

# ANNUAL REPORT TO 31st December 2016



**Wells Harbour Commissioners**

# A Message from the Chairman - Joan Price



2016 was a most interesting year for many of our stakeholders. The fishermen had exclusive use of part of the harbour for unloading their catch. People in cars benefited from the

redesigned car park, the one way system made it easier to manoeuvre vehicles by having more space in the centre of the parking area. Motorbikes were given a designated space near the gantry which we hope to further improve during the season. Those that enjoy gillying enjoyed a safer experience in the traffic free area near the harbour office with the added comfort of additional seating and the new 'Gilly Hut' promoted environmentally friendly crab lines and buckets.

Visitors who arrive by sea now have toilet, shower and washing facilities in the new barge near the gangway to the pontoons and the continued dredging of the harbour allows the wind farm feeder vessels a longer window of opportunity to enter and exit the harbour between tides. The new pontoons in Tugboat Yard are a huge improvement on the old wooden ones and provide extra mooring capacity. Our website keeps everyone up to date with everything happening in the harbour and the Port is on Facebook and the Harbour Master can be followed on Twitter both accessible from the website. None of the changes have spoilt our beautiful port but rather give us an enhanced experience. Locals and visitors alike have expressed their positive views.

Special events during the year included the Triathlon with over 300 competitors taking part and

3 Kayak Safaris through the creaks. One gentleman on the last safari of the year said it was the best two hours of his life paddling through our beautiful marsh landscape. Staff also helped with the Lifeboat Service, Carnival, the Pirate Festival and Christmas Tide to ensure they too were successful events.

At the end of the year Gary Antony, one of our commissioners, came to the end of his six year term of office. I would like to thank Gary for his work and commitment to the harbour. He headed up various sub committees and as an experienced sailor, passionate about the harbour, he has been an effective member of the commissioners.

We welcome two new members to the board of commissioners this year: Chris Thomson, a solicitor, who has used the harbour for the past ten years and Brian Riches, who worked in the energy business and now runs fishing trips, with his son, out of Wells Harbour. I'm sure they will find the work of being a commissioner interesting and their expertise will be valuable.

During 2017 we will be maintaining the harbour for the benefit of all stakeholders and adding more civic improvements. We are investigating installing pontoons to give better and safer access to *Albatros*, and to extend the railings as far as the end of the car parking area. Following EMFF funding approval we plan to purchase a lift-out hoist for the benefit of our fishing fleet and to carry out improvements to the slipway. A new shed, in the boat compound, will enable staff to carry out repairs and maintenance for boat owners.

On behalf of all the commissioners I would like to thank our dedicated team of harbour staff. They work tirelessly for the benefit of stakeholders and should be congratulated for their efforts, and to all of you who use our harbour, in any capacity, I wish you a happy and enjoyable 2017

**Joan Price**  
**Chairman**

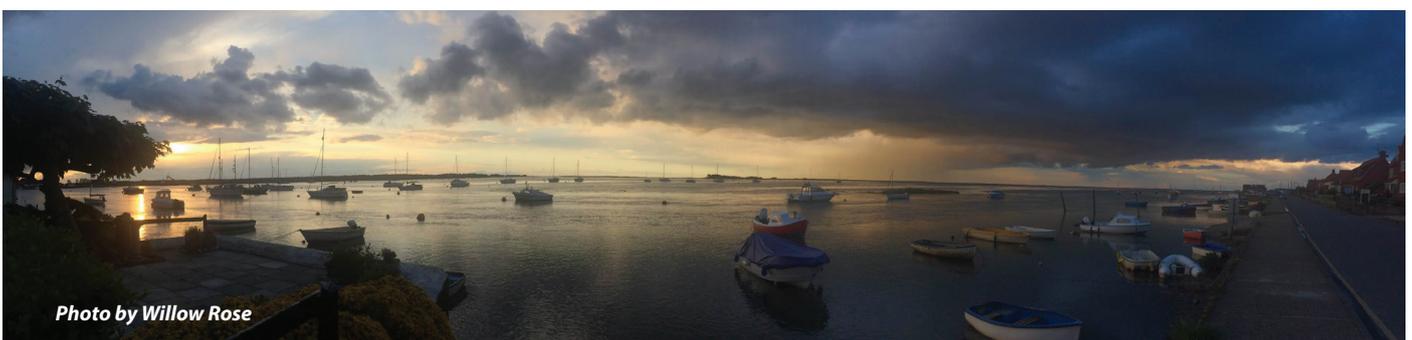


Photo by Willow Rose

# Views of Harbour Master - Robert Smith MBE



*Wells-by-the-sea lit by gas, and boasting of a very fine stone quay and commodious harbour. A large proportion of the inhabitants are employed in the fisheries of the great mussel and oyster beds which lay outside the harbour. The trade of the Port is of importance*

