

# Port of Wells

## 2023

### 360<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Wells Harbour Commissioners





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Email: [harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk](mailto:harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk)  
[www.portofwells.co.uk](http://www.portofwells.co.uk)

## Harbour Executive

Harbour Master  
Harbour Administrator

Robert Smith MBE  
Simon Cooper

07775 507284  
07867 500729

## Harbour Officials

Deputy Harbour Master

Fred Whitaker

07876 743484



Port of Wells

@RobertMbe



The Harbour Master, or staff on duty, will be present on the tide during peak season  
(Beginning of June to end of August)

For the remainder of the year (September to end May) VHF listening watch.

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.

Individual views expressed in articles in this brochure are those of the authors  
and are not necessarily endorsed by Wells Harbour Commissioners.

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Email: [admin@curlewcoastalcharters.co.uk](mailto:admin@curlewcoastalcharters.co.uk)

Tel: 07512086794

## Welcome from the Harbour Master



Despite being at the helm for over two decades and working for the Port of Wells for over three decades, I still never take for granted what an enormous privilege

it is to work in such a special place and have the opportunity to serve the Wells and North Norfolk Coast communities. I often wonder if it is a vocation or has it just become a way of life, because there are no real set hours to a typical day. My working life revolves around the tides, seven days a week and in reality, I am on call 24/7.

Of course, with this comes responsibility, scrutiny, and many challenges and hard as I try, it is not possible to please all of the people all of the time.

The Port and Harbour Estate has such a mix of different users, whether this is ashore or afloat, with many different views and needs that need to be considered and heard, where all perspectives are seen as equally valid. I try to ensure that everyone can achieve what they want from the Port, whether that is making a living or just enjoying the harbour and local area.

This is never more evident than in the summer, when the harbour and town is packed with people enjoying themselves in so many ways, as well as others trying to earn a living. This is often when the law of unintended consequences comes into play, at which point it is a case of understanding the dynamics of what has happened and calming the waters.

Myself and the Harbour Commissioners are always looking to improve the Port and facilities for its users, but hopefully

without spoiling the character or beauty of the harbour, as we are all very aware that is why the Port is unique. It is unspoilt and dare I say a little bit like stepping back in time and we are all working hard to keep it this way but at the same time provide good modern facilities.

The Port of Wells has very much become a 21st century destination, lying at the Northern tip of the North Norfolk Coast. It is a great stopping off point for sailors exploring the East Coast being probably the most accessible and well-lit harbour with modern facilities between the Humber and Lowestoft and also a great base to permanently moor your boat and explore the harbour creeks, the Wash and East Coast. Or just moor up and enjoy relaxing in the charm of this beautiful historic harbour whilst soaking up the atmosphere by venturing into our beautiful town.

Finally, the harbour team in the harbour office, or afloat, are always on hand to assist you and answer queries and ensure that your safety, enjoyment, and experience of the Port of Wells is a positive one. If you are visiting or a regular harbour user, we hope you have an enjoyable time. If you are a commercial user then we hope you have a safe and prosperous 2023.

"Fair winds and following seas"

**Robert Smith MBE, Harbour Master**



## Meet the Team



Harbour Master  
Robert Smith MBE



Harbour Administrator  
Simon Cooper



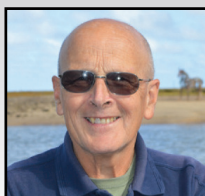
Deputy Harbour Master  
Fred Whitaker



Harbour Services  
Tristan Roberts



Administration Assistant  
Sallyann Retchless



Harbour Services  
Graham Riseborough



## A Message from the Chairman Mel Catton



Firstly, and pleasingly through the efforts of my fellow Commissioners, and in particular all the Harbour staff led by our Harbour Master and by their sterling work we have progressed

forward with several projects, with many on the verge of being completed during 2023. Thank you all for your contribution. We all knew we faced another difficult year but whilst still some way to go, our forward thinking to maintain the high standards of our Port remain on track.

Unfortunately we have had to reduce the number of staff by the withdrawal of the SCIRA Wind Farm operation and offer our thanks to those in question for all their support and enthusiasm shown whilst with us.

We also have some Commissioner changes this year and I would like to thank all of those for their input into the running of the Port during the last few years it's been very much appreciated and a pleasure to have worked with you.

Of course 2023 is a somewhat special year for THE PORT OF WELLS as we have now reached our 360th year, a celebration in its own right, but also we have been granted "HERITAGE HARBOUR STATUS" a proud achievement for the Port and our Town. Planned celebrations are in hand throughout the year for all to enjoy.

Pleasingly we still have an active fishing fleet operating within our Harbour and we trust the ever increasing running cost faced by all at present will not deter them from continuing to operate within our Port as

this not only affects the Fishermen, but the many workers ashore dependant on them.

Part of our Port operation is to welcome visiting vessels throughout the summer season as it not only provides the Harbour with much needed revenue, but brings considerable trade into the Town, and we have again maintained a consistent and growing demand for these Moorings.

Wells Harbour Maritime Trust, was set up to help youngsters gain knowledge of the water, and I am pleased to report that there was an outstanding uptake of the activities provided and organised during 2022.

Also once again it is a pleasure to congratulate all who attended the Wells Triathlon which was again supported by numerous contenders from around the country, and with the money raised going towards the Maritime Trust, allows us to provide more activities during 2023. Thanks to all the volunteer Marshals for this.

For many years now our Port hosts many local charities, and again this year many have continued to hold their events within the Harbour, but one stood out last year and that was the Wells Christmas Tide Festival, the arrival of Santa to the Quayside escorted by a flotilla of illuminated boats followed by a firework display and watched by a packed Quayside was outstanding. Thanks to all involved.

On behalf of all the Commissioners we wish to thank each and every one of our Staff for their continued support in what has been a changing and difficult time for the Port, much of which is to the benefit of our stakeholders. Thank you all.

May I wish you all a safe and enjoyable 2023 in whatever capacity you may visit the Harbour.

**Mel Catton, Chairman**



## Harbour Administrator



This year especially, Wells Harbour Commissioners will have one eye reflecting on the past and one eye on the future. The 360th anniversary plans are well underway and you would have already read in our Chairman and Harbourmaster introductions on what is being planned and the exciting news about obtaining Heritage Harbour status. 360 years is clearly a very long time for any business to be still in existence and am sure if the Harbour had not moved with the times, innovate and develop along the way, it would not have survived into what it is today. The ability to adapt to conditions, I believe, is increasingly more difficult due to increasing regulation and the need to be considered as a 'sustainable' business. The word 'sustainable' portrays much more than just being in existence these days and now largely referred to as a societal goal. In business terms, the co-existence between a business operating and succeeding today without compromising the longer term needs for future generations has of course an increasing importance and awareness to us all. With that in mind, the future of the Harbour under the watchful eye of the Commissioners, Harbour Master and team requires us to look endlessly into ways to leverage bottom-line benefits from focusing on improved efficiency and reduced waste - ultimately to view sustainability as a longer term investment rather than just a cost. Increasingly, many businesses see sustainability as a crucial means to create value, trying to find the balance between building an advantage/benefit and, at the same time, meet demands and expectations to be socially responsible.

Much investment over the last decade was in the construction of the Outer Harbour and whilst its original purpose to support the

Windfarm vessels (which itself was driven for the desire to look at more energy efficient/sustainable means) plays a significantly reduced part, the opportunity to provide more shore side pontoon moorings for our residential leisure users has proved a success. There will be an increase in more finger pontoons becoming available to accommodate larger vessels on the east side of the Outer Harbour and innovative ways to further improve the use of the Outer Harbour are also under consideration such as potentially providing more pontoon berths for smaller boats and providing a permanent berth holder 'facilities barge' much like the one used in the town quay for visitors. Other ideas and initiatives you will see within this brochure have increasing priority to look at more 'sustainable'/environmental opportunities ranging from cycle racks, lighting improvements and recycling.

Smart, bold decisions on our plans with sustainable outcomes, inevitably requires further investment and prioritising how this will support much needed revenue to counteract the loss of the Windfarm income. This needs to be balanced with understanding the appetite of our Harbour users on what 'it' might cost. So it is important that such views are reflected in our plans and therefore we are always welcoming feedback on what improvements and changes made or planned to be made. Making spending choices based on such feedback, we believe, is progressively becoming more important, as increasingly people are making choices in their pursuit of adopting a more sustainable lifestyle, whether by choosing what is best for them based on ethical or environmentally sustainable practices and values, or by no longer purchasing certain products/services because they have concerns around ethical or sustainability practices or values. With that in mind, we encourage everyone to look up our Facebook page, website, Robert's twitter account and other communications the Harbour make.

