

Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

NOTES OF THE 9TH ANNUAL JOINT RIVER SAFETY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 MAY 2018, 7.30 pm AT THE BLACKWATER SAILING CLUB

Present

Jim Dines (Meeting Chairman, MHIC)	Jonathan Rhodes (NT)
Ian Hiner (MHIC)	David Piper (NT)
Gerry Courtney (MHIC)	Grant Everiss (Heybridge Basin Lock Keeper)
Nigel Cardy (MHIC)	Clint Swann (CRS Marine)
Richard Pusey (Blackwater SC)	Pauline Marshall (Maldon YC)
Andrew St Joseph (Cllr, MDC)	Peter Woods (MLSC)
Mark Heard (Cllr, MDC)	Mandy Chapman (Stone Watersports Club)
C Swain (MTC)	Victoria Long (Stone Watersports Club)
Nigel Willsher (Blackwater SC)	C Varley (AOB)
Trisha Staerck (Essex PMU)	Julie Stuchbery (Clerk, MHIC)
Sp Officer Toby Speller (Essex PMU)	Dick Garside (Blackwater SC)
SC Simon Boygle (Essex PMU)	Joe Leary (Blackwater SC)
Nigel Harmer, River Bailiff, (MDC)	Julie Nelson (Blackwater SC)
Afsaneh Janbakhsh (Essex and Suffolk Water A)	Geoff Wass (Blackwater SC)
Jim Pailing (Harlow Blackwater SC)	

Apologies were received from Councillors, Members of the Barge Operators' Group and representatives of MDC who had to attend alternative meetings, also from other river users who were unable to attend.

The meeting was chaired by Jim Dines, Chairman, Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and initiated individual introductions.

2. Essex Police Marine Unit

Sp Officer Toby Speller gave an overview of the work of the Marine Police. He was based at Burnham on Crouch. There had been an increase in full-time and part-time officers. Patrols were carried out both on the water and also by motor vehicle. Regular visits were being made to marine organisations to raise awareness of the issues facing the Marine Police. In 2017 there had been several successful Days of Action which led to prosecutions. There was a dedicated email address and telephone number for contact:-

MarineU@Essex.pnn.police.uk

Phone 07976065917

Essex Police Marine Unit Notices – Reporting and Contact, see below.

3. Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Jeremy Littlewood, Senior Coastal Operations Officer for HM Coastguard sent his apologies as he was unable to attend. The Chairman read his report:-

Email, date: 1 May 2018

There have been no significant changes within HM Coastguard in the last 12 months, the Coastguard Rescue Teams that cover the Blackwater at Mersea and South Woodham are both operational and working well.

Jeremy Littlewood would be happy to answer any questions, which can be passed on by the Clerk, MHIC.

4. River Safety, Enforcement and Prosecutions (MDC)

Nigel Harmer, River Bailiff, Maldon District Council, provided an update. There had been eight prosecutions in the last year including four from the Days of Action in conjunction with the Marine Police. The River Bailiff commented how quiet the coast had been. Patrols had started for this season and MDC would participate in further Days of Action.

contd/

5. Natural England – Coastal Path

The Chairman read the report from Darren Braine, Senior Adviser (England Coast Path, Essex Hub) National Operations Team, Natural England, as follows:-

Our ref:

Your ref:



NE Cambridge

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Dear Maldon Joint River Safety Meeting

ENGLAND COAST PATH, PROGRESS UPDATE February 2018.

2 stretches of the England Coast Path cover the Blackwater estuary.

Maldon to Salcott:

Having published in March 2017, and received one Objection which was considered by the Planning Inspectorate, but dismissed. The route was approved as published by the Secretary of State on 25th January 2018.

Natural England will now work closely with Essex County Council to undertake any necessary establishment works over the summer, with a view to a formal opening in the autumn. As the first stretch of the England Coast Path to open in Essex, we anticipate this to be celebratory in nature, with the likes of ribbon cutting and invited dignitaries.

Burnham-on- Crouch to Maldon:

Having published in late July 2017, 2 legitimate objections were accepted at the end of the 8 week comment period. These two are still being considered by the Planning Inspectorate with site visits planned for mid- April.