*in the exportation of grain, malt and the importation of coals, tiles and deals. The harbour formally much better than at present, has sustained injury from the accumulation of sand, (continually shifting), considerable improvement have, however, of late years been accomplished by the Harbour Commissioners.*

The above paragraph was taken from a report in the harbour archives dated 1839, however the reference to the shifting sands could be taken from more recent times as the sands are continually moving, as in 2013 with the tidal surge which transformed the beach, Knock and Bob Hall Sands with long established sand dunes, which were an important habitat for nesting birds, being destroyed and lost overnight. The Outer Harbour ridges and dunes on Bob Hall Sands, apart from being an important area for birds, also provide a natural sea defence during spring tides and northerly winds.

These Outer Harbour ridges and dunes and the vast saltmarsh are of great importance to the Port, not only because of the eco-system, nesting birds etc, but also because of the value it provides as a natural sea defence. The Harbour Commissioners have tried to protect and influence the movement of shifting sands and erosion within the Harbour for centuries, by building training walls, placing of fagots and damming the creeks and this tradition continues, so much so, that the present day Commissioners are exploring schemes for the protection and possible restoration of the West frontage of the saltmarsh. This is to help with the erosion which is slowing occurring and the reasons for this are many, one being as the channel widens more fetch in the prevailing south-west winds is driv-

ing across the channel and dispersing across the marsh edge. Speed/swell restriction warning signs have been erected to try and reduce boat wash which can have an effect on the eroding marsh. The saltmarsh and harbour is well protected with many designations from SSSI to Ramsar site but I personally feel it should be allowed to be enjoyed by all and I am not in favour of restricting the access to the saltmarshes as being tabled by some more recently. Again personally I feel the public enjoying the saltmarsh for recreational purposes does not represent a major problem whether this is bird watchers, wildfowlers or walkers, all should be allowed to enjoy the large area of this natural wilderness., where not many decades past the marsh was used for grazing of sheep.

Do you know who is representing you on the Harbour Users Advisory Committee? The group/committee meet twice a year to discuss and advise on harbour matters. Also they can suggest what they as users feel we should focus more on, or should be doing. They are advisory and have no statutory powers or control of budgets or revenue, that is the responsibility of the Commissioners, however if you feel you are not represented or have a proposal to nominate either yourself or another for the committee, please pass on your suggestions in writing to the Harbour Office. These can then be raised at a meeting of the advisory group.

The policy of the Board is that non-executive members of the Board receive no remuneration except occasional expenses. The Board, as a conservancy operation, believes the Port Stakeholders and users receive dividends, in their widest sense, from the efficient operation of the Port and most cost-effective services it can provide. Performance indicators applied to commercial entities can be misleading in the role of a trust Port and the Board believes the publication of the Annual Report and Strategy from which others draw their conclusion, more than meets requirements.

At the end of this report is a summary on the Board's conclusions in meeting the various subject titles in the guide.

Finally I and all the staff feel very privileged to have the opportunity to work and help preserve this beautiful harbour on your behalf.

**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

# The Board - Wells Harbour Commissioners



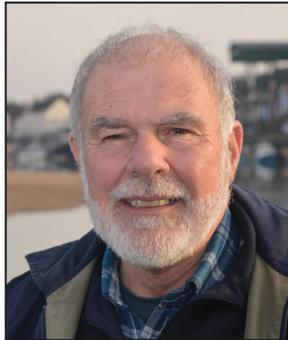
**Joan Price** A Wells resident Joan has enjoyed using the Harbour for over 40 years. Before retiring she worked as a teacher and now manages holiday lets. First appointed in Jan 2011, Vice Chair Jan 2014 and Chair in Jan 2016.



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



**Paula Baldry** lives in Wells running a holiday let, using the Harbour to sail, kayak and swim. Paula has a background in outdoor pursuits and educational management, is a member of WSC and the Carnival Committee. Appointed January 2012.



**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.



**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 committee member and watchkeeper with the NCI at Wells.



**Chris Thomson** has used the harbour for over ten years, initially as a windsurfer/kayaker and more recently as a sailor. A solicitor since 1986 involved in contracts, projects, risk management, HR, governance and ethics. He retires in 2017 Appointed in Jan 2017.



