

REPORT FROM GHT TO THE ADVISORY BODY

PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE

All harbour authorities are required to achieve and maintain nationally agreed standards for safe marine operations within their waters as set out in the Port Marine Safety Code and its associated Guide to Good Practice. In line with this, GHT has developed a Safety Management Plan which sets out the procedures which GHT follows to comply with these criteria. This is regularly reviewed and updated as required. Earlier this year it was audited by an independent assessor and verified by GHT's Designated Person before being presented to the Board for formal approval. The latest edition is available to download from GHT's website.

We are pleased to report that there have been no incidents or emergencies in the Gloucester Harbour since the last AB meeting.

OTHER SAFETY MATTERS

Sub-Standard Non-Commercial Vessels

A pilot recently reported crew and equipment inadequacies aboard an outbound leisure vessel which, due to its length, was subject to compulsory pilotage. Following this, a local Notice to Mariners has been issued which reminds owners/operators of such craft of their obligations under the SOLAS regulations and advises that pilotage may be refused if minimum safety and crew/equipment criteria are not met.

Lots of Enthusiasm but Lack of Experience – an Object Lesson

The owner of a small sailing cruiser recently called into the office to gather information to help him with a projected passage from Sharpness to Bristol. Whilst we are always happy to assist, it very quickly became apparent that this young man was unlikely to be able to complete the trip safely. His over-developed sense of adventure could not, in our view, compensate for the inadequacies of the vessel, his lack of knowledge and total absence of any reliable means of communication or determining his position. To the relief of all concerned, he was prevented from departing on the highest predicted tide of the year.

However, he returned a couple of weeks later having acquired the relevant charts and a vhf radio. He had also walked along part of the coast path towards Bristol in an attempt to identify some of the navigation marks. He was shown how to navigate the main channel using his charts, though we were not convinced he really understood what he was doing. He finally set off on a reasonably benign day and to nobody's surprise, except perhaps his own, ended up striking the rocks near the Lyde. The boat suffered damage to its hull, but the young man was fortunately unharmed and able to walk ashore. However, we hear that he has every intention of continuing his voyage as soon as his boat is repaired.

Navigation Aids

- The Trinity House PANAR system now permits defect reports to be submitted and interrogated 'on-line'.
- **Narlwood Beacons:** We believe that significant wear has occurred in the sub-surface components to which the support chains are attached, which means that the chains need to be adjusted frequently to remove slack. We are currently in discussion with Magnox concerning the best way to ensure the beacons continue to function properly.
- **Charston lighthouse:** Remedial work as recently been undertaken at Charston including: the installation of a new lantern, mounting post and solar panel brackets at the top of the lighthouse; the cleaning and repainting of handrails and other corroded steelwork; the relocation of batteries to the inside the lighthouse to reduce the need to climb ladders to access them.
- **Counts beacon:** The tide gauge had been broken off at 8.7m above local chart datum as a result of being hit by an unknown heavy object. A replacement section has now been installed and damaged parts of the steel structure have been repainted.
- The annual Trinity House lights inspection was carried out during the evening of 20 August, the only defect being one of the Sharpness fog signals, since rectified.

SHIPPING

Trade continues to be buoyant with the current monthly average of piloted dwt over 100,000 dwt. As the table below show, this compares favourably with the same period last year.

Piloted vessel movements to and from Sharpness Dock
for the first six months of the financial years 2013/201 and 2014/15

2013/14			2014/15		
Month	Ship Numbers	DWT	Month	Ship Numbers	DWT
April	30	86,465	April	33	115,920
May	37	106,484	May	26	93,795
June	33	111,293	June	27	93,044
July	33	98,960	July	35	119,148
August	23	85,269	August	33	96,222
September	26	83,998	September	29	97,6986
Monthly average: 30 ships 96,822 dwt			Monthly average: 31 ship: 102,686 dwt		

There was considerable local interest over the recent arrival of the tall ships for filming 'Through the Looking Glass' which has given Gloucester Docks a lot of positive publicity.

Scenes to represent the Thames as it would have been in the sixteenth century have been filmed at Minsterworth for a BBC production of 'Wolf Hall'. Both Sky TV and the BBC have filmed recent Bores, though in the event the waves were less spectacular than predicted.

FINANCE

With the current buoyant level of trade, GHT's finances are in a healthy state and the Trustees have been considering a number of spending projects which will be of benefit to our stakeholders. In particular, they have agreed in principle to the commissioning of a new hydrographic survey of the navigable channel. The last survey was undertaken in 2000, but the development of more sophisticated surveying techniques since then will improve the quality of the information gathered. It is hoped to include the Wye up to Chepstow as this area has never been surveyed before

OTHER NEWS

Lydney Docks

The Environment Agency continues to discuss potential disposal options for the docks.

Tidal Lagoons

Planning for a tidal lagoon proposal in Swansea Bay is already well advanced and schemes for up to six others around the country are also under discussion. However, it now appears that a further scheme is under consideration on the Welsh Grounds (near Newport) which would affect shipping bound for Sharpness and Bristol as well as sand dredging operations, if it went ahead.

GHT is concerned that no consideration appears to have been given to the effect of the lagoon on ports or navigation in the extensive economic study undertaken by Tidal Lagoon Power (TLP), the company promoting these schemes. A representative from TLP has been invited to give a presentation at the Trustees' January meeting.

A plan of the proposed Welsh Grounds lagoon is attached. Such a construction would clearly have a significant impact on the estuary and would almost certainly alter the flows and tidal regime in the channels of the upper estuary.



Surface area at high tide:
10 896 2 Acres / 8014.9 Ha

Length of Breakwater
27.5 km

Scale
1:60000

1117SK2:1
Overall Plan

Lagoon 7b
Newport

