

ANNUAL REPORT TO 31st December 2017



Wells Harbour Commissioners

A Message from the Chairman - Andy Frary



This year is an exciting and challenging year for myself as I have been selected to take on the role as Chairman for Wells Harbour Commissioners. As much as this is an honour and I am very proud that my fellow commissioners have put their trust in me, I know it will also

bring its challenges.

However, being born and raised in this community I understand the traditions that go with the harbour and also have a clear understanding of what makes the harbour tick. Firstly, my family have been associated with the harbour for decades with my own father starting up the shellfish stall on the quayside in 1954 and I have been working as a fisherman from the harbour since I was sixteen. During my time I have seen many things change and improve within the harbour. The buoyage and facilities have gone from strength to strength and personally I feel are second to none.

Fishing has a long tradition within the Port and I feel is vital to the community especially through the employment that it provides. For every three men working on one vessel there are five people working ashore. For every three boxes of crabs that I catch will provide an individual with a days work ashore. With the fishing vessels getting bigger and having to steam further afield in pursuit of their catch it is vital that the dredging of the harbour channel is maintained to provide the maximum tidal window, so I will champion the dredging for

all users.

Of course I have a passion for the fishing industry, but I fully understand that Wells Harbour has a lot more activities than just fishing. I will be continuing to support the local sailing club wherever I can in particular to help them encourage young people to sail. When I am heading to sea or returning in my fishing boat Arandora Star it is a pleasure to watch the many sailing boats under full sail. I will also be keen to protect all the other pastimes that use and enjoy Wells Harbour whether this is wildfowling, people just pottering about in boats or one of the many others. I will also look to encourage more businesses to use the harbour as they do today, with the angling charter boats, trips on the old lifeboat, sailing adventures in the creeks and local ferry. This gives many people the opportunity to enjoy the harbour and sea that normally may not have the chance. I am convinced that Wells as a town and its businesses continues to do well when the harbour is prospering. People visit Wells as a town because of the harbour, it's the hub of Wells and why many people come, it's probably the top visitor attraction alongside the beach, as I hear people say it regularly at the shellfish stall.

Finally we recently have had some staff and Commissioner changes and I would like to thank all those who have moved on, for their input and wish them well in their new pursuits. I would also like to assure all my fellow Commissioners and staff that I will support and encourage them whenever possible and to all the stakeholders/users of the harbour, I would like to say, I can often be seen working on my family's shellfish stall at the quayside and my door is always open.

Andy Frary
Chairman



Photo by Andrew Bloomfield

Views of Harbour Master - Robert Smith MBE



“What’s in a name?” was the question asked by a local sailor recently. “Why isn’t the Port of Wells just called Wells Harbour?”. My explanation was simple. The harbour commissioners are proud of the ports history; and yes, maybe the commercial shipping trade has ceased and is unlikely ever to return, but the port logo, dating

back to the 1700’s, clearly states the “Port of Wells” and that is how it will remain during my tenure.

There have however, been many changes to the port or harbour - whichever you prefer to call it - over the years. It is probably as busy as it has ever been and the responsibilities of the commissioners continue to grow. Much of their time is spent looking at strategy, in plain English - the way forward for the port - including the future of the fishing industry, windfarm vessels, angling charters boats, the Albatros and ferry trips. These commercial interests bring local employment, which means that they will always take a certain priority. But we must also consider the leisure sector, including the hundreds of visiting sailing & motor vessels that come each year, the dinghy sailors, ski boats and old lifeboat trips. Then, there are the land based activities to consider, including protecting the local environment, the maintenance of the creeks and monitoring and managing the impact of the many thousands of people who visit the quayside and harbour estate each year. Alongside our consideration of the environment, we want to ensure that every single visitor enjoys their experience, remains safe and leaves with wonderful memories of Wells.

