

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

**held at Blakeney Harbour Rooms, High Street, Blakeney
on Friday 15th April 2016 at 7pm**

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Jim Temple (JT) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendees included representatives from 12 associations connected with Blakeney Harbour who had been invited to attend the meeting with a small display table promoting their association. JT explained to the meeting that BHA wanted to promote a close working relationship with all associations and groups involved in the harbour, with a view to coming together as a 'single voice' when necessary to protect and preserve the harbour and fight any unwanted legislation which may arise in the future. JT reminded attendees that only BHA paid-up members could vote at this meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from 38 members, listed on attached sheet.

3. Election of Trustees

JT informed the meeting that BHA had been approved as a charity by the Charity Commission during August 2015 and subsequently 5 people had come forward to act as Trustees for the Charity. These are as follows:

Jim Temple (JT)	Chairman
Charlie Ward (CW)	Secretary
Helen Ward (HW)	Treasurer
Joanie McKee (JM)	Recruitment Officer
Neil Thompson (NT)	Environmental Officer

Members then voted unanimously in support of the appointment of the above Trustees. JT pointed out that within the rules of the BHA Constitution, one Trustee has to stand down each year, starting at the 2017 AGM. Members would then be able to nominate and vote for a new Trustee, or vote for the Trustee who has resigned to continue, if she, or he, is willing to do so.

4. Approval of minutes of BHBA summer meeting 2015

Members voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the above meeting.

5. Matters arising from BHBA AGM 2015 and BHBA summer meeting 2015

JT said there were no matters arising from these meetings apart from items covered by the Agenda for this AGM.

6. Financial report

CW presented HW (Treasurer)'s financial report. We currently have 369 members who have paid subscriptions in 2015 or joined in the last year. Of these, 225 have paid their 2016 subscription, so far. 108 members have so far completed a Gift Aid form. 150 new members have joined at, or since, the last AGM in April 2015.

CW asked any members at the meeting who had not paid their 2016 subscription to pay as soon as possible and encouraged all members to complete a Gift Aid form if they are UK taxpayers, so that BHA can claim back 25% of their subscriptions and donations from HMRC. He pointed out that completing the Gift Aid form is a one-off exercise because this will cover all future subscriptions and donations.

CW ran through the figures for year ending 29th February 2016 and a summary sheet is attached to these Minutes.

CW explained that the first financial year of BHA would extend from August 2015 to end December 2016. Thereafter, the financial year would run from end December to end December each year and the subscription year would be brought in line with these dates.

CW informed the meeting that Chris Dugdale, who is a partner in accountants MA Partners in Norwich, had very generously offered to audit BHA accounts and provide financial advice on a pro-bono basis as far as possible, but with a maximum cap of £500 if the workload of accountancy advice and auditing exceeded the expected level.

Finally, CW confirmed that subscriptions paid by a new member after the end of August would cover the whole of the following subscription year.

7. Fielden legacy

Peter Sharp, who has generously offered to handle the Fielden legacy on behalf of BHA on a pro-bono basis, was invited to give members an update of the current situation relating to the Fielden legacy. Peter reported that the bulk of the legacy had now been paid after much difficult and time-consuming negotiation. However, the final instalment has still not been forthcoming due to the fact that it relates directly to the sale of a property in the Dominical Republic which is proving difficult to sell. It is impossible to assess at this stage exactly how much BHA can expect to receive in the final instalment, but he is in regular contact with the lawyers dealing with the legacy and sale of this property and will keep BHA closely advised regarding progress.

8. Budget and new projects 2016

CW presented members with the BHA budget for 2016. This is attached. Total income during the next 12 months is forecasted to total around £23,500. Expenditure is forecasted to be in the region of £9,300. Closing cash and bank balance as at the end of the year are forecasted to be in the region of £50,000. CW pointed out that we are endeavouring to preserve all of the Fielden Legacy payments in a separate capital account, to be used only for special projects, or fighting possible unwanted legislation effecting the harbour in the future. BHA will therefore endeavour to live within its income of subscriptions and donations which during the next 12 months is estimated to be in the region of £10,000.

