

Minutes of the 119th Fleet study Group meeting held on 24th March 2017 at Portland Port.

Present: C. Wheeler, R. Waldock, A. Holiday, J. Mead, S. Hales, C. Bolton, F. Cox, N. Owens, K. Donelley, M. Chavner, S. Pengelly, R. Acornley, Marc Smith, M. Doggett, A. Thomas.

Apologies: E. Harland, D. Moxom, A. King, J. Cox, J. Dadds, A. Menzies, A. Scott.

Minutes of the 118th meeting : Approved.

Matters arising: none

Reports from representatives:

PHCC:- The March meeting was cancelled – the next planned meeting is 6th June. A vessel dragging it's anchor in the harbor was quickly dealt with – details can be found at http://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/15137407.Tanker_pulled_to_safety_as_50mph_winds_struck_Portland/

Dive Park – back to area originally suggested – the application has been resubmitted.

DCF: – A litter pick is planned for April 22/23rd – all are encouraged to participate.

Research Reports: An invert survey is being undertaken by Steve Trehwella on washed up eelgrass on the landside shoreline.

A butterfly survey is also underway in the West Fleet.

The work on disturbance caused by drones is ongoing – comparisons of drones v Peregrines/Red Kites have shown no reaction to drones.

NE TAG. No report

Coastal Access Enquiry. No verdict yet - Details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-lyme-regis-to-rufus-castle>

An introduction to Portland Port and its environmental policies was given by Frank Cox – details can be found at <http://www.portland-port.co.uk/environment>

The piling at the OCP has been completed and paving is now going down – there will be an official opening at some point. The berth will need dredging to allow post-panamax vessels to berth.

The Portland Oyster Farm Severe Order was discussed at some length – the second draft of the management plan is out for consultation – see [http://www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk/fcimages/files/Portland%20Oystermen%20S O %20Limited%20Sever al%20Order%20Application%20-%20Management%20Plan%2020January%202017.pdf](http://www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk/fcimages/files/Portland%20Oystermen%20S%20O%20Limited%20Severe%20Order%20Application%20-%20Management%20Plan%2020January%202017.pdf)

It was suggested a talk on this could be given at a future meeting.

Bird Flu on the Fleet. Occurred in December – H5N8 strain – there was not as much media attention as this strain does not affect humans. In total about 100 (mostly cygnets from last year) were lost. Access restrictions were imposed and now have the all clear although there is still a threat from the continent and it is still a high protection area with poultry having to be kept in.

Small Fish Survey. The aim was to look at small fish populations especially bass to inform condition assessments for the Ramsar Site, Sea Bass Nursery Area etc. The SIFCA were also reviewing their netting measures. The EA have no requirement to monitor the Fleet. Standard WFD survey methodology used. Brief details can be found at <http://www.fleetandchesilreserve.org/2016/10/13/southern-ifca-small-fish-survey/>.

The SIFCA hope to monitor the Fleet annually and dates for future surveys will be circulated.

2/3 February storm. Two sets of photos showing changes to the Chesil Bank were shown – one from Ed Harland and one from Alan Halliday.

FSG Field Day 2017. A preliminary visit to the wadeway was made in Sept 2016. Suggestions for this year were:

Bathy survey
Core sampling
Edge survey (for construction method)
Extension under beach and landward
Vegetation survey.

September suggested – dates to be confirmed.

Litter survey – it would be useful to revisit following the February storm – early August suggested.

There was no A.O.B.

Future meetings and venues –

14 July – Abbotsbury.

17th November CBC (subject to confirmation)