

ANNUAL REPORT TO 31st December 2021



Wells Harbour Commissioners

A Message from the Chairman

Mel Catton



Welcome to the 2022 Wells report on behalf of the Wells Harbour Commissioners and all the Staff. May I firstly thank my fellow Commissioners, our Harbour Master, together with all the staff.

The support shown to me during my first year as Chairman, I am most grateful.

Unfortunately, 2021 has again been another eventful one in several ways and our Harbour Master and Staff have thankfully maintained and kept the Port operational.

Although somewhat expected, the loss of the SCIRA Wind Farm business has certainly caused the Harbour to rethink parts of its operation and thankfully with the forward thinking in anticipation of this happening, the Harbour has been actively seeking alternative and active projects to generate replacement income within the operation of the Port. We have known for some time now that the Port of Wells would be facing difficult times, with changes and challenges having to be faced, and I am pleased to say, I believe the enthusiasm shown by all concerned within the operation of the Port, we will certainly continue to move forward.

It is pleasing to report that despite the difficulties faced, we have seen an increase in visiting vessels, thus putting greater demand on our pontoons, but progress is in hand to extend these in certain areas. Also pleasing is the Ports fishing fleet increasing and remaining active and continues to create the interest of the many visitors to the Port.

Many people have asked where has the Albatros gone and is it returning - with the answer, yes, once refurbishment has been completed, we will see its return which will be sometime during 2022.

You may recall sometime back we took steps to re-vamp the harbour car park and pleasingly we are continuing further to update this by re-surfacing and remarking the narrow bays, to accommodate the larger vehicles of today. The Harbour is also planning to operate a barrier controlled system, with vehicle registration, an easier payment function and space availability signs thus reducing the frustrations of the current operation.

Let us not forget our Maritime Trust set up to help our younger generation gain knowledge of the water activities. We are again planning to hold a number of events for the youngsters throughout 2022, plus we are pleased to announce the return of our annual Triathlon which raises funds for the Trust. This is having to take place slightly earlier this year in June, with over 300 competitors competing.

As stated many times, our Port hosts many local charitable and local events throughout the year, and we have a special event this year which we are supporting, being the Platinum Jubilee of our Majesty Queen Elizabeth and will be lighting our Beacon as one of many around our Coastline.

For a few years now the Port of Wells has been concerned about the climate changes and future rising tide levels and how they would affect our Town. Having taken the initiative, funds were put forward to explore the possible outcome and whilst a full conclusion has not yet been reached, concerns still remain as to what needs to be done to protect our Town for future generations. A concern for us all remains.

On behalf of all the commissioners we wish to thank our team of staff for their continued support in the changes taking place, many to the benefit of our stakeholders. Thanks to you all.

Whatever capacity you visit our Harbour, I wish you all a safe and enjoyable 2022

Mel Catton, Chairman

Welcome from Views of Harbour Master - Robert Smith MBE



Welcome from the Harbour Master. As the only port on the North Norfolk Coast, Wells historic harbour attracts many thousands of visitors each year. The stunning surroundings and fishing vessels seem to have changed only superficially over the centuries. The

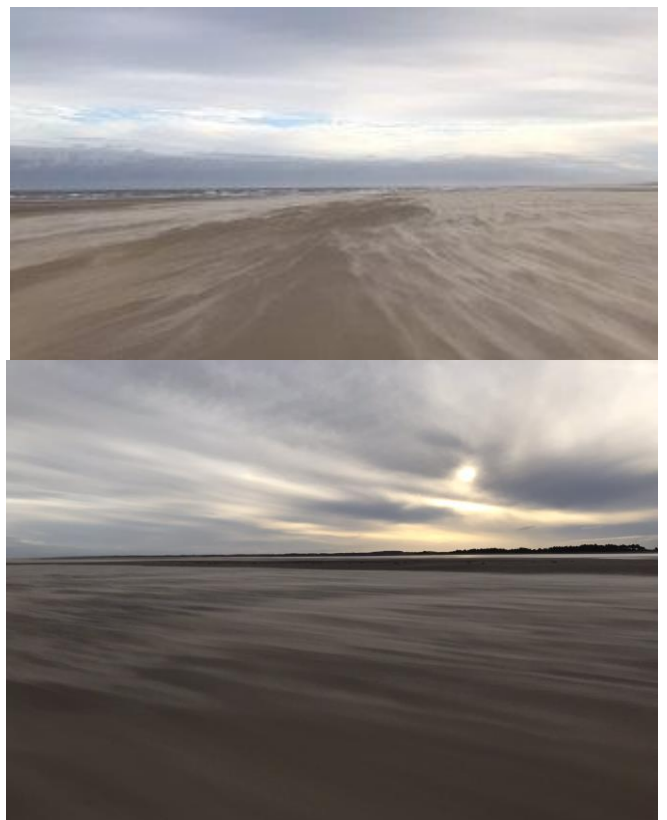
ancient Quayside and many of the waterfront buildings still retain much of their original character and charm from times gone, as maltings, warehouses and public houses, like the Golden Fleece where local boy Horatio Nelson would often spend an evening playing whist.

