
THE SENTINEL



Bembridge and St Helens Harbour Association

No. 48 October 2013

Bilko Dyer Bembridge Harbour – Looking Back
Wednesday 23 October, 7p.m. Bembridge Village Hall

Chairman's Letter

Dear Member,

Our **24th AGM** took place on 16 March at St Helens Community Centre attended by 30 members – fewer than usual – possibly owing to a conflict with the Rugby International! Janet Shuter led the discussion on the future of BASHHA. The feeling was that it has a role to play providing a forum for environmental and other interests in addition to the maritime role of Bembridge Harbour Users Group (BHUG).

I am delighted to say that as a result of our appeal for help, Ron and Sally Willbie are taking over **Sentinel delivery**, and that Mark Hickman has taken charge of **beach cleans**. However, there are still many job vacancies to fill, including the roles of chairman and secretary. It is essential to have core officers in place for 2014, and we do not want to leave it to chance. So, please, if you would like to help in any way at all, contact me now.

I gave notice that **I would be retiring** at the AGM in 2014. It has been a privilege to lead the Association and I am proud of what we have achieved. I sincerely hope that someone will accept the challenge and bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the job.

We regret to report the loss of **Barbara Blackburn** who died in March. She was one of the Founder members of BASHHA and had served on the Committee ever since. We are very grateful for her hard work and support. We convey our sincere condolences to her family.

Bembridge Harbour Authority held a **Celebration Weekend** 26-28 July 2013. (See BHUG report, p.3) Reports appeared in August *On the Wind* and in *Island Life*. It was good publicity for Bembridge Harbour and

large sums were raised for charity.

Well supported **Beach Cleans** took place in Bembridge and St Helens in April and at Bembridge Point prior to the Celebration Weekend including the welcome removal and subsequent safe disposal of noxious ragwort.

Submitted in 2001, the Application for a **Village Green** on part of **Bembridge Point** will finally be determined on 23rd October at an IWC meeting.

In May I attended a packed meeting with Richard Benyon MP to discuss the concerns of many organisations on the Island regarding the impact that **MCZ** restrictions would have on yachting and commercial and recreational fishing interests of the Island which depends heavily on Tourism. The MP listened to concerns carefully and assured those present that all factors would be taken into account.

BHUG and **Bembridge Harbour Advisory Group** report steady progress at their meetings. (Brief notes p.3) Research into the cost/benefit of the restoration of **Bembridge Groyne** is being undertaken by **Michael MacInnes**, Chairman BHT (see p.3) Any supporting evidence would be welcomed. The **Shoreline Management Plan** and **Embankment Road** is discussed elsewhere.

I am delighted that well known local historian and speaker **Bilko Dyer** has kindly agreed to talk to us on 23 October on **Bembridge Harbour—Looking Back**. (See inset above). **Put it in your Diary now!** We look forward to seeing you there

Yours sincerely,
Barbara Clough, Chairman

Embankment Road Update

In accordance with IWC's **Eastern Yar Strategy** in the **Shoreline Management Plan** Embankment Road is to be strengthened. The flood and coast protection objective is to ensure that the European habitat sites are protected in compliance with legal obligations.

"It is predicted that sea levels will rise during the lifetime of the Strategy (100-years) due to climate change. This will result in increased overtopping at Embankment Road. This in turn will increase the saline intrusion to the internationally protected sites within Brading Marshes. This is not permitted. It would also expose the properties bounding Embankment Road to increased tidal flood risk.

"In addition an increase in overtopping would likely lead to a permanent breach of Embankment Road over the duration of the Strategy.

"This would directly expose Brading Marshes to the sea, which in turn would increase the risk of flooding to properties in Sandown, Brading and Yaverland [and] a temporary loss of transport infrastructure and risk of severance of services ... and local impacts to recreational potential of Bembridge Harbour..."

There was talk of work beginning in 2014, and **Michael MacInnes** recently chased it up with the **Environment Agency**, resulting in a useful exchange:

When is it expected that the Embankment level raising might take place?

We anticipate that the project start date will be in 2014/15 (dependant on successful funding bid.) NB: physical work on the ground would start maybe 2 years further down the line. Initial work will be pulling together business case, costings, detailed design etc first.

Have detailed plans for this been set up yet?

No detailed plans exist as yet. If the project is successful in its funding bid the detailed design process would be expected to begin in 2015/16.

If not are there outline plans?