But this only scratches the surface of the roles and responsibilities the commissioners have today. I could write pages on the red tape, bureaucracy and many rules and regulations they must comply with. The form filling, reporting requirements and procedures that are expected, indeed demanded for the development and legal responsibilities of administrating a small port. These take up a great deal of the commissioners’ time and energy and they do this without payment. Their only motivation being to have a positive impact on their port and community.

As harbour master, I have a requirement to undertake CPD ‘continual professional development’. I am expected to gain a certain amount of points over a given time frame and it never fails to amuse me that successfully piloting a vessel into harbour in the dead of night results in a zero development points, whilst giving a talk to a Women’s Institute in a remote village in Norfolk gives me two points

towards my personal development!!

Looking back over my last 28 years at the harbour and more recently my 17 years as harbour master, I can see that the port has changed in many ways, yet in other ways it feels exactly as when I started. We still have an amazingly tight knit community, with new characters coming through as some of our older characters sadly pass-on. I assume this is the same for all small harbour communities around the UK coast, but in Wells, these characters bring value, in the form of knowledge and thoughts on how the harbour should or shouldn’t function and in most instances, I find these incredibly helpful and beneficial to the Port and wider community.

I would encourage people to question and when they feel necessary challenge us, but this should be done openly and positively and with a desire to find a resolution. Just to complain for the sake of it or without discussion can become tiresome and disappointing, especially when we as a harbour authority are very keen to listen to our stakeholders. I do appreciate that some people are concerned or indeed afraid of change. But I firmly believe that the port needs to evolve and that change does not need to be negative or detrimental. As a harbour and town, we need to move with the times, without, of course, losing the character and strength of this wonderful harbour.

In times past, during the days of my predecessors such as Frank Taylor or Charles (Chick) Smith; the harbour master with the commissioners were expected to ‘just get on with it’ and do what they believed was in the best interests of the harbour and community. I have no doubt that previous harbour masters and commissioners had the same vision as we have today. To operate and have a thriving port which maintains and indeed creates new employment opportunities, so that people can remain within this harbour community for generations to come. But in the past, they did not have to be accountable to a plethora of government organisations and private bodies. I can only imagine how they would react to some of the requirements of today!

On a more personal note. My role as harbour master has changed beyond all recognition and in truth, some of these changes have made the role more challenging, as Wells harbour has become a major business with many gaining employment from the success. For myself this is very satisfying and rewarding and makes my role as enjoyable as ever.

Finally a much-respected local sailor and harbour helper, Fred Painter sailed over the bar for the last time in 2017. Fred was one of the ‘band of brothers’ who for many years supported me and helped out around the harbour, long into his retirement. A few days before Fred passed away he gave me some advice, “Robert I don’t know where the time has gone. I have arrived here in a flash. Make sure you live your life to the full, as every second counts”.

Wise words indeed.

Robert Smith MBE
Harbour Master

The Executive



Robert Smith MBE
Harbour Master



Louise De Lisle
Harbour Administrator



Visiting Boats

Year	Boats	People	Nights stay	Average People per boat	Average nights stayed
2013	367	864	1171	2.4	3.2
2014	288	658	1145	2.3	4.0
2015	327	777	1229	2.4	3.8
2016	318	735	1426	2.3	4.5
2017	304	692	1251	2.3	4.1

2018 Board - Wells Harbour Commissioners



Andy Frary was born and bred in Wells. A fisherman since 1975, he ran Wells' first commercial crab boat from 1980, owns a local business and is committed to preserving the fishing industry of Wells. Commissioner since January 2009. Appointed Chair Jan 2018.



Denys Hickey has over 40 yrs experience as a maritime lawyer with experience of dredging and port safety. Denys has been a senior partner in a London law firm and more recently a barrister and maritime arbitrator. Appointed Jan 2018.



