



River Deben Association

RDA Forum: 29th November 2014
at the Woodbridge Cruising Club

PRESENT:

Organisation

River Deben Association Cttee	Robin Whittle, Robert Simper, Adrian Judge, Anne Moore and Simon Read
Saltmarshes	Simon Read
Felixstowe Ferry Foreshore Trust	Tony Storer
Felixstowe Ferry Residents Association	Colin & Victoria Lister
Whisstocks Project Group	Malcolm Hodd (absent)
Suffolk Coast Against Retreat	Graham Henderson
Landowners	John Symes Bill Waring (apologies for absence) Robert Simper William Notcutt
Fairway Committees & Harbour Masters	
Waldringfield	John Smith
Kyson	Steve Cosey
Felixstowe Ferry	Robert Wright
Tide Mill Yacht Harbour	Mike Ellis
Boatyards	
Robertsons	Clive Eminson
Melton	Simon Skeet
Larkmans	Fred Larkman
Waldringfield	Mark Barton (apologies for absence)
Felixstowe Volunteer Coast Patrol	
Rescue Service	John Creswell (absent)
Woodbridge Cruising Club	Tony Patrick
Sailing Clubs	
Deben Yacht Club	John Prevett
Waldringfield SC	Bob Whitehouse
Felixstowe Ferry SC	Robert Wright
Bawdsey Haven YC	Robert Simper
Deben Rowing Club	William Notcutt
Water Ski Club	Matt More (absent)
Deben Estuary Partnership	Christine Block.

The Meeting Opened Promptly at 9.30am.

Robin Whittle welcomed everyone and provide the latest attendee list.

He requested that all participants kept their presentations brief and Adrian Judge was appointed as time keeper.

Robin Whittle advised that Victoria Lister would be standing in for Wendy Brown (to take notes) who due to family illness was unable to attend.

Robin Whittle thanked the Woodbridge Cruising Club for hosting the RDA Forum meeting.

Reports from the Organisations

RDA – Robin Whittle

- River Users Guide – a code of conduct and information leaflet. During the past year the RDA has worked with partners to complete this project. Now circulated to Marinas, Sailing Clubs, and Yacht Clubs both in Suffolk and in Essex.
- During the past year 5 or 6 formal letters have been submitted surrounding Planning Application Reviews.
- The RDA produces an informative magazine twice per year and this has a membership form within and available today if anyone who is not already a member would like to join.

Saltmarshes – Simon Read

- Advised that the erosion at Loder's Cut Island is being monitored by members of the RDA committee.
- Recently work on the DEP Plan has taken precedence over the saltmarshes.
- Simon reflected on the changes in mindset over the past 5 years – the greater understanding of estuary processes and intertidal habitat. Post Hurricane Sandy greater importance is being placed on the sensitivity of, and cost of, maintaining inter coastal saltmarshes.
- Going forward a new group will review the integrity of saltmarsh up and down the river. This knowledge will become part of a much wider debate and we hope to share knowledge nationally.

Felixstowe Ferry Foreshore Trust – Tony Storer

- Advised that they have now been in existence for 22 years to protect the essential character of the foreshore. They have a special relationship with the RDA and have included them as a member.
- TS advised that they are currently addressing 2 instances of unlawful development to the north of the boatyard through the county court.
- The FFFT feel that some parts of the DEP plan are very valuable now and for the future. They hope that the plan will be adopted and used.

Felixstowe Ferry Residents Association – Colin Lister - secretary

- The FFRA endeavour to represent all persons living at the Ferry. These fall into 3 distinct groups. Houseboat, FBI area and Martello area.
- A need exists for a flood plan for the whole area of Felixstowe Ferry; however it has not been possible for agreement to be made on a formal plan. (Please note that the informal one works very well). It has been suggested that this be brought up with Felixstowe Town Council under whose control the Ferry comes.
- RW noted that over the past 5 years the FFRA has done an excellent job.

Whisstocks project Group – It was unfortunate that Malcolm Hodd could not make the meeting.

