



Minutes of
BHA Summer meeting held in Blakeney Village Hall
on Friday 26th August 2016 at 7pm

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The BHA Chairman, Jim Temple, welcomed 62 members to the meeting and apologised for the change of venue which had resulted from Morston Village Hall having been double-booked.

2. Apologies for absence

The Chairman reported the following apologies for absence had been received:

Anthony/Mary Hunt, Brent Pope, Jason Bean, John Pakenham, Guy Hodgson, Tim Hayward, Alan Collett, Julian Levick, Geoff Finkemeyer, Chris/Anna Dugdale, John Downing, Bernard Chase, Peter Franklin, Richard Newton, Paul Mather, Charles Austen, Roger Hall, Charles Tyndell, Yvonne Tyndell, Rodney Harmes, Peter O'Hare, Kim Farrow, Stuart Farrow, Will Darby, David Diggins, Michael Wilson, Mel Kemp, Tom Chandler, Michael Archer, Matthew McKee, Michael McLean, Jane Temple, Chris Dimbleby, Mary Athill, Margaret Smith, Dave Buckey.

3. Matters arising from BHBA summer meeting 2015

The Chairman reported that there were no additional matters arising from the summer meeting which were not already covered in the agenda for this meeting.

4. Vacancy for Secretary

Charlie Ward reported that he is having difficulty coping with the workload involved in secretary duties for BHA on top of also managing and undertaking the work involved in dealing with harbour buoys, lights and beacons. He further stated that he would like to resign as Secretary as soon as a replacement could be found, but he would be happy to continue for as long as it takes to recruit a suitable replacement. A member questioned whether Charlie intended to remain as a Trustee and it was confirmed that he did.

Members were invited to submit an application to the Trustees if they were interested in becoming more involved in BHA as Secretary. The work ranges from traditional secretarial work to handling a wide range of other administration relating to BHA and its charity status. It is hoped that new skills could be brought to the role of Secretary and anyone interested is encouraged to contact Charlie Ward for an informal meeting to discuss the work involved - to some extent the role of secretary could be adapted to suit the skills of the applicant. Members were reminded that this is a voluntary role but that expenses incurred would of course be reimbursed.

5. Financial report

This was presented by Charlie Ward on behalf of Helen Ward (Treasurer). The total in the bank is currently £44,457. Expenditure since 1st March 2016 has been broadly in line with budget set. However, expenditure to date on buoys, lights and ground tackle is considerably over-budget (£2,108 over). This is principally due to the fact that there has been a lot of cost involved in buoying the continually changing harbour entrance channel around the Hjordis wreck area.

Added to this, BHA have invested in several new buoys and lights which has resulted in an extremely well-buoyed channel from the Bar all the way to the Pit and the harbour is now safe to enter at night in good weather, with clearly defined lights along the entire length of the channel into the Pit.

Income since 1st March '16 has been £10,847 under budget. This is principally due to the fact that we have not yet received the expected final payment from the Feilden Legacy of approximately £13,000. The good news is that we have received considerably more donations/sponsorship than anticipated and this is currently running at £3,845 over budget. It was felt that there is further scope for sponsorship in the future.

Finally, it was reported that BHA are endeavouring to preserve the funds from the business account (from the Feilden Legacy) in order to keep this money for special projects or as a fighting fund to deal with any unwanted legislation which may be imposed upon the harbour in the future.

6. Subscription non-payers

The Chairman read out a list of members who have not renewed their subscriptions from last year and members present at the meeting were encouraged to contact any of these people who they may know in order to remind them. Currently there are approximately 35 on the list, which is worrying because this figure exceeds the new members recruited so far this year. A member suggested payments to be made by standing order or direct debit. Helen will be meeting the bank to discuss this shortly. A member advised that she can put her in contact with someone who is an expert in this field, handling subscriptions for a charity on a direct debit basis. She will follow this up.

7. Feilden legacy

Charlie Ward reported that there was no further news on the final payment which is due to BHA from the Feilden legacy. Peter Sharp continues to work very hard pushing the lawyers acting for the Feilden estate, but the only news he has received is that there are still considerable problems disposing of a property in the Dominican Republic and therefore, at the present time, the outcome of the sale of this property remains uncertain.