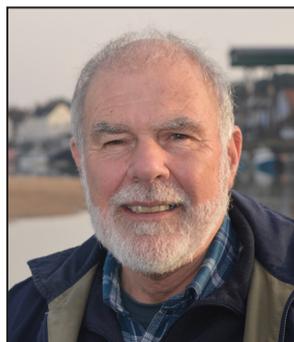
Alan Bushell a Wells resident has sailed in the Harbour since 1972. He retired as Deputy Harbour Master in 2007. Alan was a member of the Wells RNLI operations committee and is a watchkeeper with the NCI at Wells and a trustee of Rescue Wooden Boats.



Avril Lill runs a successful B&B in Wells. Previously held a senior position in IT providing experience in project and stakeholder management, business change and corporate social responsibility. Also Wells NCI watchkeeper and a medic with BDMLR. Appointed Jan 2018.



Mel Catton a Wells businessman and resident for 50 years and Chairman of the Carnival committee for 25 years. Mel is passionate about keeping Wells as an idyllic seaside resort recognising the need for change to allow the town to move forward.



Brian Riches held a project management position in the energy market prior to setting up a sea angling business in 1997 which he has now passed over to his son. Brian has a passion for fishing and enjoys being on the water. He was appointed in Jan 2017.



Robert Ellis moved to Wells in 1976 as a Police Constable and Sergeant serving the community for 30 years, heavily involved in the 1978 floods and the aftermath. A member of Wells Sailing Club and recreational harbour user and boat owner since 1978.



Chris Thomson Spent over thirty years working as a solicitor, involved in contracts, HR, governance and ethics. Lives in Wells. Chris sails and works in the harbour. Appointed as a Commissioner in Jan 2017.



Nicholas Groom from a long standing Wells family. Semi retired from an operations management position with a national Telecoms company. Now runs Wells Harbour Tours. Has experience of telecoms operations and construction. Appointed Jan 2018.



Adrian Underwood OBE A life in boarding education concluding with the post of National Director, the Boarding Schools' Association. Now education consultant. Wells resident and small boat sailor. A Wells Harbour Commissioner 2007 - 2012. Re-appointed in 2016.

Summary of results

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017 £	2016 £
Income Statement		
Turnover	1,285,194	1,327,060
Cost of Sales	(674,362)	(678,846)
Gross excess of income over expenditure	610,832	648,214
Overhead expenses	(729,367)	(742,452)
Other operating income	302,512	298,175
Interest receivable and similar charges	1,885	2,962
Excess of income over expenditure before taxation	185,862	206,899
Taxation of ordinary activities	(35,733)	(37,746)
Excess of income over expenditure for the year	150,129	169,153
Balance Sheet		
Fixed Assets	1,660,926	1,845,414
Current Assets	1,479,276	1,319,374
Creditors - amounts within one year	(413,970)	(412,333)
Net Current assets	1,065,306	907,041
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	2,726,232	2,752,455
Provisions	(43,649)	(46,562)
Net Assets	2,682,583	2,705,893
Reserves		
Accumulated fund	1,424,322	1,274,193
Grant Reserve	325,827	334,647
Capital Reserve - Shellfish facility	326,193	333,442
Capital Reserve	606,241	763,611
Total Reserves	2,682,583	2,705,893
Note assets above include:		
Investment by Scira into Outer Harbour and channel and Inner Harbour		
Spend to 31 December 2016		
Cost brought forward	1,951,170	1,951,170
Capital equipment purchased in year	1,951,170	1,951,170
Less Depreciation brought forward	(1,208,255)	(1,049,748)
Less amounts depreciated in year	(157,370)	(158,507)
Total Included in Assets	568,545	742,915

Board Members

Attendances 2017

There were six scheduled board meetings held in the financial year.

Board changes

Resignations

Duncan Vaughan November 2017

Retirements

Joan Price December 2017

Paula Baldry December 2017

Appointments

Avril Lill January 2018

Denys Hickey January 2018

Nicholas Groom January 2018

Name	Jan 2017	Mar 2017	May 2017	Jul 2017	Sep 2017	Nov 2017
Paula Baldry	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Alan Bushell	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mel Catton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bob Ellis	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Andy Frary	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Joan Price	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brian Riches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chris Thomson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adrian Underwood	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Duncan Vaughan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Resigned
Robert Smith	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Louise De Lisle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

MODERNISING TRUST PORTS – Second Edition Review

The above document, in its introduction, states The Department nevertheless expects all Trust Ports in England and Wales to take steps to comply with guidance or to state openly where and why they have decided not to. The Harbour Commissioners have carried out their review as stated below.

