

Exe Estuary Handbook

In conjunction with the new website, the Partnership are producing an A5 booklet about the estuary in a waterproof information pack which will contain a wide range of leaflets from service providers around the Estuary.

The booklet will provide descriptive information about the estuary and the role of the Exe Estuary Partnership. It also offers an opportunity for service providers to advertise their business.

The deadline for contributions to the Handbook has been extended until the end of 2002.

If you have information which could be included in the website or handbook, please contact us!

Trust Port Proposal: Partnership Views

Exeter City Council have been seeking comments on proposals for a new harbour authority this summer. A report was sent to over 60 organisations with a particular interest in the Exe Estuary and has been the subject of much discussion at Partnership meetings.

The report by Adams Hendry consultants was commissioned by the City Council. It briefly considered five options for the long-term management of harbour services, but recommended that a new trust port is created. The City Council, East Devon and Teignbridge District Councils, along with Exmouth Marina Ltd. (formerly Exmouth Docks Company), have all agreed that a new harbour authority is needed.

Under the proposals, the harbour authority functions of Exeter City Council and Exmouth Marina Ltd. would be taken over by a new independent trust port. It would be responsible for marina safety such as aids to navigation and byelaws, preventing pollution and protecting the natural environment.

The Exe Estuary Partnership has been facilitating consultation on the Adams Hendry report. Views from the Focus Group meetings and Exe Estuary Forum, were considered at a special meeting of the Partnership's Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) on 17th October. The formal recommendations to Exeter City Council include:

- Recognition that the status quo is not an option for Exeter and unlikely to be accepted by central government in future;
- It is reasonable to expect the introduction of harbour dues, however, it is essential that they are fair and equitable - further definition of how to apply the 'user-pays' principle is needed;
- More detail is required on the proposal for a Trust Port i.e. costs, eligibility of persons to sit on the Board, their accountability, and how the Board would be established. If the Trust Port option is pursued, it is recommended that the Partnership's JAC become the advisory body to the new Trust Port;
- Due to concerns about the relevance of central government's Trust Port model to the Exe Estuary, there should be more detailed investigation of alternative options. In particular, the feasibility of Exeter City Council seeking a small increase in powers, but contracting out the harbour authority role to a not-for-profit organisation, managed by a Board that is fully representative of the estuary community;
- Greater clarity was requested on how Exeter City Council would choose to manage harbour services if they retained/strengthened their municipal port status;



- More detailed consideration be given to the potential role of the JAC and its members;
- More in-depth consultation with statutory organisations and local clubs/interest groups;
- Closer co-operation between Partnership representatives and Exeter City Council.

Exeter City Council are now considering the views expressed through the consultation and we wait to hear more from them in due course.

The Adams Hendry report and summary can be seen on the Council's website:

www.exeter.gov.uk/harbour and copies are available from the City Council by calling **01392 265336**. For further information contact Ian Cowe, Leisure Manager or Alan Caig, Head of Leisure & Museums at Exeter City Council (Tel: **01392 265372**).

Minutes of the Partnership's meetings are available on the Exe Estuary Website:

www.exe-estuary.org or by contacting the Estuary Officer (see below).

A Date for your Diary

Sat 12th April 2003

Exe Estuary Forum

The annual formal meeting of the Forum to launch the Exe Estuary Partnership's Action Plan 2003-2004.



Would you like to sponsor **EXE-Press**? If you are interested in supporting the newsletter or other Partnership work, please contact the Estuary Officer, Natasha Barker.

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Tel: (01392) 382236 Mobile: 07967 456376 Fax: (01392) 382135

Email: nbarker@devon.gov.uk or exeestua@devon.gov.uk

Focus on water quality



Walking the shores for the environmental health audit

Representatives of the Environment Agency, South West Water, Devon Sea Fisheries Committee, Local Authorities and the community have been walking the estuary's shores this autumn. They're looking for sources of pollution - from 'point' sources (e.g. outfalls, pipes, waste tipping) and 'diffuse' sources (e.g. sediment and fertiliser from land runoff).

The aim of the environmental health audit walks is to identify and then tackle potential pollution sources. By bringing together statutory organisations and local people, areas of concern

identified on site are brought to the attention of the people who are responsible for managing water quality. It also increases local people's understanding of relevant legislation and helps set priorities for investing in improvements.

So far, during the two shore walks undertaken in September, a few potential problem areas have been identified and are being investigated. A report on the Environmental Health Audit walks and their findings will be available from the Estuary Officer, by the end of the year.

Looking ahead..

Estuaries are special places enjoyed by a large number and variety of different people. The Exe Estuary Partnership aims to encourage estuary users and managers to look ahead, to ensure that the estuary we know today is available for future generations to enjoy.

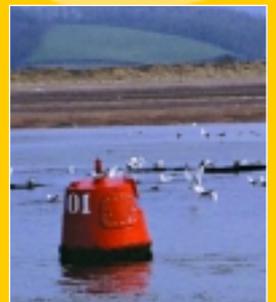


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New Harbour Authority



The Exe Estuary Partnership have been facilitating consultation on a report prepared for Exeter City Council which recommends the setting up of a new Trust Port.

