



# C. A. Y. F. Newsletter

*This is an occasional newsletter from the Crouch Area Yachting Federation for affiliated Clubs, issued only when there is something of interest to tell your members. Designed to be pinned on noticeboards*

**Issue: May 2019**

## **Havengore Bridge**    Update May 2019

Following the most recent regular meeting of the Marine Users Group and QinetiQ it was established that they have revised their methods of inspection, the bridge is tested at the end of every day for operation. If a fault is found a new electronic monitoring system will indicate where the failure is and thus help the site staff with location of repair. They have two new contractors, one electrical the other hydraulics based. Parts which were causing problems in the past have been recently overhauled or replaced. They also have just been internally awarded a budget to hold spares, such as motors and electrical parts.

The bridge failed for the first time for a long time on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>. A barrier lift motor failed and this meant the control system went to a lock down safety position. The bridge operator is now instructed as it's a weekend to notify various organisations concerned with the Thames and Crouch, sailing organisations etc to notify asap the bridge is out of action. HM Coastguard and Thames PLA also put it out on their frequent weather forecasts. The system needed tweaking but cover of information seemed to work and the meeting agreed it was going in the right direction. Two spare barrier motors are now in spares stock on the island.

Due to the ongoing maintenance work being carried out, the meeting was told the need to raise the boom at times of failure was considered now not a requirement. The budgeted money for this is now being spent on maintenance inspections and repairs. Any major maintenance work will be tied to "Neap Tide" times so that access is not infringed if possible.

Further regular meetings will be held to monitor the work and operation of the bridges and waterways.

The photo shows the reason why we have to keep this waterway open, the lighter not certified for offshore sea going, was brought through the bridge on a spring tide, saving also a round trip of 41 miles. Over the past possibly 4 years CAYF have been trying to have a meaningful engagement with QinetiQ over their operational difficulties of the bridges on their patch at Shoeburyness Ranges.

The group attending were from the Shoeburyness Thames side area, the commercial yard interests of the immediate area, and CAYF represented the sailing concerns and the CHA. This was felt to have been a very positive meeting which has led to a regular consultative meeting held at the ranges of which we have just had our second meeting.

We now as a group have an understanding of the reasons for the mechanical and electrical failures. Basically the Havengore bridge was built in the 1970's and the Potton bridge in the 1940's, the Havengore lift sections were designed and supplied by Vickers who have ceased trading. The same or similar systems are used on the Thames Barrier who per chance are having the same nightmares of maintenance. Spares are nearly all bespoke parts, now found to be not off the shelf as thought, in some cases have to be overhauled and reconditioned as there are no manufactured parts available. A stock of spares are now being created as they have now been given a MOD budget for this where in the past there was just an ad hoc system of repair at breakdown.

QinetiQ have changed contractors for the hydraulics and another for the control systems lately, they have put a monitoring system of rapid fault finding on the electrical side which speeds up repairs. They also now test the

bridge every day by lifting at the end of the days shift, so if any faults are found the site engineers can arrange early next day response. The mechanical and electrical systems have now been placed on a regular inspection calendar. Bridge operators, site staff have been retrained as to engage more in the day to day operations and not just throwing switches. We now are listed for immediate telephone contact if the bridge is out of operation, this is followed asap by a general NTM and notification to Coastguard to place on their general marine broadcasts and the PLA on the VTS system.

There will soon be placed large notice boards with contact details for the bridges at the entry to Havengore creek from the Thames, The Vines area at Potton Creek and the entrance to Yokes fleet off the Roach. Also there will be notified times when the bridges are down for now routine inspection and maintenance, these will be carried out at low neap water times when depth of water through the area is very restricted for craft.

The good side of all this work has meant the yards have used it to move boats, barges and fishing trawlers through for overhaul and maintenance see attached photos taken this year as an example.

**What is now needed is the use of this waterway by craft, it has in the past been placed on the list of places not to use, but I would suggest it's very usable.**



### **Presentation by Capt Mike Robarts to River Crouch Clubs**

Capt Robarts explained the legislation and basis of the Codes of Practice that guide and govern the operations of the Crouch Harbour Authority (CHA) which is one of 120 Trust Ports ie a not for profit harbour run by professional competent staff governed by volunteer members of the community . It is a Salutatory Harbour Authority, the Policy and Reporting is to the Department of Transport and the enforcement is by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. These require that the CHA engage an independent “ Designated person” to audit and advise the voluntary board members on compliance of the applicable Codes of Practice and legislation. Capt Robarts is the CHA Designated Person.

He explained that the Port Marine Safety Codes for Harbour Authorities are based on risk assessment within the harbour. He then illustrated the incident analysis with the CHA 32 miles and highlighted the largest - Wash from excessive speed and the prosecution of two cases in 2018. He finished requesting feedback on stakeholder awareness and involvement with the CHA. Throughout his presentation there were a number of questions and concerns expressed :-

1] One of the users' representatives complained about increasing costs in the CHA particularly in buoyage and staff costs and queried where the benefit was now for the upriver users since Cross Rail has finished. The CHA has had to move on and there are now new costs involved with running the CHA

- 2] Calls for transparency in costs of the CHA - they were reminded that accounts are published, the complaint is that smaller clubs trying to do their bit of the local community and the CHA are struggling with rising costs
- 3] Could a cost reduction be looked at for the more non-accessible berths/moorings eg dinghy plaques for use + or - 3hours HW.
- 4] Yacht membership is reducing according to RYA Eastern region statistics
- 5] Up river clubs are a good entry point into the leisure sector - can we do things to help this?
- 6] Notable reduction in competition entry with different classes of yachts and dinghies
- 7] Communications with CHA - Governance, operations and being able to contact out of hours
- 8] Incident reporting - how can this be done simply [smart phone]
- 9] Risk assessment feedback - introduce a steering group [meet after leisure season]
- 10] Irritation from Jet skiing and fishing boats
- 11] Risk of multiple racing events in condensed areas of the CHA and conflicts - such as Kayaking v sculling/rowing craft/competing sailing dinghies, yacht racing

**Note** Mobile phone carried by Watchful when on patrol is 07761282890

Steve Barham offered to provide concise guidance for kayaking in the 2019 Crouch Harbour Guide for leisure users

### **New Launch arrangements at North Fambridge**

NFYC reported that they had joined in a new initiative with Fambridge Yacht Havens to operate a new the trot boat "Devon Lady" during weekdays using NFYC volunteer members who were in the process of being trained to RYA PBL2 certification. The trot boat would be operated by Havens staff at the weekends. This scheme would start on 4 May. between the hours of 10:00-15:00. A NFYC Flag would be flown at the masthead of the watch hut on the seawall, when the trot boat was operating.

### **Upper Crouch New Withies installed**

3 Withies have been installed at Short Reach on the Upper Crouch, marking the outer edge of gabions to warn small craft not to go inside the withies as stakes protrude from recent sea wall improvement works.

### **The RYA Census**

The annual RYA Census is has recently been sent out to all Affiliated Clubs.

### **CAYF Officers representing your interests in 2019**

Ken Wickham Chairman, representing the Roach Area Fairways Conservation Committee Email:

[k.wickham.1@btinternet.com](mailto:k.wickham.1@btinternet.com) , Doug MacEwen representing River Crouch Clubs and associations Email:

[dmacewen@btinternet.com](mailto:dmacewen@btinternet.com) , Clem Freeman Treasurer representing the River Roach Clubs and associations

Email: [Clem.freeman@btinternet.com](mailto:Clem.freeman@btinternet.com)