Modernising Trust Port	Wells Harbour Commissioners Response Guidance
1.1 Stakeholders and beneficiaries	WHC already recognises the Stakeholders in the Port of Wells. There is a Harbour Users Advisory Committee and an annual public stakeholder meeting as well as a website where stakeholders can submit comments.
1.2 Commercial	WHC already operates as a commercial business and publishes headline accounts. However, in line with other Port operators WHC does not believe that details of commercial contracts should be published. The Board already publishes all harbour dues. The Board uses bench marking as a means of maintaining competitiveness.
1.3 Performance indicators	Profitability - not currently published but readily calculable from published figures. Return on Capital employed - not currently published and because of the nature of the asset base not very meaningful. Weighted average cost of capital and Gearing - not meaningful as WHC has no significant borrowings. Labour productivity - not currently published as not very meaningful. Profitability of land holdings - not relevant. The cost of producing some of this type of information outweighs any benefits that may be achieved. Channel depth management - The main channel is dredged to allow greater access into the Outer Harbour for vessels serving the Sheringham Shoal Wind Farm. There is a waiting list for some moorings, pontoon and quayside berths. Statistics are provided on visiting boats.
1.4 Stakeholder benefit	WHC already uses all its surpluses in the ways outlined in this section.
1.5 The role of stakeholders	WHC already complies with this section and has a Stakeholder advisory committee.
2.1 Annual Reporting Requirements	WHC will make available the accounts at the annual meeting. The Strategy & Business Development Plan has previously been published and is available on the website.
2.2 Audits and Accounts	WHC is a fishery Trust Port and therefore is not required to deliver annual report and accounts to the Secretary of State. Unders the provisions of the Companies Act, WHC is exempt from requiring a statutory audit.
2.3 Compliance	The production of this summary document and others shows compliance. Annual summaries of the Boards review on meeting the guide will be documented and will be included in the Annual Reports.
2.4 Good Housekeeping	This is done through the membership of the appropriate professional bodies and industry associations. The Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) and Safety Management System (SMS) was updated in 2018 and reviewed by the independent designated person in March 2018 and confirmed that WHC are fully compliant with the PMSC. The PMSC is reviewed for changes annually. There is a designated Commissioner for ensuring that health & Safety checks are carried out. This is reported on in board meetings.
2.5 Data Handling	Because of the size of the operation this is not an issue for WHC.
3.1 Constitution	WHC already complies with this section.
3.2 Management	WHC already complies with this section.
3.3 Appointment	WHC already complies with this section.
3.4 Length of Term	WHC already complies with this section.
3.5 Membership	WHC already complies with this section.
3.6 Board skills and Diversity	WHC already complies with this section.
3.7 Role	WHC already complies with this section.
3.8 Performance Management & Board Remuneration	WHC do not receive any remuneration other than incidental expenses. Attendance records are published.
3.9 Probity and Interests	WHC already complies with this section
3.10 Personal Liability	WHC is looking at adopting the provisions of the Commissioner's Clauses Act
3.11 Training	WHC Board members receive appropriate training where necessary.
3.12 Succession Planning	WHC already complies with this section.

PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE- Compliance

The Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) applies to all harbour authorities in the UK that have statutory powers and duties. The PMSC has been developed to improve safety in UK Ports and to enable harbour authorities to manage their marine operations to nationally agreed standards. It provides the standard against which policies, procedures and the performance of harbour authorities can be measured. It describes the role of board members, officers and key personnel in relation to safety of navigation and summarises the main statutory duties and powers of harbour authorities.