However, these ancient surroundings stand in vivid contrast to our modernised fishing industry. Gone are the days of the many traditional open clinker vessels that fished from Wells harbour, with no wheelhouse or modern electronic aids, just a compass and a watch to guide them. Today's hi-tech fleet, with all their bells and whistles are very committed to sustainable fishing and are very proactive with the Wells Harbour Commissioners in driving forward new initiatives, like the lobster hatchery, where all concerned are working together to put back for future generations. Visitors and locals alike will see daily landings be made of Crab, Lobster and Whelks, much for the home market via local and the London restaurant's & hotels and other for export, but all of the highest quality. Because the Harbour Commissioners and I believe Wells Harbour is a national asset with a long and fascinating history, we are in discussions to have the Port registered as an historic harbour, to coincide with the 360th anniversary of the formation of the Commission in 2023.

As for myself as harbour master, 2022 will see my thirty third year working at the port, twenty second as HM and the time has past in a flash and as much as there have been many trials and tribulations, it has always been a privilege and honour to work for this town and harbour community. I have learned that no matter what, I cannot please all the people all the time and there have been times when perhaps I should have done things differently, but each day is a learning curve and very varied, which is the most enjoyable part of being HM.

During my tenure I have seen so many changes at the Port, from the last coasting ships to berth in the harbour for import and export, to the boom of the leisure boating sector and more recently the offshore wind industry leaving. But changes are inevitable and as much as there are many exciting future possibilities being discussed for the port, I am getting to a stage in my career, where in not many more years I will need to start considering my own future and even retirement. What sort of legacy I would like to leave for future generations? With global warming and resulting climate change, the port, town and North Norfolk Coast, does face an uncertain future, with rising sea levels and more severe storms. With this in mind, as HM I will be putting a lot of my time and energy into planning and mitigating with the powers to be on the impacts on flooding of our coastline. Whether you are part of this harbour community, have arrived from sea or visiting via land, I hope you enjoy all Wells harbour and our town has to offer, especially the "Fresh Air and Freedom"

Robert Smith MBE, Harbour Master



The Executive



Robert Smith MBE
Harbour Master



Simon Cooper
Harbour Administrator

Board Changes 2021

None

Board Members attendances 2021

There were scheduled board meetings held in the financial year.

Name	Jan 2021	Mar 2021	May 2021	July 2021	Sept 2021	Nov 2021
Mel Catton	p	p	p	p	p	p
Josh Danziger	p	x	x	p	p	p
Bob Ellis	p	p	p	p	p	x
Andy McCullum	p	x	p	x	p	p
Nicky Groom	p	p	p	p	p	p
Denys Hickey	x	p	p	x	p	x
Ashley Mullenger	p	p	p	p	p	p
Brian Riches	p	p	p	x	x	p
Chris Thomson	p	p	p	p	p	p
Kevin Theobald	p	p	p	p	p	p
Sally Wynne	p	p	p	p	p	p
Robert Smith	p	p	p	p	p	p
Simon Cooper	p	p	p	p	p	p

2021 Board - Wells Harbour Commissioners



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.



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.



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.



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.



Nicholas Groom is 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.



Kevin Theobald has been working in the lighting design profession for over 40 years, serving as a board member and latterly president of its representative international association. A Wells resident and leisure sailor with a keen interest in the future of the town and port. Appointed Jan 2019.



Ashley Mullenger is not a resident however, as Wells' only commercial fisherwoman working aboard one of the harbour fishing fleet, the vast majority of her time is spent in the harbour or out at sea. Appointed Jan 2020.



