

FLEET STUDY GROUP

Minutes of the 94th meeting of the Fleet Study Group, held at the Royal Engineers Bridging Camp in Wyke Regis, Weymouth, on 27th November 2008.

Present: G. Poole, D. Moxom, S. Eden, J. Bass, E. Harland, R. Waldock, L. Baldock, G. LePard, D. Seaward, R. Burden, D. Bucke.

Apologies for Absence: J. Fitzpatrick, M. Bray, P. O'Sullivan., J. Leverick, S. Feist, J. Whittaker, J. Cox, R. Edmonds, K. Donnelly, D. Brunsten, S. Hales, B. Jones.

Notes of Last Meeting: Accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising:

Minutes were not received by JB/LB.

FSG Flyer – more to be printed.

Re-opening of channel adjacent to new marina in Portland Harbour – now open. RW to check if it is deep enough.

Talk by Peter Tinsley (DWT) postponed until next meeting.

Reports from Representatives:

Dorset Coast Forum. Next meeting December 2nd. C-Scope Intereg bid was successful.

Joint Dorset Marine Committee. No recent meeting.

Channel Coast Observatory SW. No annual meeting this year.

Jurassic Coast Team. The Annual meeting was held on 12th September. DM gave a talk and Chesil & Fleet research was highlighted. Positive feedback on the multimedia project work was received.

SMP2. Consultation meetings were held this week. EH attended the Weymouth evening meeting. Draft policies are now available for comment.

Research reports. Paper on GPR survey of Chesil Beach is about to be published – Bennett, Cassidy and Pile (2008) Internal structure of a barrier beach as revealed by Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Chesil Beach, UK. Geomorphology.

No other current research known.

Kingston Maurward College course – no further contact. (post-meeting note – this course is now running)

Dorset C-SCOPE £1.5m Intereg bid was successful.

The Fleet Management Plan. The management plan should appear in draft form in 2009, the plan has been shaped by Richard Burden and contains a series of visions for conservation of the Fleet and how these may be achieved. The contribution of the FSG over the years is recognised. Knowledge gaps need to be identified even though a great deal has been done.

A list of potential projects needs to be drawn up to offer to universities to try and engage researchers. Species lists should be revisited and updated.

The Reed beds are being looked at under an HLS agreement.

The Fleet shoreline study. DM gave a talk on the current project.

Fleet Study Group documentation. FSG leaflet is now available

Chesil Beach and the Fleet website. Still awaiting an alternative explanation for the formation of the beach. GP will provide one.

1947 aerial photos – very good definition – need to check copyright before they are put on the website.

Fleet lagoon pages are being worked on. Species lists – still need to decide how these should be displayed – associated with other pages or as pages on their own.

More old postcards will be scanned soon. More cards around the Abbotsbury area are needed. It was suggested that Dave Stephens in Abbotsbury has a huge collection of postcards.

Activity on the website is still increasing. Events for 2009 to go on soon.

Any other business EH – EH now on shortlist for Portland Harbour Consultative Committee representing the FSG.

Steve Hales has carried out a Ringed Plover count between Abbotsbury and Ferrybridge – EH has details.

Chalk and Cheese Initiative - £3m EU funding available for a new initiative.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) will not be coming to Dorset.

RW – Natural England are carrying out a review of activities that could pose a risk to the Fleet as well as a review of the condition of the European Marine Site.

JB – EA request re national eel stock decline – Fleet records could be a good candidate for assessment.

DM – Little terns – very bad year – no fledglings. Common terns deserted the island this year – on inspection 11 single egg clutches were found which is very unusual. Cygnets – a lot were lost due to bacterial infection, which in turn was due to the unusual weather conditions.

GLP – Big Anchor Project underway- see www.biganchorproject.com
Elephants tusk found on Chesil Beach comes up for auction tomorrow. This is the 8th tusk found and is assumed to be part of a cargo of ivory – Lyme Regis used to have a lot of trade with W Africa in the early 1800's.
Pirates Cove – salt works from approx 2000 years ago could be used to identify where the Fleet shore was at that point in time by coring to find the burnt layer.

EH – the 100th meeting of the FSG is coming up soon (Nov 2010) – ideas on how to celebrate needed. The Ilchester Estate may be prepared to support any celebration.

Future meetings and venues. 20th March 2009 @ DWT, Brooklands Farm.
17th July 2009