

## **Minutes of the 116<sup>th</sup> Fleet study Group meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.**

**Present:** E. Harland, D. Moxom, R. Waldock, J. Dadds, A. Holiday, J. Cox, C. Bolton, S. Fiest, R. Carpenter, C. Wheeler, J. Mead, N. Owen, J. Bass, L. Baldock

**Apologies:** A. Scott, R. Acornley, M. Doggett, N. Michard, E. Rance, F. Cox.

**Minutes of the 113<sup>th</sup> meeting :** Approved.

**Matters arising:** None.

### **Reports from representatives:**

**DCF:** – The DCF winter meeting was held at Wareham on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015. The cost deterred many from attending. Presentations can be found at <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorset-coast-forum/events>

**PHCC:**– The March meeting was cancelled. The coaling pier is about to be extended – see <http://www.portland-port.co.uk/news/16/Port+moves+forward+with+cruise+berth+extension+plans>  
Questions were raised about the monitoring of noise levels during piling operations. The current pier can handle ships of 225m LOA and this will be increased to 350m by the extension.

**Coast South West 2016:** Alan Halliday will be attending.

### **Research Reports:**

**Seagrass initiative** – Seagrass surveys will be taking place in April, August and October. Details of the project can be found at <http://www.csi-seagrass.co.uk>

**Chesil and the Fleet Annual meeting:** Several presentations of interest to the FSG – copies will be added to the archive.

**CBFNR:** Charlie Wheeler gave a presentation on his role at the Swannery and Fleet Wardening (with Angela). A permit/consent system is being looked at for people who want to access the Fleet for specific reasons (scientific study, photography etc). There will be no fee and the permit will allow access to a specific area for a specific time and duration.

There have been more frequent sightings of drones. Nick Stubbs has asked for permission to undertake a series of short flights that could be monitored to see what the impacts might be. Footage could be used to draw up guidelines for any future flights that could be permitted. Fly/No Fly zones would be designated.

The Fleet Explorer starts 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

A website is being developed for the fleet Reserve – there will be a blog and links to other organisations, events, sightings, volunteers etc.

(post meeting note: the website is now operational, visit:

<http://www.fleetandchesilreserve.org/> )

**David Bass (CEFAS/NHM)** gave an overview of a seagrass pathogen project he is working on – looking at parasites and microbes living on and around them with a specific interest in phagomixids. Liaison with the seagrass initiative – samples could be provided from their dives. They are already collecting samples for Manchester University who want to look at genetic connectivity of seagrass beds in the South West.

**NE TAG.** Ruth Carpenter questioned whether *Ruppia maritima* is still present – needs to be flowering to be correctly identified. A focused site specific survey using N Holmes sightings is needed – could be a FSG field day? Good ID sheets need to be produced.

Small fish survey – partnership of NE with EA and SIFCA – the EA will undertake as a team training day in the West Fleet and SIFAC will undertake in the East Fleet. Seine netting and possibly fyke netting will be used. CEFAS would be interested in any juvenile fish for genetic study.

Little Tern provisioning survey – a bid for money for this year has been put in.

### **FSG Field Day 2016.**

The litter survey site needs revisiting this year – June suggested. Other suggestions included an update of Invertebrates looked at in past symposia, patchiness/presence of *Ruppia* and *Lamprothamnium*, collection of saline lagoon specialist species for Edinburgh museum – would need to look at licence requirements and the paper trail needed for the museum.

### **Coastal Access.**

Lin Baldock reported that Ilchester Estates has put in an objection and NE has responded. Another representation can be made (deadline 29<sup>th</sup> March) and the proposal is that IE's alternative inland route is adopted all year. The latest version of the proposal will be sent out to members tonight with comments to Lin this weekend. A nil response will be taken as in favour.

### **AOB:**

CB - A date to visit the Fleet Archive needs to be set (1<sup>st</sup> April agreed)

JD – a new warden for the Little Tern colony has been appointed and starts on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

EH – suggested that as he has been Chair for 8+ years it might be time for a change.

A presentation was made to Don Moxom to mark his retirement.

**Future meetings and venues** – 22<sup>nd</sup> July – Abbotsbury  
18<sup>th</sup> November – location to be decided