CW then outlined the planned BHA projects for 2016 which are as follows:

- Harbour buoy maintenance and moving buoys to reflect the changing situation at the harbour entrance around the Hjordis wreck area.
- Continue to maintain Blakeney and Cley channel buoyage.
- Install new port hand light on existing red buoy at entrance to Morston Creek.
- Erect starboard hand beacon on south sounds, due south of the Lifeboat House to mark the sands and also provide a clear line, east of which the 8 knot harbour speed limit applies.
- Provide 1 starboard hand buoy for Pinchens Creek, at the entrance. This buoy to be fitted with retro reflective tape which will also be fitted to the withies along the length of the creek.
- Slipway maintenance -- there is an ongoing rolling programme of maintenance planned for the 2 slipways at Morston quay with an annual budget of £1,000 to continue for the next 5 years. A site meeting will be arranged shortly to discuss the work to be undertaken on these slipways during

2016. Gary Riseborough kindly offered to provide 360 plant to compact aggregate on the slipways, on a free of charge basis. Steven Bean has kindly offered a supply of crushed concrete.

- Remove wreckage from channels and harbour.
- Assist National Trust with salvage and removal of wrecked vessels.
- Continue to assist National Trust with collecting and disposing of rubbish and wrecked dinghies along the tide line (particularly along the base of the sea wall running from Morston to Blakeney).

9. Report from Recruitment Committee

JM (Recruitment Officer) thanked all the groups and members attending the AGM. JM confirmed that a number of donations had been received from members in addition to their membership fee and expressed the charity's gratitude. JM also offered considerable thanks to her sub-committee who have been working behind the scenes over the past 6 months. 5 meetings have been held through the winter looking at various ways to raise the profile of BHA and increase membership figures. The total membership target for 2016 has been set at 450 members. At the present time membership stands at around 370. Members are requested to try and recruit a friend or two to join BHA, which would greatly help to boost membership numbers. A request has been received from a member to consider offering 'family membership'. Over the past 18 months we have focused on individual membership with 1 member, 1 vote. However, over the next 6 months we will consider this option in further detail and report back to members.

New BHA boat and car stickers were made available at the meeting to all members and will be available to be collected from Charlie Ward's boatyard office at Morston from now onwards.

JM then outlined her sub-committee activities. The BHA website has been developed over the last year and is currently going through an upgrade to improve the facility for all members. This work has generously been done by a member at no cost to BHA. Facebook and Twitter have proved to be successful and JM thanked Hannah Kelsey for all her hard work in supporting the sub-committee on this front. The notice boards at Blakeney and Morston have been re-vamped through the winter by John Walton and are now looking very smart indeed. A new BHA flag has been added to the Blakeney buoy/notice board and a weather vane has been added to the Morston buoy, together with posts around the Morston buoy and notice board to prevent cars parking too close. JM thanked John Walton who has put so much work into these boards through the winter and continues to keep them updated on a weekly basis during the summer months. Last September the sub-committee organised a barbecue/paella afternoon and had great support from members. They are looking at repeating this during the season, along with a quiz evening – more information to follow. Any volunteers would be most welcome to help out.

BHA wants to adopt a tag-line and various suggestions were displayed at the meeting for members to vote on.

We have 2 members currently looking into the history of Blakeney Harbour and any members who have old photos, press cuttings or any information they think would be useful are encouraged to come forward to help.

10. Environment report

Neil Thompson (NT), Environmental Officer, reported that a lot of good progress has been made dealing with abandoned GRP boats littering the marsh and creeks over the past few months. This is likely to be an ongoing problem. NT reassured members that BHA are not salvaging boats without the owners' help or permission and are working closely with the National Trust to locate owners and establish clear title if necessary. NT then listed environmental accomplishments over the past year as follows:

- Yacht *Petronella* removed from Morston/Blakeney sea wall and sold. Thanks to Jim Temple and Graham Lubbock for all their work on this.
- 10 ton rusty boat moored at quay outside Blakeney Hotel removed and sold for scrap with cooperation and help from the owner.
- A Falmouth Gypsy yacht on the marsh north of Red House has been refloated and returned to its owner.
- *Falcon* which has been sunk on the marsh south of The Hoods has been refloated and returned to its owner.
- The large steel rope barge on the marsh north of Blakeney quay has been refloated during a storm but due to its precarious condition it is likely to remain where it is with the National Trust monitoring its conditions.