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



Josh Danziger lives in Burnham Overy Staithe since 2012. Retiring from a career in finance he now has more time to enjoy sailing his 37' sailing smack built in 1892, which is kept in Wells. Appointed March 2020.



Andy McCullum Coming from a fishing family, Andy has been fishing since leaving school. He started fishing going off Weybourne Beach with the Frary brothers, then working on boats fishing out of Wells with the "Blucher" and "Comrade" before having "Two Brothers" built and then "Nel Diana", catching crabs, lobsters and whelks. Appointed January 2021.



Sally Wynne is a Speech and Language Therapist, born and brought up in Wells. After bringing up their 4 children in Norwich, she and her husband have returned to Wells. She sails 12m² Sharpies as a member of Wells Sailing Club. Appointed in January 2021.

Summary of results

For the year ended 31 December 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Income Statement		
Turnover	1,379,536	1,236,802
Cost of Sales	(644,888)	(576,691)
Gross excess of income over expenditure	734,648	660,111
Overhead expenses	(738,201)	(759,000)
Other operating income	284,876	238,173
Interest receivable and similar charges	147	2,135
Excess of income over expenditure before taxation	281,470	141,419
Taxation of ordinary activities	(69,262)	(39,759)
Excess of income over expenditure for the year	212,208	101,660
Balance Sheet		
Fixed Assets	1,389,579	1,532,878
Current Assets	1,846,367	1,581,570
Creditors - amounts within one year	(206,756)	(210,785)
Net Current assets	1,639,611	1,370,785
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	3,029,190	2,903,663
Provisions	(60,117)	(60,286)
Net Assets	2,969,073	2,843,377
Reserves		
Accumulated fund	2,038,296	1,825,919
Grant Reserve	290,543	299,364
Grant Reserve - Slipway Hoist	83,342	97,232
Capital Reserve - Shellfish facility	297,197	304,446
Capital Reserve	252,488	300,108
Capital Reserve - The Lifeboat Horse Sculpture	7,207	10,457
Capital Reserve - Lobster Reserve	-	5,851
Total Reserves	2,969,073	2,843,377
Note assets above include:		
Investment by Scira into Outer Harbour and channel and Inner Harbour		
Spend to 31 December 2021		
Cost brought forward	1,942,130	1,943,555
Capital equipment disposed in year	-	(1,425)
	1,942,130	1,942,130
Less Depreciation brought forward	(1,642,022)	(1,594,167)
Less amounts depreciated in year	(47,620)	(47,855)
Less depreciation on disposal	-	-
Total Included in Assets	252,488	300,108

WHC are a non-profit making organisation whose excess of income over expenditure is ploughed back into the Harbour for the good of the stakeholders

Ports Good Governance Guidance

Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC) is a Trust Port, an independent statutory body run for the benefit of stakeholders and the local community.

WHC aims to run the harbour in accordance with standards and practices set out in the Department for Transport's document Ports Good Governance Guidance (March 2018).

Ports Good Governance Guidance states that “a trust port is a valuable asset presently safeguarded by the existing board, whose duty it is to hand it on in the same or better condition to succeeding generations.”

Ports Good Governance guidance also sets out a trust ports commercial accountability. It stresses the importance of monitoring performance and consultation with stakeholders, and sets out a management framework and standards compatible with good governance.

Finally, it publishes a framework setting out the guiding principles for appointment to the Board of Commissioners and the standards to which the Board should adhere.

The Department for Transport actively monitors compliance with these standards but interested

parties should play their part in bringing to the Department's attention any examples of unaccountable behaviour. Section 3.46 of Ports Good Governance Guidance sets out how stakeholders can complain about governance issues or other matters arising from a ports activities.

In the first instance, please raise the matter with the Harbourmaster and/or the WHC Board. We will endeavour to provide a written response within four weeks setting out whether we consider the complaint justified and details of any remedial action we intend to take. Where the complainant does not believe the response is reasonable in addressing the grounds of his or her concern, the matter can be reported to the Department for Transport.

However, please note that the Department for Transport has no role in reviewing the commercial decisions or activities of a trust port or in intervening in essentially localised disputes. Its interest is in ensuring that a trust board is governed well and does not take decisions in an arbitrary or unaccountable manner.



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 November 2021.

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.portofwells.co.uk

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

The Port publishes an annual brochure, The Haven newsletters and as well as the annual public meeting, which now also includes a Harbour User Advisory Committee meeting.

