



CATTEWATER HARBOUR USERS GROUP

held on Wednesday 23rd February 2022 at 10:30 hrs.

Present:

Richard Allan	Harbour Master & CEO
Alan Nosworthy	Sailing Clubs
Steve Marshall	Commercial wharf operations
Mike Artherton	PCC Marine Services (<i>attending in place of Sue Dann</i>)
Chris Treeby	Residents Association
Chris Price	Marinas
Claire Baker	Leisure - Paddle sports
Tors Froud	Making Waves Charity/Ops team RNLI & SUP user
Sam Waites	Education
Helen Fox	Leisure – swimming group leader

Apologies:

Ryan Bonney	Turnchapel Wharf
Steve Philips	Valero
Sue Dann	PCC
Richard Lerigo	Moorings
James Balouza	Charter Boats

RA welcomed all to the Cattewater Harbour Users Group's (CHUG) first meeting of this year. All attendees introduced themselves.

RA presented a Cattewater Harbour slide show, attached separately.

Port presentation included the following discussion points:

- PWC positive results
- Upcoming dredge campaign, powers to dredge, and a license, with strict conditions to meet for disposal.
- TECF, commencement of the new 10-year plan to protect the MPAs of Plymouth Sound.
- Sea grass projects
- CHC Port Air Quality Plan & Plymouth Uni report on air quality data. <https://plymouthport.org.uk/air-quality-report-from-university-of-plymouth/>
- Harbour dues. Anyone using the Cattewater contributes to the running of the harbour - pays for enforcement, CCTV, harbour patrols, dredging, training etc.
- Trade and operations during the pandemic and looking ahead
- Fishing
- Cruise, and the excellent support from the Lord Mayor and town crier.
- Future proofing the port
- Apprenticeships in the port afloat and ashore
- Autonomy at Turnchapel
- Offshore wind potential
- PMSC
- Leisure - new visitor mooring buoys / pontoons
- Mayflower tender pontoon

CP QAB marina - Business Review, pandemic and outlook.

Discussion on live aboards, and shore services provided by marinas. Noting the shift of most of the marinas in Plymouth now not permitting live aboards.

CT queried whether water pollution levels were checked for swimming.

RA Plymouth has 5 designated swimming areas that are tested throughout the bathing season.

PCC Port Health officer updates the water quality sign on the Hoe every day during the bathing season. No swimming is permitted in the Cattewater, but I acknowledge there is a limited amount around the slipways.

CT Stated his concern in the ever-increasing population around Oreston, with more and more using the slipway in the summer, right opposite the sewage works.

CT who can change the ruling to discharge? Council shouldn't approve new housing when there is already a problem with sewage discharges and the cities systems not coping.

RA The EA license SWW.

Plymouth central is one of the main sewage works for the city, but around the Cattewater there are also several storm sewers to be aware of. These were displayed on the main screen. We post a media message every time we consider there to be a risk of sewage entering the watercourse. Water quality is far better now than it was in the past, but agree improvements are required.

CT asked that sewage concerns are noted.

CT In the lock down there was a huge increase in water users - SUP's/jet skis with questionable behaviours. Sunday is the worst day for residents, specifically regards parking and blocking the village green. Would like to see parking wardens.

(Not port related)

MA A legal mine field what can and can't be done. Would like to tighten regulations on slipway use but not in such a manor that causes problems for locals/people using them properly. A number of options are being considered, to make slipways safer and will look at the parking issues. PCC welcome any suggestions going forward.

CT although it's a public slipway, it is not policed like other slipways elsewhere are. People using the slipways never have boat insurance, but to have a boat on a swinging mooring/ marina you have to have insurance.

RA correct, a weakness we have as a SHA are the access points to our water which are not CHC responsibility unfortunatley.

HF how do we get people who need training most to actually do it, specifically jet skis?

RA CHC and the wider port has invested considerable time and effort to ensure PWC users understand the waterways here in Plymouth and usage is compatible with other water users (registration, code of conducts, enforement, surveillance, patrols, engagement).

TF Water taxi reports swimmers regularly in the way, perhaps PCC can incorporate no swimming signs on slipways so the no swimming rule can be enforced.

CHUG Discussion – Safe Lane Oreston Slip South

The number of slipway users has boomed, resulting in numerous near misses and minor accidents between water users during summer season.

Propose putting a ground chain in at Oreston slipway with marker buoys for the summer season, to act as a safe/non motorised lane off the slipway, adjacent to the wall.

HF noted that is the area that children/youths jump in.

CT it is a massive risk in the summer. An incident waiting to happen.

CT improved since camera went up at Oreston. If you go down the slipway to the right it is dangerous as there are currents when tide coming in. Left hand side is better, but that is where the sewage problem is.

RA A Local Notice to Mariners would be issued if we proceed with the proposal.

AN Most of the problem is on the slipway, When boats come down the slipway there is a bottle neck with vehicles and children.

CT advised he had been threatened by users regularly. Residents lives have been hell. Improvements since RA got involved.

HF Swim group gets in, gets on with it and gets out, causing no danger to the port.

RA Swimming is not permitted in the Cattewater, but if it occurs, regular swimmers are generally not a concern, its now so popular though that many people don't understand the risks. Rather work with an organised group rather than against them.

TF – OWS rescues have risen massively in Plymouth, Log incidents with MCA. Even if lifeboat was not required.

RA proposed putting forward suggestion of a 1 year trial to HALC.

CHUG members agreed with the proposal.

SUP Charging Discussion

Discussion re. the growing pressure for SHA's to register/charge SUPS.

RA Water users who pay harbour dues have questioned why SUPs don't contribute to the running of the harbour, especially as harbour dues have been used to contribute to SUP safety around the Cattewater via various means.

CT why should they pay. No different than swimming - leisure hobby, anyone/any age can try. Affordable to all and gets people outside away from the tv.

TF Problem is at the slipway. Have to arrive in a vehicle and abandon it at the slip.

Intervention impacts on ability to park. So many angles. Harsh reality is that there is a cost to everything we do - if you charge it may deter activity. Need sustainable access to water that doesn't require a car to go with it.

TF After supportive feedback from regular SUP users, it was suggested a charge of a nominal fee and advise on taking a lesson with a reputable SUP user. Last year 26 RNLI SUP rescues, previous year 40 SUP rescues.

CT The economy is facing massive changes. Can't take more and more from people and wrong to take away their freedom, costs nothing. How many rescued from Oreston?

RA No problem with SUPs at Oreston specifically, but overall CHC assisted/ rescued 22 SUP users in the Cattewater last year, recovered 3 drifting SUPs, they were also responsible for 6 navigation incidents, this included impeding shipping and being unlit at night.

AN Can't imagine families not paying £20/annum and it stopping them going in the water.

HF Questioned the cost of enforcing such a scheme, although acknowledges this issue is the same with all water users who use the slipway and are liable for harbour dues.

RA Will continue to monitor local and national SUP safety and revisit next season.

NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting TBC