**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.



**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.



**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.



**Duncan Vaughan** appointed a Harbour Commissioner from 1st January 2016. Duncan lives on the North Norfolk Coast and keeps a sailing vessel in Wells. Duncan is a professional mariner and advises the government as a fisheries and environmental specialist.

# Summary of results

## For the year ended 31 December 2016

	2016 £	2015 £
<b>Income Statement</b>		
Turnover	1,327,060	1,309,849
Cost of Sales	(678,846)	(679,259)
Gross excess of income over expenditure	648,214	630,590
Overhead expenses	(742,452)	(780,741)
Other operating income	298,175	359,209
Interest receivable and similar charges	2,962	2,460
Excess of income over expenditure before taxation	206,899	211,518
Taxation of ordinary activities	(37,746)	(37,721)
Excess of income over expenditure for the year	169,153	173,797
<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
Fixed Assets	1,845,414	1,963,448
Current Assets	1,319,374	1,072,549
Creditors - amounts within one year	(412,333)	(283,434)
Net Current assets	907,041	789,115
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	2,752,455	2,752,563
Provisions	(46,562)	(41,247)
Net Assets	2,705,893	2,711,317
Reserves	1,274,193	1,105,040
Accumulated fund	334,647	343,468
Grant Reserve	333,442	340,691
Capital Reserve - Shellfish facility	763,611	922,118
Capital Reserve	2,705,893	2,711,317
Total Reserves		
<b>Note</b> 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	1,937,370
Capital equipment purchased in year		13,800
	1,951,170	1,951,170
Less Depreciation brought forward	(1,049,748)	(889,732)
Less amounts depreciated in year	(158,507)	(160,016)
Total Included in Assets	742,915	901,422

# Board Members

## Attendances 2016

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

## Board changes

### Resignations

Bob Laucht                      May 2016

### Retirements

Gary Anthony                      December 2016

### Appointments

Chris Thomson                      January 2017

Brian Riches                      January 2017

Name	Jan 2016	Mar 2016	May 2016	Jul 2016	Sep 2016	Nov 2016
Gary Anthony	✓	✓	X	Part	X	✓
Paula Baldry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alan Bushell	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
Mel Catton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bob Ellis	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Andy Frary	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X
Bob Laucht	✓	✓				
Joan Price	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Adrian Underwood		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Duncan Vaughan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bruce Walls	✓					
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. Under 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 2015 and reviewed by the independent designated person in March 2015 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 and March 2015.

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](http://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](mailto: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 1BT

Telephone: 01328 711646  
Email: [harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk](mailto:harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk)

# The work of the Commissioners 2016

## Introduction

The work of the Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC) is regulated by Central Government and 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/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/shippingports/ports/trust/) Department of Transport). The WHC aim to conform to the governance as set out by the Government.

The following information was distilled from the reports of the bi-monthly meetings of the Commissioners in 2016. All these reports can be found on the Harbour Website -- [www.wellsharbour.co.uk](http://www.wellsharbour.co.uk)

## Annual Meetings

The Commissioners hold an annual public meeting to report on their work. In 2016 it was held on 3rd May 2016. A report of that meeting is on the Harbour Website -- [www.wellsharbour.co.uk](http://www.wellsharbour.co.uk)

The date of the 2017 meeting is 16th May 2017 at 7pm at Wells Community Hospital.

## Harbour Staff

There were no full-time staff appointments during 2016.

A seasonal vacancy was created to man the Gilly Hut.

There were no staff leavers during 2016. A reorganisation replaced a contractor with an existing staff member.

## 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

Bob Laucht, Adrian Underwood and Duncan Vaughan were appointed effective 1st January 2016. Chris Thomson and Brian Riches were appointed effective 1st January 2017.

## Retirements

Bob Laucht resigned as a Commissioner in May 2016 after a short tenure as he felt the Commissioners were not for him.

Gary Anthony retired Dec 2016 completing 6 years of service. Wells Harbour Commissioners thank him for all the work and input he has provided during his tenure and wish him well.

## New Commissioner Portfolios

Joan Price took over as Chairman of the Harbour Users Advisory Committee in 2016.

Duncan Vaughan was elected as new Vice Chair of the Commissioners effective 26th July 2016.

## Beach Patrol

The beach patrol operated successfully for the sixth year employing four 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 received a grant from the Norfolk Community Foundation (Sheringham Shoal Community Fund) to purchase the hut which 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 wild-life entanglement from the nylon line used on the plastic reels which are sold in local retail outlets. The Gilly hut was a huge success and highlights environmental awareness to visitors to the Port.

