

Minutes of a meeting of the **Dinghy Park Joint Management Group – Handover Meeting** of the proposed **Channel Dredging/Maintenance Project** which was held on **Tuesday 7th February 2017 at 6pm**, in The Wallace Room of Blakeney Village Hall.

Present:- John Seymour (Chairman of Blakeney Dinghy Park Joint Management Group), Alban Donohoe & Roger Hall (Blakeney Parish Council), Neil Thompson (Neil Thompson Boats), Rod Jeffreys (Blakeney Sailing Club), Victoria Egan (National Trust), Peter Roe (Coastal Rowing Association Blakeney), Simon Read (Cley Dredging Project), Paul Bishop (Bishop's Boats), Ed Ewing (Blakeney Marine), Jane Armstrong (Dinghy Park Management Group), David Woodcock (previous DPMG Chairman), Don Glaister (Project Manager) & Tracey Bayfield (Clerk to Blakeney Parish Council.)

Apologies had been received from James Cowan (Norfolk Etc.)

Welcome by the Chairman of the Dinghy Park Joint Management Group, John Seymour, who welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief introduction as to why the need to form a new group, and explained that the idea was to see if there were new volunteers wanting to join with a view to seeing if the project in one form or another could be taken forward. John explained that Don Glaister had kindly volunteered to take on the role of Project Manager and was happy to continue.

It all started with concerns over the safety and navigability of The Channel and grew, to include maintaining the Channel for the long term benefit of the village and community as a whole. Lots of research has already taken place, and much information gathered.

Don Glaister - Moving Forward - Don Glaister, then did a brief slide presentation (*see attached*) which introduced the history of what we will (due to having to find a title for a funding application) call the '**Blakeney Channel Coastal Community Team**' (BCCCT).

- It is fair to say that the scope of the project and milestones seem to keep changing. We currently have £10,000 which we received from the 'Coastal Communities Team' at DCLG, and the timescales at the moment are driven by funding deadlines and we have to have submitted an 'Economic Plan' by the 31st March 2017, saying how we are going to spend the money in the next 12 months.

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- The next two meeting dates have been agreed; the first being an Open Public Meeting on Tuesday 21st February at 7pm in the Committee Room, at The Harbour Room. The next meeting will be on 17th March at 7pm with the venue to be advised.

- **What we want to know;**
 - Who wants to be involved.
 - We need as many people as possible with various skills.
 - We need to work on a constitution and a budget.
 - We need to agree a project and we need to obtain funding for it.
 - We need to define what this project is about, where does it start and where does it finish.
 - We need to undertake further community consultation and come up with a scheme of one type or another which the community will buy into.

- The window for works is October each year, and hence in reality, given where we are, any work on site would possibly start in October 2018, subject to licences and permissions etc.

David Woodcock – (Past Chairman of Dinghy Park Management Group & Past Commodore of Blakeney Sailing Club) did a brief slide presentation (*see attached*).

In 2010 we started talking about navigational problems in The Cut, and hence our starting point when looking to address the concerns was a 200m section north of Bridge Creek, with a view to addressing the tidal scour.

History – The New Cut was last dredged in 1986 and the scheme involved various local people, such as Morris Pye, Philip Page and Godfrey Sayers. It was a success, and annual surveys were carried out for a further 7 years and they provide a base point. The Binnie report is also available. We have lots of information about the state of The Channel and the problems and we need to see how we can drive it forward.

- We had obtained a £10,000 grant from the Sheringham Shoal Fund and had initially designated a section for improvement and hence commissioned a detailed survey of The Channel as existing from the slipway to the end of the 200m 2 years ago.

- The brief was given to the experts to look at the 200m as a starting point and the objective was to improve water flow down into The Channel, and Dan

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Leggett from DL Enviro Ltd produced a report. It was calculated that the amount of spoil to be removed was about 6,000 cubic metres.

- Both the Binnie report and DL Enviro Ltd agreed that all the little creeks run into The Channel and create and add to the siltation, hence if we can address the tidal flow. A reptile survey of the dinghy park area was also undertaken when we were considering placing spoil on the park and this came back clear.
- A public questionnaire was undertaken in 2016 and 97 people responded saying that something ought to be done.
- Other research had been undertaken in between which can be reviewed.
- The main consideration of previous discussions has been future maintenance.

Current Issues -

- Channel narrowing and moving westward at Bridge Creek outfall
- Navigation difficulties increasing particularly on the ebb tide
- Rate of silting increasing

Questions & Comments

- What is the purpose of this? – *It is to maintain what we have and to improve if we can.*
- In 1986 the mud was put on the marshes and many people think it went back into The Channel.
- Where will the spoil go? - *All scenarios have been discussed, but no agreement reached as yet, as much is based on permissions (themselves very costly to obtain) and costs and we had no clear method statement. The spoil would be classed as contaminated waste, hence no easy solution.*
- Bridge Creek is a problem, but it is not the only problem – The Blakeney Freshes could be up for managed realignment in 2025 and hence the long term needs should be considered and planned for, as this could have a positive impact, however we are in 2017. (National Trust.)
- It is all about options and costed options. Do we still want it to be a Coastal Harbour? In the long term are we thinking about the economic future also?
- The curve and siltation has increased.
- The 2013 survey can be seen by anyone, and possibly emailed. We have the 7 year annual surveys and the Morris Pye surveys, which go up to the 'Cooke Posts'.

- It was considered to be a phased project, ie. Phase 1, the 200m stretch, and sufficient maintenance, and then moving the project out further.
- Or we could of course as a community agree to do nothing and let nature take its course.
- We need to define what we want to achieve.
- Just to confirm that this was never about the Blakeney Sailing Club, it was always considered as a general safety benefit to all.
- Doing nothing poses the question – What would this mean to the long term future of Blakeney? *A question which has been contemplated before.*
- We need to consider everything from doing nothing at all, to going right out to The Bar and everything in between.
- We should invite and consider all ideas and the implications of each and ask the experts what they think.
- If we do nothing, then how long before there is a real problem? Could we use the £10k to answer this question?
- The Heritage Lottery could be helpful with funding and release phased funding.

Cley Old Harbour Project – Simon Read (Project Co-ordinator) explained that whilst the Cley and Blakeney project were two very different projects the community at Cley really bought into the project and soon decided that lots more needed doing. The time and work is not to be under estimated, but has been well worth it so far.

Next – If you are interested in being part of any new group, then please complete one of the expression of interest forms and return either direct to Don, or to the Parish Office and please come along to the next meeting.

Closed at 7.00pm.

Chairman _____