8. Projects completed 2016, new projects for 2017 and budget for 2017

Charlie Ward reported that all the planned projects for 2016 have now been completed. These have included:

- Liaising with Trinity House regarding the new Hjordis East buoy
- Maintenance of all channel marking buoys and lights
- Maintenance of all channel buoys in Blakeney and Cley channels
- Installing light on port hand buoy at north end of Morston Creek
- Update and servicing old lights which have required new batteries
- Purchase of 2 spare lights (1 port, 1 starboard) to replace faulty lights as required
- Purchase and installation of 7 more port and starboard lights for harbour channel buoys
- Fabrication and erection of new beacon on South Sands with speed limit sign attached
- Laying new yellow marker buoy at entrance to Pinchens Creek
- Fitting retro-tape to various withies along the length of Pinchens Creek
- Annual maintenance of slipways at Morston Quay
- Removal of various wrecked boats around the harbour
- Purchase and installation of new No. 2 starboard buoy with light

Charlie then reported that the following projects are being considered for 2017 and will be completed subject to enough finance being available:

- Purchase and installation of new Fairway Buoy complete with chain and sinker

- Removal of some green channel marker buoys from the Run (from Lower Harbour to Pit) and installation of 4 new red buoys and lights along this stretch of the channel, with a new east end buoy closer to the Pit than existing
- Purchase and installation of approximately 50 channel marker buoys, chains and new sinkers for Blakeney and Cley channels
- Removal of wreck in channel from north end of Blakeney Cut
- Installation of 2 slipway signs beside slipways at Morston
- Installation of 2 speed limit signs in Blakeney Cut with wording re 'Watching your wake'
- Installation of withies at north end of Blakeney Cut in one section of Cley Channel
- Refurbishment and checking of all buoys and lights
- Donation to Cley Harbour Project (£1,000)
- Investment in security at Morston (confidential)
- Re-numbering of outer buoys around Hjordis wreck area
- Installation of more withies along Pinchens Creek
- Moving of No. 1 buoy to new position as No. 3, just north of 'the gap'
- Purchase and installation of new No. 1 buoy
- Annual maintenance of Morston slipways (£1,000)

Charlie Ward reported that the Trustees would be looking closely at the above 2017 project list and a budget would be produced during the next couple of months. Full details of the finalised project list and budget will be available on the BHA website before the end of 2016. Members are encouraged phone or email BHA with suggestions for the project list.

9. Recruitment Committee report

Joanie McKee presented the report and offered a very big thank you to all members for attending the meeting and also to Jill Tibbett for opening the bar and organising the booking of Blakeney Village Hall at such short notice.

Joanie thanked the Trustees, sub-committee members and volunteers of BHA for all their hard work over the last few months.

Current membership numbers are 363 fully paid up with non-payers currently standing at 35. This was a very big concern for BHA because the total number of new members recruited since April currently stands at 33, resulting in a small drop in members when non-payers are taken into account. If all non-payers paid up, the total numbers of members would be approximately 400.

Joanie asked for members who hadn't signed up for Gift Aid to do this as soon as possible so that BHA can gain an extra 25% on subscriptions and donations. Once a Gift Aid form has been completed, this will cover all future subscriptions and donations from each individual member.

The introduction of 'Family Membership' was discussed at the AGM as an option to increase membership. The Trustees have looked into this and have decided to propose to members that as from January 1st 2017, family membership will be available covering 2 adults (living at the same address) and children under 18 at a cost of £40. This was put to the vote at this meeting and whilst there was some discussion from the floor regarding the age of the children, the proposal was approved and members were informed that this will come into effect on January 1st 2017.

Recruitment Committee activity over the past few months has included further developments of the BHA website which is providing an excellent communications channel for BHA. Joanie thanked Tom Harrison for all his work in this area. Thanks were also offered to Hannah Kelsey who gave members an overview of Facebook and Twitter activity at the meeting (280 Twitter and 476 Facebook followers) Members are encouraged to share their news, comments and photographs.

The notice boards at Morston and Blakeney have been maintained and updated on a weekly basis by John Walton, who was warmly thanked for his efforts.

BHA held a Nautical Quiz evening in June at the Anchor pub at Morston. Joanie thanked all members who attended, Tony McKee for pulling the questions together and Sam Curtis who was the Quiz Master. The Anchor gave BHA a healthy donation following the evening and Joanie thanked them warmly for this.

Finally, Joanie confirmed that on September 11th BHA are planning a Bale Out Barbecue at Morston on the Norfolk Etc field from 4pm to 7pm. Members are encouraged to come along and support BHA at this event – look out for the posters. BHA member Andy Barton offered to give a chainsaw carving demonstration at the event and to raffle or auction off the resulting carving.

10. Environmental report

Neil Thompson reported that earlier this summer a BHA member noticed a 23' motor boat drifting through the harbour, having broken its mooring. The member temporarily secured the boat and alerted BHA who were able to move the vessel to a secure mooring and alert the owner (who was a member of BHA) to inform him of the situation. A great example of the benefits of joining BHA.