In order to comply with the PMSC, the duty holder on behalf of the harbour authority must:

1. Review and be aware of their existing powers based on local and national legislation
2. Comply with the duties and powers under existing legislation as appropriate
3. Ensure all risks are formally assessed and as low as reasonably practicable in accordance with good practice
4. Operate an effective marine safety management system (SMS)
5. Use competent people (i.e. trained, qualified and experienced) in positions of responsibility for safety of navigation
6. Monitor, review and audit the marine SMS on a regular basis - an independent designated person has a key role in providing assurance for the duty holder
7. Publish a safety plan showing how the standard in the PMSC will be met and a report assessing the performance against the plan
8. Comply with directions from the General Lighthouse Authorities and supply information and returns as required

Wells Harbour Commissioners SMS includes a calendar of safety topics with defined areas of responsibility. A Commissioner is allocated responsibility for ensuring all aspects of health & safety under the SMS are checked and signed off and this is reported at the full meetings of Commissioners.

Wells Harbour Commissioners had an independent review of the PMSC and SMS in March 2012, March 2015 and March 2018.

The Chairman on behalf of Wells Harbour Commissioners being the PMSC duty holder for the Port of Wells. considered all the requirements of the PMSC, including reviewing the risk assessment and SMS and has certified that the Port of Wells meets the standards required by the PMSC.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

Since 2010, Wells Harbour Commissioners as part of their open and accountable policy and practices publish all plans and reports of meetings on their website. The website is regularly updated. Website address : www.wellsharbour.co.uk

In addition Wells Harbour Commissioners has a facebook page : Port of Wells and the Harbour Master can be followed on Twitter @hmwellsnextsea

The Port publishes an annual brochure bi-annual newsletters and as well as the annual public meeting, holds two Harbour User Advisory Committee meetings a year.

Members of the public can report incidents and make suggestions by e-mail to harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk, by phone or direct to the Harbour Office. All suggestions and complaints are entered in the incidents/suggestions book and are reviewed by the Harbour Master.

Harbour Office,
Old Lifeboat House
West Quay
Wells-next-the-sea
NR23 1AT

Telephone: 01328 711646
Email: harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk

The work of the Commissioners 2017

Introduction

The work of the Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC) is regulated by Central Government. Full details of the appointments and management structure can be found in the Government legislation Modernising Trust Ports -- A Guide to Good Governance Last update 2009 (www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/shippingports/ports/trust/ Department of Transport). WHC aims to conform to the governance as set out by the Government.

Reports of the bi-monthly meetings of the Commissioners in 2017 can be found on the Harbour Website -- www.wellsharbour.co.uk

Annual Meetings

The Commissioners hold an annual public meeting to report on their work. In 2017 it was held on 16th May 2017. A report of that meeting is on the Harbour Website -- www.wellsharbour.co.uk

The date of the 2018 meeting is 15 May 2018 7pm at Wells Sailing Club. The Commissioners hope that the change of venue back to the Sailing Club will encourage an increase in stakeholder attendance.

Harbour Staff

A new dredging skipper was appointed in September 2017, Tristian Roberts, who previously worked as a deckhand and temporary skipper for a local fishing vessel. Tristian comes from Walsingham.

The decision on the recruitment of a Harbour Assistant has been deferred to early 2018.

The Port took on a young person for work experience for one week during the summer. The Port has already agreed a placement for 2018.

The quay cleaner Terry Corbishly left in January 2017 due to health reasons following many years of service. Sadly Terry passed away on the 4th December 2017. All the Harbour Commissioners and staff miss seeing Terry on the quay and are thankful for his hard work and dedication. We send our deepest condolences to his family. Replacing Terry is Adam Birnie, who has already made himself a familiar face and is carrying out his duties diligently.

Deputy Harbour Master Simon Blakeley left in October 2017 following six years of service to the Port, the staff and Commissioners wish him success with his own business venture. Mick Frary, Deputy Harbour Master, also left during the year.

The Port trainee position has been deferred to 2018.