The outlook is for the Secretary of State to consider the response from the Planning Inspectorate and then three things can happen. The report is approved as published, the report is approved but with modification, or the report is rejected. As the objections do not relate to the alignment of the Trail, it is anticipated the likely outcome is either approved as published, or with modification. It is hoped this would be by the end of 2018.

Details on both stretches can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-in-essex>

I am happy to try to answer any questions the group may have.

Yours faithfully

Darren Braine
Senior Adviser, England Coast Path, Essex.

Questions can be passed on via the Clerk, MHIC.

6. Essex and Suffolk Water Authority

Afsaneh Janbakhsh, Environmental Scientist, E&SWA, gave an overview of the Maldon dredging project since 2001 which was a joint initiative between the Water Authority, the Environment Agency and the Harbour Authority. This had been beneficial for the Harbour. Dredging material was used to replenish the saltmarsh. A recent report showed an increase in the saltmarsh area by 50%.

7. The National Trust

Jonathan Rhodes, newly appointed Operations Manager for the East Essex properties, Northey Island, explained that the post covered a new NT portfolio, with a remit extending from Pin Mill to Rayleigh. A project had just started on Northey Island due to run for 8 – 9 years redeveloping the saltmarsh, especially the far side. This was a large scale project.

David Piper, Lead Ranger, Essex and South Suffolk, reported that he had taken on the management of Northey Island including public events. Work being carried out has resulted in mud accretion going quicker than anticipated. The next stages were being considered and a new Planning Application had just gone in.

8. Marine Management Organisation

Questions to the MMO could be passed on via the Clerk, MHIC.

9. Update from Maldon Barge Operators Group

Paul Jeffries, Maldon Barge Operators Group sent his apologies, and provided a report as follows:-

Date of email: 1 May 2018

On behalf of the barges I am not aware of any issues that have arisen during the year. I am pleased to say there are good lines of communication between the barges and the Blackwater Sailing Club regarding race meetings and the club does an excellent job of marshalling the racing boats and chaperoning the novices. Wherever possible the barges try to keep out of the way of the racing fleets. I think there is a very good level of understanding between both groups.

10. Update on Heybridge Lock

Grant Everiss, Lock Keeper, reported that the works were in the process of being signed over.

11. Update from Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

Jim Dines reported on the last 14 months.

a) Visitors' Pontoon

This was still a possibility, but there was no money for it currently.

b) Light Pollution

MHIC had met with MDC following up complaints regarding the high intensity lighting at the Promenade tennis courts. MDC had raised this with the Tennis Club. Jim Dines asked that if

anyone had any issues with light pollution at this or any other Harbour location to let MHIC know. MHIC are pursuing issues of light pollution.

c) Granaries Wall

The collapsed wall at the Granaries had been repaired by the Environment Agency.

d) Liaison with MDC

MHIC had regular liaison meetings with MDC and Jim Dines asked that if anyone had any Harbour issues to let MHIC know and these would be raised at the meetings.

e) Web cams

Web cams would be hosted by the Maldon Little Ship Club, funded by MHIC, providing views up and down the river. There would be live streaming and also a recording facility of approximately 4 weeks. This facility might prove useful to Harbour Users and they could contact the Commissioners if they needed to view past material. Nigel Harmer (MDC) suggested that Maldon Tourism might have funding and offered to put MHIC in touch.

f) Dredging

2,500 tons had been dredged from Fullbridge down to the end of the Promenade extension and put back on the saltmarshes. There was a Siltation Committee which comprised MDC, the Water Authority, the harbour Authority and other interested bodies.

g) MHIC Buoys and Navigation

It was estimated that maintenance of MHIC buoys had involved 300 man-hours. Commissioners' work boats had been used free of charge. Ian Hiner (MHIC) provided a buoy report. There had been a further incident of unreported damage to No15 buoy which cost £1070 inc VAT excluding ground tackle. MHIC asked that Harbour Users should report damage and reminded that it is an offence to damage buoys. There was on-going overhaul of buoyage including fitting retro-reflective tape. This on-going maintenance was not charged. River checks had been carried out with removal of floating debris including logs, ropes and plastic sacks.

h) Post Meeting Note – Risk Assessments, Incident Reports, Port Marine Safety Code
Copies of Risk Assessment forms for events in the Harbour should be sent to the Harbour Commissioners, email clerk@mhic.org.uk as well as to MDC. Organisations needing template forms can use the example on the Commissioners' website, www.mhic.org.uk, under Navigation and Safety.