There is still a semi-wrecked Falmouth Gypsy yacht at Blakeney Quay. Neil is looking into the best way to remove this boat from the quay this autumn, subject to successful negotiations with the current owner.

A member enquired about a small, unused yacht SE of the South Sands beacon. It was confirmed that the owner had been located and is aware of the poor mooring.

A commercial fishing net that was dumped on the mud close to Blakeney dinghy park has been removed and disposed of.

Neil is meeting with the National Trust on a regular basis to discuss other wrecks that need to be dealt with – mainly the old rope barge at the north end of Blakeney Cut.

BHA members are encouraged to contact Neil with regard to any environmental issues in the harbour.

11. Buoyage report

Jim Temple and Charlie Ward reported as follows:

- Trinity House have undertaken their annual inspection of our lights and buoys and have confirmed that these are all in excellent condition. They were impressed with the new buoys and lights that have been installed since their last visit. They did however state that the Fairway Buoy is in urgent need of refurbishment and repositioning and that this work should be undertaken as soon as weather allows.
- All channel marker buoys and lights have now been serviced. There are a few small jobs to be completed which will be wrapped up before the winter.
- 7 new lights have been installed on channel buoys recently. BHA have received an email from a visiting Dutch yacht stating that, in their opinion, Blakeney Harbour is now one of the best buoyed and lit harbours on the east coast!
- We are intending to try and purchase a large new green buoy to be installed north of 'the gap'. This will complete the installation of large and very visual buoys along this dangerous stretch of entrance channel.
- Several meetings have been held with Trinity House regarding marking the east end of the Hjordis wreck, now that the channel is running to the east of the wreck. As a result of these meetings, Trinity House have visited the harbour twice with their service vessels and a new

lit *Hjordis East* buoy has been installed. We are informed by Trinity House that this is a temporary buoy and that another long-term buoy will be installed in due course.

- BHA have been very busy over the past few months re-buoys the entrance channel in the area of the *Hjordis* wreck. Buoys have been moved to reflect the move of the channel eastwards. We are carefully monitoring the situation and expect the channel to move further east over the coming months.
- There has been a lot of publicity in the press regarding the exposing of the *Hjordis* wreck as a result of the channel running right through the middle of the wreck recently. Members were encouraged to look at some amazing aerial photographs of the wreck at low tide which were taken by members Sam Sykes and Henry Faire.
- There is a black buoy marking the chain which held Buoy No. 1 during 2015. Unfortunately, with the building of sand in that area, this chain has become completely buried and impossible to lift at the present time. The black buoy will remain in place in the hope that this sand will scour away eventually, which might enable us to salvage the chain and sinker.
- The buoys marking the Cley and Blakeney channels have been regularly serviced and moved to reflect changes in the channel. Thanks to Alistair and Hilary McInnes for managing the buoys along Cley Channel and to Tony and Joanie McKee for managing the Blakeney Channel buoys.
- It has been reported to BHA that there is a yacht named *Morander* that has been moored right in the middle of the Blakeney Channel. If anyone knows the owner of this vessel, perhaps they could be persuaded to move the mooring slightly because this vessel is causing an obstruction on small tides.
- Jim Temple reported that the current Fairway Buoy is too large to be handled by Charlie Ward's lift vessel *Hercules*. Trinity House have quoted £2,500 to lift the buoy for us which we clearly cannot afford. We are therefore going to try and cut the buoy free from its mooring chain and bring it ashore for refurbishment. However, we have decided that it would be much better to try and purchase a new Fairway Buoy of a similar size to the large green and red buoys at the northern end of the harbour entrance so that it can be lifted and serviced using *Hercules* in the future. Jim Temple then asked members if anyone might be interested in making a donation towards the cost of a new Fairway Buoy, including chain and sinker. The total cost, after Gift Aid has been applied, would be £3,800. This new buoy would be supplied by Norfloat who have quoted an extremely competitive price with signwriting to be moulded into the buoy free of charge.

A member enquired whether the North Sea Pilot still says of Blakeney 'Do not enter this harbour without local knowledge'. Charlie explained that Tom Harrison contacts the pilot books with navigational changes on a regular basis. The entries have been re-worded but it may take up to 18 months to appear in print. Members were reminded that the Information for Skippers section of the website contains the navigational warnings and phone numbers for local advice.