Harbour Commissioners

It should be noted, that all Commissioners are

volunteers and receive no payment for their work. The revenue from the services offered by the port is used entirely to finance the port's management and development.

Appointments

Chris Thomson and Brian Riches were appointed effective 1st January 2017.

Denys Hickey, Nicholas Groom and Avril Lill were appointed 1st January 2018.

Retirements

Joan Price retired as Chair and from the Harbour Commissioners in December 2017.

Duncan Vaughan resigned at the end of December 2017 due to work commitments.

Paula Baldry completed her six years of service and retired from position in December 2017.

The Commissioners and staff thank them for their years of service and valued insight.

New Commissioner Portfolios

Andy Frary was appointed as new Chair of the Commissioners effective January 2018. Bob Ellis will take over responsibility of health and safety.

Beach Patrol

The beach patrol operated successfully for the seventh year employing five local young people for the summer season. The patrol advises the public regarding safety matters, swimming, keeping off the berms and buoys and assists with the public



cut off by the tide.

Gilly Hut

The Harbour Commissioners funded the employment of seasonal staff to man the Gilly Hut on behalf of the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust. The Gilly Hut hires out eco friendly gillying (crabbing) equipment in the form of a steel bucket and wooden reel with the aim of reducing plastics in the harbour and to help prevent wildlife entanglement from the nylon line used on the plastic reels which are sold

in local retail outlets. In 2017 the Port introduced a plastic bucket recycling scheme.

Capital Expenditure

2017 completed

- Second harbour pickup
- East end Repair Store
- Power to Tug Boat Yard pontoons
- Talus Tractor purchased
- Deposit on slipway hoist
- Completion of board room and refurbishment of second floor of harbour office.
- Land at south of boat yard leased and cleared to increase boat store facilities
- Motorcycle area permanent posts installed
- Temporary repairs to main slipway
- Live stream camera installed which replaced fixed cameras. The live feed has proved very popular with visitors to our website.
- New gates to visiting pontoons installed providing coded access at night. These provide security to visitors on our pontoons preventing access from the general public after some complaints received of anti social behaviour.
- New car park machine to take card payments.
- Outside cupboard for the defibrillator to allow public access after the office is closed.

Planned for 2018

- Floating pontoons at East End for slipway hoist services.
- Flood panels for the outside of the Harbour Office
- New pontoon for diesel berth on quay and for the Frank-T
- New quayside lighting
- Continue with feasibility for channel straightening project
- Continue investigating habitat creation using dredged material for beneficial use
- Resurface quayside car park
- Create a new wooden jetty adjacent to main slipway
- Production of Port book on history of harbour

Future expenditure under consideration

- Reinstatement of wooden jetty near Shipwrights
- Water taxi/ferry
- Wooden jetty at Skredge
- Archive of historic documents for public viewing

Environment

The Port continued the Gilly patrol in 2017 to educate families regarding gilly welfare whilst still enjoying the activity.

A plastic bucket recycling initiative was intro-

duced to reduce single use buckets ending up in landfill.

Investigations continued into creating marine habitats such as the reinstatement of Tern Islands swept away in the Dec 2013 tidal surge. WHC are not permitted to deepen Bob Hall Sands for recreational sailing and use that material to create an island, however are able to beneficially use dredged material from maintenance dredging of the channel and Outer Harbour.

Natural England held a meeting at the Port for regional managers. Robert Smith presented on the practicalities of a working port and gave a tour of the harbour.

Navigation and Channel

The Port was inspected by Trinity House and passed its annual inspection on buoyage and also passed its annual audit. Following the navigational aids audit two buoys were replaced.

Dredging

Licensed maintenance dredging continued in 2017 which maintains the channel to a depth of 1m low water neap tides for navigational safety of vessels and maintains access to and the depth at the Outer Harbour. These dredging activities ensure the Port remains fit for purpose. Replenishment of the Outer Harbour berm on the east and south sides will be carried out in January 2018. Dredging of Tug Boat Yard pontoons will be carried out in Spring 2018.

