

**GLOUCESTER  
HARBOUR TRUSTEES**

**REPORT TO  
STAKEHOLDERS**

**DECEMBER 2016**



**STOP PRESS**

**Our new improved website is now on-line:  
[www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk](http://www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk)**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

We aim to keep Advisory Body members and other stakeholders up to date with our recent activities and hope that this newsletter will be of interest.

We were pleased to welcome many stakeholders to our annual lunch in May and help promote useful interaction between a wide range of different interests. Since then, we have been busy with our normal day-to-day business and there have been no matters requiring an urgent meeting of the Advisory Body.



## **PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE (PMSC)**

Like all harbour authorities, we have a duty to comply with the nationally agreed standards for safe marine operations within our waters set out in the Port Marine Safety Code and its associated Guide to Good Practice. A new edition of the PMSC was published recently and is available on our website.

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. We have recently introduced a new hazard assessment system which has enabled us to assess and rank risks more effectively and monitor the actions taken to mitigate them. 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 which we maintain.

We have 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.

There has also been clearance work at the entrance to the dock by both the Canal & River Trust inside the bell mouth and for GHT on the seaward side of the North Pier. This has improved safety for the larger, deeper ships which now come to Sharpness. This build-up of silt and stones is a recurring problem in the dynamic regime of the Severn and is something which is kept under careful review.

## VESSEL MOVEMENTS

All vessels over 30 metres are subject to compulsory pilotage. The pilotage service is currently provided by four first class pilots. One of our most senior pilots has decided to retire at the end of June 2017 and an experienced pilot from the Tees area has been recruited to take his place. He will begin his formal training in April and should be ready to receive his first authorisation at the beginning of July. We are confident that GPP will continue to provide an excellent service to the ships coming to Sharpness.



The port of Sharpness continues to be busy and trade remains buoyant. The main cargoes handled are cement, fertiliser, minerals and grain.

The figures below compare the monthly totals and annual averages for the first six months of both the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial years and show a consistently high level of activity.

<b>Piloted Vessel Movements to and from Sharpness Dock</b>					
2015/2016			2016/2017		
Month	Ship Numbers	Piloted DWT	Month	Ship Numbers	Piloted DWT
April	33	115,201	April	30	104,128
May	26	93,555	May	28	91,013
June	27	109,864	June	23	86,568
July	35	87,380	July	24	88,298
August	33	91,443	August	23	88,989
September	29	106,813	September	31	118,245
Monthly average: 29 ships: 100,709 dwt Average ship size: 3,534 dwt			Monthly average: 27 ships: 96,207 dwt Average ship size: 3,630 dwt		

The main factor in the slight decrease in tonnage has been the lack of movement of scrap metal by sea. As in previous years, the size of ships trading to Sharpness has been increasing gradually and it is significant that, although the monthly average number of ships has fallen slightly, the average size has increased. This trend is likely to continue and careful planning will be needed to ensure that these larger vessels can enter Sharpness safely by identifying the right tidal windows and adjusting working practices when necessary.



A number of historic vessels have visited Sharpness recently, generally for work to be done at the Sharpness Shipyard and Dry Dock. These have included:

‘Egremont’, a former Mersey ferry now based in Salcombe as the headquarters of the Island Cruising Club

‘Oldenburg’, the Lundy ferry, which visits each year for annual survey and certification

‘SS Freshspring’, a historic steamship which came for refurbishment before returning to her home port of Bideford

‘Irene’ a traditional trading ketch which has sailed for the Canaries after refurbishment at Tommi Nielsen’s yard in Gloucester



SS Freshspring



Irene

## FINANCE

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

Most of our income is derived from the dues paid by ships for pilotage and conservancy which are calculated according to the size of vessel. The continuing buoyant level of trade to Sharpness means that we have been able to retain our harbour dues at the same level for the third consecutive year. Nevertheless, we keep the situation under careful review to ensure that our finances remain viable. At the moment, we are in a healthy financial position.



An Unusual View of the Severn Bridge

## **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. We are in the fortunate position of having generated modest surpluses in recent years and regularly consider the best way of using these funds for the benefit of our stakeholders – all users of the Harbour.

Recently, we have concentrated on some of our 'behind the scenes' activities to improving the quality of the information we make available. For instance, a lot of effort has gone into updating the tidal information at Sharpness so that trends can be identified and specific tide heights predicted to manage passages on particular tides more safely.

Another project to improve communication with stakeholders has been a revamp of our website to give it a new look and, hopefully, make it easier for readers to navigate around the pages. It contains a wide range of information for leisure sailors and commercial vessels, as well as people with a more general interest in the Harbour. We would encourage people to sign-up to receive email news and updates. The website went live in the middle of November and we would welcome any comments and feedback from readers.

As always, the site is: [www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk](http://www.gloucesterharbourtrustees.org.uk).

## **STAKEHOLDER SUMMARY**

- **Investment in Hazman software to improve risk assessment**
- **Investment in software associated with the tide gauge to improve tidal prediction**
- **Improvements to the website to make it easier for users to access relevant information**

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