*Simon Cooper*

## Introducing the 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.



**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



**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.



**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.



**Josh Danziger** has lived 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.



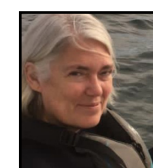
**Denys Hickey** has over 40 yrs experience as a maritime lawyer with experience of dredging and port safety. Denys has been a senior partner in a London law firm and more recently a barrister and maritime arbitrator. Appointed Jan 2018.



**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



**Andy McCullum** comes from a fishing family, Andy has been fishing since leaving school. He started fishing going off Weybourne Beach with the Fray brothers, now having two boats fishing out of Wells "Two Brothers" and "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 12m<sup>2</sup> Sharpies as a member of Wells Sailing Club. Appointed in January 2021.

## Crossing the Bar - Tales of Wells Harbour

Our Harbour Master Robert Smith MBE has not only worked for the Wells Harbour Commissioners for 30 years, but also has first-hand experience of scratching a living from the saltmarsh and sandflats as a longshoreman,

skills now in decline.

The stories Robert tells in this landmark book capture the soul of Wells-next-

the-Sea on the North Norfolk coast. As long-serving Harbour Master and former lifeboatman, he reveals the characters and events that have shaped the history and spirit of this historic coastal town. From maritime disasters 'Crossing the Bar' and secret wartime experiments, to smuggling tunnels and dodgy dealings by landowners and early harbour commissioners – this book boasts historical detail and human drama in equal measure. Some of the stories have been passed down

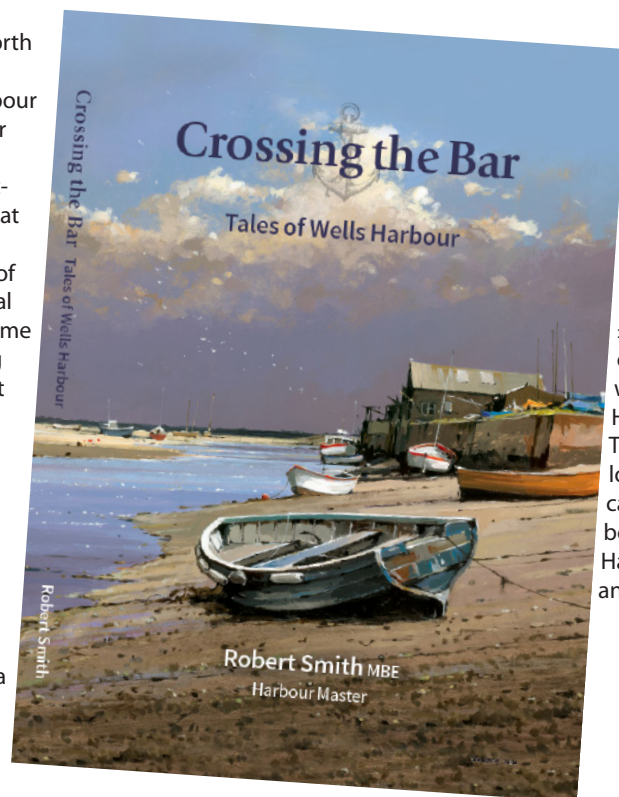
through the generations of the author's own family – resident in Wells since at least the early 1800s – some are from the harbour archives, and some from the memories of local people. Many have never been told in print before.

*“A hymn to the most beautiful coastline in the world and its magical creeks, marshes and secret history.*

*Robert Smith tells vivid stories of this wild landscape but also of its resilient people and the great community-next-the-sea.*

*Essential reading for anyone who loves North Norfolk or has ever sat and eaten fish and chips by the port of Wells.”*

Patrick Barkham, The Guardian



The book is packed with rare historical photos, beautiful illustrations and specially commissioned full colour photographs.

The foreword is written by Lord Leicester and in the preface, Robert speaks movingly of the challenges of writing the book posed by his dyslexia.

Priced at £19.50, all profits of the book will go to Wells Harbour Maritime Trust and other local causes. You can purchase the book from the Harbour Office and local shops.

## Finding Success in Failure...

It's a stunning morning as I look out into the vastness of the ocean. The sun is just peeking over the sea as it slowly wakes from its night-time slumber, providing me with a path of golden light to follow into the unknown. As I'm standing there on my board the familiar voices creep into my head, they are most unwelcome, but appear to add their views regardless. We all have them, the voices of self-doubt, they give you a million reasons why you shouldn't do something... 'you won't make it', 'how stupid are you going to look when you fail?'... also for me I have the added voices telling me of all the ways I can lose my life. I have at times, crippling anxiety as part of a diagnosis of PTSD. I am just about to set off on a world record attempt to sup between Northern Ireland and Scotland across the notorious North Sea. Sorry for the spoiler alert but I made it across...and came in 1 hour and 40 mins under the current men's record. You see this article isn't about the world record, it's about the journey getting there. It's about embracing failure and how failing is a wonderful skill we should all learn to embrace, the information we get about ourselves is so richly rewarding.

So for those that don't know I was due to paddleboard the English channel in 2019 and it all went wrong, between permissions to do it and covid it didn't happen and I was heartbroken I had put all this effort into training and raised over £6,000 for a PTSD charity. Some would look at that and say FAILURE...in fact a couple did! I felt stupid, embarrassed, silly and just wanted to hide away from everyone but...me being me and armed with the attitude of wanting to prove myself to others, I decided I would take myself off up to Scotland. Inspired by amazing athletes like Cal Major and Charlie Head, I had the great idea that I would paddle as far down the east coast of the UK as I could with the aim of making my way around the UK in chunks. Sorry, another spoiler alert I only made it about 70KMS down the coast so another failure! Again heading home with my tail between my legs feeling silly, embarrassed the usual feelings of failure consuming my thoughts as I prepared to hide away from the embarrassment of it is all.

That's when something different happened. I can't tell you how or what changed but the way I started to view the 'failure' changed...dramatically! I looked back over the last two weeks and started to see little glimmers of achievement and moments of personal growth and a deeper understanding of just who I was. A moment that springs to mind is having a full on meltdown and panic attack after leaving John O'Groats. You pass by Duncansby Head where there are these two huge rock towers that look down on you like you're the size of an ant. I was totally overwhelmed but continued one paddle stroke at a time trying to breathe and calm my heart down which felt like it was going to explode. To continue onwards took a bit of bravery. Not something I ever thought I was, especially living with anxiety the last thing you feel is brave, but here I was moving forward terrified but one paddle stroke at a time moving towards my goal and not turning back!

The deeper I looked into the trip the more gems I found and the biggest gem I had discovered is that I don't like long expeditions, the variables of what the weather is doing drove me crazy. I wanted to be on the water every day...sitting and waiting for the fog to lift takes a whole set of skills I learnt I don't have - that's amazing to learn about yourself! If I had sat at home after the English Channel didn't go ahead I would never of given myself the opportunity to learn about myself to the depth I did. So worried about what people thought...well guess what, 100's of people look back over their life and wonder 'what if' don't be one. If I can inspire one person to take a step out of their comfort zone and have a play around with failing then those moments of tears, anxiety and panic attacks are so so worth it. Challenges don't have to be huge either...my world record journey started looking at Snettisham lake (not even 1km long) and wondering can I get to the end of the lake?...so where will your journey to failing start!

**Samantha Rutt runs Barefoot SUP which operates from East Quay in Wells and became the first woman to cross the North Channel, a notorious stretch of water from Northern Ireland to Scotland, where the waters from two oceans merge to create unique conditions to paddle and navigate.**





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## The work of the Commissioners 2022

### 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 2022 can be found on the Harbour Website -- [www.portofwells.co.uk](http://www.portofwells.co.uk)

### Annual Meetings

The Commissioners hold an annual public meeting to report on their work. In 2022 this was held at the Wells Sailing Club. Details about the financial performance and works undertaken by the commissioners are discussed along with questions taken from the public. The minutes for the meeting can also be found on the website. The Annual Report & Accounts is also published on the Harbour Website -- [www.portofwells.co.uk](http://www.portofwells.co.uk). The date of the 2023 meeting is yet to be decided but will be advertised in the first quarter of the year.