Robin Whittle recapped:

- The planning was approved 1 year ago.
- A change was requested to make the housing permanent instead of holiday. This was approved. The RDA sent a formal letter to both applications.
- It is RW's understanding that the Investor Bank is now opening funds and development is to start.
- In addition to the houses there will also be a museum, a boat building training centre with an Anglo Saxon Ship.

Suffolk Coasts Against Retreat – Graham Henderson

- GH recapped that 10 years ago John Gummer called a meeting to improve communications with the Environment Agency. GH was and still is Chair. They have been successful and worked closely with the EA on the plan.
- The objectives of SCAR has varied over the years but essentially they remain a lobby group. They cover the area Cove Hythe to Felixstowe and represent all the groups along the coast. He gave an insight to various concerns in the region.
 - **Benacre** has particular problems. A farm there is losing 20 acres per year and no sea defence is allowed. The reason is that this eroding shoreline is wanted to feed the coast further south.
 - **Sizewell**. A long Jetty will be required for the off loading of building materials. However it is not known what effect this will have on the shoreline either side.
 - **Thorpeness**. Coastal erosion.
 - **East Lane**. The original (1.8m) work was successful but this put pressure on the next section north and work continues at Shingle Street where piling and rock armour have been necessary to protect farm land and villages.
 - It was noted that if the **Bawdsey Coastal Group** are not successful in fund raising then any resultant breach could cause wide ranging flooding.
 - **Anglia 1**. Due to start in 2017. **Anglia 3** approved. The IFCA is concerned over laying the pipe work to the shore. In other areas they have used rock groins to protect the pipe work but here that would not work and so far they have not found a pipe laying machine suitable for the job.

Landowners

Hill Farm - John Symes

The river wall just down river from Martlesham Creek suffered 1 major breach and 2 minor ones in December 2013. This caused major flooding to the pastureland of Hill Farm behind. Luckily the EA told them that they should do whatever was necessary to quickly undertake repairs.

A contractor was employed to work at low tide installing a steel sheet piling barricade to hold back the worst whilst clay was put in place. They had the necessary clay on site. Subsequently the sheet piling was removed. A sill was created at 4.8m CD to allow flooding without further breaching at exceptional high tides. The sluice has been improved so that pasturelands drain quickly after any flooding. A further wall has been constructed inland to protect the arable land and a bore hole. There has been one tide in the last six weeks which has caused overtopping of the sill. So far so good.

A major wildlife benefit of the clay relocation was the creation of a large hole which has naturally turned into a pond giving sanctuary to wild life such as Teal.

Martlesham Creek - William Notcutt

This land lies to the north of Martlesham Creek and is 26 acres of rough grass which is grazed and has a 4:1 gradient. He has cut back the grass in the area where he will be undertaking the work following the breach to this wall but he does have to complete all the paperwork before going ahead. He has been advised that the work will be authorised. Two sills and a sluice will be installed. The footpath will be reinstated by SCC 'Rights of Way' and they are reviewing best options.

Sutton shore - Robin Whittle (for Bill Waring)

RW noted that BW (who was not present) had repaired his wall along the Sutton shore opposite Robertsons Boatyard. As the clay in the pasture land was of poor quality he had had to import material and was raising the height of the wall to the max 3.8 OD that Andrew Hawes recommends. RW noted that where erosion of the bank behind the concrete Essex blocks had taken place these had been crushed to retain the armour but to allow grass to grow through.

River wall upstream of Ramsholt: 1 km of wall has been raised to a level of 3.8m AOD. This has increased the width of the wall leaving the existing footpath on the riverside at its existing level.

Waldringfield: This has also had flood protection around the boatyard - concrete works plus gates and brickwork in front of houses. The river wall upstream of Waldringfield has been strengthened. It was noted that Waldringfield had been successful in securing a £636,000 grant from the coastal community fund. This had not previously been thought possible.

Kirton Creek: It was noted that work has started in Kirton Creek, however they require more clay and so there will be a delay in further progress until the spring.

Others: It was also noted that the river walls to Flood Cells 1 and 4 still required work. Discussions are under way.

Fairways Committees

Kyson - Steve Copsey. Has taken over from David Poole.