Various boats have been salvaged and rescued with the involvement of owners, which has highlighted the benefit of the BHA boat stickers, enabling us to locate and contact an owner quickly if a boat is seen to be needing to be salvaged or secured.

NT pointed out that all the above work has been carried out on a voluntary basis and we have received donations for most of the work that has been completed so far. Money has been set aside in the budget to help dispose of boats where owners are not found in the future.

Guy Matthews and Stuart Farrow offered to provide help with salvage work when required.

11. **Buoyage report**

JT reported that the harbour and channel buoys are all in good order at the moment and none of the larger buoys have been lost during the winter months. Routine annual maintenance will be carried out on all the buoys and lights shortly. Unfortunately the light on the No. 1 green buoy was lost during the winter months and this will be replaced shortly. Additionally, new red lights will be fitted on the 3 red buoys around the end of Blakeney Point and a red light will be fitted on the red buoy at the end of Morston Creek.

The biggest problem area is the harbour entrance around the Hjordis wreck. Henry Faire and James Cowan have recently flown over the area and produced photos showing that the main channel in and out of the harbour passes straight through the middle of the Hjordis wreck, which is causing considerable concern. A new sand spit has grown several hundred metres north of the No. 1 green buoy which was positioned at the end of the spit less than a year ago. We have installed a temporary small green buoy with a light marking the end of the new spit and vessels are advised to pass between this buoy and the Hjordis wreck beacon (a gap of approximately 70m), taking great care with the tidal set to the east.

CW has been in contact with Trinity House regarding the marking of the wreck if the channel continues to move east. In this event, Trinity House may have to install either a beacon or a large green buoy to the east of the wreck to mark the obstruction, which is now quite considerable due to the scouring caused by the channel passing through the wreck. BHA and Trinity House are staying in close contact over this situation and BHA will endeavour to move buoyage to reflect the changing harbour channel entrance and members will be kept informed via navigation warnings on social media and the BHA website.

12. **Volunteers required**

CW reported that from time to time volunteers are needed to help with BHA work within the harbour. At the present time there is a need for volunteers to assist Tony McKee who has kindly offered to take responsibility for monitoring the Blakeney and Cley channel buoyage and moving buoys to reflect changes in the channel on a regular basis. Members are encouraged to contact Tony to offer help in this respect if they can.

13. Report from National Trust

Victoria Egan from the National Trust gave a brief report of Trust activities over the past year. A new harbour brochure has been developed by The Trust in cooperation with BHA and this is now available from various outlets. The harbour brochures consists of an updated harbour map, together with good practice guidance and other useful information relating to the environment in and around the harbour. Victoria confirmed that the large harbour maps on display at Morston and Blakeney will be updated shortly.

There was an almost record-breaking number of grey seal pups last winter and The Trust are hoping for a successful tern breeding season this year. Victoria confirmed that there had been close cooperation between the National Trust and BHA over the past year and this had proved to be very successful with several joint projects having been completed.

Victoria confirmed that The Trust are intending to redevelop the toilet block at Morston Quay next winter and they have recently taken over the management of the information centre café which has now re-opened for the new season and is running successfully.

4. Harbour/Flood Wardens

JT confirmed that BHA has proposed 10 Harbour Wardens for the forthcoming season and these are Jim Temple, Jason Bean, Graham Bean, Stephen Bean, Charlie Ward, Neil Thompson, James Cowan, Jason Pegden, Graham Lubbock and Chris Keys. Members were asked to vote in support of these appointment and there was a unanimous vote in favour. JT further explained that several years back the Harbour Wardens were supported by NNDC to uphold local bylaws and badges were issued to each Warden. However, recently NNDC, with many changes of personnel at their offices over the years, have not been able to find any records of NNDC supporting the Wardens in the past. Andrew Wells, Local District Councillor, confirmed that he is continuing to press NNDC to provide this support and he is hoping that a meeting can be arranged between BHA and NNDC shortly. JT confirmed that in the meantime a briefing meeting would be held for the Wardens for the forthcoming season and they would be supported and organised by BHA in the absence of any support from NNDC. The principal role of Harbour Wardens is to advise boat owners about speed limits and good practice within the harbour.