Moorings

Harbour Staff continue to maintain the Fore & Aft/swinging moorings within the Harbour by lifting and checking the sinkers and chains and reorganising and realigning the moorings. Following channel movement moorings were relaid which are considered emergency works under the Harbour Revision Order. Some moorings, no longer in use, have been removed at Buxtons Bight to improve and create more sailing area.

Port Safety

Health and safety inspections have been regularly undertaken and all H&S issues have been addressed. The Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Safety Management System (SMS) was independently audited in March 2015. The next audit will be in 2018.

Public Relations

WHMT organised the 10th Norfolk Triathlon to raise funds for the charity. The event was held on 10th September 2017. The 2018 event will be held on September 2nd 2018.

WHC worked with Wells Lighting Committee to organise and continue the ever popular Wells

Christmas Tide event. WHC transported Santa to the quay as in previous years and sponsored the purchase of one Christmas Tree and also funded the works required for a third Christmas tree.

During the year, the Harbour Master gave up his free time to present and talk to many organisations, donating any fees received to the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust.

The bi-annual newsletter The Haven for Spring and Autumn was published to further communicate with stakeholders.

In addition WHC communicates via:

- Published Harbour Minutes
- Published Strategy & Business Development Plan
- Website news page
- Harbour brochure and flyers
- Facebook and Twitter
- Stakeholder meetings i.e. AGM and HUAC
- Quay magazine
- Events

Two kayak safaris were held in 2017 to provide opportunities for stakeholders to explore the creeks and local wildlife and view the Port from a different perspective. Further safaris will be organised for 2018.

[Harbour Users Advisory Committee \(HUAC\)](#)

Reports of the meetings of the HUAC can be found on the Harbour Website. The reports confirm that the interests represented on HUAC are pleased with the way in which the Harbour Master and his team respond to the different requirements of each of these interests.

[Outer Harbour](#)

Three to four vessels worked from the Outer Harbour supporting O&M activity at the wind farm in 2017. Other survey vessels used the Outer Harbour also. All the vessels call Wells Harbour on VHF channel 12 before departure and on arrival at the leading buoy to gain clearance for transit.

The Port dredger Kari Hege works approximately 5 days per week, weather permitting, from number 13 buoy out to the entrance maintaining the channel. Dredging notices are placed on the website to notify harbour users of where the dredger is working on a weekly basis.

[Administration](#)

The Port provides advice and assistance to Burnham Overy Trust on the management of their navigational buoys at Burnham Overy.

The Harbour Master was consulted on the Destination Management Plan produced by the Wells Coastal Communities Team (WCCT).

[Harbour Website](#)

The website is regularly updated with news, navigation updates, reports of the meetings of the Harbour Commissioners and views of the public in the Visitors' Book. The website has proven to be very popular worldwide as we can see from the comments on our visitors page and now incorporates links to facebook and twitter.

[Facebook and Twitter](#)

The Port has a Facebook page which can be accessed via the website. This is a public page and stakeholders do not need to have an account to view the page. Also from the website stakeholders can follow the Harbour Master on Twitter.

[The Haven](#)

The Port's bi-annual newsletter brings updates to Wells residents and other local villages.

[BPA](#)

The Commissioners are members of the BPA.

[Staff Appraisals and Training](#)

WHC is committed to the training of its employees to maximise their full potential with role succession at the forefront. The board feels it has a pivotal part to play in the community and is committed to the education and training of its employees and local young people and considers this vital to the success of the Port's future.

Some staff have attended training courses:

- Simon Blakeley took the Harbour Master's diploma in February 2017.
- Fred Whittaker passed a Glass Reinforced Plastics course
- Bob Hull passed a Health and Safety Environment Test

[HR consultants](#)

The Port changed HR Consultants during the course of the year and updated all employee contracts.