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 2021

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 publication 'good governance guidance for statutory harbour authorities operating ports in England and Wales' - Published 5 March 2018 Department for Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-governance-guidance-for-ports>). WHC aims to conform to the governance as set out by the Government. Reports of the bi-monthly meetings of the Commissioners in 2021 can be found on the Harbour Website -- www.portofwells.co.uk

Annual Meetings

The Commissioners usually hold an annual public meeting to report on their work. However, with the COVID restrictions being in force, it was not held given the circumstances. Details about the financial performance and works undertaken by the commissioners can be found in this brochure as well as the Annual Report & Accounts which is published on the Harbour Website -- www.portofwells.co.uk. The date of the 2022 meeting is yet to be decided due to the ongoing concerns with social distancing requirements and of which impacts the ability to hold public gatherings of any size.

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.

Commissioner Portfolios

To enable more proactive involvement in Port Operations, Commissioners have been assigned individual specialised portfolios:

- Mel Catton - Chairman and HR
- Kevin Theobald - Vessels and Plant
- Robert Ellis - Health and Safety
- Nicholas Groom - Harbour Services
- Denys Hickey - Legal
- Josh Danziger - Coastal Change
- Ashley Mullenger - Community & Hatchery
- Brian Riches - Channel & Buoys
- Chris Thomson - Estates and Events
- Sally Wynne - Heritage
- Andy McCallum - tbc

Beach Patrol

The beach patrol was postponed for the season due to the COVID social distancing measures in force throughout the period.

Gilly Hut

The Gilly Hut was unfortunately also a victim of the COVID social distancing and lockdown measures.

Capital Expenditure/Projects

2021 completed

- Little tern artificial nesting pontoon
- Extended quayside railing running alongside the Lobster Hatchery.

- Purchased Lobster Hatchery equipment

Planned for 2022 and / or future consideration

- Flood wall and landscaping of land west of Harbour Office
- Create memorial seating with anchor
- Install sympathetic lighting on quay to reduce light pollution
- Introduce recycling bins for harbour use.
- Maritime Trail interpretation boards
- Create a new jetty adjacent to the public slipway
- Jetty/ pontoons at the Skredge, sailing club and/or Shipwrights
- Archive historic documents for public viewing
- Establish studio pods to hire out on East End land
- Resurface quayside car park
- Look at railings for Tug Boat Yard
- Cycle racks for car park



Environment

The Harbour has been working with local retail owners who sell single use plastic crabbing items to see what can be done about reducing plastics in the harbour. Shop owners are coming up with ideas on a return and resell system or hiring.

We are delighted that the shop owners have taken onboard our concerns and are thinking about alternatives. Drop nets in particular cause not only damage to wildlife through entanglement they are also a major nuisance for boat owners both leisure and commercial as they get caught around props. Please respect our beautiful harbour, we would prefer that you avoid buying single use plastics and drop nets.

A “Billy the Gilly” booklet has been designed by a local artist which is available to provide information to the public on handling, care and general information on the shore crabs. The leaflet is available at the harbour office and Natural East on the quayside.

Navigation and Channel

The Port was inspected by Trinity House and passed its annual inspection and audit.

Dredging

The Outer Harbour basin and access channel was comprehensively dredged to re-instate the previous depth of the harbour at low water.

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 2018. The next audit is currently being undertaken.

Public Relations

WHMT once again had in plan to rerun the North Norfolk Triathlon to raise funds for the charity. The event though never launched amid concerns of competitors and spectators being unable to socially distance and upon guidance from British Triathlon. It is hoped the event can return in 2022 albeit at an earlier month given the tide times in September.

WHC worked with the Wells Christmas tide committee to organise and build a Crab & Lobster pot Christmas tree which turned into a great success and was a very popular addition which will now be a annual feature. In addition, WHC communicates via:

- Published Harbour Minutes
- Published Annual report & Accounts
- Website news page
- Harbour brochure and flyers
- Facebook and Twitter
- Stakeholder meetings i.e. AGM
- Events