Incidents in the Harbour should be reported. There is a template Incident Report Form on the Commissioners' website, Navigation and Safety.

The Port Marine Safety Code is being kept up to date in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Transport and is audited by Trinity House. Copy available on the Commissioners' website, Navigation and Safety

12. General Issues for Discussion

a) Swimming in the River, including the Triathlon

There were concerns for safety, including the visibility of swimmers in the water. Grant Everiss (Heybridge Lock Keeper) reported seeing long distance swimmers outside Heybridge Lock. Nigel Harmer (River Bailiff) has high visibility swim hats available.

b) Sewage at the Blackwater Sailing Club

Commodore Richard Pusey expressed concern regarding sewage in the water around the BSC. Julie Nelson (BSC Warden) would get a water sample. Afsaneh Janbakhsh, (E&SWA) recommended that Anglian Water be contacted. Dick Garside (BSC) commented that there was a smell coming from the marsh.

It was reported that there were proposals to increase sewage discharge at Goldhanger. Nigel Harmer would follow this up with MDC Health Officers. Pauline Marshall (Commodore MYC) reported that Essex Wildlife Trust was sampling between Goldhanger and Tollesbury and was hoping to do all the coast. David Piper(NT) was aware of this and would find out further details. Nigel Cardy (MHIC) commented that the tide brings the sewage in.

Clint Swann (CRS Marine) asked if the water was clean enough to swim in. Nigel Harmer referred to sampling water quality with respect to shellfish production which included testing for e-coli and would let people know the results. Gerry Courtney (MHIC) enquired if these results were published and generally accessible. Nigel Harmer pointed out that if the quality of water were downgraded, it could halt shellfish production. Cllr Andrew St Joseph stated that the Parish Council had samples indicating high e-coli in the river which was a matter for concern and the public should be made aware. Dick Garside (BSC) stated that the Environment Agency do publish some results. Afsaneh Janbakhsh (E&SWA) stated that the public can ask for water quality data and suggested contacting Anglian Water.

c) Maldon Port Guide

Gerry Courtney (MHIC) reminded the Meeting that the Maldon Port Guide was available on line and also as printed copy.

13. Events for Information - See below.

14. Meeting Close

The Chairman thanked the Blackwater Sailing Club for the use of their premises and thanked participants for attending.

EVENTS 2018

Blackwater Sailing Club Events www.blackwatersailingclub.org.uk

Maldon Yacht Club Open Day, 28 May 2018

Mud Race, 10 June 2018

Maldon/Blackwater Sailing Barge Match, 7 July 2018

Marconi East Coast Piers Race, 7 – 8 July 2018

Heybridge Basin Regatta, 15 – 16 July 2018

Maldon Triathlon, 22 July 2018

Blackwater SC Cadet week Regatta, 28 July – 2 August 2018

Burnham Week Regatta, 25 August – 1 September 2018

National Trust Castaway on Northey Island, 31 August – 2 September 2018

Barts Bash, 15 – 16 September 2018

Maldon Town Regatta, 22 September 2018

The Saltmarsh 75, 6 – 7 October 2018

Essex Marine Police Unit Notices



In an emergency always dial 999

Ways to report a non-emergency marine crime or anti-social behaviour:

- Call our non-emergency number **101** or alternatively **01245 491491**
- Call in at a police station
- Please confirm that your information is marked as '**marine crime**'

Or you can report it online:-



<https://www.essex.police.uk/do-it-online/report-non-emergency-crime/>

Or if you prefer you can share information anonymously with Crimestoppers in two ways:-

- Call **0800 555 111** any time of day or night
- Online information form at the link below



<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/give-information-online/>



Essex Police Marine Unit **01621 782121** or marineu@essex.pnn.police.uk

CRIME DOESN'T RESPECT OUR BORDERS

IF YOU SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT WHERE, WHEN OR HOW A VESSEL AND CREW ARE OPERATING. **REPORT IT**

Quote **KRAKEN** In an emergency always dial 999

Project Kraken is a joint law enforcement operation tackling maritime threats to the UK

Border Force NCA National Crime Agency NPCC National Police Chiefs' Council