

## FLEET STUDY GROUP

Minutes of the 81st meeting of the Fleet Study Group, held at the Estate Office, West Yard, Abbotsbury, on the 16th July 2004.

**Present:** John Whittaker (Chairman), Don Moxom and Dave Wheeler (Ilchester Estates), Partick O'Sullivan, Geoff Poole, Sue Eden, Jeanne FitzPatrick, Ken Coombe, Lin Baldock, Gordon Le Pard (DCC), and Rachel Waldock (EN: Minutes). The meeting welcomed Danuta Kochanowska (DERC) and Sam Rose (World Heritage Team, DCC) to give presentations on their respective roles as Marine Database Officer and World Heritage Projects Coordinator.

**1. Apologies for Absence:** these were received from Edward Green (Ilchester Estates) and Malcolm Bray.

**2. Notes of Last Meeting:** (80th of 19th March 2004). Accepted as a true record.

### **3. Matters Arising:**

Contrary to the claim (last Minutes: Item 9) that the only detailed bathymetric map of the Fleet was that undertaken by Messrs Wimpeys in the 1970, Lin Baldock correctly pointed out that a new bathymetry map was made in 1990 by consultants for EN.

### **4. Reports from Representatives:**

(4.1) Dorset Coast Forum – John Whittaker had attended and reported that the morning session was fisheries based and that there had been a very vigorous discussion between Defra and the fishermen. Also noteworthy was a good presentation by Richard Stanford on the Lyme Bay Reefs Project. Three trips were offered in the afternoon – Sustainable Transport/Durlston Castle/Wessex Water STW.

(4.2) Joint Dorset Marine Committee – Lin Baldock once again kindly represented the FSG. She reported on development issues raised by EN – of particular interest to us were the planned windfarm, the Ferrybridge slipway and the marina developments in Portland Harbour.

### **5. Current and Recently Completed Research:**

Land use in Fleet catchment – 'bird days' i.e. seasonality now taken into account and written up.

Institute of Sound and Vibration, Southampton University – Investigation of clicking sounds in UK waters, possibly caused by the "snapping shrimp" – Ed Harland is involved.

EN announced that a new *Armandia* Survey is to be undertaken in the near future.

The proposed foraminiferal survey of the Fleet had been delayed until 2005, mainly due to Professor Murray's illness.

### **6. Chesil Survey Points.**

Dennis Seaward reported that work, to be undertaken by Malcolm Bray, Portsmouth University, will hopefully begin in August – 26 points, 500 metres apart, will be installed.

### **7. Memorial Plaque.**

In addition to the Survey Points on Chesil Beach – a project initiated in memory of Alan Carr - there was a possibility that two information boards/memorial plaques would also be included. Dennis Seaward and John Whittaker would report further at the next FSG meeting, with ideas on their wording and siting...the latter would probably be at the Chesil Beach Field Centre and at Abbotsbury.

### **8. Fleet Symposium Proceedings.**

Six papers from the IVth Fleet Symposium are now finally going forward for a Special Issue of *Aquatic Conservation*. We are, however, still awaiting some comments from referees.

**9. DERC Marine Database Officer** – this item was moved to end of meeting.

### **10. Future meetings.**

Dates already agreed were 19th November 2004 and March 18th 2005. After some discussion the following meeting was scheduled for 15th July 2005. Venues will be announced in due course. As the forthcoming November meeting will be the last that Edward Green will be attending before his retirement, he would be asked to give a presentation on his time with the Ilchester (sometime Strangways) Estates and the FSG.

### **11. 'Look and Tell' or Poster Event**

It was hoped that during the 18th March 2005 meeting there would be an opportunity to have displays/posters, and short presentations. Further discussion on this idea would take place at the next meeting.

### **12. AOB.**

Ken Coombe reported that he had a large number aerial photos of the Fleet (taken in the 1970's/1980's) that needed a home. It was appropriate that they should go to the FSG Archive.

Archive – Dennis Seaward took the opportunity of the previous item to remind members that the Archive still exists, is housed in the Weymouth College Library, and that copies of all papers/reports on the Fleet (etc.) need to go to him first.

Geoff Poole reported that he is now archiving all his substantial research material and that Phil Sterling (DCC) is aiding him in this task.

Gordon Le Pard reported that Wessex Archaeology have just completed their assessment of offshore archaeology. A draft Consultation Document had been produced and comments were invited on it, by the beginning of September 2004.

Dorset Coast Forum – it is about to celebrate its 10th Anniversary – various ideas on how to mark the occasion were being discussed but no firm decisions had been made as yet.

Rachel Waldock reported that a Consultation Document on a draft Maritime Strategy was now out – comments were invited by October 10th 2004.

Photos of the Fleet and Chesil Beach from 1911/12 have also come to light – Gordon Le Pard offered to scan them into a digital format for archival purposes.

Don Moxom reported on the Fleet Hinterland Project. Seven farm plans have been produced. WDDC have money to go into practical things e.g. buffer zones, but the hinterland has no strategic planning. WDDC need support – in areas where cereals are planted right up to the edge of the cliff, suggestions on how to achieve a buffer strip were needed – ideas to Don are invited.

**13. Presentations:** Danuta Kochanowska spoke on her role as Marine Database Officer, DERC. Sam Rose, the new World Heritage Projects Coordinator, spoke on “The Jurassic Coast: coastal processes and collaboration”. It is hoped to make available synopses of these talks at the next FSG meeting.

The next meeting of the FSG will take place on Friday 19th November 2004, at the Estate Office, West Yard, Abbotsbury (NOT the DWT, Brooklands, as originally scheduled). As this will be the last meeting attended by Edward Green, before his retirement, it was felt that Abbotsbury would be more appropriate venue. He has kindly agreed to address us, this being followed by a presentation to him by the FSG, in grateful thanks for his support over many years. Please make every effort to attend.