### 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
- Robert Ellis - Health and Safety
- Nicholas Groom - Harbour Services
- Denys Hickey - Legal
- Josh Danziger - Coastal Change
- Ashley Mullenger - Community & Hatchery
- Sally Wynne - Heritage
- Andy McCallum - Channel & Buoys

### Capital Expenditure/Projects

#### 2022 completed

- Little tern artificial nesting pontoon repositioned
- Installed car park barrier system to replace the 'ANPR' pay & display system.
- Resurfacing of quayside car park.
- Installed 7 finger pontoons on the East side of the Outer Harbour

#### Planned for 2023 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
- Install 3 further finger pontoons in Outer Harbour
- Introduce recycling bins for harbour use.
- Identify location for Cycle racks
- 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
- Look at railings for Tug Boat Yard



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## Environment

The Harbour has been working with the 'Little Blue Hut' who now offer to rent out crabbing equipment and bait which is key to reducing plastics in the harbour. We are delighted that the 'Little Blue Hut' has had a first successful season. 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 is now also available from the hut and was designed by a local artist to explain and provide information to the public on handling, care and general information on the shore crabs. The leaflet is also 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. The town pontoon was also dredged so the depth of water is retained for visiting vessels that have different keel types and need to therefore stay afloat.

## 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 November 2021 to ensure the Harbour remained compliant and all finding/recommendations were acted upon albeit no material issues were found.

## Public Relations

WHMT did see the return of the North Norfolk Triathlon to raise funds for the charity. The event took place earlier in the year due to tide conditions but still was as popular as ever and fully subscribed by April. The day went very smoothly, the weather was kind and feedback from the British Triathlon representative was excellent.

Port of Wells Brochure 2023



WHC worked with the Wells Christmas tide committee once more to organise and build a Crab & Lobster pot Christmas tree which turned into a great success and continues to be a very popular addition to the towns festivities.

In addition, WHC communicates via:

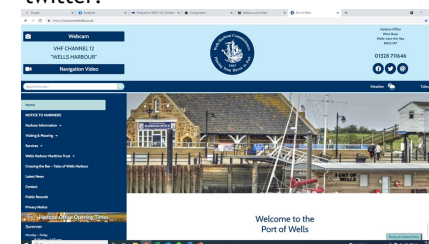
- Published Harbour Minutes
- Published Annual report & Accounts
- Website news page
- Harbour brochure and flyers
- Facebook and Twitter
- Stakeholder meetings i.e. AGM
- Events

## Outer Harbour

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. As a result, the Outer Harbour became available to moor larger private vessels with the installation of 10 finger pontoons and extra space on the 'inside' for smaller boats. The pontoon waiting list as a result have shortened but nevertheless remain very popular and long!

## 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. This year, work experience was also offered to a pupil of Alderman Peel High School.

### 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 2022.

### Slipway Hoist

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

### Car Park

Given the continued social media debate about the parking enforcement regulations on the quayside car park the Commissioners undertook a review to reconsider alternative ways to manage the car park. As a result a ANPR barrier system was introduced towards the end of the year which only allows entrance to the car park if there is a space and payment is made prior to exiting the car park. The system still uses ANPR technology to monitor entrance/exits and to match car registrations to payments which in turn avoids the need for Parking Charge Notices to be issued.

### Facilities Barge

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

### Port Charges

The board of Wells Harbour Commissioners, review tariffs yearly to ensure they remain appropriate.

### 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. The 2022 season turned out to be one of the busiest for nearly a decade which provides valuable income for both the harbour and retail outlets around the town.

### 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. The plans for the current lifeboat house are still to be announced/ confirmed, 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 2022, Katy, the events co-ordinator held several kayaking and paddleboard sessions as well as organising for an entire year of the local high school to attend Whitlingham lakes in Norwich. Added to that, beach cleans, visits to the Lobster Hatchery, nature guides with the Holkham team to the beach and East Hills to explore and explain some of the natural habits made for a very busy but successful year. Given the key objective for the trust is to engage and get as many young people onto the water as possible the trustees are pleased to have so much going on and a great foundation for the coming years.

The Trust will also provide grants on an individual basis:-

- For recognised sailing courses at beginner or intermediate or advanced standard at local approved sailing schools.
- 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.

**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](mailto:harbouroffice@wellsharbour.co.uk)

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



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## Harbour Master's Directions for users of Wells Harbour

These directions are generally enforceable under the Wells Harbour Revision Order of 1994 that contains details of penalties for non-compliance.

### Navigation

1. All vessels should comply with Collision Regulations but sailing and small craft vessels do not have automatic right of way due to depth limitations of the channel
2. Speed limits must be observed. A speed limit of 8 knots is in force for all navigable water from Number 6 buoy to Number 19 Buoy and 5 knots from Number 19 Buoy to the East End. However, vessels must always navigate with consideration for other Harbour users particularly as regards wash created by your vessel
3. Jet-ski (personal watercraft) and hovercraft type craft are not permitted in the Harbour
4. High speed craft (other than members of Wells Waterski Club) intending to operate at more than 15 knots are not allowed to use the Harbour except for entry and exit unless specifically authorised by the Harbour Master
5. Vessels must be kept clear of navigation marks
6. Power vessels over 4.57m (15ft) must carry third party insurance to a minimum specified by the Commissioners
7. Collisions, strandings, vessels adrift or any obstructions to the channel must be reported to the Harbour Master. Incidents may be entered in the report book in the Harbour Office
8. Persons under 16 years of age may not operate powered boats capable of more than 8 knots within the harbour
9. Vessels proceeding to sea should be properly and safely fitted out and be open to the Harbour Master's inspection
10. Masters of visiting vessels must complete a visitor's registration form and, if from foreign Ports, must ensure they obtain Customs clearance and have the correct documentation for any animals

11. Swimming is not permitted in the quayside area 2.5hrs either side of high tide. Swimmers are not to use pontoons, moored boats at quayside or to climb on navigation marks

### Moorings

1. No vessel may be launched or brought into the Harbour without the prior consent of the Harbour Master and payment of dues. Permit discs must be displayed
2. No moorings may be laid or ownership transferred without prior approval of the Harbour Master who must be given notice of intent if a mooring is to be vacated for more than seven days
3. Boats must be kept properly moored at all times and rigging muffled on overwintering boats
4. Boats' names should be displayed and moorings marked as directed by the Harbour Master
5. Visiting vessels will be charged at the visitor's rate as determined on the current list of charges
6. Masters are responsible for their vessels during shipping movements and must allow access to the quays to vessels wishing to load or unload cargo or passengers
7. Vessels with quay berths may be required to double berth and access must be allowed to the outside vessel. Masters are responsible for properly mooring and fendering their own vessels

### General

1. No oil, bait, rubbish, sewage or any other substance may be allowed to enter the Harbour and any accidental discharge must be reported to the Harbour Master immediately. Vessels with direct discharge toilets should seal off exit ports. Persons causing pollution are liable to substantial fines
2. Public landing and launching places must not be obstructed
3. Vessels who need information on entry to the



Port, please contact the Harbour Master. Prior notice of entry if possible

- Automatic bilge pumps must not be used within the Harbour limits

### Commercial Operators

- The Harbour Master must be given at least eight hours prior notice of the arrival of ships and his clearance obtained before entry or movement within the Harbour
- Movements must be under the supervision of the Harbour Master and masters must ensure sufficient crew is available at all times to ensure the safety of the vessel
- Ships' engines are not to be run except when manoeuvring and there must be no pump-

ing of bilges or other discharge within the Harbour

- Safe and proper access to ships must be maintained at all times
- No permanent storage of pots, fish boxes or gear at any time on quayside
- Passenger carrying vessels must be properly licensed

### Definition

The Harbour is all navigable water inside Number 1 and Number 2 buoys

### Harbour Limits

Bounded east by line of longitude 0°55'E  
Bounded west by line of longitude 0°50'E  
Bounded north by parallel of latitude 53°00'N

## Port entry information and facilities

Charts AC108; SC5614; Imray Y9, C28; OS132

**Position of outer buoy** Latitude 52°59'684N, Longitude 000°50.235E. (West Cardinal) to the leading buoy (yellow special mark). Then make course to entrance (Green No 1 conical buoy and Red No 2 can buoy) which will be visible ahead (east).