## Capital Expenditure

### 2016 completed

- Replacement Harbour Pickup
- Completion of Facilities Barge incorporating showers and heads for visiting boats.



- 2nd phase of redesign of car park - motor bike area moved to far East End, and leisure seating installed at new amenity area. Car park lines re-drawn and gates installed at entrance and exit.
- Strip out of upstairs of Harbour Office and creation of new boardroom
- Diversified Port activities to include boat repairs and engineering

- New building for boat repairs at East End
- Gilly Hut introduced to provide an alternative to plastic gilying items by hiring eco friendly buckets and reels to reduce plastic waste
- MMO maintenance dredge licence renewed for five years
- Installation of new pontoons at Tug Boat Yard
- Replaced two buoys following Trinity House audit
- Harbour Office painted outside
- New 21ft GRP Tidemaster boat purchased for possible use as a water taxi or an investment
- New signage installed at slipways

#### *Planned for 2017*

- Investigate replacement to slipway trolley (ordered)
- Investigate creation of habitats i.e. Tern Island
- Feasibility for channel straightening project
- Develop boat repairs and engineering
- Expand boat yard (complete)
- Investigate installation of flood panels on Harbour Office perimeter wall (replacement of Harbour Office extension project).
- Extension of quayside railings to end of car parking spaces
- Maritime Trail interpretation boards
- Slipway repairs
- Explore possibility of increasing visiting pontoons
- Consider potential property investment opportunities either by purchase or rent
- Investigate methods to protect the saltmarsh from further erosion and take reasonable steps
- Strive to enable our conservancy and dredging operations to be brought completely in-house by purchasing required machinery e.g. Talus Tractor (purchased)
- Install sympathetic lighting on quay to reduce light pollution
- Look at extending camera coverage throughout the Port to improve security of vessels
- Fill remaining mooring ring holes in car park
- Construction of storage shed in boat compound for boat repairs (complete)
- Improvement to East End slipway

#### *Future expenditure under consideration*

- Replacement to beach patrol rib
- Resurface quayside and car park
- Increase visiting pontoons
- Reinstatement of wooden jetty near Shipwrights
- Water taxi/ferry
- Pontoon for safer access to *Albatros*
- Wooden jetty at Skredge

- Archive of historic documents for public viewing
- Production of Harbour history book

#### **Environment**

The Port continued the Gilly patrol in 2016 to educate families regarding gilly welfare whilst still enjoying the activity.

The Gilly Hut was introduced to hire environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic gilying items. The hut has educational material advising the public on plastic pollution and marine life entanglement.

Investigations began into creating marine habitats such as the reinstatement of Tern Islands swept away in Dec 2013 tidal surge.

#### **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 2016 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. A new maintenance dredging licence was approved by the MMO for five years replacing the previous three year licence that expired.

#### **Dams and Creeks**

Refurbishment of some of the dams, first erected in the 1700's, continued. These works have proven to be very beneficial in the tidal flow arriving approximately 15-20 mins earlier at the quayside on the flood and a lot greater ebb remaining in the quayside at low water. It has also helped with the scouring effect on the channel. By carrying out these works over the last couple of years it has replenished and protected the marsh and also in some areas has created new marsh.

#### **New Vessel**

A 21ft GRP Tidemaster was purchased for possible use as a water taxi or possible investment.

#### **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.

#### **Port Safety**

Health and safety inspections have been regularly undertaken and all H&S issues have been addressed. The Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Safe-

ty Management System (SMS) was independently audited in March 2015. The next audit will be in 2018.

### Public Relations

WHMT organised the 9th Norfolk Triathlon to raise funds for the charity. The event was held on 4th September 2016. The 2017 event will be held on September 10th 2017.



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.

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.

Harbour Master Robert Smith continues to contribute to the Blue New Deal initiative in London. The Blue New Deal aims to deliver stronger economies for UK coastal communities, supporting more and better jobs through a healthier marine and coastal environment by innovative and sustainable approaches.

The facilities barge was opened for public viewing prior to its opening for visitors. Stakeholders had the opportunity to view the facility as well as meet with Commissioners.

A new flyer was produced geared towards encouraging visitors from European marinas to the Port.

The Port placed an entry into *Sail the Wash* information booklet giving details about visiting the Port.

