

POOLE HARBOUR NEWS



Issue 3: October 2006

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE POOLE HARBOUR
AQUATIC MANAGEMENT PLAN
WWW.POOLEHARBOURAQMP.CO.UK

Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan 2006 www.pooleharbouraqmp.co.uk

Since January this year a project has been underway to revise and update the Aquatic Management Plan for Poole Harbour which was first produced in 1994.

The need to manage Poole Harbour with its

multitude of activities has long been recognised and this plan aims to do just that, by promoting its safe and sustainable use, whilst balancing the demands on its natural resources, minimising risk and resolving conflicts of interest.

As a non-statutory plan it seeks to guide the current and future management of the Harbour and act as a vehicle for communication between the key statutory organisations that make up the Poole Harbour Steering Group, as well as other stakeholders. The Steering



Group is a voluntary partnership and its members work under a Memorandum of Agreement to promote the sustainable use of the Harbour whilst securing the long-term nature conservation importance of this site.

The new plan consolidates and updates the original Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan, 1994 and the 1998 Poole Harbour Management Policies, as well as drawing on many other current planning and guidance documents.

The Plan, which is due for publication at the end of this

year, details the objectives and actions for the ongoing management of the Harbour. It also contains useful information on a range of topics such as water quality, recreation, habitats and conservation, archaeology, commerce and shoreline management.

To ensure the success of the Plan it was subjected to a full public consultation which closed on 1st September.

Full details of the project, along with a copy of the draft Plan and a summary of the consultation representations can be found at:

www.pooleharbouraqmp.co.uk

Enquiries to:

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A Conceptual Model of Poole Harbour

Effective ecosystem management requires inter-disciplinary collaboration and communication between stakeholders and decision makers, often having different backgrounds, perspectives and 'languages'! To ease the strain, a picture or diagram can save a thousand words and conceptual diagrams, or models, are becoming an important tool in getting messages across. Operations like dredging can impact upon many different and often surprising system components, such as water quality and bird feeding areas, and with climate change adding another tier of complexity, a clear under-

standing of processes and potential effects becomes evermore important. A 3D animated conceptual ecosystem model of Poole Harbour would not only help stakeholders understand processes better, but would also enable us to test hypotheses, be a focus for further model refinement, and encourage integrated, inter-disciplinary research. Currently, we are trying to piece together an influence diagram to illustrate links and relationships between different known components. Perhaps you could help us fill in some gaps!

Please visit the following web link to find out more about conceptual models...

www.coastal.crc.org.au/pdf/WesternPort/Western_Port_models_brochure.pdf

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The Crown Estate Who they are and what they do.



“We have supported several projects on the English south coast, including the Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan.”

The Crown Estate is a large UK land-owner with a property portfolio including offices and shops, agricultural and common land, large areas of foreshore and seabed. We manage activities on this land through a process of consenting and leasing. The net profit gained from our activities is returned to the Treasury for the benefit of the UK taxpayer: some £191 million in 2005/06.

Our marine estate is the largest and most diverse portfolio within The Crown Estate. It includes more than half of the UK's foreshore, 55 per cent of the beds of tidal rivers and estuaries and almost the entire seabed out to the 12 nautical mile territorial limit around the UK. It also includes the rights to the natural resources in the UK Continental Shelf, with the exception of oil, coal and gas. We therefore manage, with Government Departments, a wide range of marine activities including, offshore renewable energy, marine aggregate extraction, aquaculture, ports and marinas.

Our Science and Research Strategy and Marine Stewardship Strategy Group guide the direction of our longstanding Marine Stewardship Programme (MSP). The MSP supports scientific research to underpin the marine and seabed activities we manage, and practical projects and programmes which con-

tribute to the development of best practice, and make a significant contribution to the environmental management and stewardship of the marine estate.

We have supported several projects on the English south coast, including the Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan. Other local projects include: board walks across the sensitive habitats at Pagham Spit (in progress); Devon Wildlife Trust's Lyme Bay spatial planning project; Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Rhythms of the Tide initiative; the Portsmouth Harbour Guide; a Sea Scout slipway, and various archaeology initiatives with the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology. Larger, national projects include the RYA/BMF's Green Blue, the Marine Conservation Society's Campaign for Clean Seas and the Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN).

