



Fowey Harbour Newsletter 2019

Dear Harbour Users

It feels like only yesterday that I was looking forward to 2019 and celebrating the Commissioners' 150 years 'at the helm'. It is all astern of us now but what a year we had! Our book entitled 'The Fowey River' launched to celebrate the achievements of the FHC whose guardianship has protected our precious harbour for the last 150 years. It has proven really popular; if you haven't got your copy already, make sure you get one and enjoy the culture, history, environment and scenery that makes Fowey the special place that we love. They are £9.95 and available from the Harbour Office or we can post a copy to you, they make a marvellous gift and are a wonderful reminder of the diversity within the River Fowey.

Whilst not quite as good as 2018 the weather was still kind and we had a very successful summer season afloat. Again an 'Indian Summer' did not really materialise so September and October were less busy but overall 2019 was another good year for Fowey; we remain a popular destination for visiting boats.

Commercial activity has been below levels forecast and this was compounded with news that an important paper manufacturer based in Sweden is closing production in the New Year causing a significant reduction in the volume of china clay forecast to be exported in 2020. This will reduce the conservancy income for the port which goes toward the costs of dredging and maintaining Aids to Navigation. The future of the ports' tugs remains secure at present due to the work they are undertaking in neighbouring ports. This vital income ensures we retain a tug available in Fowey. The importance of this capability was underlined in August when our tug was able to quickly mobilise and assist a loaded clay ship which had grounded whilst departing the harbour.

The effort to improve facilities available to visiting and resident leisure boats in the harbour has continued. At Penmarlam there has been investment in extended and improved electrical plug-in facilities for boats in storage ashore. A new boat hoist has also been commissioned at Penmarlam; this upgrade allows us to set boats down more precisely making better use of all the space available. Replacements for the dilapidated Pilot's Office and porta cabin at Berrill's Yard have been ordered to be in place early next year.

The project to repair and reinstate the slipway at Brazen Island has been the biggest infrastructure project undertaken by FHC in recent decades. The slipway is used for the maintenance of FHC vessels (except the two tugs) and all the pontoons. Its facilities and operatives are an essential asset to us, and we hope to better utilise the space available in 2020. The project is now complete having suffered an irritating delay at the final stage when the wheels for the cradle failed their load test. We are now working to catch up on the backlog of vessel and pontoon maintenance that has built up over the refurbishment period.

We have recently launched our new look website which we hope will not only provide all the useful and essential information required but act as a great advert for our beautiful harbour. Embedded within the site is a 'virtual tour' incorporating images taken by drone on a beautiful summer's day, it allows you to explore upriver from the seaward approaches right up to Lostwithiel and Lerryn. The viewer can zoom in and explore the entire harbour from the comfort of their armchair – highly recommended for banishing the winter blues!

The important work of the Commissioners would not be possible without the dedicated and professional men and women who work here, I am hugely grateful for their knowledge, resilience and initiative. They do what they do through a genuine love of this place and the Commissioners would like to particularly recognise the service of Graham Dean and Steve Tabb on their retirement after 67 years of service between them.

General Information

Please remember that our approval must be sought before any change in boat on a particular mooring. Moorings are allocated by vessel size / type and length and includes any protruding equipment; you risk being found liable for any damage resulting if you are oversize and remember this also includes frapes and pontoons as well as moorings. We do our very best to ensure boats do not come into contact with each other but without the right information from you, spacing and swinging room is sometimes insufficient and vessels can come into contact. Please ensure you have adequate fendering arrangements in place.

Most of our customers now receive our invoices by e-mail, this is appreciated as part of our drive to help our environment and keep our overheads down. Please make sure the details we hold for you are correct, if not, then let us know!

Now is the time of year to check that your lifejackets and flares are all in date. Why not invite a friend to cast an eye over your boat to check your safety equipment. There is nothing like a fresh pair of eyes to spot something you may have grown accustomed to. The RNLI sea safety team are also available to offer further advice and guidance.

As part of the terms and conditions of taking a mooring you undertake to ensure your vessel has adequate insurance cover (including wreck removal). We will continue to request proof of insurance from a small number of customers annually to ensure compliance.

We hope you have found this newsletter informative and useful. We are here to help so please feel free to contact us if you have any specific queries or require any further information. Don't forget you can get more information from our website www.foweyharbour.co.uk

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable time afloat in 2020.

Paul Thomas
Harbour Master
For and on behalf of the Fowey Harbour Commissioners