12. Report from The National Trust

Victoria Egan, for The National Trust, reported that the toilets at Morston Quay will soon be demolished and replaced with a new toilet block. Plans are being finalised at the moment, and subject to finance being available, it is hoped that construction will commence latest winter 2017/18.

The Trust have had several discussions with BHA regarding the removal of wrecks from various parts of the harbour and this has been successfully completed. There is, however, one vessel which is proving very difficult to remove – this is the old steel rope barge currently on the marsh at the north end of Blakeney Cut. The National Trust now own this vessel and have fenced it off to prevent anyone getting injured. Discussions are continuing to decide the best way to deal with the removal of this vessel which is likely to be a fairly massive task.

Victoria reported that 2016 has been a very difficult breeding season for birds on Blakeney Point due to predators such as rats and herring gulls. Although foxes have been culled, there has been a considerable problem with rats eating eggs from nests and a large number of herring gulls feeding on chicks. A rat expert has been called in and has prepared a report to advise the Trust how best to deal with the problem and over 300 rat bait traps have been strategically positioned to try and deal with this problem before next season. Discussions are ongoing nationally regarding how to deal with the herring gull problem because these birds are protected.

A new harbour map has been prepared by The National Trust, together with additional instructions for harbour users. These are displayed on a new notice board at Morston quay, close to the slipways and at Blakeney Quay (replacing the old map). This project has been jointly funded by The National Trust and BHA and a new harbour brochure has also been produced as a joint project.

Victoria thanked BHA for buoying their water pipe under the harbour to prevent damage from mooring/anchoring.

13. Police report

PC Jason Pegden, our local police officer, informed the meeting that there had been very little crime locally this year and this is thanks in no small part to the vigilance of BHA members who have reported suspicious vehicle numbers and other useful information which has been closely followed up by the police. Jason said that they had received hundreds of calls in this respect and he particularly thanked BHA members for all their help. When calls are received they are all followed up and checked with the National Database. Jason encouraged BHA members to phone in any information relating to suspicious activity or vehicles and he felt confident that if this vigilance can continue there is a good chance that crime such as outboard thefts can be dramatically reduced in this area in the future.

Contact, PC Jason Pegden: Tel: 01362 652155 Mob: 07887 450992
pegdenj@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

If you see suspicious behaviour or a theft in-progress call 999

14. Acknowledgements

Charlie Ward thanked everyone who had assisted BHA over the past few months and special thanks went to:

Peter Sharp – pro bono legal help with the Feilden legacy

Chris Dugdale – pro bono help with accountancy

Tom Harrison – website and social media

Norfloat Ltd – provision of harbour buoys at cost

Gary Riseborough – provision of 360 excavator and labour to refurbish slipways

Sam Sykes, Henry Faire and John Massingham – aerial photography

Alistair and Hilary McInnes – managing and monitoring buoys in Cley channel

John Walton – weekly updating of Blakeney and Morston quay notice boards, manufacturing new South Sands beacon and erecting same

Tony and Joanie McKee – managing and monitoring buoys in Blakeney channel

Martin Law, Tom Law, Andy Barton, Tony McKee, James Cowan– help on *Hercules* with harbour buoyage

Anchor pub at Morston – generous donation from nautical quiz

Steven Chase – provision FOC of drums for channel buoyage

Hannah Kelsey – social media

Anonymous donor – donation for full cost of new No. 2 starboard hand buoy, light and ground tackle

15. Correspondence

There has been no correspondence since the AGM.

16. AGM date and venue

Members were advised that the date of the 2017 AGM will be Friday 28th April at 7pm. The venue was discussed with members and it was agreed that Blakeney Village Hall would be best for this meeting. Charlie Ward agreed to check availability and book the hall and bar.

17. Any other business

Jim Temple advised members that sadly Peter Hargreaves (Treasurer for BHBA for many years) had died recently. His funeral will be held on Friday 9th September in Norwich. Members agreed that BHA should send flowers or a donation. Charlie Ward to arrange.

Jim Temple then informed the meeting that investigations are underway regarding the source of possible human sewerage which has been detected in a field close to the dyke which exits through the sluice in the Morston to Blakeney sea wall and then into the harbour via Morston creek. Concerns have been raised that this could possibly be the source of pollution which has been detected in the harbour at low tide over the past couple of years when water quality has been tested for shellfish farming. Investigations are ongoing regarding the source of this possible pollution and whether it could perhaps be coming from the toilets at Morston quay. NNDC Environmental Department, Anglian Water and The Environment Agency have all been informed and there have been site meetings to discuss the matter. A soil sample has been taken from the field for analysis.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

.....
Jim Temple, Chairman