



## Cobb's Quay Berth Holders Association

### MINUTES of the 2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at COBB'S YACHT CLUB on SATURDAY 22nd MARCH commencing at 10.30am.

#### *Committee Members Present:-*

Jonathan Saunders – Chairman  
Mike Brine – Vice Chair  
Carol Turner – Secretary  
Kevin Butler – Cruise Leader  
Ian Wateridge – Merchandise & Ass. Resources  
Val Grant – Membership Secretary  
Jim Reynolds – Members Representative  
Jennie Higson – Treasurer  
Peter Hayton – Webmaster & Horizons Editor  
Clive Snow – No Portfolio

#### *Apologies from Committee members:-*

Nina Dunne – Cruising Secretary  
Emma Butler – Dry Stack Liaison & Facebook Editor

#### **Introduction**

Jonathan welcomed the guests:- Eamonn Feeney - MDL COO, Dave Wilson - MDL Regional Manager and Neil Salter. Neil replaced Peter Hogsden as speaker following Peter's resignation. Neil takes over as CQ Manager during April. Jonathan thanked the members for attending and also the Cobb's Yacht Club for hosting the AGM. He also thanked the committee for their efforts through the year and their preparation for the AGM.

#### **Minutes of 2012 AGM**

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 16th March 2013 had been posted on the CQBHA website and copies were available at the meeting. Peter Hayton proposed that the minutes should be accepted. This was seconded by Stephen Jones and accepted unanimously. There were no matters arising.

#### **Chairman's Report**

Jonathan began by reviewing the **Aims & Objectives of the Association for 2013** and giving a 'school report' of how well the Association had done against each activity.

**Purpose** - Bring people together to have a better experience cruising from Cobb's Quay and Davis'

**Vision** - Enabling members to 'Go Further'

#### **Key Strategies**

- Develop members' experience of cruising from Cobb's Quay
- Continue to enhance communication with members
- Promote safety and skills
- Continue to be seen as a valuable partner by MDL

#### **2013 Activities**

Very successful were:-

- Maximise the opportunity offered by Active Marina for member training and RYA relationships
- Continue to develop communication with members

- Liaise with MDL to give added value to members and enhancing our joint working
- Use finances prudently to the benefit of all members
- Drive up membership numbers by 20 during the year
- Establish and run at least 3 non cruising events to include social and training activities

Moderately successful were:-

- Positively influence the functionality of the bridges
- Have a positive impact on the use of the Backwater Channel and the Harbour
- Continue to develop the financial input from revenue generating activities

Least successful were :-

- Develop article content in Horizons Magazine and make self financing
- Continue to develop a relationship with Davis' Boatyard - office and members

There had been a number of **Member Events during 2013** including:-

- Cruises - which are still the core of what CQBHA does. Positive feedback for the day cruise was received during the AGM.
- Events
  - Boat Jumble - not so successful year in 2013
  - Marina open day - CQBHA offered rowing tuition and had two 'open' boats
  - Winter activity - the clay 'Seagull' shoot proved very popular
- Development Opportunities - especially with the Active Marina programme offering shore based courses in Pilotage and Navigation as well as practical events
- Visits to Poole Harbour Control - again thanks to support from Brad Bradshaw

The key **Association Successes for 2013** have been:-

- Bridges - continuing to influence the procedures and contribute to use issues. Member feedback is that new all-year-round timetable is working but that the basin pontoons are still unsatisfactory
- Membership increased by 20 this year – now around 850 members
- Communication with members via the CQBHA website and the monthly member news email. We have also introduced a CQBHA Facebook page
- Consulted members - but received very little response - over topics including Navitus Bay Wind Farm, Summer Party ideas, Cruising Programme and attitude toward social media involvement
- We have also encouraged responses to matters such as Challenge Navitus, Navigation Bill, Portland Helicopter Rescue and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)
- We have asked members for Photos for the website, Horizons articles and to 'like' the CQBHA Facebook page
- Finances - prudent financial control as ever, this year resulting in a small profit of £10

## **Website**

The website, new last year, has been growing in importance as a key resource and communication medium. There have been:-

- Around 175 visits in week prior to AGM/500 page reviews (2.85 page visits per visitor)
- Around 25 visitors with 70 page reviews per day
- Stats do not include spam and spider visits
- Good range of advertisers - please mention us when you use them

The website contains links to many sources of weather information – useful for cruise planning. The webmaster would love to receive more cruise photos for the website. Now we have a new website – please visit and use it.

## **Plans for 2014**

The Chairman then went on to discuss plans for the forthcoming year. He asked for the support of the members to confirm that they are behind the CQBHA committee and what we are trying to do.

The **Purpose, Vision and Key Strategies** of the Association for 2014 remain unchanged.