The strategy recommends a Standard of Protection of 1 in 25 years. We have no information more detailed than what is already in the strategy/published consultations.

Will it require Isle of Wight Planning consent?

Isle of Wight Planning consent will be required depending on the scope of the scheme. The scheme may be allowed under permitted development, in which case a full application may not be required. We will know nearer to the time whether planning consent will be required.

Where does the proposed raised reinforcing wall stop going East?

These elements would be assessed during the detailed design stage of the project and will depend on a number of factors e.g. cost, size, permitted development rights, etc. [Options are to extend to Pump Lane or round a Bembridge Spit contour(JS)]

Is it in your budget and how much is budgeted?

We estimated that the project would cost in the region of £8million. We will not know until February 2014 if government funding has been secured, but at the moment it has an indicative allocation for 2014/15. It is worth noting that as the allocation is only indicative it may be subject to change.

Thanks to Michael for sharing this with us. You can read or download the whole *Shoreline Management Plan* at www.coastalwight.gov.uk/smp/contents.htm . (JS)

Bembridge Point Tidy Up

This ongoing project has achieved much of what it intended, with the exception of replanting owing to recent weather conditions!

Notable improvements have been made – the ugly fallen boulder and post by the Point entrance road has been removed, pot holes filled, the posts and chain railings have been repainted and a **new Bus Stop** has been erected. The Palmer Memorial troughs have been cleared of rubble and surrounds weeded. A **litter bin** has been provided on Point Beach.

In **Station Road** an Information board has been erected near the Bembridge Point signpost. In the upper half an attractive map features both the Bembridge and the Yar River Trails which follow identical routes for about 4 miles between Bembridge and Brading where they diverge. The lower half features pictures of historical interest about the Point area. The 11 mile Bembridge to Newport **Bembridge Trail leaflet** has been updated, walked, verified and republished and will be available to the public. A smart new IWC litter bin has been installed.

The Toilets are currently being renovated and refurbished. Under Parish Council ownership everyone benefits from year round opening!

The Project has involved considerable time and effort by individuals and organisations, for which we are most grateful. A celebration of the Re-launch of the Bembridge Trail will take place shortly. The approach to Bembridge Village Centre now looks far more attractive and welcoming. (BC)

abbreviations bookmark

Jenny Maconchy was concerned at the constant confusing abbreviations we face and devised a very useful aide memoire Bookmark for BASHHA to assist with the some of those in current use. The attractive Bookmark is available in Bembridge Community Library and at Association events

BHUG Report

The weather this summer has certainly made a difference and resulted in many more visitors to the harbour. The **Harbour Celebration weekend** was judged a great success and Malcolm & Fiona Thorpe were extremely grateful for everyone's input & support. The profile of the harbour had certainly been enhanced. The only events that had not really worked as well as had been hoped had been the Street Fair on the Sunday morning and the Photographic Exhibition. The **Dance on the Duver** was a sell out and raised roughly £3,200 for the RNLI & the Hospice. Sail4Cancer were very pleased with the amount of exposure they gained and anticipated receiving about £1,300 from cake sales, donations and the raffle.

It is more than likely that there will be another **Village Sailing Regatta** next year (26th July 2014) with the **Dance on the Duver** in the evening. The Regatta will hopefully include paddle boarding, canoeing and another Paper Boat Race.

BSC & BHYC **dinghy training weeks** over the summer were very well supported and had benefited from the relatively benign conditions. Similarly, the various Club Regattas had all gone well, although the numbers of competitors had been a bit disappointing.

Fewer harbour **trot moorings** were laid this summer which allowed for better dinghy sailing in the harbour; they are being winterised in early October which is somewhat earlier than previous years and will benefit the Illusion sailors. **Bembridge Boat Storage** is gaining customers and the new dock face and dredged access

channel is working well. The possibility of a fuelling facility remains under review.

Outer harbour dredging by Nigel Bennett continues when tides allow. He has reported a steady increase in the height of the shingle bar (aka the Fort Road) over the last 12 months and although he has managed to smooth off a few bumps, it remains the shallowest part of the channel. He has also promised to remove the causeway he built a couple of years ago between Nos 4 & 5 buoys which is the next shallowest area. He has also advised that he will be replenishing the gravel on **Warners beach front** soon. Apparently what had originally been a 5 year exercise has now become an annual one - a clear indication of the changes over the last decade in availability of natural material being deposited in the area by the long-shore drift.