We are always on the look out for new projects. If you are interested in learning more about the Marine Stewardship Programme please visit our website:

www.thecrownestate.co.uk

If you have any specific queries please contact David Philip on 0131 260 6076.

The Water Framework Directive

The EU Water Framework Directive came into force in 2000 and is an important piece of legislation that will change the way we manage the water environment across Europe, including the waters of Poole Harbour. It updates and consolidates some existing EU water legislation, and establishes a new, integrated, ecosystem based approach to water protection, improvement and sustainable use.

The aim of the WFD is to:

“establish a Community framework for the protection of groundwater, inland surface waters, transitional waters and coastal waters, in order to prevent and reduce pollution, promote sustainable water use, protect the aquatic environment, improve the status of aquatic ecosystems and mitigate the effects of floods and droughts.”



Kevin Cook

Its timetable for implementation extends to 2015 and beyond, requiring “good ecological and chemical status” or the equivalent for designated water bodies to be achieved by 2015, with protection and improvement measures in place by 2012. However the measures of work necessary to move towards and achieve the required

environmental standards will take due account of the practical economic and social considerations, specific for each water body.

Responsibility for ensuring the Directive does what it sets out to do in England ultimately lies with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, however the Environment Agency have been given statutory duties to administer the rules of the Directive and ensure the environmental objectives are met.

The WFD is being implemented in a series of stages that started in 2004. By the end of 2009 River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) will be in place for all River Basin Districts. These are statutory plans, which will identify what measures need to be taken to meet the environmental objectives and will provide the mechanism for managing future water use and activities affecting water. Poole Harbour is in the South West River Basin District, which covers most of the south-west of England. For detailed planning purposes this district will be subdivided into smaller areas. To facilitate the implementation of the WFD in the south-west the Environment Agency has set up a River Basin Liaison Panel. Dorset is well represented on the panel, whose members include Dick Appleton, the Harbour Engineer for



Kevin Cook

Poole Harbour, who represents the port interests for the district, and Tim Badman of Dorset County Council who is the coastal representative.

Commercial shipping, agricultural practices and other industrial and recreational activities all have the potential to impact on water quality and future management must focus on those initiatives aimed at meeting the standards that will be set by the Water Framework Directive.

The WFD will undoubtedly have implications for many of the activities that can affect the environmental quality of the Harbour. However, the current monitoring and high standards of management mean that we are in a good position to meet the challenge these new standards will present.

Enquiries to:
Ben Bunting
Environment Agency
Ben.Bunting@Environment-Agency.gov.uk

“future management must focus on those initiatives aimed at meeting the standards that will be set by the Water Framework Directive.”



Activity Feature: Kitesurfing

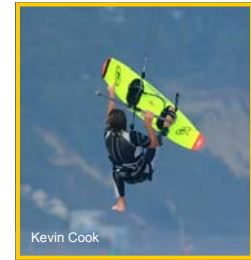
In this issue we look at the dynamic sport of kitesurfing which has seen a rapid growth in popularity over the last few years. The concept of kitesurfing has been around since the early 1960's but it wasn't until the mid 1980's that anything was really done about experimenting with kite flying on the water. Today you only need to take a trip down to the Whitley Lake area of the Harbour to see how the sport has developed from early experimentation with



Kevin Cook

stacked kites and water skis. Modern equipment is easy to use and enables top riders to achieve speeds in excess of 30 knots and to hang in the air for several seconds at a time.

Within Poole Harbour the activity is generally centred around Whitley Lake which is popular for kitesurfers of all levels due to the safety offered by its shallow waters. Several local water sports shops provide tuition and equipment hire and there is a local association which is part of the British Kitesurfing Association (BKSA), run through Easyriders/H₂O Watersports.



Kevin Cook

Kitesurfing is an activity that virtually anyone can do, but it's always best to receive qualified instruction so you can learn how to do things safely and with consideration to others.

For further information contact: Andy Gratwick (BKSA)

01202 744055

Poole's Mystery Shipwreck

"it could be the most exciting discovery in English waters since the finding of the *Mary Rose*."

