour talk. We much enjoyed Martin's last presentation and this time his topic will be **Treasures from the Deep** from earliest times to the present. Don't miss it.

*Yours sincerely,
Barbara Clough, Chairman*

KNOW YOUR HARBOUR 20

Martin Woodward
on

Treasures from the Deep

Tuesday 16 October 7.30 pm
Bembridge Village Hall

Bembridge Harbour Advisory Group (BHAG)

update on primary matters reviewed at the last meeting

Local Notices to Mariners. These are now being issued as required. LNTM 3/12 gives clearer guidelines on when boats with a tow should report details to the Harbour Authority.

Dredging. The initial task (including the BSC bar in the area of No 12 One-Design) has been completed. The post-dredge survey indicated that a good job had been done. The equipment will be returning in the Spring to dredge Bembridge Marina, Fisherman's Pontoon and possibly BHYC plus the area of the BSC Scow pontoon.

Pontoons. The initial 70m extension to the Visitors Pontoon has been completed and the pontoons of the Fisherman's Pontoon have been replaced (double width in places). The Best Dressed Crab processing barge is now afloat alongside the Fisherman's Pontoon although not yet in its final position. Re-decking of Bembridge Marina is expected to be carried out in the Autumn.

Tide Gauge. Repairs have been made and it has been agreed that consideration should be given to replacing the actual marking gauge which is almost unreadable towards the bottom.

Litter Bins on the Beach. A green 240 litre 'Wheelie Bin' has now been put in place.

Channel Dredging. A "channel walk" took place earlier in the year. The news that Malcolm Thorpe, Chris Turvey & Nigel Bennett will be undertaking a similar visit every couple of months was welcomed.

Houseboats. BHA is concerned about raw sewage being discharged into the harbour. All 'new' boats are required to have a suitable system before being occupied.

Arctic will be moving into the berth previously occupied by Harmony and will be moored stern to Embankment Road. Concerns over the undermining of the

embankment were expressed and BHA will be keeping a close eye on the work being carried out. The maximum permitted height for houseboats is confirmed as 21ft above the waterline.

50th Anniversary: 31st July 2013. BHA has circulated a document seeking suggestions for ways of celebrating the formation of Bembridge Harbour Improvements Company Ltd in July 1963. It was agreed that in addition to the organisations represented at BHAG this should also involve Bembridge PC, St Helens PC, local businesses, the BBA and the Bembridge Village Regatta Committee. It is also hoped that local schools will be involved. We understand that BHA will be talking to the National Trust to investigate the possibility of using The Duver for the weekend.

BHA News. BHA publishes a monthly news letter *On the Wind* and a more comprehensive twice-yearly *Bembridge Breeze*. Look at the Harbour website www.bembridgeharbour.co.uk - for details of how to obtain copies. BHA has been asked to ensure copies are placed in Bembridge Library.

Fuel. BHA circulated a questionnaire regarding fuel requirements in Bembridge. From the information obtained it was evident that the demand does not warrant the investment that would be required for BHA to provide and operate such a facility. (This would be petrol and not diesel as most diesel powered boats have arrangements in place from existing facilities). BHA might make space available for anybody interested in carrying out a third party operation. It is understood that the RNLI and BSC are investigating the possibilities of becoming self sufficient.

Robin Powell (Chairman BHUG)

Marine Conservation Zones update

Natural England and the JNCC submitted their formal advice and Impact Assessment, to Defra on 18 July 2012. Ministers will examine the advice before deciding which sites should be considered for designation in the first tranche in summer 2013. These sites, and those recommended by the regional projects will be included in the **public consultation** that will run for three months from December 2012. That will be an opportunity for stakeholders to make their views known, and to submit any new additional evidence they feel ought to be taken into account by Ministers.

Once a site has been designated as an MCZ by Defra, Natural England and the JNCC will provide advice to regulatory Marine Management Organisations (MMOs) and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs). Regulators will undertake public consultations on appropriate management measures.

The Minister announced **additional funding** for seabed and habitat monitoring to support MCZ designation and work in other areas such as the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

An **Independent Expert Review Group** was established to review the protocols by which the advice of Natural England and the JNCC on site designations was formulated. It also reviewed the advice itself.

(Notes above condensed by JS from: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/protect/mpa/mcz/ which links to the reports and other documents.)

Balanced Seas had a good degree of stakeholder support, but **NE/ JNCC advice** goes rather further, and will cause problems for some groups. The following was extracted [with permission] by JS from a longer report by **Alan Deeming**, a member of the **IW stakeholder group**.

Anglers, seagrass and MCZ

The final recommendations from the Balanced Seas team would see 75% of the entire Island coastline, including 90% of its Solent coastline, being designated whilst almost all of the remainder is subject to existing protection status.

anchoring and seagrass beds

Last year we estimated there being in excess of 800 angling boats based in various locations along the Solent (NW & NE) coasts of the island. Of particular concern to these boat anglers is the prospect of not being allowed to anchor virtually anywhere inshore within the Solent MCZs because the main feature being protected is our **seagrass**, *Zostera marina*. This concern is also shared by the RYA representing the vast number of yachts that also use the Solent.

The mitigating actions proposed in official documents consist of either providing permanent mooring points or displacing activities outside of the MCZs

The main shipping channel in the middle of the Solent combined with very strong tides precludes island based boats from displacing their angling activity outside the MCZs.