[Port Trainee Scheme](#)

The establishment of this scheme has been postponed to 2018. This will be the first of its type at the Port and will aim to provide opportunities for skills development in Port operations. There is potential for a full time job at the end of the training period, although is not guaranteed.

[Boat store](#)

The boat storage and lift out facility at the East End continues to be a great asset to the Port and to stakeholders and was at full capacity in the Winter season 2017. The Port leased additional land to the South of the current boat store to provide more light to boats stored at the southern border and extra space.

The boat and buoy shed in the compound has proved invaluable for storage purposes.

The Port commenced the provision of marine repairs in 2017 providing an additional revenue stream.

Slipway Trolley

WHC received EMFF funding for a self propelled slipway hoist to replace the slipway trolley. The delivery of this project has been postponed due to circumstances beyond the control of Wells Harbour Commissioners and it is now expected to arrive mid March 2018.

Car Park

A new car park machine was installed which permits payment by card. This will be trialled before a decision is made to replace the second machine.

Albatros

The Albatros at present continues to be berthed at the main quay. As an historic ship operating as a licensed bar, cafe and bed and breakfast, the ship is regularly monitored by the Harbour Commissioners on the disposing of waste and is also regulated by NNDC environmental health. The future mooring position of the vessel will continue to be evaluated by the Commissioners should a more suitable mooring site become available. Following the tidal surge in January 2017, although the tide did not make as expected, the vessel's anchors were tested and worked well keeping the vessel away from the quay wall.

Facilities Barge

The facilities barge has proved extremely popular with visiting vessel owners. WHC permit up to 25 residential boat owners to purchase a seasonal permit to use the facilities barge. In 2017 x11 were taken up.

Port Charges

The board of Wells Harbour Commissioners, after reviewing the Port's reserves, took the decision to freeze charges and fees for 2018. Therefore 2018 fees will remain at 2017 level. We hope that stakeholders will appreciate this gesture but of course cannot be guaranteed in future years.

Visiting vessels

Visiting vessels totaled 304 in 2017, down 14 from 2016. Average nights stayed remain comparable at 4 nights.

Quay Events

The Port has issued a new Events Policy for all outside organisations and groups wishing to use the quay for events. Compliance and agreement to this policy in writing is required before an event can go ahead. There will be fees for use of the quay

to commercial organisations run for profit.

New RNLI Boathouse

The Port was consulted regarding the plans for the new RNLI boathouse required to house the new Shannon lifeboat. The new slipway will run the length of the groyne. At the time of writing a decision has still not been made on what will happen to the current lifeboat house, however if removed, a sea defence will be put in place and foundations left to protect the spit. Coastwatch have plans to replace their lookout and are looking for funding, see their article.

Beach Road Development

The Port was consulted as a statutory consultee regarding the plans for developing the toilet block on Beach Road. WHC's response is that we would have concerns should the Beach Road site be over developed, would like to think that NNDC in their decision making should be sympathetic to the surrounding harbour and that any potential development would be in keeping and of suitable size so as not to dominate the area. The main concerns highlighted were:

- WHC are of the opinion that three storeys could have an impact on the visual amenity of the harbour and possibly a two storey building would be more in keeping.
- WHC would like to see improved WC provision at the site or very close by in any future proposed plans.
- WHC feel a restaurant of the proposed size could adversely impact local small independent catering businesses particularly out of peak season.
- WHC do have concerns regarding congestion at the top of Beach Road with any new proposed development in this area. Congestion at this point has proven to cause backup and traffic problems further into the town.

Wells Harbour Maritime Trust (WHMT)

In 2017 WHMT funded one young person in a swim teaching course and one in a sailing course. Three sea cadets were funded for a sailing experience at sea.

The Trust organised the North Norfolk Triathlon for the third time which proved to be a huge success raising money for the Trust.

From January 2018 all serving Commissioners will become Trustees.

WHMT would like to thank all supporters of the Trust for their kind donations during the course of the year. WHC donated the surplus made from the Gilly Hut to the Trust.



Borderforce Alert