**Entry Information** Prior notice of entry required if possible. Shipping - at least 24 hours notice required. Contact Harbour Master.

### Access at Harbour entrance (No. 1 buoy)

Max draft 3m at high water springs. Most vessel movements two hours before high water to two hours after high water - dependent on draft. There is considerably more scope for local vessels which are familiar with the entrance. The channel is continuously dredged from the entrance to the Lifeboat House. Contact Harbour Master for latest access information.

**Tidal Window Outer Harbour** Commercial and wind farm vessels have an access of up to 3 hours either side of HW. There is more scope available on neap tides. Vessels must inform Wells Harbour on channel 12 before movement. All skippers must obtain a Captains Handbook from the Harbour Office.

**VHF/communication** Call sign 'Wells Harbour' VHF Channel 12 on arrival at Leading Buoy or before. Harbour Office - 01328 711646.

**Live weather** Weather and sea conditions information is available live at the Harbour

Office.

**Moorings and berths** Pontoon berths - if available - are just inside the quay to the west or berths alongside the quay wall. Visitors' moorings available on request.

**Night Entry** The Harbour Launch will help direct vessels if possible or requested. A good spotlight/torch is always helpful on entry.

**Anchoring** For suitable positions contact Harbour staff. Please keep fairway and channel clear. Do not anchor in vicinity of the quayside within mooring areas or in front of the Lifeboat House.

**Landing** Do not moor your craft from the middle to the east end of the main quay. This is used by commercial fishing vessels.

**Fuel/water** Diesel oil available on the tide at fuel berth. Contact Harbour Office. Fresh water is available at pontoons.

**Electric/refuse** Electricity is available at the pontoons. All refuse should be placed in bins on main quay. Do not dispose of refuse in the Harbour.

**Important** All craft must observe the speed limits and must not create excessive wash in the inner Harbour and quayside.

**Notice for visiting vessels** No crabbing, barbeques, chairs or picnic tables on the pontoons. Pontoons to be kept clear of all obstructions at all times.

## Entry into the Port

Whether approaching Wells Harbour from the Blakeney Overfall, the South Race, the Woolpack or the Burnham Flats you will have no difficulty in laying and holding a course for the Wells leading buoy. The water, though quite shallow in parts, presents few hazards and the tides are not over powerful. A useful homing in guide is the long plantation of fir trees (Holkham Meals). Wells lies immediately at the eastern end of this plantation.

Previous to or on arrival at the leading buoy it is advisable to call the Harbour Master on VHF Channel 12 (Wells Harbour). He will then advise you of the entry time. If you are attempting entry at night or are unsure the Harbour launch is

often available to escort visitors into the Harbour and up to the quayside.

### Draft

On spring tides, Wells Harbour may be entered by craft drawing up to 3m (10ft) at high water. On neap tides vessels drawing up to 1.75m (6ft) can enter at high water or two hours either side of high water. As a guide vessels with a draft of up to 1.5m (5ft) can look at entry three hours either side of high water up to the lifeboat house on all states of tide. The channel is continually dredged from the entrance to the lifeboat house. For more up to date access times contact the Harbour Master.

### Entry

The entrance channel across the bar and into the Harbour is subject to change from time to time, however, the buoyage system is relatively stable.

From the Outer Buoy (West Cardinal) head towards the leading buoy (special yellow mark). From there continue ahead (easterly) towards the large green No 1 conical buoy and No 2 can buoy - flashing red. It is advisable to make good course to come between them until the smaller buoys of the channel become visible.

From the starboard buoy No 9 (the 'Knock') the channel bends away towards the south east into quieter waters. The wide sweep to the east just past the lifeboat house must be made with the red buoys quite close on the Port hand side as the channel is quite narrow. On passing green buoy named the 'Pool', sweep round to the south west and follow the buoys running parallel to the sea wall (beach bank) and follow the red/green buoys all the way to the quay. Please also look at the Navigation video on the website.



# Wells Harbour Commissioners

## Charges from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Dues and mooring charge is for the year whether full or part year

### Mooring fees

Running mooring	£87	per year
Fore & Aft/Swing	£183	per year
Town Quay / OH Inside Pontoon	£79 per metre	Min £462
Outer Harbour Finger Pontoon	£79 per metre	Min £725

Vessels on running moorings are not allowed to have a tender. All tenders must be 3.6m (12ft) or under. Tenders over 3.6m (12ft) will be charged at the normal rate.

### Harbour Dues

Dinghies up to 3.6m	£95	per year
All vessels over 3.6m	£36	per metre
Day launch	£17	per day

Wells residents (defined as those who reside permanently in Wells and are on the Electoral Register) are entitled to a discount of 10% on Harbour dues if paid before 28th February 2022, after which full dues will be payable.

### Visiting leisure vessels- pontoon/quay wall mooring

All Vessels	£1 per ft (LOA) min £24	per night
Visitors on their own anchor	Free	per day (max 1 week)
On visiting mooring	50%	of night rates

Visiting vessels over 10.66m (35ft) at the Harbour Master's discretion. Maximum stay 2 weeks unless prior agreement with Harbour Master.

### Winter boatstore

Winter storage (30 September 2023 to 1 May 2024)	£34	per metre (all vessels)
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### Laying up

Vessels remaining in boat store for longer than 2 weeks	£25	per week
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### Trailer store

All sizes	£67	for summer season (May-Sept)
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Vessels whether in the water or the compound will pay the equivalent of Moorings and Harbour dues if left in the Wells Harbour Commissioners' boatstore.

### Other Charges

Harbour Launch charge	£80	per hour (min 1 hr)
William-T	poa	subject to availability
Frank-T	poa	per hour (min 1 hr)
Tractor	£58	per hour (min 1 hr)
Hoist	£27	per metre per lift
Raising mast	£87	per hour (min 1 hr)
Use of Launch to move boats	£35	per hour (min 1 hr)

## Fishing vessels

### Harbour dues

All fishermen	£36	per metre per year
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All fishermen are entitled to a 10% discount on dues if paid by 28th February 2023.

### Moorings

All fishing boats on Main Quay	£1500 including one car parking season ticket	per year
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### Visiting commercial vessels

Town Quay	£56	per night
Outer Harbour jetty (up to 20m/65.6ft)	£129	per night
Direct turnaround	£61	per turnaround

### Services

Car Park up to 6pm cars (camper vans not permitted on quay)	£5.00	per day
Car park after 6pm	£1	per evening

### Use of Quay charge

Lifting boats in or out of the Harbour - non residential	£58	
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## Visiting vessels - Pontoon Rules





# SEA FISHING TRIPS

Wells-next-the-Sea



**3 or 10 Hour trips available.  
Beginners & experienced fishermen welcome.  
Tackle available.**



Fishing trips are for:  
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Tope**

**For bookings & information contact:**

**Ben Riches**

**07990 518 337 or 01485 570921**

**[www.norfolkseafishingtrips.com](http://www.norfolkseafishingtrips.com)**

## Best Seafood Restaurant in the Region



**W**ells Crab House in Freeman Street was named Best Seafood Establishment in the Region in the Food Awards 2022. The awards honour the best food professionals in the country and businesses are voted into the finals by the public.

Sourcing their crabs, mussels and lobsters from Wells own fishing fleet we asked Kelly and Scott to tell us about their restaurant. We also persuaded Scott to share a recipe!

As a husband and wife team, we are now living our dream of owning our own restaurant in the beautiful town of Wells next the Sea. Our aim was to create a small, intimate yet informal venue, offering a great selection of seafood with a changing monthly menu.

Our team is small, yet all are involved in the planning and execution of our offerings, with dishes inspired by each chefs' experiences and travels. That on top of our always popular seafood platters gives our guests a great choice of dishes. After over six years of opening and several prestigious awards, we think we've got the balance just right. But were always looking to improve.

Ever popular are the fresh lobsters, crabs and mussels out of Wells Harbour, as are the oysters from Brancaster, and daily changing specials add a bit more excitement for the chefs, depending on what we can source from some of the best suppliers around the UK

The recipe I chose is a spicy sweet crab curry I learned while participating in a chefs table experience at the amazing Cinnamon Lodge hotel in Habarana, Sri Lanka.

Enjoy!

**Scott Dougal, Owner & Chef at Wells Crab House**



# Wells Crab House



## Seafood Restaurant

A Seafood Restaurant in the beautifully quaint and picturesque Seaside town of Wells next the Sea



Our philosophy is to source what's in season whether it be from the sea, land or earth locally with dishes from afar charming our Monthly Menu and specials.