In 2004, before work started on deepening the channel into Poole Harbour, an archaeological survey was carried out along the proposed route. This survey discovered a previously unknown wooden shipwreck, just outside the Harbour on the edge of the Swash Channel.

Diving on the site revealed massive timbers in a very good state of preservation, iron cannon and pottery dating from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. As wrecks of this date are very rare, an application was made to designate the site under the Protection of Wrecks Act, this took place in the summer of 2005.

During 2005 Wessex Archaeology continued to investigate the site. It now seems that the ship tipped onto its side when it sank and what has now been revealed are the timbers of one side of the forecastle, the raised section at the front of an early wooden fighting ship. It has strange circular ports, which can be seen on sixteenth century ship paintings, as well as fragments of carved timbers.

The preservation of many of the items



Wessex Archaeology

is excellent, including rope work, which rarely survives from that period, suggesting that the wreck has only been uncovered recently. This is a cause for concern as it is possible that the site is now eroding, which may lead to the destruction of this shipwreck.

As yet the wreck hasn't been firmly identified, there are theories as to what she might be, and if one of them is right it could be the most exciting discovery in English waters since the finding of the *Mary Rose*. Bournemouth University are now studying the wreck, and it is certain that there are many more discoveries still to be made. Watch this space!



Wessex Archaeology

Poole Harbour Channel Deepening

In November 05, following nearly two years of extensive studies, a major dredging operation began to widen and deepen the main shipping channel in Poole Harbour. The work, which was jointly commissioned by Poole Harbour Commissioners and the Borough of Poole, was undertaken by the international dredging contractor Van Oord UK Ltd.

The project was successfully completed in April 06, by which time approximately 1.8 million m³ of sand and silt had been dredged from the approach channels to the Harbour and port. Of this, over 1.1 million m³ was made available to the local Coastal Protection Authorities (Poole, Bournemouth and Purbeck Councils) for beach replenishment to enhance the protection of the coast of Poole Bay and Swanage and the amenity value of the beaches. The remainder of the material, which was unsuitable for beach nourishment works, was disposed of at a nearby offshore disposal ground. Sediment monitoring (suspended and deposited) was undertaken before and during the dredging works and at no time were the limits set by the Environment Agency exceeded. Ecological monitoring work in relevant parts of Poole Bay and in the Harbour is continuing

and will report in due course.

Combining both the channel deepening and beach replenishment projects provided significant cost saving and reduced the overall environmental effect by minimising both dredging and sea disposal.



Van Oord

The success of this scheme means that the port is more versatile in the type of vessels that it can accommodate and now has the capacity to increase activity and therefore profitability in the long-term. The depths of the Swash and Middle Ship Channels have been in-



Will Drake

creased from 6m to 7.5m to accommodate modern ferries at all states of the tide.

As well as deepening and widening the channels, the Harbour Masters' department has also taken this opportunity to renumber the channel markers to aid easy and safe navigation. All navigational marks conform to the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) system of buoyage and are numbered consecutively from Bar Buoy No.1 at the seaward end of the Swash Channel. Buoys marking the port hand side of the channel have even numbers and buoys on the starboard side have odd numbers. Both the Wareham and North channels have also been consecutively renumbered.

A full version of the Channel Deepening Environmental Impact Assessment and further details on the renumbering of channel markers can be found on the Poole Harbour Commissioners' website: www.phc.co.uk

Enquiries to:
Poole Harbour Commissioners
01202 440200



“The success of this scheme means that the port is more versatile in the type of vessels that it can accommodate”



Baitdigging Survey

As a result of concern raised as to the intensity of bait digging occurring in Holes Bay, English Nature commissioned a survey in Winter 2005/2006 to investigate bird usage of different parts of the mudflats in the bay for feeding and to assess the impact of bait digging on bird behaviour.

Depending on the intensity and location of baitdigging, this activity can have the potential to impact on bird populations through disturbance and through affecting bird prey availability. The objective of this survey was to gauge bird usage of different parts of the mudflats in Holes Bay for feeding and to assess how birds behave during the presence and absence of bait digging over the December and January period.

