

## **Minutes of the 118<sup>th</sup> Fleet study Group meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016.**

**Present:** E. Harland, D. Moxom, R. Waldox, J. Dadds, A. Holiday, J. Cox, J. Mead, J. Bass, L. Baldock, S. Hales, C. Bolton, C. Wheeler, S. Ashman, A. Brokenshire, F. Cox, N. Owens, M

**Apologies:** M. Chavner, K. Donelley, A. King, S. Pengelly, E. Brown, S. Feist.

New members – Angus Menzies (DWT) and Maxine Chavner (NE).

**Minutes of the 117<sup>th</sup> meeting :** Approved.

### **Matters arising:**

FLAG – funding obtained.

Seagrass Survey – JM will e-mail a copy of the report.

### **Reports from representatives:**

**PHCC:-** EH couldn't make the last meeting. The Dive Park has been delayed due to depth of silt problems, an alternative site is being looked for.

The Oystermen application – stocking has yet to begin, Scallops only at present.

Hamm Beach – problem with fishermen – possibility of zoning being looked at – signs are going up on the beach to request leisure users to be considerate of others.

**DCF:** – The last meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> November – very expensive therefore not attended by the FSG. <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorset-coast-forum/events>

**National Geologists Association Conference** was held on Portland on the 21<sup>st</sup> October with a day of talks on Geo-conservation and Education and field trips on Portland (led by AH) and Kimmeridge (led by S. Scrivens) – details can be found at <http://www.geologistsassociation.org.uk/conference2016.html>

World Heritage Coast steering group held their final meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> – the team will be subsumed into the Jurassic Coast Trust.

<http://jurassiccoast.org/documents/>

### **Research Reports:**

**NE TAG.** No report

**Drones and Bird Disturbance.** This is being undertaken as Illchester Estates get requests to use drones over the reserve (currently refused) – one flight done so

far – more are needed to get a wider picture under differing conditions. Guidelines could be drawn up pending the results of the study (height, time of year etc.)

NE are looking at using drones for survey work eg seagrass/saltmarsh surveys.

**Pipeline in front of visitor centre** – EH reported this was exposed at low water on November 15<sup>th</sup> – not previously seen for about 30 years.

Water temperature data at the Black Hut was shown – available on the Chesil Beach website <http://www.chesilbeach.org/CMMP/CMMPwt.html>

**Seagrass initiative** – J. Mead reported that surveys will continue in April/August and October. General observations are that growth is shorter and patchier. Details of the project can be found at <http://www.csi-seagrass.co.uk>  
A PhD student (Alex Green) is taking core samples to look at the carbon storage capacity of seagrass beds – the Fleet is amazing – it has the highest capacity of any seagrass beds looked at.

A PhD student (CEFAS) is also looking at parasites in seagrasses and sediments and wasting diseases.

The retreat of seagrass in the West Fleet is generally attributed to water quality, however the current bare patch in a previously dense area seems to be different. The EA are focusing their sampling effort on the rivers feeding the Fleet (no sampling in the Fleet in 2016). NE will be undertaking some soil sampling in the surrounding fields.

The possibility of loss of the seed bank due to the 2014 storms was discussed – it is not known how the Fleet seagrass propagates itself in terms of % rhizome survival and germination of seed.

### **Coastal Access Enquiry.**

This began on 1<sup>st</sup> November and will continue on December 13<sup>th</sup>. 3 issues being considered:

The need for an Appropriate Assessment.

The effect on Ilchester Estates agricultural land.

The alternative route proposed by IE.

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

Day 1 was a return to the litter swathe to resurvey.

Day 2 was a preliminary visit to the Wadeway with a view to undertake further work in 2017. Suggestions for 2017 are:

Bathy survey

Core sampling

A look at the edges of the Wadeway to understand the construction

Investigation of the extent of the Wadeway under the beach and the land shore

Vegetation survey on and around the Wadeway.

A September date is probably best for tides. Any further ideas to EH.

**Geoff Poole.** There will be an archive of all Geoff's photos etc – could be linked to the FSG archive. Suggested that Corrine could be asked to come to a meeting to talk about how far the archive has progressed and what the future is.

### **Old Photographs**

Two photographic archives have been obtained by EH – 1 has ~35,000 items and the other a few hundred – some pictures relevant to the FSG.

### **AOB.**

Deposits magazine (<https://depositsmag.com>) are advertising Guided walks on the Fleet shore – these had previously been removed at DMs request – CW to take forward.

FC – Impact piling for the Coaling Pier extension started this week – should be finished by December. <http://www.portland-port.co.uk/public/files/PORTLAND%20PORT%20BERTH%20EXTENSION%20WELL%20UNDERWAY%20DECEMBER%202016.pdf> S. Hales is undertaking bird survey work.

The dredge of the OCP area – a contaminant survey will be needed, location of dredge spoil deposit unknown at present.

SH – more ringing of terns took place this year. Herring Gull ringing on the breakwaters is showing birds go as far as France and Spain.

JD – Little Terns – 71 fledglings from 39 pairs. 10 pairs moved slightly west this year.

**Future meetings and venues** – 24<sup>th</sup> March – Portland Port  
14 July – Abbotsbury.