Updating of the **Harbour Management Plan** is planned for early next year. BHT have just been requested by BHA to lead on the possibility of repairing/re-building the Bembridge Groyne as currently the latter has neither the time or funds to proceed.

Yachting Monthly are going to do a historical article on the harbour similar to the one they had published recently on Chichester. The lead author visited over the weekend of 21st & 22nd September and was particularly grateful for sight of the **1995 BASHHA Report** and took away a photocopy of the historical section.

Mike Samuelson

Bembridge Groyne

BHAG members think that the final disintegration of Bembridge Groyne is increasing harbour gravel and sand silting, and agree that rebuilding has to remain a high priority. BHAG September minutes report that Professor Paul Tosswell (Lymington Technical Services) was working up a report on the groyne and indeed the whole dredging operation, but was currently waiting for further information. BHA has no funds to do the work, but has offered support for BHT to seek grant funding. **Michael MacInnes**, Chairman BHT, has taken this on.

There is no public funding for rebuilding, because it is not

acting as a flood defence.

The Eastern Yar Strategy report considers: "It was concluded in the ABPmer Coastal Assessment report that there is a degree of uncertainty on the links between the groyne and The Duver... It is designed to capture sediment from the east and stabilise the Bembridge spit from erosion. ... Although the structure is in disrepair, the system has stabilised and there is no erosion presently occurring along this frontage. Therefore recommended that regular monitoring of the spit be carried out to measure its response to any management." (JS)

BASHHA Annual General Meeting
Thursday 13 March 2014, 7pm, Bembridge Village Hall
PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY NOW!!

Have you paid your 2013 sub yet?
Soon you will be able to use Paypal

By the end of October, we shall have a link from www.bashha.org.uk for BASHHA members to use Paypal, a secure facility for paying online. With a debit card, you don't need a Paypal account to do it.

Marine Conservation Zones update

DEFRA has published Marine Conservation Zones: Consultation on Proposals for Designation in 2013 Summary of Responses. In addition, there is a factsheet: Marine Conservation Zones Common myths. Both pdfs downloadable from www.defra.gov.uk.

There were over 40,000 responses, of which over 96% came from campaigns organised by Fish Fight, the Marine Conservation Society (11%), the Wildlife Trusts (21%) and the RSPB (5%). These and other campaigns collected 350,000 pledges of public support, delivered as a joint petition to 10 Downing Street. The report gathers comments into a series of summarised issues, each with a Government response.

In the last Sentinel, I transcribed the specific reasons why Bembridge was not included in the first tranche of designated sites. In common with many other sites, the evidence base was not considered adequate.

"Defra has stated from the outset that it wants well-managed MCZs to contribute to the network of Marine Protected Areas and not just a series of lines on maps. It has also been clear that it wants to move swiftly to managing sites soon after designation. To do this effectively, adequate evidence is vital. ...

"Defra agrees that best available evidence should be used but considers that there are instances when this is not sufficient to proceed with designation. Defra has built on this basis by commissioning additional survey work for recommended sites which in some cases has confirmed uncertainties around the information available to the Regional MCZ Projects. Given these uncertainties it is important that the evidence is robust to support management. Defra considers that an adequate evidence

base is necessary to support decisions that may have social and economic impacts and effects on peoples' livelihoods and result in enforcement and monitoring costs that fall on the tax payer.

"Defra is actively working with Natural England and JNCC to ensure that evidence standards are appropriate for features included within MCZs and it will be possible to move rapidly to site management. Specific challenges around the evidence supporting individual sites are being investigated on a case by case basis."

Further on (paras 83/84), the report mentions ports and harbours:

"... Many responses from the sector called for the removal from MCZs of port and harbour limits and operational areas, and some questioned the impact of designation on dredging operations and disposal sites. There was also an expectation that surface navigation activity will not be restricted. As these issues will be relevant to specific sites rather than general, we will take account of these concerns when making final decisions on sites.

"There were site-specific concerns raised around potential restrictions to recreational activities, particularly the mooring and anchoring of leisure craft, and challenges to the cost estimates for this, and from members of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation. We will consider all these issues when making final decisions on the specific sites. We will only manage activities that have a detrimental impact on achieving the conservation aims of the MCZ. Where activities are not damaging to the species or habitats being conserved in an MCZ, then they will not need to be restricted, subject to normal licensing and management conditions." (JS)

Bembridge & St Helens Harbour Association 2013 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