

## **FLEET STUDY GROUP**

Minutes of the 91st meeting of the Fleet Study Group, held at Chesil Beach Visitor Centre, Portland Road, Portland on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

**Present:** G. Poole, S. Feist, D. Moxom, K. Donnelly, J. Cox, S. Eden, J. Bass, E. Harland, R. Waldock.

**1. Apologies for Absence:** D. Seaward, J. Fitzpatrick, R. Edmonds, M. Bray, L. Baldock and P. O'Sullivan.

**2. Notes of Last Meeting:** Accepted as a true record

**3. Matters Arising:**

Access consultation – J. Whittaker did reply – copy to be obtained for records.

**4. Reports from Representatives:**

**Dorset Coast Forum.**

Presentations were given on the Water Framework Directive, Shoreline Management Plan review, Coastal Access, Marine Protected Areas and the Defra consultation on scalloping in Lyme Bay. The afternoon session was a workshop brainstorming ideas for the Dorset 2012 legacy.

**Joint Dorset Marine Committee.**

No recent meeting

**Channel Coast Observatory SW.**

Website has very good photographs, although not very user friendly. They have a budget of £several million. Concern was expressed that real-time data was not accessible although there is no problem with data several months old.

**Jurassic Coast Team.**

Publications are produced at 2 levels – 1 covering the whole WHS and 1 covering smaller areas. It was suggested the FSG could produce one for the Fleet and Chesil Beach area.

**5. Research reports – present and future:**

The Heritage group have lost all funding. John Whittaker hoping to get some from the NHM.

A study of the Fleet edge looking at activities and effects is underway.

A survey of the *Zostera* beds has recently been completed by Lin Baldock for Natural England. A copy for the archive to be provided.

Anchors found buried in the shingle at Ferrybridge. Possibly abandoned from the anchor testing station. A request for any good photo of the station put out. Website should be up and running by the end of June with the support of Wessex Archaeology.

Lichen survey – nothing undertaken yet.

Upper Fleet water temperature and tidal cycle data shown – the Fleet is colder in winter and warmer in summer than Weymouth Bay (data from wave rider near Bowleaze Cove). Presently a lot of water pouring through the beach.

Avian Influenza. 14 corpses and partial corpses retrieved from the Fleet. 5 swans have tested positive, all ringed birds. Thought to all be either old or young birds. Mortality is lower this year than normal. 60 birds have been caught and swabbed – to be analysed for presence of the virus within the herd. Culling not being considered at present.

## **6. Role of the Fleet Study Group.**

**Mission Statement** – the 1990 statement states ‘The FSG collates information and encourages research on the Fleet Lagoon, Chesil Beach and Portland Harbour, Dorset.’ It was agreed to add ‘collates and disseminates’.

The brochure was updated in 2002 by Dennis Seaward – Ed Harland has produced a new one amalgamating the 1990 and 2002 versions – a copy will be circulated with the minutes for comment. A new drawing rather than a photograph is needed – GP to pursue.

**Funding** – none at present – in the past symposia have been funded by the County Council. Natural England to request £2,000 for the next F/Y.

**Reports from Representatives** – short written note from each to attach to the minutes would be helpful.

**Minutes** – will continue to be produced for circulation within the group only. An extract of interesting discussions could go onto the website and could be circulated to universities/museums.

Feedback from the website will be available soon. Photos are being used and referenced. Additional photos are welcomed with the proviso that the owners are happy for them to be used.

**Website content** – Publications list needs updating. The archive is on the website at present, but not easily searched – needs to be put into a bibliographic format such as en-note (available as a free download from university websites).

Survey points need to be more widely publicised. A copy of Malcolm Brats report will be put on the website.

**Membership** – the membership list was amended with both additions and deletions.

**7. Future meetings and venues** – agreed to keep to a Friday afternoon and that nomadic venues preferred.

**4<sup>th</sup> April** – Cefas Lab Weymouth

**25<sup>th</sup> July** - Slepe Farm, Wareham (tbc)

November – army camp and different day.

**8. AOB.**

**DM** – A course at Kinston Maurward College is being set up on Marine Conservation – they are interested in working with the instrumentation project. 1<sup>st</sup> years starting this September.

**GLP** – Google earth has turned up 2 archaeological (iron age)sites at Moonfleet.

**SF** – has images of specimen fossils – however showing these has the potential to encourage increased unsupervised collection – could be linked to fossil walks.