- The lease has now been finalised for 24 years. A number of issues surrounding the positioning of craft exist. Next year they plan to have a stricter regime.
- Fewer people are requesting moorings.
- Peter Riches from the Crown Estate has met with all the Fairways Committees.
- It had been suggested combining the Knoll fairway with Kyson but was too late to consider this year and will be looked at again next season.

Waldringfield - John Smith

- A proper constitution is now in place with up to date rules. Tony Lyon has taken over as Harbour Master and JS becomes secretary.
- The plan is to keep the number of moorings static.
- Speeding through moorings has been contained.
- No real involvement in flood defence, however worth noting that flood gates are being installed between The Maybush Inn and boatyard.

Tide Mill – Mike Ellis

- Reported that there is a trend for boats of 30 foot plus but not necessarily motor boats, wanting permanent berths.
- Most of the large fleets seen on the river are visitors. There is a trend for large motor boats as seen in Ipswich. It was noted that visiting motor boats had caused a few problems.

William Notcutt speaking for the Rowers said that a large power boat travelling at 8 knots caused a lot of wash for people on sculls. On some occasions these arrived from other parts of the coast in groups of five or six. The resulting wash was greater still.

Anne Moore speaking for the swimmers endorsed this comment.

Felixstowe Ferry – Robert Wright

- The only real change at the Ferry has been the flattening and widening of Horse Sands. This has eliminated 10 moorings. They try to provide moorings for all types of boats. They have seen a trend for larger boats and it can be a challenge to keep them appropriately matched for swing.
- It was noted that the fleet of Cornish Shrimpers on the river has grown to 15.
- Some of the moorings have been moved to deeper water.

Boatyards

Robinsons – Clive Eminson

- Although the waterfront is changing they run a traditional boatyard.
- They have been making investment into the yard, new equipment, holiday flat above the office and raising up part of the yard for yacht storage.
- It is the intention to maintain a trade yard. Visitors are welcome please give him a call.

Waldringfield – Mark Barton (Robin Whittle in his absence)

- They have been trying for one year to get dredging permission from MMO, they plan to put the spoil on the saltmarshes. This requires further negotiation to reach sensible licensing costs.
- Christine Block agreed that the DEP is in favour of using dredging spoils to re-create saltmarshes. The MMO is a self financing organisation which has tried to apply the same rules they used offshore inshore.

Melton – Simon Skeet

- Reported that he was now running the yard as his father had recently retired. They had no problems to report.

Larkmans – Fred Larkman

- Reported that they had launched a traditionally built Dragonfly class boat. It was the work of James Palmer who together with his father went on to sail it and win the Cartoon Regatta at Waldringfield.

Felixstowe Ferry Boatyard – no one was able to attend.

Felixstowe Volunteer Coast Patrol Rescue service – John Cresswell absent.

- It was reported that a number of the Volunteer staff have undertaken training by the police and have the power to stop and have a word as required. It was suggested that a number of these are now classified as police specials – harbour masters are aware.
- They are now based at Suffolk Yacht Harbour.

Woodbridge Cruising Club – Tony Patrick

- TP advised that WCB is a thriving club. Membership is open to all.
- Their next project is to build a balcony to take advantage of their excellent river view.

Deben Yacht Club – John Prevett

- They are a club with dinghy sailing, yacht racing, cruising and being RYA accredited run training programmes.
- They have done much to improve the club and its surroundings. They have recently rebuilt the slipway and renewed the toilets and changing rooms.
- Conditions of grants are to increase the numbers sailing.
- They had two safety boats stolen. The engines were not recovered. Costs have increased as they now keep them in the Tide Mill. They have had a Safer Neighbourhood event to raise awareness.

Waldringfield SC – Bob Whitehouse Vice Commodore

- The main focus of the club is dinghy sailing. They have 7 -800 members and hold regular events for 80 - 100 people. They have 200 members in their yacht class.
- They have issues with:
MMO licences

Maintaining Sea Defences

Local housing projects

So far outboards have been ok

Moorings have been contained to allow space for racing.