We recommend booking, especially at Weekends and you can make a booking via [resdiary.com](http://resdiary.com) or call 01328 710456



38-40 Freeman Street, Wells, NR23 1BA

Tel: 01328 710456

[www.wellscrabhouse.co.uk](http://www.wellscrabhouse.co.uk)



### Sri Lankan Crab Curry

*Serves 12, although can be portioned and frozen*

*Preparation time 15 minutes*

*Cooking time 1hr 15 minutes*

#### Ingredients:

4 tbsp coconut oil  
2 tbsp yellow mustard seeds  
3 tbsp dill seeds  
2 tbsp curry leaves  
4 large thumbs ginger, peeled and grated  
12 crushed garlic cloves  
12 finely chopped red chillies  
8 red onions, finely diced  
2 tbsp unroasted curry powder  
2 tbsp turmeric  
2 tbsp hot chilli powder  
½ tbsp crushed black pepper  
4 tsp salt  
4 tins chopped tomatoes  
4 tins of coconut milk  
Meat from 12 dressed crabs

#### Instructions:

In a big pan heat 4tbsp of coconut oil,  
Add 2 tbsp yellow mustard seed, 3 tbsp dill seed, and 2 tbsp curry leaves  
Fry till seeds start to pop

#### Add:

4 large thumbs of grated ginger  
12 crushed garlic cloves  
12 finely chopped green chillies  
8 finely chopped red onions  
Sweat until soft

#### Add:

2 tbsp unroasted curry powder  
2 tbsp turmeric  
2 tbsp hot chili powder  
½ tbsp crushed black pepper  
4 tsp salt  
Fry for 5 minutes

#### Add:

4 tins of chopped tomatoes  
4 tins of coconut milk  
Meat from 12 dressed crabs (more to taste)  
Simmer for 1hour on very low heat  
Season with more salt if needed or more coconut milk if not sweet enough.  
More crab can be added at anytime if not present once tasting at the end.  
Serve with lime zested basmati rice and a red onion and lime salad.

This will be quite a lot of curry for domestic use but you can safely freeze in portions. Good for 6-8 months. Once defrosted don't panic at the look of it, the coconut oil will split, but will be fine once heated back up

To do this with Chicken, add diced breast at the curry powders stage

To do this with prawns add cooked peeled prawns 10 minutes before the end of simmering.



## North Norfolk Triathlon



There was a fantastic turnout for the North Norfolk Triathlon which returned after a 2 year break due to the pandemic.

The event was once more all organised by the Wells Harbour Commissioners team for the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust in order to raise money for the charity which benefits young local people in sailing and maritime activities and courses.

Wells Harbour Commissioners as in previous years donated the use of the car park for the transition by closing it whilst the event took place.



The Harbour Master, Robert Smith MBE, compered the event and also started the event, setting off with the swim in the quay which was split into three waves. All harbour/ vessel movements were suspended while the swimmers were in the water with Harbour vessels and Wensum Ospreys Canoe Club and other volunteers acting as safety boats/ lookouts.

Nearly 250 competitors took to the event including 9 relay teams with only a couple of people unable to finish. The fastest time was just over 2 hours.

Large crowds came out to support the event as usual and we have received some amazing feedback from competitors, watchers and from the British Triathlon Federation who as the governing body, oversee the event to ensure it is managed well and in accordance with the rules.



Whilst we are pleased to advise we expect to hold the event again next year, the final details are still being established and as soon as dates and times can be announced we will do so via the website and facebook page.

The event has become so successful it is now the prime fund raising event for the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust which allows many more events to be run. This year the trust was able to fund for an entire year of students from the local secondary school to attend a Whitlingham Lakes multi-activity day.

Thanks to our race official Mark Philo, the Wensum Ospreys Canoe Club, Race Timing Solutions, Steve Finch of Wells Football Club - for allowing us to use the club for registration and our volunteer marshals who are just fantastic, and not forgetting all the dedicated and hard working harbour staff.



## HOLKHAM

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grand day out  
that breaks  
with tradition





# Port of Wells Marine and Coastal Code of Conduct

## At Sea

- ✓ Stay away from Coastal nesting sites
- ✓ Do not approach or disturb birds on the surface as they may be resting, courting or feeding
- ✓ Do not swim with, touch or feed any marine wildlife
- ✓ Do not harass marine mammals by chasing them, overcrowding or not allowing them an escape route
- ✓ Throw nothing overboard. Do not dump any waste or fuel into the sea and keep your vessel's oily waste from the water – use a bilge sock or filter.
- ✓ Dispose litter in appropriate onshore facilities.
- ✓ Litter attracts litter – take more than you arrived with – collect your five-a-day

## On land

- ✓ Follow the Countryside code
- ✓ Keep to the paths and be aware of where you walk, particularly in nesting season
- ✓ Keep dogs away from roosting sites and on a leash
- ✓ Refrain from dropping litter, leaving dog mess or discarding old fishing/crabbing tackle
- ✓ Avoid excessive noise, it disturbs nesting birds and may cause them to abandon their young
- ✓ Use designated car parks to minimize habitat destruction



Please consider  
how your actions  
will affect the  
marine  
environment and  
other users



## Places to visit locally

Our corner of North Norfolk is steeped in history. There are a number of places which repay a visit if you venture inland a little way. Some of them are noted here.

**Holkham Hall** is situated just along the coast from Wells - a magnificent Palladian mansion built between 1734 and 1764 by Thomas Coke, the first Earl of Leicester. Not only is the house itself worth a visit but so too is the Courtyard café and also the most magnificent parkland to walk and cycle around.

**Binham Priory** was founded by a nephew of William the Conqueror and is one of the earliest Norman religious foundations in the country. The impressive ruins are set among some of the most beautiful countryside with

in honour of the victory at the Battle of the Nile. Nelson held a dinner here prior to his departure to join HMS Agamemnon. The pub was refurbished recently and now run by a local brewery 'Woodforde's. A visit to the church is a must with all its Nelson history. Burnham Thorpe is around five miles from Wells. Leave Wells on the Fakenham Road, and turn right at the Holkham Gates. Carry on with the estate wall on your right hand side until you come to a right turn to New Holkham. Burnham Thorpe is at the bottom of the hill.

Walsingham is five miles from Wells, and has been a place of pilgrimage since medieval times. Both the Roman Catholic and Anglican shrines in the village attract thousands of visitors

and pilgrims each year. It is a beautiful place with a tangible atmosphere.

The Coasthopper bus is an easy way to travel along the north Norfolk coast from King's Lynn to Sheringham. Just catch the bus on Freeman Street or the Buttlands. See timetable at bus stop.

Cycling is the other way to get around - the smaller roads round Wells are often almost traffic free and it is a wonderful way to see the local sights.

earth-works visible in adjoining fields. Binham is about five miles from Wells. Warham Camp has some of the most impressive earth-works in the county.

**Warham Camp** is an Iron Age hill fort with steep banks and deep ditches built on a rise overlooking the river Stiffkey. It is a fascinating place to visit and very atmospheric. Warham is around two miles out of Wells. Take the Warham road in the direction of Walsingham by Gallery Plus. There is a left turn to Warham signposted off this.

**Burnham Thorpe** is the birthplace of Lord Nelson, whose father was rector of the parish church. The village's main pub was built in 1637 and was known as The Plough until 1798 when it was renamed The Lord Nelson



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## Sailing the East Coast from Wells

### Whitby—111 nm

Whitby is the gem of the east coast which stands at the mouth of the River Esk. It has been a major fishing port for hundreds of years and the town is full of history. The remains of the abbey on the East Cliff date from the 13th century, but it was first founded in 657. Visiting craft raft up on the Whitby Marina pontoons, beyond the swing bridge. For a good meal find the Duke of York pub overlooking the harbour in the old town. Well worth a visit.

### Scarborough—95 nm

A seaside resort with a mixture of identities. It has a harbour formed by four piers which divide it in two, the Old Harbour and East Harbour, where visiting craft moor on drying pontoons in the south west corner. Worth a visit just for the interesting entrance into the East Harbour!

### Bridlington—79 nm

A popular holiday resort with fine beaches sheltered by Flamborough Head.