## **2014 Activities**

The Committee's priorities will be to:-

- Positively influence the functionality of the bridges and temporary moorings

- Enhance the involvement of Dry Stack and smaller/day boat users - some do not regard themselves as berth holders. Emma Butler is leading this initiative.
- Develop quality relationships with the new MDL structure and new CQ Manager.
- Support an improved quality of experience at the Cobb's Yacht Club and new owners Dave and Julia
- Drive up membership numbers by 20 during the year
- Contribute to at least 3 social and training activities, for the benefit of members - including the planned MDL Summer Party

Other activities will be to:-

- Enhance the role and impact of pontoon representatives
- Have a positive impact on the use of the Backwater Channel and the Harbour
- Continue to develop communication with members
- Liaise with MDL to give added value to members, enhancing our joint working
- Use finances prudently to the benefit of all members
- Continue to develop a relationship with Davis' Boatyard - office and members

### **Detailed Plans for this year are:-**

2014 Cruise programme

- Exciting programme visiting Brighton, Ocean Village, Northney, Sheppherds Wharf, Port Hamble, Day Cruise to Lymington, Cherbourg Cross Channel, Guernsey & St Cast and Weymouth. The cruise booking fee remains at £10.00. The Weymouth Cruise was proving as popular as ever – with 15 bookings already and an upper limit of 20 places available.
- Continuing 'required' briefing attendance and enhanced skipper guidance

Training

- The Association plans to continue to support part funded shore-based passage planning and pilotage courses. These are taster sessions with no test or certificate.
- Tell us what else you would like ....

Representation

- Pontoon reps - especially need a yacht rep and another Dry Stack rep
- MDL/CQBHA contact with new structure
- Promote member interests to the Bridges Operating Board (BOB). Dave Wilson had now replaced Jon Eades as the Leisure Representative.

Events

- Boat Jumble - there will be a CQBHA stall for members to sell good quality boating items with the 10% commission going to Association funds
- Harbour Control visits - should we offer anything else?
- Summer Party - we plan to actively support the MDL party
- Special events for Dry Stackers with a small boat cruise and BBQ
- Keen to involve yacht members - maybe even establish a yacht specific section? – need volunteers
- Possible First Aid course - informal, no test or certificates involved
- Possible Rifle shooting event - following the success of the Clay 'Seagull' shoot.

Twin Sails Bridge/Poole Bridge

- Enhance quality of the link with the leisure rep on the BOB
- Respond positively to any consultation requests - need your input

Communication

- Monthly e newsletter - make sure we have your up to date email and other details
- Website - important to look at it regularly – it's where we put news
- Magazine - looks like we may put this on hold
- Facebook - our most instant communication method – so please 'like' us!!

### **Summary**

In bringing the presentation to a close the Chairman concluded by saying :-

- During 2013/14 your Committee has continued to work hard to take the Association forward - but we need more ideas of what you want - so please give us feedback - positive or negative!
- Link with Bridges Operating Board weakened with little to do - want to change that
- Cruising is still at the heart of the Association - same for 2014 - we still see this as what is wanted (?) but please support them
- Other activity - including visits and a small boat cruise & BBQ to engage those berth holders as members

and reminding the members present of our vision **"Enabling members to go further"**

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Chairman presented accounts for 2013/2014 – which had been audited by the Michael Dufty Partnership Limited. Summary copies were available for members at the meeting. The Association's sources of revenue were limited - since members only paid a one-off joining fee. Cruise booking fees provided most of the income and CQBHA still maintained a healthy bank balance of just under £10,000. Clive Snow proposed that the accounts should be accepted. This was seconded by Peter Hayton and accepted unanimously.

### **Election of Officers**

No nominations had been received, however new committee members would be welcomed and co-opted at any time. The current committee members were willing to stand for re-election, so the Chairman suggested that the committee be re-elected en bloc. This was proposed by Beatrice Doppita, seconded by Ivor Moorhouse and accepted unanimously.

### **Appointment of Auditor**

The current auditor – Dave Whale – from the Michael Dufty Partnership Ltd was re-elected.

The Chairman then declared the official business of the AGM completed at 11:20.

### **Guest Speaker 1: Eamonn Feeney – COO, MDL Marinas**

Eamonn began his presentation by introducing himself. He joined MDL in May 2011. He had previously worked in retail: for Diageo – a pub, restaurant and hotel business, as well as working for Blockbuster. He was a chartered accountant with no boating experience.

He then outlined MDL's investment and plans for Cobb's Quay. £509K had been invested in Cobb's Quay over the past 2 years in providing various family facilities, a BBQ and bar area, and repairs/enhancements to concrete and slipways. He was very aware of bridge issues via Dave Wilson. Further investment was planned for 2014 under the leadership of the new CQ Manger – Neil Salter.

MDL wanted someone very senior and experienced to succeed Peter Hogsden. Neil has 16 years in the business and during that time has run 5 marinas in the UK and 2 in Europe – in Spain and Italy. As MDL's biggest Marina, MDL will continue to invest in CQ, employing top staff and becoming increasingly customer-focused.