Counts of wildfowl and waders across the whole bay during periods of negligible disturbance revealed a bias in distribution of birds reaching greater numbers and concentrations in the eastern (Creekmoor Lake) part of Holes Bay than the western (Upton Lake) part of Holes Bay. Although this correlates to some extent with the pattern of bait digging observed many other factors could have led to this distribution. For example, sewage outfalls on

the eastern side of the bay may have resulted in enrichment here leading to an increase in density and biomass of prey items.

Observations found disturbance was moderate where bait digging was restricted to within 50m of the shore, but severe disturbance was observed where bait diggers strayed further out from the shoreline or where they were accessing the bay north of the railway line via the saltmarsh or



Pergin's island. Severe disturbance often had the knock on effect of birds taking flight in response to other birds taking flight and therefore the actual disturbance would extend beyond 100m. Many birds would not return while other birds kept their distance and only moved back once the bait digger moved away, although beyond 100 m all birds returned and appeared to feed normally.

The degree of mud perturbation

appeared to have an influence on whether bait digging affected bird foraging behaviour. Birds seemed to avoid areas of heavy perturbation, particularly in the north-west sector, while a few birds e.g. redshank were noted to feed over the freshly perturbed mud created by digging where it was done sparingly.

Other forms of direct disturbance in Holes Bay were also noted and were mainly caused by people using a footpath adjacent to the east and, to some extent, the north shore of the bay. This disturbance was, on many occasions, much greater than that caused by bait digging in the same areas. Rapid movement and large numbers e.g. cyclists, joggers and multiple walkers caused more disturbance than slow movement, solitary in nature, e.g. a single walker.

Boat based bait dragging was noted to have perturbed the substrate to a much greater extent than any bait digging.

A copy of the report 'Morrison, S. (2006) Holes Bay Survey: Effects of Bait Digging on Feeding Behaviour of Wildfowl and Waders Winter 2005/06 can be obtained from:

Sue Burton (Natural England)

01929 557472



Poole Harbour Study Group

www.pooleharbourstudygroup.org.uk

The Poole Harbour Study Group was founded in 1997 by a group of individuals interested in the recording of wildlife and other biological and scientific aspects of Poole Harbour. At that time there was no single body responsible for keeping data about or encouraging research specifically on the Harbour.

The Group has produced a series of useful publications over the last few years on the habitats and wildlife of the Harbour. The latest of these is the book "**The Ecology of Poole Harbour**" which has 22 chapters on a wide range of ecological issues on the 'Changing Harbour' theme. Further details on the Study Group and its range of publications can be found at www.pooleharbourstudygroup.org.uk

Alternatively write to: The Secretary, Poole Harbour Study Group, Syldata, Arne, Dorset, BH20 5BJ

News from Brownsea Lagoon

The last few years have seen interesting consolidation of some of the recent bird population trends. Brownsea Lagoon, providing as it does a refuge from the hustle and bustle of the harbour at all times of the year, remains a vital component of the SPA.

Recent winters have seen further modest increases in the internationally important flocks of birds. Avocets peaked at the end of 2005 at 1,331 birds which could be as much as 29% of the UK population. Many of the birds frequently move between the Island and Middlebere and follow a different line to most other wading species when they do so. It is extremely unusual to see Avocets flying across the middle of the island as is the case with large flocks of Godwit and Dunlin. Rather, they follow the north shore of the island and swing slightly left around Pottery Pier and out across the harbour – a tremendous spectacle for anyone lucky enough to witness it. Black-tailed Godwits too continue to



Kevin Cook

use the lagoon in sometimes very large numbers with over 2,000 birds on occasion.

Some recent studies of the breeding birds in summer have provided interesting confirmation of a number of our existing assumptions. The Black-headed Gull population, which is generally between 150 and 200 breeding pairs, is of course a tiny proportion of the total harbour numbers. Egg studies and basic biometric data have confirmed that the Brownsea birds tend to be younger and less experienced pairs – hence they nest in this peripheral colony where productivity is often likely to be lower. The recent increase in numbers in the Sandwich Tern colony has been most welcome after the species failed to nest at all in 2000 and 2001. The

past 2 years have seen over 200 pairs and we have had a run of high productivity levels. In 2006 213 pairs have fledged 135 young. A study of the foraging strategies of the terns during chick provisioning in 2004 confirmed that Sandeels comprise almost exactly 75% of the diet with Herring / Sprat a further 17.5%. The Common Tern colony also continues to consolidate, with 2006 seeing the highest total to date with 248 pairs raising at least 82 young.