JT confirmed that Flood Wardens for the parish of Morston are Jim Temple and Charlie Ward and that these are quite separate from Harbour Wardens. Flood Wardens here and in other parishes along this coast are supported by NNDC.

15. Cley Old Harbour report

Simon Read gave the meeting an update regarding this project. He confirmed that the first phase of dredging has now being completed upstream of Cley Mill. The old line of the harbour wall has been located and a new harbour frontage timber quay wall has been installed. The old slipway has been relocated nearer the mill. The project so far has been funded partly by grants and partly by private donations. The second phase of dredging will be carried out early next year and this will include continuing to dredge and widen the river upstream past Beau Rivage and working further downstream from the mill to the tidal gates.

It is hoped in the not-too-distant future to continue dredging and widening the river north of the flood gates to enable larger vessels to access the new quay.

Finally, Simon confirmed that, as a result of the dredging, it is now much easier for vessels to access Cley from the main harbour.

16. **Request for donation from Cley Old Harbour Project**

CW confirmed that a formal request had been received from this project for BHA to make a donation towards their costs. The BHA Trustees have considered this request and whilst they are very supportive towards the project, they do not have any fund for donations included in their budget for this year and therefore do not feel in a position to be able to make such a payment at this time. However, the Trustees will reconsider this request early next year. JT then invited members to vote to indicate their support for BHA making a donation when funds permit in the future. There followed a unanimous vote in favour.

17. **Blakeney Dredging Project**

David Woodcock (Chairman of this project) gave a brief report about progress with the plans for dredging. He confirmed that Blakeney Cut will continue to silt, whatever is done in the way of dredging, so the issue is one of continued maintenance (ie. not to do the work and leave it for 25 years as has happened in the past). The main problem is the outfall of Bridge Creek which joins Blakeney Cut at 90 degrees to the main flow, causing siltation in the form of the sand spit which has developed west of the bridge. This outfall has also caused the marsh west of the bridge to become very badly eroded and a large kink to develop in the main channel.

Following advice from consultants, it is planned to dredge a straight channel for 200m north from the Sailing Club slipway and redesign the outfall of Bridge Creek so that it compliments the tidal flow in the main channel. The amount of spoil to be dredged is 7,000 cubic metres which is in fact a small amount in dredging terms.

Numerous consents will be required from The National Trust, The Crown Commissioners, Natural England, NNDC, MMO, etc. It had been hoped to start the work in October 2016 but it now seems more likely that the work will commence in October 2017 because of the length of time it will take to obtain the necessary permissions and to raise the necessary funds to undertake the work – hopefully from both grant funding and private donations.

Finally, David stated that the Dredging Committee may formally apply to BHA for help towards funding this project in the future.

18. **Boat insurance**

JT confirmed the importance of all boat owners in the harbour making sure that they have at least adequate third party insurance cover for all their vessels. This is very important because if a mooring for an uninsured vessel were to fail, this could cause the owner of the vessel to have to face a very hefty bill for damage caused to other vessels when it ‘goes walkabout’ down the harbour, hitting other vessels en route. Added to this, it is unreasonable to expect owners of well moored vessels to have to pay for damage to their vessels caused by uninsured vessels hitting them. JT added that whilst BHA cannot insist that all boat owners have adequate insurance, BHA strongly advises all boat owners to take out this insurance and hopes that everyone takes this seriously and acts responsibly in this respect.

19. **Police report**

Jason Pegden gave a report of police activities during the past year. He advised everyone to remain vigilant at all times, take down vehicle registration plates and personal descriptions of those acting suspiciously, as the police can do a lot with this information. He also advised the public to call 101 for non-urgent police matters and 999 if a crime is in progress.