The Bayle Gate built 1388 is worth a visit, it has served as a courtroom, sailors' prison barracks and is now a museum.

### Grimsby—52 nm

Conveniently located just a short distance up the river Humber. Vessels can moor in the basin outside the lock, and there is free access to the open lock two hours either side of high water. Outside these times vessels can lock through for a charge. After going through the lock carry on straight to the marina. Visitors can moor in vacant berths where all facilities

are provided. Well worth a visit as the Humber river is a place of great interest and a magical place to sail.

### Wisbech—38nm

Cambridgeshire's link with the sea at Wisbech Yacht harbour. Facilities include a 75 tonne travel hoist including a three tonne crane for mast stepping, engine replacement etc. CCTV, water and electricity are available to all berths and showers, toilets and diesel fuel are close

by. The Yacht Harbour Master can advise on optimum times to arrive to make best use of tides, depths of water and air draft.

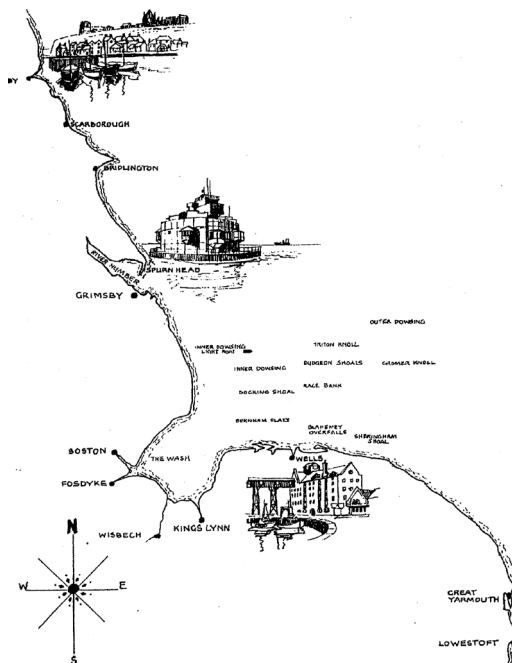
### Lowestoft—56 nm

A maritime town and tourist destination. The port is the mainstay of the town. The rebuilding of the yacht basin has been completed and is well worth a visit. Being the most easterly port, it is well placed for the crossing to the Scandinavian and European coast. A worthwhile walk can be taken to the Sparrows Nest Gardens and Museum, home of the Royal Navy Patrol Service

during WWII

### Southwold—73 nm

A real step back in time, watching the activity of the local fishermen landing their catch and the rowing boat ferrying people across the river to Walberswick. Sitting on the visitors quay is like being in a different age, opposite is the historic Harbour Inn where most of the visiting crews are normally found, either having a good meal in the restaurant or relaxing with a pint of Adnams Bitter. A great place to stop over.



## Wells Sailing Club



Wells Sailing Club continues to thrive since our early days without a clubhouse and meeting in the Shipwrights pub, to our current fine premises. Our family oriented club maintains a strong local membership with a self-help ethos, members giving their time freely to maintenance, event catering, and serving behind the bar.

You will see our dinghies on the water from April to October, both racing and cruising. We encourage all water sports, and current trends have led to a waiting list for our canoe / kayak storage area. The club maintains a strong core of 12 square Metre Sharpies in our racing fleet, many passing from generation to generation. There are always Sharpies available, some in great condition for reasonable costs, so come and talk to us if you fancy joining the fleet of Sharpies, for over 70 years they have maintained their distinctive presence in Wells Harbour. In

addition to our mixed handicap fleet, the club own and maintain Fevas, Lasers, and Wayfarers which are available to all club members to learn and hone their skills before the commitment of buying a dinghy.

The club, located at the East End of the town has our dinghy park and private slipway opposite our ever improving clubhouse. This year we plan to fit bifold doors to open up the clubhouse onto our ever popular deck. Inside, the changing rooms will get a much needed refurbishment, ready for the new season.

Social life is an essential part of the club, along with income from the bar. This allows us to fund our on the water activities and rescue boats. Natalie Gail is a familiar sight acting as committee boat for racing, next season will see our new RIB "Reef Knot" replace "Herbert E" after 30 years of fine and important safety and rescue duties.

Our aim is to promote all water pursuits with our core activity being dinghy sailing, allowing all generations from Wells and beyond to continue to enjoy the beauty of our harbour, coast, and marshes.

We welcome new members to share our love of sailing and watersports, just come along to the clubhouse and chat to our members!

[WellsSailingClub.co.uk](http://WellsSailingClub.co.uk)







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## Summary of results

For the year ended 31 December 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Income Statement</b>		
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
<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
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
<b>Reserves</b>		
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
<b>Note</b> assets above include:		
Investment by Scira into Outer Harbour and channel and Inner Harbour		
Spend to 31 December 2021	1,942,130	1,943,555
Cost brought forward	-	(1,425)
Capital equipment disposed in year	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

## The Harbour and the Community

Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC) support many community events permitting use of the harbour and quayside wherever possible.

### North Norfolk Triathlon

WHC via its charity the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust organise an annual Olympic distance triathlon. The event raises funds for the charity which provides grants for young local people in maritime courses, water-based activities and training.

### The Annual RNLI Service

This annual event is enjoyed by townsfolk and visitors. WHC ensure space is made available at the visiting pontoons for the arrival of the lifeboat and provide space for people to come and enjoy the service and hymns to honour our lifeboat crew.



Photo by Martyn Gould

### Christmas Tide

WHC organise the arrival of Santa for this unique and fantastic event. The quayside is used for crowds to welcome Santa who visits Wells each year arriving on the tide from the North Sea by boat.

### Wells Carnival

The Annual Raft Race is held each year by the Carnival Committee and Harbour staff organise the course and supply safety boats.

### Kayak Safaris

The Harbour Master arranges kayak safaris around the creeks for the public to enjoy the harbour from a different perspective. These events are free, with donations welcomed for the WHMT.

### Other activities

The Harbour Master gives many talks to groups

and institutions throughout the year donating his fees to the Trust.

### Event Policy

WHC have an events policy. Any organisation wishing to promote or organise an event should approach us as early as possible and approval would be based on:

- Objectives and scope of the event
- Commitment of the organisers to provide an event with their own resources and insurances
- Effect of the event on the local communi-

ty and surrounding area

WHC will consider charging fees to the event organisation as appropriate taking into consideration the nature of the event, the legal status of the organisation, the length of the

event and amount of Port personnel and time required. If WHC considers it appropriate to charge for the use of the quay the following fees apply and must be paid for prior to the event.:

#### Fee Structure:

Daily use of quay £800

Half day use of quay £400

Use of non car park area of quay £200



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## About the bar

One of the questions many visiting skippers ask is, what is the Wells Bar and where is it? Many who know Wells well may raise their eyebrows at the very thought of the question. But overall, during the summer season when many vessels visit the Port for the first time, you often can transit/cross the Bar unaware you have, unless watching the vessels sounder. As the bar can be at times during periods of fine weather, unnoticeable or even placid and serene when crossed. But any local mariner will also know the Bar is like a sleeping giant and should you under estimate it when it is awake, you can do so at your peril.

Wells Bar is an extensive sandbank that lies at the mouth of Wells Harbour entrance channel, joined to and extending from Bob Halls eastern sands right across the deep water channel to the West beyond the bar buoy (yellow special mark) where the deep water channel snakes it way out into the deep water of the North Sea. From the West of the bar buoy running eastward the bar dries on most tides but not all neap tides. The Bar is prone regularly to move over time and in adverse environmental conditions, especially when there are strong winds from any northerly direction, when the height and shape can soon change.

The geographical position of Wells Next the Sea means it is subject to swell/waves that originate in the North Sea and travel down the east coast until the swell reaches North of the Wells Bar and as the water depth reduces and the wave period shortens, each wave steepens



grows in height and at times can have a near vertical face before breaking over Wells Bar.

On the bright side, as much as the Bar dominates the mind of many sailors, the approach to Wells harbour in the right weather conditions, entry is neither difficult nor dangerous as long as skippers call "Wells Harbour" VHF Ch 12 for entry advice, the ideal time to enter, depending on draft is not until at least three hours before and then up towards local high water. Never attempt entry before calling Wells Harbour, in the hours of darkness or if there is any swell and breaking sea that can be seen in the vicinity of the entrance buoys.