A new bi-annual newsletter was produced *The Haven* for Spring and Autumn publication 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

Three kayak safaris were held in 2016 to provide opportunities for stakeholders to explore the creeks and local wildlife and view the Port from a different perspective.

### 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. There was a suggestion from a group representative to change the format of the meeting in that the various stakeholder groups would run the meeting themselves and invite WHC as a guest. Following a discussion at the HUAC meeting and a vote it was unanimous to keep the format as it is with WHC organising and facilitating the meeting.

WHC agreed to acknowledge recreational boating in the SBDP with the following wording: *WHC acknowledges the importance of recreational boating area in Wells Harbour and will make their best endeavours to maintain a recreational boating area in the Harbour for these activities in the foreseeable future.*

### Outer Harbour

3-5 vessels worked from the Outer Harbour supporting O&M activity at the wind farm in 2016. 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 WHC responsibilities are many and a key one is to maintain Wells harbour as a working port, a WHC responsibility since 1663. The executive, with approval from the Commissioners, continue to promote the Port of Wells and the Outer Harbour to other wind farm developers in the region.

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 work-

ing on a weekly basis.

### Harbour Office Extension

A project which started in 2015 to look at extending the Harbour Office at first floor level to protect the Office against future potential flooding has been shelved in favour of installing flood panels similar to the environment agency glass panels to the Harbour Office perimeter wall. This project is still under investigation at the time of writing.

### Administration

The work of the Harbour Master and the Port was recognised by Robert Smith receiving an MBE



in the 2017 New Year Honours list for his services to the Port and the community of Wells-next-the-sea.

The Port of Wells is categorised as an A&B Port with Braemar Howells contracted as the Tier 2 responder. A new OPRC Oil Spill Contingency Plan was approved by

the MCA in 2016.

Hydrosphere chartered the *Frank-T* to lift three buoys off Weybourne.

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

Louise De Lisle now sits on the Norfolk Community Foundation (Sheringham Shoal Community Fund) which provides grants to North Norfolk community groups seeking financial assistance for projects or initiatives that meet key criteria and focus on renewable energy, marine environment and safety, sustainability or education in these areas.

### 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 introduced a bi-annual newsletter in 2016 bringing updates to Wells residents and other local villages

### UKHMA

Harbour Master, Robert Smith, represents small Ports in the East Coast region on the council of the UKHMA.

### 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:

- Robert Smith attended a dredging management course
- Robert Smith and Simon Blakeley attended a conference on habitat creation
- Graham Riseborough attended CPC training
- Simon Blakeley completed the IDG Harbour Master and Port Marine Safety Code course in Southampton as part of his career progression training.
- Fred Whitaker GRP course April 2017

### Trainee Scheme

WHC announced the intention to establish a trainee scheme and will develop this in 2017. This will be the first of its type at the Port and will aim to provide opportunities for skill development in various aspects of Port operations with a potential job opportunity although this cannot be 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 2016. The Port is investigating additional land to the South of the current boat store and has cleared the land in 2016 to provide more light to boats stored at the southern border.

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

The Port commenced the provision of marine repairs and engineering in 2016 and this will be progressed in 2017 providing an additional revenue stream.

### *Slipway Trolley*

WHC has received EMFF funding approval for a self propelled slipway hoist to replace the slipway trolley

### *Car Park*

WHC redesigned the car park in 2016 to improve the flow of traffic entering and exiting the car park. A decision made to remove the motorcycle parking at the pinch point of the car park for safety reasons where pedestrians walk and gillying activities occur has been a success and following public concern about the removal of motorbike parking an area has been created to the east end of the car park.

### *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.

### *Facilities Barge*

WHC permit up to 25 residential boat owners to purchase a seasonal permit to use the facilities

barge. In 2016 10 were taken up.

### *Port Charges*

There was a small increase to the majority of 2017 Port charges. In order to promote the Outer Harbour to other commercial operators, the decision was taken not to increase berthing fees for the Outer Harbour.

### *Visiting vessels*

Visiting vessels totaled 318 in 2016, down 9 from 2015. Average nights stayed remain comparable at 4 nights.

### **Wells Harbour Maritime Trust (WHMT)**

Students from Wells Primary took part in a *Fun on the Water* day in 2016.

In 2016 WHMT funded young people in group sailing courses from Langham School, Alderman Peel High School and Burnham Market Primary School and four individuals were given funds to complete RYA sailing courses.

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

WHMT would like to thank all supporters of the Trust for their kind donations during the course of the year.



*Photo by Chris Rose*