

## **Chair's Report Year ending 31 March 2021**

### **Introduction**

Teignmouth Harbour Commission (THC) is a Trust Port created by statute. It is primarily responsible and accountable for the marine safety in harbour waters.

THC is the Statutory Harbour Authority, Competent Harbour Authority for pilotage, Local Lighthouse Authority for the aids to navigation, Navigation Authority regulating the marine operations within the harbour and estuary from the harbour entrance at the Ness to the entrance to Stover Canal at Newton Abbot. It is also the Mooring Authority administering and managing all moorings within the estuary.

THC provides a pilotage service for all shipping over 30m, which trade with the port. It ensures the harbour remains open for public use and that the risk to navigation is kept as low as is reasonably practical. It complies with the Port Marine Safety code to ensure a high degree of safety is maintained for the operation of the port, all its users and the community as a whole.

Its main source of income is through dues raised from ships trading with the port, the provision of moorings and leisure services.

The harbour has been managed by, the Chief Executive Officer and Harbour Master, Commander David Vaughan OBE RN supported by a small operational team of 6 staff members. He reports to the Commission, a non-executive board consisting of ten voluntary Commissioners all of whom are required to have a set of specific but complementary skills and experience. The board provides both strategic and business guidance and direction as well as being ultimately responsible for the application of and compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.

### **Results**

The surplus before taxation was £12,503 having paid the money collected to the PNPf and an additional payment to PNPf as a result of poor performance of the fund.

While commercial cargoes were below budgeted levels the figures were bolstered by additional works by the Teign C and the requirement to do less external dredging. The Commission continues to benefit from the dredge undertaken 4 years ago, however the decrease in annual cargo throughput has

continued, decreasing from 376K tonnes last year to 350K tonnes this year and the ship tonnage decreased from 473K to 456K tonnes.

The financial position will continue to be challenged by the liability to the Pilots' National Pension Fund for a number of years. A new focused effort to reduce the liability could significantly lower the overall cost and have a forecast completion in 2028.

The leisure side of the Commission's activities has continued to grow partly as a result of COVID with more people holidaying in the UK, an increase in leisure boating and an increase in visitors and the income we have been able to recover from our visitor moorings has increased appreciably. Over recent years we have seen a significant increase in the use of kayaks, SUPs and wild swimming in the harbour as more people are able to take to the water. Ensuring all the different users of the water can do so together safely remains a high priority.

The cash flow remains positive and the position would be a great deal healthier but for on-going liability to the Pilots' National Pension Fund.

All our vessels used commercially are coded, have been re-fitted and are fit for purpose.

### **Key Performance Areas**

The channel depth has been maintained at Chart Datum -1.0m or more throughout the year.

The Commission's compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code has been audited and the requirements have been met; the Commission remains compliant with the PMSC.

Aids to navigation have been maintained to the standards set by Trinity House.

Sadly there was one fatal incident involving a Jet Skier outside the harbour limits but near the Ness. There were no other major incidents or incidents notified to the MAIB

There were 34 recorded incidents in the year of 01.04.2020 to 31.03.2021; the majority of which were related to moorings

There have been no pollution events.

No serious injuries or accidents to staff have been recorded or reported.

Return on capital employed was 5.4%.

## **The Year Ahead**

After 13 years in post David Vaughan retires this year on 31 August and Captain Karen Dalton-Fyfe, fresh from the Royal Navy and sea command, will take over from him, bringing a wealth of experience to the post.

David has worked tirelessly to make the port and harbour a safe place for all to use and we wish him well in his retirement and we welcome Karen to her new post.

During the year ahead we will continue to learn to live with Covid 19 and its effects.

We will continue to negotiate terms with the PNPF that enable us to meet our commitment within our anticipated commercial income.

I am indebted to the Commissioners for their support and advice. During the next year we will be working together to develop a forward looking strategic plan for the harbour that takes account of the evolving commercial and leisure scenarios. In particular, on the leisure side, we will continue to look for any opportunity to increase the services we can offer our customers

I wish to record my thanks and appreciation to our staff and to our pilots who have shown a high degree of professionalism and commitment in particular in operating with larger vessels and a deeper channel.

I also wish to thank our customers and stakeholders for their continued support and welcome their contributions whether directly or through the Consultative Body.

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Dr Sue Astbury  
Chair, Teignmouth Harbour Commission  
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