Eamonn then talked about plans for a new Marina for Poole. Poole Harbour Commissioners (PHC) first proposal was located in Hamworthy. The second version was proposed for Poole Quay. As developers of marinas, MDL offered to co-operate with PHC. When the Crown Estates invited public tenders, MDL submitted a bid, achieved the highest score and were selected as the potential 'preferred bidder'. Crown Estates subsequently withdrew the tender – re-naming it as an 'evaluation'.

MDL's bid has limited facilities with pontoon berthing only. There is no dry stack, no yard services and has limited parking. MDL would run the two locations in tandem – with parking and marina services at CQ – and ferry transport between the two. MDL intend to monitor closely the Crown Estates thinking and have invited MP Robert Syms to visit to get a full feel for jobs and investment opportunities.

During the Q&A session, members raised various issues including:-

- Current status of marina proposal - gone quiet
- Size of proposed marina - 600 berths and 200 parking spaces
- Access - may include access for fishing boats but deep water access for cruise ships is not included in MDL plan
- Parking issues - plan would require additional parking facilities at CQ but uncertain how this would be achieved at present
- Lift out/dry storage - plan would increase demand for these facilities but uncertain how this would be accommodated at present

In conclusion, Eamonn stated that MDL plan to increase the number of marinas in the UK from 19 to 21/22 and continue to develop their franchise operations outside the UK.

## **Guest Speaker 2: Dave Wilson – MDL Regional Manager**

A quick feedback session from the audience indicated that the Bridge reliability had generally improved, although transit time variability was an issue. There were now 4 dedicated and trained bridge operators with 1 auxiliary, which had improved communication between Bridge Control and skippers.

Dave acknowledged that there were still problems with temporary mooring facilities in the basin. Poole Council had removed the cleats on the pontoons following an incident during 2013, when a cleat had broken and resulted in injury. Members complained that without cleats, the vertical poles had to be used and these were difficult to reach under some tidal conditions and from certain vessel types. (CQ berth holders were split 80/20 for ownership of motor boats/yachts). Members also reported that the cheap Chinese plastic fenders scratched hulls unlike the more expensive Versadoc material. Members were also concerned about accessing the pontoons in the event of a fire or man overboard. People fishing from the basin walls were also hazardous to vessels attempting to moor.

MDL had proposed proper pontoons, but Poole Council had rejected them, as they did not want people to get off their boats in the basin. Dave thought it unlikely that council would do anything about the temporary mooring facilities - partly because of their limited use by boats waiting in the basin. The audience were evenly split between those using the mooring facilities always/occasionally/never.

Jonathan promised that CQBHA would seek further comments via the next e-mail Newsletter and forward them to Dave Wilson to present to John Rice at the next BOB meeting. Jonathan requested that comments should be presented as a list of bullet points and confirmed that he would always acknowledge any email received.

In association with the RYA Active Marina, CQBHA had offered practical courses on boat handling between the bridges - but the take-up had been disappointing. For new/nervous skippers, MDL also had a short film available to view on the new monitor in the office.

The all-year-round timetable was a positive result for CQBHA and MDL, offering skippers greater flexibility in their bridge transits. Dave also confirmed that imminent bridge maintenance should not impact on boaters. The definition of 'on station' was discussed and it was recommended that skippers inform Bridge Control if they can get under Twin Sails Bridge, but still require Poole Bridge to lift.

MDL were supporting Dave & Julia, the new owners of the Cobb's Yacht Club and planned to run some joint events. Through the Yacht Club, MDL would be offering the chance to win a prize for £1000 off berthing fees. Berth holders would receive an electronic card that would entitle them to discounts. A pizza oven would be purchased – so the need for berth holders to order takeaways should reduce!

### **Guest Speaker 3: Neil Salter – Cobb's Quay Manager**

Neil had previously been marina manager at Brixham, Dartside, Queen Anne's Battery, Torquay (where he first encountered CQBHA), San Carles, Barcelona, Hamble Point and in Italy. He takes up his position at Cobb's Quay after Easter and intends to continue the good work of his predecessors.

Neil had already experienced the food at the Cobb's Yacht Club and would recommend it.

MDL plans for Cobb's Quay included:-

- Installing fibre optic cabling to improve the Wi-Fi
- Re-line the car park
- Repair the collapsed concrete walls
- Rebuild the bin area
- Provide a temporary spray tent
- Social activities including the Activity Weekend, Summer Party, Dogfish Dave fishing competition and children's Crabbing competition

When Dave was manager, he often walked the pontoons. Neil also promised to be 'visible', by working out of the office on summer Saturdays at the marina.

During the Q&A session, members raised various issues including:-

- Provision of cycle racks
- RNLI occupancy - scheduled until the end of 2014
- Parking problems
- More flexibility required in lift-out options
- Marina staff to be more visible on pontoons to help
- Fuel berth being blocked by RNLI and boaters having lunch
- Damage to vessels by hoist operators

Neil promised to investigate these once in post and provide more formal feedback on resolutions.

Neil concluded by stating that any problems should always be reported to MDL staff and that his door was always open to berth holders.

The meeting closed at 12:40

