

Teignmouth Harbour Commission  
Chairman's Statement Year ending March 2025

A year of two halves, starting with Humphrey Vince as Trial Harbour Master and Toby Dean as CEO alongside Sue Astbury as Chair of the Commission and ending with Capt. Rob Parsons Harbour Master /CEO and myself as Chair. The Commission wish to thank Sue Astbury and Vic Weston who both reached the end of their tenure as commissioners and Toby Dean for his work during a testing time for the harbour.

- Financial Year to March 2025

Major expenses were incurred in the year, this was due to the commission of a new pilot boat for the harbour ensuring ongoing availability of pilotage and allowing us to maintain our competent harbour authority status.

- Shipping

Shipping has improved with a small upturn in volume in the year ending March 24 with a total tonnage of vessel at **182,150** in comparison for the FY ending March 2025 at **224,379** tonnes. Whilst this is encouraging, we must remember the errors of the past and ensure that significant spends are appropriately planned for

- Port Safety Compliance.

Not an insignificant part of what we do. The current HM has rewritten, reviewed both THCs processes and that of ABPs local guidance for both Teignmouth and Millbay. I am pleased to now say with confidence that we are in a far better position this year than where we were. The changes we have seen this year in the code are not insignificant and will form part of the report for next year but it is important to note that our core function of the safe navigation of ships during the year to March 25 improved.

- Beach Management

Teignbridge District Council has commissioned a study entitled "Teignmouth, Shaldon and Holcombe Beach Management Plan" (BMP) using the consultants, Jacob. This study is to deliver a comprehensive study of sediment movement in the area. Teignmouth Harbour Commission have tried to support this work as a member of the Steering Group. This study will provide a solid, data driven, foundation for future decisions. The report was due to be delivered at the end of 2024 however this is still ongoing. We look forward to being able to offer services as required for any works that may come out of the BMP.

- Moorings

Whilst demand for maintained moorings remains high, there has been a significant reduction in non-maintained moorings. A net loss of 35 non-maintained moorings resulted in a fall in annual income. This reflects a change in leisure craft with more, higher value vessels, not suitable for drying out moorings. The Commission is actively looking at how to provide more maintained moorings within the harbour and is exploring possibilities above the bridge.

- **Vessels**

In November the Commission welcomed the Storm Siren 2 into the family she was named by Jill and Sandra Hook in a small ceremony overseen by Rev. Sue Astbury. She has proved to be a reliable asset for the safe transfer of pilots to vessels. The Syd Hook which was retired has gone to a new home in Essex to become a leisure vessel.

The Teign C continues to be invaluable whilst the Barbara “Babs “plods on. The rib was well used during the summer months for patrols.

- **Pilots National Pension Fund.**

The prescribed payments have been made, however where a few years ago the end date for these payments was 2026 due to global financial pressures this has now been pushed out till 2029. Unfortunately, there is nothing the Commission can do about this as we hold a minuscule percentage of the fund and payments and surcharges must therefore continue.

- **Leisure Use**

The river continues to be a great place for leisure users offering safety, affordability and variety, whilst there are a few problems with antisocial behaviour, on the whole people enjoy themselves in a responsible fashion. Sadly, the uptake of visitor moorings was low through the summer of 2024 probably due to tough economic climate and poor summer weather.

- **Stakeholder Engagement,**

Although through the summer of 2024 this was particularly difficult with many strained relationships within both commercial and leisure sectors, I am pleased to report that this is now much improved. In February the first Advisory Board meetings were held, these were divided into sectors, Commercial, Leisure and Local Authorities. The meetings were well received although more buy in from local authorities would be gratefully received. The HM has continued to engage with one to ones and group meetings.

Much has been made of both the MMO disposal license and the effect of essential dredging within the harbour. I am pleased to report that with a lot of work a new 10-year license was obtained. The current HM is taking a much more dynamic approach to dredging.

The Harbour Revision Order has also caused some concern amongst stakeholders, but a more responsive approach to questions has helped to quell concerns. The HRO has not been delivered as more questions have emerged, this is an ongoing process.

- Environmental

The summer of 2024 saw the advent of a new group within the river The Friends of the River Teign, they are already proving to be great allies. The biggest challenge for THC within the river currently appears to be the disposal of derelict craft, unfortunately because they are so difficult and often costly to dispose of safely, they are being abandoned. There are also problems with old fashioned views that it is ok to put rubbish 'out of sight, out of mind' going forward this will no longer be the case for the commission.

- Staff

As previously mentioned, the year 23/24 saw big changes in staffing. Humphrey Vince and Marcus Walton both left the commission, we wish them both well in their future endeavours.

Toby Dean who was always on a temporary contract left us in November for retirement and made way for Capt. Rob Parsons who joined us from Torbay harbour having also gained experience in the Royal Navy and Newlyn Harbour. His first 4 months have been a time of massive change with many fundamental operational requirements being brought up to current standards. It promises to be an exciting period ahead for the Harbour.

Will Burton continues to be invaluable to running the harbour and was promoted to be Senior Harbour Assistant in Summer 24. We were also joined by Charlie Maddocks in Summer 24, he has slotted in well to the organisation. Jake Tribble has continued with his apprenticeship.

Jayne and Jude continue to run the office and finances respectively with quiet efficiency.

Volunteers also provided cover for patrols through the summer and their help is as always gratefully received.

Lastly, I would like to thank the commissioners for all their help over the last year. It can sometimes be a difficult but rewarding task. I am confident

that the future of Teignmouth Harbour is in safe hands and will meet the trials of the next few years head on with a positive attitude.