The Port of Wells run a free escort and patrol service for visiting vessels with the harbour launch, monitor the channel entrance on CCTV and carry out a listening watch on the VHF Ch12 from three hours before and up to high water.

"If in doubt stay out"



## Wells Coastguard

The HM Coastguard team, Wells, based in the town is on-call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for search and rescue operations. We are a group of volunteers from diverse backgrounds, who are responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of emergency search and rescue response to all maritime incidents on the immediate coastline and at sea. Our guard runs from Thornham through to Kelling but we can be tasked anywhere along the Norfolk coast and beyond. We are Category 1 responders (same as police, fire and ambulance) and we work alongside them and also the RNLI when required. We can call on many resources if needed including our Coastguard helicopter fleet and air ambulance. We frequently respond to walkers that have been cut off by the tide or offering medical assistance and safety advice to sailors who have found themselves in trouble around our coast. Our team also attend broken down or aground vessels, help injured people such as walkers and horse riders, deal with suspected ordnance washed up on the local beaches, carry out receiver of wreck duties and much more. Our team are highly skilled and receive specialist equipment and training to carry out



anything that we are tasked to. Our specialist training includes water rescue, advanced first aid and lost & missing persons search. Wells Coastguard remind you that your safety is in your hands. Be prepared; please ensure that you are well equipped for whatever activity you are taking part in, check the weather conditions and tides before heading out and familiarise yourself with the area. In an emergency at sea or on the coast, contact us on VHF CH16 or call 999 and ask for the coastguard. Boat owners don't forget to register your vessel with our free safety service. Download the RYA SafeTrx app or register online: [www.safetrx.rya.org.uk](http://www.safetrx.rya.org.uk)





# National Coastwatch Institution

National Coastwatch commenced after a tragic accident. 25 years ago. HMCG (Coastguards) had commenced moving away from visual watches to RADAR and VHF radio, they closed one of their watch stations on the Cornwall coast. Just two weeks later two local fishermen drowned while fishing from a small boat. That prompted local folk to get permission to take over the old HMCG station and man it with volunteers. That was the start.

Seventeen years ago a group local to Wells commenced using the old coastguard station and the story goes on from there. "SPOT, PLOT and REPORT" is the well known brief that we have. Wells of course has a large beach with swimmers, children, sunbathers and walkers. While we actively keep an eye on the



commercial and leisure vessels especially when they cross the bar, the most common problem is when walkers are cut off by the tide. In a recent incident the NCI watch were able to liaise with the RNLI Lifeguards and guide their team to the distressed couple, that saved a lifeboat launch. There are of course other emergencies, some medical, some injuries. Incidents at sea or swimmers in difficulty is where the "Plot" comes into play.

With the instruments we are able to give chart positions or bearings to the Coastguard. They are responsible to launch the lifeboat but being able to give an accurate position is important.

The viewpoint is really excellent but the original building was showing its age. After several options were explored it was decided the



way forward was a complete refurbishment. The building was stripped to the frame, local builders worked on it but many, many hours were put in by a small team of NCI members, saving thousands of pounds. Aerials were re-sited much higher for better communications and our's and the Harbour Master's CCTV cameras were installed.

NCI Wells has about 40 volunteers, although since the pandemic we sometimes need more staff. Every member of the team goes through a training programme and we are all reassessed each year. The station is open every day of the year including Christmas day, there for the benefit of the community and visitors on the beach.

Visitors can now visit the station and we welcome your financial support. We are all volunteers and need to fund our own activities.



# RNLI Wells



## New Lifeboat House

The lifeboat station is complete, and it became fully operational at the end of 2022 once the crew had been signed off as competent on the Shannon and SLARS. At this point Doris M Mann, our Mersey class lifeboat, was stood down and returned to RNLI headquarters in Poole.

The shop opened during October and the visitor centre opened shortly afterwards.

## The Arrival of the Shannon Class Lifeboat

RNLB Duke of Edinburgh arrived in Wells Port on 8 October, to a warm welcome from the local community. It was escorted into the quay by a small flotilla of boats, including our Mersey and D class lifeboats and historic Wells lifeboats.

Training for our volunteer crew has been intense and began back in August on the relief Shannon lifeboat. The crew have given many hours of their free time and sometimes unpaid from work, to dedicate their attention to train in the intricate workings of the Shannon and SLARS, both on and off the water.

The Shannon is 50% faster than our previous Mersey lifeboat, with two 650hp Scania engines allowing her to achieve a top speed of 25knots. Waterjets allow the Shannon to operate in shallow waters and be intentionally beached unlike our Mersey lifeboat. An improved Systems and Information Management System (SIMS) allows the crew to operate and monitor many of the lifeboat's functions from the safety of their seats. Learning all these new features and more, has driven the intensive training for our crew during the latter part of 2022.

## The SLARS

The SLARS, 'Shannon Launch and Recovery System', arrived on station in July. This specialist equipment has been developed to launch and recover the 18-tonne lifeboat from extremely rugged and harsh environments. The tractor and carriage can negotiate the beach where there are steep gradients

and gullies, and can travel long distances over flat, saturated sand or shingle.

Connected by a pivoting swan neck, hydraulic motors power both the tractor and the rear carriage. The system incorporates several unique and innovative features including a software-controlled four-track drive system that provides exceptional mobility.

The vehicle can be operated in calm water up to a depth of 2.4m and shut down to withstand full submersion in water up to 9m deep if stranded on an incoming tide.



The Shannon-class all-weather lifeboat can be launched and recovered bow first. The cradle that carries the lifeboat rotates through 180° using a unique turntable feature built into, the carriage. This reduces the time and space needed to prepare for relaunch – a crucial factor if the Shannon is to receive more than one callout in a day.

## Lifeboat Call Outs

Between January 2022 and October 2022, we have had 8 all-weather lifeboat shouts and 26 inshore lifeboat shouts.

For any coastal emergency dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Coastguard

## Volunteers

We are looking for enthusiastic and committed volunteers to join us in many different roles at RNLI Wells. These areas include roles within the shop, visitors centre, fundraising and the crew. If you can offer your time and commitment to join us, we would be delighted to hear from you.

**For more information about RNLI Wells Lifeboat Station or if you would like to find out more about being a member of our team, please email [admin@wellslifeboat.org](mailto:admin@wellslifeboat.org) or visit our website [www.wellslifeboat.org](http://www.wellslifeboat.org)**



# Wells Harbour Commissioners Marks 360 Years with Historic Harbour Status

## 2023 MARKS AN HISTORICAL YEAR FOR WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS – ITS LANDMARK 360TH ANNIVERSARY – 1663-2023

After three years of meetings, planning and consultation, Wells Harbour Commissioners have been accredited with Heritage Harbour Status.

To commemorate the occasion there are many events planned during this year. Harbour Master Robert Smith first approached the Heritage Harbour Trust in 2019 to discuss possibilities of the Port of Wells to be recognised and registered as a UK Heritage Harbour. At the very first discussion it was stated by the Maritime Heritage Trust (MHT) Wells Next the Sea was a prime candidate for heritage harbour status.

If we step back in time to 1663, Charles II was on the throne and the Port of Wells was prosperous. Before this period the Port was administered by the merchants and gentlemen of

the town. The townsfolk of Wells felt this was unfair practise and petitioned parliament for change and change came in the shape of an act of parliament being passed for the formation of Wells Harbour Commissioners.

Originally consisting of over thirty gentlemen, the board was represented by a mix of local merchants and mariners, so very little changed until the end of the twentieth century. The Commissioners has always been a not-for-profit organisation, with no owners or shareholders, and all profits are reinvested back into the Port. The board met bi-monthly at the sign of the fleece, believed to be the 'Golden Fleece' public house on the Quayside. One of the boards' first tasks was to employ a Haven-Man, the forerunner of today's Harbour Master. The first haven-man to be appointed was Mr Robert Pearson, who was paid one penny per tonne of goods for his pains and labour.

The philosophy of the Heritage Harbour status is that considerable mutual benefit and pride



will be generated among the local community. Wells Harbour Commissioners propose to work with and encourage other interested local groups in promoting the Port and Towns maritime history and explore possible long-term benefits that Heritage Harbour status could bring to the local area, while maintaining the Port as a working harbour.

The Wells Harbour Commissioners will be working closely with local businesses and groups, where possible, and practical, encouraging them to become involved in celebrating the town's maritime heritage, by identifying local structures, buildings and its people and displaying historic photographs and artefacts within their businesses that reflect the Port's maritime heritage.