- They have met and are exploring opportunities with the new owner of the boatyard re services for yachts.
- WSC would like to see Deben Week re-started but not prepared to go it alone.
- A request was made that WSC refrain from positioning race marks on corners in mid channel especially when the tide is turning. A discussion then took place on the positioning of marks.

Felixstowe Ferry SC - Robert Wright

- FFSC was flooded last year. This had a silver lining for the club as it has now been brought up to date.
- There is a vibrant youth group of all ages and skill. We see this as important as they are the life blood of the sport.
- FFSC also lost 4 engines in one night – the new ones are kept in locked cages but are difficult to protect.
- FFSC have a vibrant cruising section.
- Robert was cautious about Deben Week. It was very hard work and always came down to the same 6 people. Today FFSC run various class championships but it is still difficult to get trained volunteers.

Bawdsey Haven YC – Robert Simper

- We continue to grow numbers standing at just under 100.
- We experienced problems with our track but the new matting laid on the shingle is working.
- Parking continues to be a problem.

Deben Rowing Club – William Notcutt

- The rowing club is doing very well. They have grown from 50 to 120 which is still a little short of the 150 they need to fulfil their grant obligations.
- They do experience the effects of erosion and silting, it can be difficult to recover from a capsize.
- They do suffer as mentioned earlier from wash from motor boats but these do seem to be from visitors outside the river.

Water Ski Club no one present.

- It was noted that the WSC feel that they get all the bad press for any rogue water skiers. They do try to keep to the river code.

Deben Estuary Partnership – Christine Block

Reported on the DEP Plan.

- This turned out to be a larger and longer project than anyone had anticipated. The RDA survey set the tone and underpins the plan.
- All the answers echoed: keeping the tranquillity, sustaining use - the plan tries to balance out needs.
- The plan is out for consultation to Jan 5th. Everyone is being encouraged to report on line any factual errors needing correction. Various assessments paid by the District Council have been undertaken and so far it has found favour. It is hoped the final document will be approved and adopted in February. It does not cover housing, roads or infrastructure.

- Further consultations are planned for, marine businesses on 15th December, River clubs and Fairways on 13th Dec. Parish councils, residents of Sutton on 3rd Dec and Waldringfield 11th December – these will be between 2pm and 7pm with a presentation at 6pm.
- Following consultation amendments will be made and then the final document will go to the SCDC Cabinet in February then to the County Council in March and to the Environment Agency and ANOB in Spring. Then SCDC Planning Department will hopefully adopt it. i.e. take note of its contents.
- Houseboats. Appendix 2/3 refers to houseboats. Apparently the council has not abandoned the 20 year old plan and is going to re write policy. The lack of knowledge concerning the tidal river is being addressed and assisted by John White who has organised trips along the river.
- Tranquillity is addressed by good practice.
- The question of dredging needs to be addressed as the replenishment of saltmarsh is supported in the plan.

After the plan is adopted the DEP are beginning new and extending existing projects – Saltmarsh and Sea Walls. Working together strengthens position.

- DEP has formed a charity for finance purposes – DEP Limited. They have been lucky to get access to little pots of money to help with projects. It is necessary to have a specific project well worked out to start the funding process. DEP Limited is ready to look at projects that require funding.

Future funding is likely to be a problem. Matched funding is going to be required.

- Donating land for housing may be an option for cell 4.
- An annual levy on all boat users of say £1 might be needed. The same applies to parishes and to visitors who come to stay and may be extended to other interest groups as appropriate. ie the beneficiary pays.
- Representations have been made to Anglia One wind farm. The inspector felt that EON was not responsible for compensation to anyone but the landowner. It is felt that the clay removed during pipe-laying could be used for wall defence and this will continue to be pursued. It was pointed out that inspection chambers on Flood cell one would be rendered useless if the cell flooded. Further efforts for recompense will continue.

AOB

Colin Lister requested that the RDA leaflet be made available electronically so that it could more easily be distributed to club members. This request was supported by the other clubs. RW will distribute a PDF. Any amendments to RDA leaflet please pass to RW so that any further print run can be updated.

WSC agreed at their last meeting that they would continue to have meetings with the SCDC and the police.

At 11.25 the meeting closed with thanks to all given by Robin Whittle.