Anglers need to anchor at specific productive locations and thus permanent moorings are not a viable option.

Local scientists have agreed that our seagrass beds are in good condition and have expanded over a number of years so there is clearly no evidence to suggest that the current level of activity is having any significant detrimental impact. A stakeholder group for Studland Bay has produced a document that calls into question the

claimed vulnerability of local seagrass. We fully accept the need to preclude any new damaging activity such as commercial dredging either for shellfish or aggregates.

The bottom line is that anglers and sailors wish to be able to continue to anchor within Solent MCZs and they would be prepared to accept a reasonably low upper limit to the weight of their anchor.

high MCZ/ high scientific study concentration

Whilst we accept that we are unable to change the recommendations, it is most unfortunate that the high concentration of recommended MCZs round the Island seems to be more the result of a higher concentration of scientific study than necessarily an actual higher existence of Features of Conservation Interest. The proximity, at Southampton, of the National Oceanography Centre may be a contributing factor.

buffer zones

Another specific concern is the general requirement contained in the advice document from NE for Reference Areas to be made larger to provide a buffer zone round them. Had this been considered at local stakeholder meetings, the level of stakeholder support would almost certainly have been far less in many cases. The **Tyne Ledges Reference Area (RA)** is one such which was specifically commented on for enlargement.

We obviously support the principle of MCZs as it should help protect fish stocks although it was disappointing that direct conservation of most fin fish was not included. We do, however need any restrictions to be seen to be fair and proportionate. *(from Alan Deeming's report)*

Bembridge Point Tidy Up Project

After the BASHHA Beach Clean in April, it was decided that the Bembridge Point area, effectively the entrance to Bembridge Village, was in urgent need of improvement.

A letter requesting approval and support was submitted to the Parish Council who fortunately had similar ideas. They passed it on to the Village Partnership who, having looked at the detailed proposal, have given their approval and have agreed to fund the Project which will involve three areas. These are:

Bembridge Point entrance; the grassed verge area maintained by IW Highways between Embankment Road and Kings Road together with the overgrown rear part; the untidy area along Station Road where signpost Public Footpath BB19 is located.

It will be a community project involving willing volunteers and contributions from several organisations. The end result should be an enhanced and more attractive local environment.

Malcolm Thorpe was happy to give his support, although urgent harbour matters such as obtaining a dredging

licence and upgrading facilities had to take priority. A large wheelie bin has been installed to help combat the litter that spoils the environment.

Some time ago Rights of Way erected a new signpost "Bembridge Point" on the verge opposite the Pilot Boat Inn. The intention is to add arms directing to the Coastal Path. Currently there is no indication that the Bembridge Trail starts here, nor that the route from Bembridge Point to Brading is also part of the Yar River Trail.

The Point area has a rich history and we think an information board near the signpost would be of considerable interest and an asset to residents, walkers and visitors. Permission to erect a lectern type information board is awaited from IWC.

Two Monterey Cypresses are a feature of the central area, both in need of tree specialist attention. One has a Tree Protection Order(TPO). We plan to clear the overgrown area and replant in a natural manner that will require little maintenance and approach the badly neglected area of the BB19 signpost in a similar way. *Barbara Clough*

St Helens Duver Sea Wall

The new wall certainly looks elegant and improves the landscape. The swirled walkway surface is a delight to walk on. Thanks to Mike Samuelson for the photo below.

The works were completed on time and within budget. An information plaque concludes “Thanks to all who made this possible” — which might include all who contributed to the *Eastern Yar Strategy* and the *Shoreline Management Plan*.

You can see an IWC video of the grand opening,

including an interview with Bilko Dyer on Youtube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciZ6B53XKcA; while for some excellent closeups of the works from, er, another point of view, see “Erasing WW2 history — st helens duver...” by WWII pillbox enthusiasts:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVJU0kcbDiU

Stills by Mike Samuelson are at tinyurl.com/8oefbdg and by Imphouse at

www.imphouse.org.uk/st%20Helens%20Duver.htm



Annual General Meeting 17 March 2012

An eventful year in which BHIC went into Administration, the Harbour was put up for sale, and new owner Malcolm Thorpe announced in December 2011. Full Minutes will be available at the AGM 2013. Officers and Committee were re-elected en bloc.

After the business of the meeting Malcolm Thorpe spoke on *Getting under Way in Bembridge Harbour*.

AGM 2013
Saturday 16th March
2.30 pm

**St Helens Community
Centre**

Have you paid your 2012 Subscription? We really do need your money! Please use the form below, or download from www.bashha.org.uk

Bembridge & St Helens Harbour Association 2012/13 Membership Application/Renewal

I/We wish to apply for/ renew membership of the Association and enclose a remittance as follows:

Ordinary membership	Annual	£5	Life	£50
Family membership		£6		£60
Reduced membership		£4		£40
Donation				

Name(s).....

Address.....

..... telephone.....

Email.....

Signature..... date.....

I should like to receive the Sentinel by email..... YES..... NO.....

*Please send cheques to Christine Grant, BASHHA Hon Treasurer, 3 King's Close, Bembridge PO35 5NX.
 Personal information supplied by you will be treated in confidence and will not be supplied to any third party*

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