

# **REPORT TO ADVISORY BODY MEMBERS FROM GHT**

## **DECEMBER 2015**





Navigation House  
The Docks, Sharpness  
GL13 9UD  
01453 811913  
[www/gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk](http://www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk)

## INTRODUCTION

Members will be aware that attendance at Advisory Body meetings has been dwindling in recent years. The group currently lacks a chairman and the November meetings have been cancelled through lack of business. Nevertheless, we will continue to look forward to meeting members who are able to join us at our annual Stakeholder lunch in May, when matters of mutual interest or concern can be discussed.

We shall, of course, arrange further meetings of the Advisory Body if we become involved in issues on which we would value input from members of the Advisory Body. Conversely, if there are any issues affecting GHT which members wish to raise, please contact the office in the first instance and we shall try to deal with any problems. If members are still unhappy, we shall call a meeting of the whole AB so that all members have a chance to discuss matters in more detail.

However, we feel it is important that, in any event, members should be kept up to date about GHT's latest activities and we will continue to send out a newsletter twice a year.



© Mike Nash

The 'Wilson Hook' outward bound from Sharpness

## PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE

Like all harbour authorities, GHT has a duty to comply with the nationally agreed standards for safe marine operations within its waters set out in the Port Marine Safety Code and its associated Guide to Good Practice. Our Safety Management Plan, which is regularly reviewed and updated to take account of any changes to activities within the harbour, sets out the procedures which must be followed in order to comply with these criteria. The latest edition of GHT's Safety Management Plan is published on our website.

We are pleased to report that there have been no incidents or emergencies in the Gloucester Harbour in the last twelve months.

## NAVIGATION

The Trinity House inspectors continue to be satisfied with the performance of the aids to navigation maintained by GHT.

### Narlwood Beacons



© Mike Johnson

One of the beacons held in place by the new struts

One major project undertaken this year was work on the Narlwood Beacons. These are the responsibility of Magnox as they are situated in the tidal reservoir at Oldbury, but they had been giving cause for concern for some time.

The underwater chains holding the towers in place had become worn over time which allowed the towers to sway and fail to act adequately as navigation marks for shipping. Maintenance of the chains was difficult and dangerous with nil visibility underwater.

We proposed installing struts fixed to concrete blocks which would hold each tower in place and be easier to maintain when necessary. Magnox agreed to fund this work which was undertaken over several weeks during the summer.

We have recently had reports about problems with navigating in the Lower Parting below Gloucester as a result of unmanaged tree growth on the banks obstructing the river. We have drawn this to the attention of the riparian owners and the emergency services.

We have also undertaken our normal maintenance programme with routine work carried out where necessary to ensure that all aids to navigation continue to function correctly. We continue to issue local Notices to Mariners from time to time which give navigational advice on any problems in GHT's area.

**PILOTAGE**

The pilotage service is currently provided by three first class pilots plus a second class pilot. He is continuing his pilotage training and should be fully qualified by mid-2016. We are conscious that our older pilots may be retiring over the next few years and, because it takes several years for a pilot to achieve first class authorisation, we are looking at ways to attract suitable new recruits to start training in good time to ensure that the service is maintained.



©Mike Nash The 'Helen Anna' and 'Monika Muller' waiting to leave Sharpness

The port of Sharpness continues to be busy and trade remains buoyant. Recent cargoes have included cement, fertiliser, scrap metal, minerals and grain.

The figures in the table overleaf compare the monthly totals and annual average for the first six months of both the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years and show a consistently high level of activity. We have noticed that the size of ships trading to Sharpness has been increasing gradually and are now consistently bigger than those which used to trade here ten or even five years ago.

<b>Piloted Vessel Movements to and from Sharpness Dock</b>					
2014/15			2015/2016		
Month	Ship Numbers	DWT	Month	Ship Numbers	DWT
April	33	115,920	April	33	115,201
May	26	93,795	May	26	93,555
June	27	93,044	June	27	109,864
July	35	119,148	July	35	87,380
August	33	96,222	August	33	91,443
September	29	97,986	September	29	106,813
Monthly average: 31 ships 102,686 dwt			Monthly average: 29 ships: 100,709 dwt		
Average ship size: 3,367 dwt			Average ship size: 3,534 dwt		

**FINANCE**

AB members who are interested in the details of GHT’s finances can find annual reports and accounts going back to the financial year 2000/2001 on GHT’s website.

Our income is almost entirely dependent on the level of shipping coming to Sharpness because ships pay for pilotage and conservancy according to the size of vessel. We tend to err on the side of caution when forecasting our income and expenditure for the coming year and aim to set our rate to break-even each year. However, although we have no crystal ball to predict future trends, we felt reasonably confident about the anticipated level of shipping for 2015/16 and have, therefore, agreed to retain our harbour dues at the same level for the third consecutive year. However, the situation is always kept under careful review to ensure that GHT finances remain viable.



© Mike Nash

The 'Rusich 7' leaving Sharpness

## **STAKEHOLDER BENEFIT**

The Department for Transport's guidance to trust ports, which, unlike public companies, have no shareholders, recommends that they identify their stakeholders and offer a 'benefit' as if they were shareholders. Having been in the fortunate position of generating modest surpluses in recent years, we have given careful consideration to the best way of using these funds for the benefit of our stakeholders.

We came to the conclusion that accurate information on the harbour area is important for all its users. To this end, a new hydrographic survey of the navigable channel and immediately adjacent area was commissioned and undertaken during May.

The more sophisticated surveying techniques developed in recent years have improved the quality of the information gathered. The data was passed to the UK Hydrographic Office and included in the latest editions of Admiralty Charts 1166 and 1176 published on 3 December 2015.

Data has also been made available to Tidal Lagoon Power to help with the modelling exercises being undertaken for the proposed lagoon schemes at Cardiff and Newport.

## **GHT STAFF**

Susan Hill, who has many years' experience working as an AAT for a number of clients, joined us at the beginning of 2015 to look after our finances. Although she only works one day a week, she has now successfully seen us through the preparation of the annual accounts and our audit for the first time.



Mike Johnson working on Charston Light

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL OUR STAKEHOLDERS**

