

CHA Annual Report Year Ending 2021

As we approach the conclusion of another challenging year, I take this opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months whilst looking forward with a little more optimism and positivity toward 2022.

Despite the disruption and uncertainties centred around coping with the Covid virus, 2021 departs with many positives.

Countless of us over the year have taken to our waters for an assortment of reasons: a moment of calm, an excellent exhilarating fleet race, connecting with friends and trying something new.

We are fortunate to have many facilities, clubs and businesses adjoining the rivers Crouch and Roach, which support, assist, and encourage everyone wishing to enjoy an eclectic mix of water-based activities.

Again, we have seen an ever-increasing number of people embracing canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding and swimming. To assist those new to these sports, the CHA has consulted with organisations representing these activities and, along with their assistance, drawn up information that is available on our website to help keep you safe whilst pursuing your chosen recreation.

Earlier in the year, along with fellow trustees and the Harbour Master, I took some time to visit launching sites at South Woodham Ferrers and Hullbridge to meet up with river users.

This allowed us to explain the remit of the CHA and what we do.

Much discussion was based on water safety, which is vital to us all.

With everyone's cooperation and consideration toward others, there is ample space and opportunity for us all to enjoy ourselves.

I am pleased to report that compared to many of our neighbouring rivers, we had very few incidents of antisocial behaviour, one is too many so we will strive with the assistance of the marine police to eliminate further, to this end I believe education to be fundamental.

We intend to interact further and visit these and other sites during 2022.

In 2011 the Crouch Harbour Authority decided to offer a prompt payment rate on our harbour dues whilst the Crossrail/Wallasea Island Project was taking place.

The shipping and spoil deposits ceased in 2015, and all remaining equipment and jetties were removed in 2019.

We have maintained this concession until 2021 but now feel that we are mindful of our obligation to balance accounts that this concession should no longer be available.

For the benefit of our customers, we continue to make improvements and updates to our online systems making it more straightforward to make harbour dues payments online. We would encourage you to make use of this facility and pay promptly.

The commercial berths at Baltic Wharf have operated well throughout the year. We are advised that the importation of timber and steel products remains very positive. It is hoped that 2022 will increase vessel numbers and a greater cargo volume entering our small port.

Our working boats are vital in keeping the harbour operational. The pilot cutter Crouch Trident has had a busy year serving the commercial ships, and our staff maintain her to as high a standard as possible. The launch Watchful continues to provide a reliable weekend patrol service for the benefit of all.

Late in June this year, we held our annual "*Beating the Bounds*" day. As an alternative to viewing the river, we held a training day. We split the day into two sessions, the morning for the CHA Authority members covering many topics from marine pollution, pilotage, aids to navigation, incident reports and the Port Marine Safety Code that governs our activities. In the second afternoon session, we were joined by Advisory committee members focusing on governance, legal issues and responsibilities & remits of the committees. The day was led by Captain Peter McArthur and Captain Mike Robarts. We all learnt a great deal and were able to discuss and debate many subjects.

I want to take this opportunity to recognise the work and thank those who have given up their time to litter-pick our rivers' banks and acknowledge those who have pushed hard for better operation of the Havengore Bridge.

The board of volunteer Trustees and members of the Advisory and Finance and Estate committees have again given generously and freely of their time, supporting the Crouch Harbour Authority and attending many zoom meetings throughout the year.

Finally, I must thank the Harbour Master and staff, all our team have again worked exceptionally hard this year and have been generous with their time in the extra hours they sometimes find necessary to finish the job. Our Harbourmaster has always been on call to efficiently organise the office and our on-water activities with our limited resources. I am very grateful for their continued support.

Lastly, I wish everyone safe and enjoyable days afloat on our excellent water in 2022.

29.12.2021