The capacity of the lagoon to still spring surprises is a constant delight. Oystercatchers have recently had to contend with predation from the local breeding Ravens and have fared much better in 2006 than the previous year when all clutches were lost. For the last 3 summers Ringed Plover are known to be nesting. There is no evidence that any young have been successfully raised but we hope that with the continued protection of secluded refuges like the lagoon, species which may otherwise be

highly susceptible to disturbance may have a chance to re-establish in Poole Harbour.

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01305 264620



Kevin Cook

“The capacity of the lagoon to still spring surprises is a constant delight.”

Chris Thain

English Nature becomes Natural England



Natural England
“for people, places and nature”

In October 2006 English Nature, the environment activities of the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency's Landscape, Access and Recreation division united to form a new organisation, Natural England. Natural England will have the responsibility for enhancing biodiversity and our landscapes and wildlife in rural, urban, coastal and marine areas; promoting access, recreation and public well-being, and con-

tributing to the way natural resources are managed – so they can be enjoyed now and for future generations. Under the Habitat Regulations, Natural England will have a statutory responsibility to advise relevant authorities as to the conservation objectives for European Marine Sites in England such as Poole Harbour. Natural England will advise relevant authorities as to the activities which may cause deterioration of natural

habitats or the habitats of species, or disturbance of species for which the site has been designated. This information will be a key component of any management scheme which may be developed for these sites.

More info at:

www.naturalengland.org.uk



For more information contact:

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**Visit our website:
www.pooleharbouraqmp.co.uk**

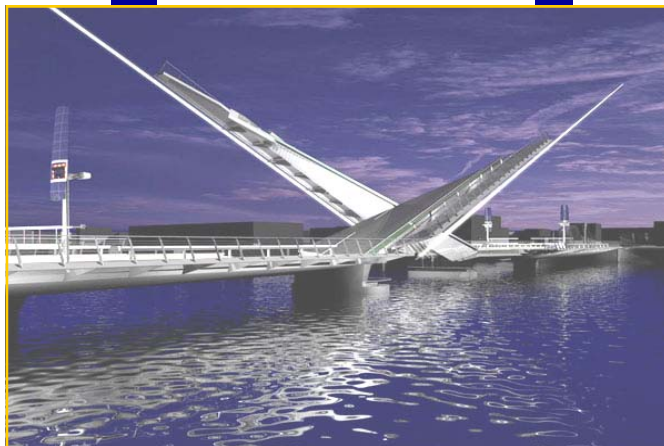
Kitchenhams Ltd

It's a yes for the Twin Sails Bridge

The Borough of Poole has received permission from the Secretary of State for the proposed second Harbour crossing (Twin Sails) connecting West Quay Road with the former Power Station site in Hamworthy crossing the Back Water Channel. The decision was announced on Friday 11th August by the Secretary of State for Transport, Douglas Alexander, who agreed to grant the Transport Works Act (TWA) Order as recommended by the Department of Transport's (DTI) Inspector, following last year's Public Inquiry and to direct that planning permission be deemed to be granted subject to conditions.

The town's second bridge will provide the vital second harbour crossing that will relieve traffic congestion, open up huge development opportunities and provide better access to the town centre and Port of Poole. In his decision

notice the Secretary of State states that he considers that the scheme would bring clear and



substantial economic, transportation, environmental and social benefits which would significantly outweigh its limited adverse impacts.

The next phase of the project is to ensure the balance of funding and to complete the detailed design of the bridge. With the granting of the Order to go ahead the Council needs to be able to forge ahead with developing the detailed design and commissioning

the building of the bridge. The actual building work is programmed to begin in 2008.

The TWA Order is subject to a number of standard conditions relating to the development of the site, all of which had already been built into the Council's programme of works. A 42 day period for challenge of procedural aspects of the bid is underway, and, if passed successfully, the Council will have the permission it needs to build the iconic Twin Sails Bridge across Holes Bay.

Enquiries to:
Borough of Poole
01202 633329



Members of the Poole Harbour Steering Group

