

CHA Annual Report Year Ending December 2022

I hope the end of another year finds you well and that you enjoyed the summer of 2022. The sunny season was again an opportunity for us all to have some fun on the water, and we did!

Fortunately, there were very few disagreeable incidents to mar or detract from the pleasure of being afloat and taking part in the eclectic mix of activities taking place on our waters except for a few thoughtless jet-ski operators whose antisocial behaviour both clouds days out for others and tarnishes the reputation of all jet-ski owners, the majority of whom operate and use their craft with care and consideration.

Going forward we will continue to monitor this situation with the assistance of the Marine Police Unit, and it is very much an action point for our meetings in the coming year.

An ever-increasing number of people are embracing canoeing, kayaking, paddle-boarding, and swimming. We now have representatives from the National Associations connected to these sports on our Advisory Committee who assist in keeping our website updated with the latest safety information and helpful tips and advice.

During the past 12 months we have strived to make further improvements and updates to our online systems enabling a more straightforward method to make Harbour Dues payments electronically. We would encourage you to make use of this facility if possible and pay promptly.

Non-payers have once again been issued with Court Summons and we have successfully collected outstanding fees through the Courts. We are awaiting the outcome of more warrants in January 2023.

A new addition to our online activities has been the introduction of a stakeholder's survey tool which we trialled in the latter part of 2022 regarding the potential move of the 8-knot speed limit area in Cliff Reach.

Commercial shipping movements to Baltic Wharf have increased during the past 12 months with a noticeable increase in the import of steel. Timber cargoes also continue to arrive from Baltic ports.

The CHA fleet has again provided a stalwart service. The Harbour Master Launch Watchful provided a valuable patrol service at weekends and Bank Holidays. Our Pilot Cutter Crouch Trident has once again been invaluable for pilots boarding and landing and escorting commercial ships.

Our finances remain our top priority, with our accountability to balance our books. For 2023 we are increasing our fees with a slight single-figure percentage raise.

In compliance with our obligation to the PMSC, during the past year, we have been audited by the MCA for our Port Waste Management and Oil Spill Plans.

Both reviews and inspections were wholly successful, and credit should be given to the office staff for the professional manner in which they administer these matters.

The Swallowtail West buoy was moved last year following a survey conducted by the PLA on our behalf of several pinch points in the main navigation route on the river Crouch.

The "Raysand" leisure vessel shortcut to and from the Blackwater has also been surveyed and it is likely that the buoys marking 'best water' for the crossing will be moved in early Spring 2023.

I am sure that many of you are aware of the time and effort given by the CHA Trustees and Finance and Estates & Advisory Committee members all of whom are unpaid volunteers and give freely and generously of their time.

As I end my term as Chairman, I would like to express my gratitude to them for their contribution to the harbour.

Finally, I must thank the Harbour Master and all our staff. They have supported me with remarkable dedication, generous with their time and always ready to assist me and 'get the job done'

Our Harbour Master has always remained on call and continues to organise on-water activities and the office with consideration and empathy.

I am sincerely grateful to them for their backing, cooperation, and assistance.

As I conclude my term as Chairman of The Crouch Harbour Authority, I would like to end my last Annual Statement by expressing what a pleasure it has been to meet so many of our river users and listen to all they have to say. Taking the information back to our committees in the hope of making our beautiful water space more enjoyable and a safe and happy place for everyone, including the generations to come.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2023.