Outer Harbour

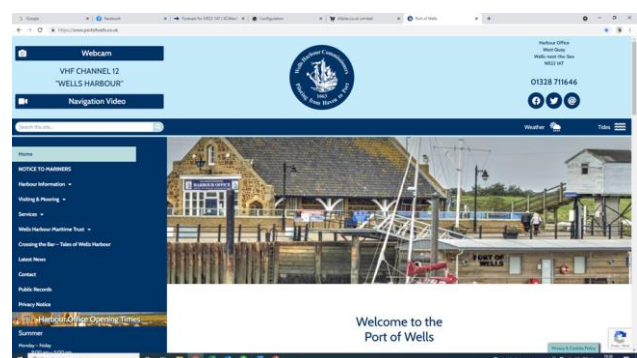
Three to four vessels worked from the Outer Harbour supporting O&M activity at the wind farm in 2021. Other survey vessels used the Outer Harbour also. All the vessels call Wells Harbour on VHF channel 12 before departure and on arrival at the leading buoy to gain clearance for transit.

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.

The windfarm company Equinor gave notice to Wells Harbour Commissioners that they would not be using the harbour from September 2021 and have changed their working practices to combine its operations with the Dudgeon windfarm.

Harbour Website

The website is regularly updated with news, navigation updates and reports of the meetings held. The website has proven to be very popular, especially the webcam 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.

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 commissioners feel 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.

Boat Store

East End continues to be a great asset to the Port and to stakeholders and was at full capacity in the Winter season 2021.

Slipway Hoist

The self propelled slipway hoist delivered in June 2018 has proved to be a valuable addition to the Harbour as it frequently used lifting fishing vessels for maintenance and repair and well as some of the larger private vessels.

Car Park

There continues to be much social media debate about the parking enforcement regulations on the quayside car park. All the commissioners expect is for people to purchase a valid ticket at the machines, as we are a business just like any other and we rely on the income from the car park to pay for the upkeep of equipment, moorings and plant that maintains our beautiful harbour. As with all services the Harbour provides, our contracts are scrutinised frequently and the car park is no exception. To that end, the current operation is under strategic review at the time of writing.

Facilities Barge

The facilities barge was able to open this season. To provide the safest possible environment for users, restrictions were made on the number of people using the facilities at any one time.

A sanitising station was fitted outside and air purification systems fitted inside which runs constantly to eliminate any traces of 'COVID' as much as possible.

Port Charges

The board of Wells Harbour Commissioners, review tariffs yearly to ensure they remain appropriate. The commissioners also took the decision to look to simplify the charging structures for 2022 and beyond.

GDPR

The Port instructed an external consultant to assist with compliance to the GDPR regulations. Privacy statements for staff and visitors and a data protection statement for the website have been produced.

Visiting vessels

The port welcomes over 300 visiting vessels each year and receives frequent compliments on the facilities and welcome the port provides them. To aid visitors a video of how to enter the harbour was commissioned and can be found on the website and YouTube.

Quay Events

The Port has an 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.

The Commissioners would also like to encourage the use of the harbour to local charitable organisations and are welcome to apply to the harbour office accordingly.

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. There are no confirmed plans for the current lifeboat house, however, it plays an important role protecting the spit which will be important going forward. Further details can be found in this brochure in the RNLI article.



Wells Harbour Maritime Trust (WHMT)

All serving Commissioners are Trustees. All profits from the North Norfolk Triathlon go to WHMT. For 2021 we managed to hold several kayaking and paddleboard sessions. The plan for 2022 is to continue and extend these activities and allow Katy, the new events co-ordinator, to regain the momentum lost in 2020. The Trust will provide grants on an individual basis:-

- For recognised sailing courses at beginner or intermediate or advanced standard at local approved sailing schools.
- A sail training vessel for a week's experience at sea. The Trust will make a contribution (direct to the sail training agency) of an amount of money at the discretion of the trustees.
- On maritime courses to extend their maritime skills such as a Sea Survival course. The Trust will make a contribution (paid directly by the WHMT to the training agency) of an amount of money at the discretion of the trustees
- On swimming courses so that young people can learn to swim or teach with confidence. The Trust will make a contribution (directly to the swim school) per applicant to cover the costs for an appropriate swimming course (number of sessions at discretion of the Trustees).

The Trust does not cover travelling or meal costs.

Katy is also working with local schools to support larger groups with other activities such as beach cleans, nature walks and attending activity centres focussed on given children more confidence in and around water.

This is a great opportunity to learn or develop a new skill so why not apply?

Contact the Harbour Office for an application form:-
The Harbour Office, West Quay, Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1AT
Phone: 01328 711646

Email: harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk

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