The Port of Wells has many historic maritime quayside and maritime buildings and structures as well as many vessels, including Dunkirk little ships, that all tell a story of the Port's past growth and prosperity. This prosperity will be celebrated this year and in the future.

It is planned for a sound booth to be established in the old tide gauge that is owned by the harbour Commissioners, so locals and visitors can listen to local maritime stories, while looking out over the saltmarshes from a building that is a Quayside landmark. The Commissioners have also planned to have an audio maritime walking tour of the town, where it will be possible to learn the history of many maritime buildings and structures of the area.

The Quayside and Harbour are the jewels in the crown for the town of Wells, to which visitors automatically gravitate, expecting to see, and look forward to, boats coming and going, among all the hustle and bustle of the waterfront.

Wells is not a typical modern UK seaside resort and is not trying to be. Locals and visitors still feel the sense of stepping back in time among the modern facilities and Heritage Harbour status will help protect and encourage this ethos.

**Robert Smith MBE**  
Harbour Master

## Nautical flags & Numeral Pennants

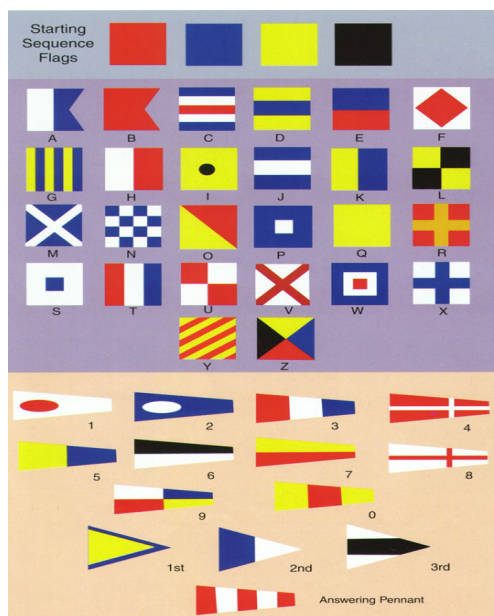
Nautical flags are an international code system used for two ships to signal to each other or for a ship to signal to shore. They are also called signalling nautical flags. Using a group of different coloured flags, shaped flags and markings each one has a different meaning. The flags can be used alone or in combination with another flag. They are made up of 26 square flags (which represent the letters of the alphabet) along with 10 numbered pendants; one answering pendant and three substitutes or repeaters. At sea, only a few flag colours are easily recognized, these are: red, blue, yellow, black, and white and they cannot be mixed indiscriminately. For easy recognition nautical flags are either red and white, yellow and blue, blue and white, black and white along with plain red, white and blue.

The knowledge of their meanings are valuable at sea in case of danger or breakdowns in other communications systems such as radio. One-flag: urgent or common signals. Two-flags: used mostly for distress and manoeuvring.

### International meanings for nautical flags:

**A: Alpha** – diver down; keep clear  
**B: Bravo** – carrying dangerous cargo  
**C: Charlie** – yes  
**D: Delta** – keep clear  
**E: Echo** – altering course to starboard  
**F: Foxtrot** – I am disabled  
**G: Golf** – I want a pilot  
**H: Hotel** – a pilot on board  
**I: India** – I am altering course to port  
**J: Juliet** – vessel on fire keep clear  
**K: Kilo** – I want to communicate with you  
**L: Lima** – stop your vessel instantly  
**M: Mike** – my vessel is stopped  
**N: November** – no  
**O: Oscar** – Man overboard  
**P: Papa** – vessel is about to sail  
**Q: Quebec** – I request free pratique  
**R: Romeo** – reverse course  
**S: Sierra** – engines are going astern

Three-flags: are for points of the compass, relative bearings, standard times, verbs, punctuation and also general code and decode signals. Four-flags: used for geographical signals, names of ships, bearings, etc. Five-flags: used to relate time and position. Six-flags: used to indicate north or south or east or west in latitude and longitude signals. Seven-flags: for longitude signals containing more than one hundred degrees. There are also flags used in nautical racing which signal to the competitors what they are supposed to do.



**T: Tango** – keep clear  
**U: Uniform** – you are heading into danger  
**V: Victor** – require assistance  
**W: Whiskey** – require medical assistance  
**X: X-ray** – stop your intention  
**Y: Yankee** – am dragging anchor  
**Z: Zulu** – I require a tug

## BEAUFORT SCALE

Force		Anemometer reading			Description	
		mph	kmh	m/s	knts	
0		0-1	<1	<0.3	0-1	Calm; smoke rises vertically. Calm
1		1-3	1-5	0.3-1.5	1-3	Direction of wind shown by smoke drift, but not by wind vane. Light air
2		4-7	6-11	1.5-3.3	4-6	Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; ordinary vanes moved. Light Breeze
3		8-12	12-19	3.3-5.5	7-10	Leaves and small twigs in constant motion; wind extends light flag. Gentle Breeze
4		13-18	20-28	5.5-8.0	11-16	Raises dust and loose paper; small branches are moved. Moderate Breeze
5		19-24	29-38	8.0-10.8	17-21	Small trees in leaf begin to sway; crested wavelets form on inland waters. Fresh Breeze
6		25-31	39-49	10.8-13.9	22-27	Large branches in motion; whistling heard in telegraph. Strong Breeze
7		32-38	50-61	13.9-17.2	28-33	Whole trees in motion; inconvenience felt when walking. Near Gale
8		39-46	62-74	17.2-20.7	34-40	Breaks twigs off trees; generally impedes progress. Gale
9		47-54	75-88	20.7-24.5	41-47	Slight structural damage occurs (chimney-pots and slates removed). Severe Gale
10		55-63	89-102	24.5-28.4	48-55	Seldom experienced inland; trees uprooted; considerable structural damage occurs. Storm
11		64-72	103-117	28.4-32.6	56-63	Very rarely experienced; accompanied by wide-spread damage. Violent Storm
12		73-83	≥118	≥32.6	64-71	Hurricane







## Final comments from the Harbour Master

Entering a new harbour for the first time can be a highly enjoyable part of cruising and sailing, but whether it is up a straightforward buoyed channel or an interesting meander between the sandbanks, the wise skipper will have done homework beforehand.

Any harbour can be potentially dangerous in the wrong conditions. Always call before entry

on VHF channel 12 call sign "Wells Harbour".

The harbour and entrance is monitored from the Harbour Office by CCTV where entry instructions and advice can be obtained and the Harbour staff are always happy to pilot/guide vessels into the harbour with the Launch.

**If in any doubt stay out until assistance is available.**



## Don't forget

**Wear your lifejacket  
It cannot help you  
if the boat is wearing it!**

**Statistics from WAID In 2014 show:**

**75% of accidental drownings involved males  
aged 20-30**

**40% of accidental drownings i.e. trips never  
expected to end up in water**

**25% of all drownings involved alcohol**

**Harbours are not always completely safe places.**

**People fall overboard in harbours more often than at sea.**

**There are more accidents in dinghies than in yachts, often through over-loading and often at night, which is when most drinking occurs .....**

# Port of Wells Boatstore

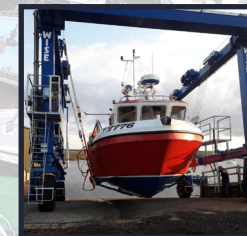
**Secure outdoor boat storage and hard standing  
Located at East End of Wells adjacent to slipway  
CCTV and security lighting  
Site regularly inspected**



*7.5 tonne  
Boat Hoist*



*Tractor*



*35 tonne  
Boat Hoist*

**We can offer flexible lift and launch arrangements  
and competitive storage rates**

## HAUL OUT PACKAGE

**Winter haul out, pressure wash, anti-foul,  
hard standing for winter and launch to mooring.**

**CONTACT HARBOUR OFFICE  
01328 711646**

**Old Lifeboat House, Wells-next-the-sea, NR23 1AT**



# WELLS HARBOUR MARITIME TRUST



**Promoting personal and social  
development**

**Funds education and training for local young people in  
maritime skills and water based  
activities.**

**Sailing, rowing,  
kayaking, Diving  
"Fun on the Water"**

**Wells Harbour Maritime Trust  
Call 01328 711646 or message Katy Moore via Wells Harbour  
Maritime Trust Activities Facebook page  
Registered charity 1136392**