Jason further asked boat owners to make sure that all their equipment is insured in the case of an accident or theft and to make a note of all their equipment and serial numbers which can be handed to police in the event of a theft. Boat owners are also encouraged to make sure they take their own security measures to

make it as difficult as possible for thieves to steal marine kit. He confirmed that police outboard motor covers are still available and these have proved to be very effective.

The public should report lost and found boats to the police and The National Trust so that owners can be reunited with their boats and unclaimed boats can be placed on Morston Quay whilst the legal process for tracing an owner can be undertaken.

20. Acknowledgements

CW confirmed that many members had offered a considerable amount of help to BHA over the past 12 months and he read out a list of these people and the help they had given the association. There followed a long round of applause from members in appreciation of this help. Briefly, these are as follows: Peter Sharp (Fielden legacy), Chris Dugdale (accounts advice and auditing), John Walton (work on notice boards, updating notice boards, installing posts around Morston notice board, fabricating South Sands beacon, etc), Hannah Kelsey (social media), Jim Land (bridging loan), Martin Law/Tony McKee/Andy Barton (crewing on lift vessel Hercules), Steven Chase (providing cans used for buoyage in Cley and Blakeney channels), Simon Kelsey (help with method statements and risk assessments), Henry Faire/James Cowan (aerial photographs of the harbour), Victoria Egan (help and cooperation from National Trust), John Emerson (recovery of BHA buoy at Wells East Hills), Stuart Farrow (help with posts around BHA notice board at Morston). There are also members who have done an enormous amount of work but wished to remain unnamed.

21. Correspondence

CW reported that a letter had been received from Charlie Martineau asking if the Association would consider introducing 'family membership'. He confirmed that the Trustees are currently discussing this and would inform the summer meeting of their decision in this respect.

An email has been received from Jason Bean suggesting that an updated harbour map should be displayed at Morston Quay close to the tracks leading to the two slipways (where it used to be situated up until a few years ago). Additionally, he suggests some basic advice for boat users to be displayed below the map, which would help inexperienced boat owners and newcomers to the harbour to adhere to the speed limits and good practice advice. CW confirmed that BHA have had discussions with The National Trust about updating the harbour map at Blakeney Quay and installing a harbour map at Morston Quay in the position suggested above. The Trust have also agreed to provide an additional notice with some basic advice for boat users as suggested above. It is hoped that this work will be completed around end May/early June.

22. Summer meeting date/venue

JT informed the meeting that the Trustees would consider whether to book the Harbour Rooms for the summer meeting or whether to revert back to Morston Village Hall and then perhaps use the Harbour Rooms for the AGM next spring.

Special note: since the AGM, the Trustees have decided that the summer meeting will be held in Morston Village Hall at 7pm on Friday August 26th.

23. **Any Other Business**

Brent Pope thanked the BHA Trustees for all their work in arranging the AGM and for their achievements over the past year. He also requested that for future meetings in the Harbour Room a sound system is used so that people at the back of the hall can hear adequately.

Steven Bean reported that two dinghies have appeared on the marsh near Morston Quay in case anyone has lost a dinghy recently.

John Pugh-Smith (Barrister) advised the Trustees that changes could perhaps be made to the Incorporated Organisation that is Blakeney Harbour Association, in order to provide better indemnity for the Trustees in the event that a claim is made against the Association or the Trustees personally. He offered to provide advice in this respect to the BHA Trustees for their consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 2100hrs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J.P.S.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Apologies for absence:

Seamus Elliot, Marie Benn, Roland Goodison, David & Eleanor Sidgwick, John Pakenham, John Kirby, Tony Faulkner, Adney Payne, Jason Incles, Edward Allen, Andrew Mills, Martin Foulds, Guy Hodgson, Michael Lee, Stephen Allen, Geoff Finkemeyer, Paul Lazell, John Massingham, Andrew Rogers, Dennis Pell, Simon Kelsey, Charles Reed, Liz and Charles Austen, Andy Barton, Michael McLean, Dave Buckey, Peter Hargreaves, Jill Tibbetts, Colin Haye, Hannah Kelsey, Christopher Dimpleby, Chris Dugdale, Andrew Wolfe, Robert Wolfe, Adrian Taunton, Dave Buckey