Turn to the back page for further details.

In addition to the Exe Estuary Forum, the Partnership organise Focus Group meetings. These are open to anyone with an interest in or knowledge of estuary-related matters, bringing together groups of people in specific subject areas:

The existing Focus Groups:

- Agriculture and Land Use
- Conservation
- Commerce
- Fisheries
- Harbour Services
- Local Community
- Recreation and Access
- Water Quality and Pollution

Each Focus Group has a Chairman, who collectively meet with the Exe Estuary Officer four times a year. Focus Group Chairmen, in conjunction with the Estuary Officer, are responsible for identifying appropriate timings for individual Focus Group meetings.

Views from the Focus Groups are taken to the Forum for wider discussion and are represented by Focus Group Chairmen on the Partnership's Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) when necessary.

If you are not already involved and would like to attend Focus Group meetings, please contact the Estuary Officer.



Improving water quality

News from the Environment Agency on the latest works to improve water quality:

- At last! The village of Ebford has its own sewerage system. South West Water have been working hard to provide this scheme, which goes live this month. The scheme will result in much improved water quality in the Ebford stream, which enters the Exe via the Clyst. The sewerage system is much needed in the village and was first discussed around seventy years ago! The Environment Agency will prosecute the owners of any property causing pollution if they fail to connect onto the scheme.
- South West Water have recently completed improvements at the pumping station at Kenton and Starcross sewage treatment works, including year round provision of ultraviolet irradiation tertiary treatment. The works are for the requirements of the European Shellfish Waters Directive.
- Following a successful prosecution brought by the Environment Agency for two offences under the Water Resources Act 1991, South West Water have completed improvements at Cofton pumping station.
- South West Water have recently completed improvements at Kenn and Kennford in order to reduce frequency of storm sewage spills into the River Kenn. The Environment Agency will be monitoring the situation to assess how effective the improvements have been.
- East Devon District Council are about to undertake an environmental impact assessment for the favoured option for re-mediating the redundant



Tim Robbins (right), from Devon Sea Fisheries Committee and Daragh Turley (left) from the Environment Agency investigating an outfall on the Exe

landfill at Imperial Road, Exmouth. They are also in the process of appointing consultants to undertake investigatory works at the redundant landfill site at Warren View Sports Ground.

- South West Water recently pleaded guilty at Honiton magistrates court to polluting the Bapton Stream in Exmouth with sewage from a manhole, in a case brought by the Environment Agency. They were ordered to pay £6,200 in fines and costs. The Bapton stream enters the Withycombe brook, a tributary of the estuary.

Each Spring, the Partnership launches its annual Action Plan with a formal meeting of the Forum. In the Autumn, informal activities are arranged including outside activities and a meeting if appropriate.

This year's autumn Forum included a meeting on the proposed new harbour authority, a boat trip from Starcross and a guided walk and tractor/trailor ride around Powderham Estate. The date for the next Forum is given under the 'A Date for your Diary' section on the back page of the newsletter.

Tim Faulkner, Powderham Estate's General Manager, hosted the Forum's guided walk in October

Exe Estuary Forum

The role of the Exe Estuary Forum is to provide an open event at which any organisation, interest group or member of the public can become involved in discussion of estuary related matters.



Launch of the Action Plan 2002-2003 in the Council Chamber of County Hall, April 2002



Exmouth Pontoon Proposal

The Commerce Focus Group met on 10th October to comment on a proposal for a new pontoon facility in Exmouth.

Representatives from the Partnership's Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) have been in discussion with East Devon District Council, Eagle One and Exmouth Marina Ltd. over the possibility of building a visitors' pontoon off north pier at the entrance to Exmouth Marina. An outline plan was available at the Commerce Focus Group meeting in October but there are still important questions to answer about who would finance and operate the pontoon. However, approximately ¾ of those present at the meeting agreed that in principle the pontoon facility was a good idea and should be pursued. The next step will be to undertake studies which are needed to establish the feasibility of the proposal, such as hydrological studies and environmental assessment.

Water Safety Awareness Day

In response to concerns raised last year about the risk of an accident at the mouth of the Exe Estuary, the Partnership organised a Water Safety Day this year.

A variety of demonstrations, activities and displays to promote the water safety message took place in Exmouth on Saturday 6th July 2002.



The Exmouth lifeguards demonstrated their rescue skills to a captive audience



Beach activities for children were organised by the Exmouth lifeguards



Water Safety Songs were performed by the choir of St. Peter's School, Lympstone



Displays by the Devon Fire & Rescue service, Maritime & Coastguard Agency, RNLI, National Coastwatch Institute, Exeter City Council and the Exe Estuary Partnership caught the public eye



The MCA's helicopter 'Whisky-Bravo', was called in for a search and rescue demonstration

New Website Launched



www.exe-estuary.org

The Exe Estuary Partnership's website was launched in April 2002. The website provides easy access to the Partnership's publications: Exe Estuary Management Plan, Action Plan, Exe-Press newsletters, minutes of meetings and a wide variety of leaflets about the estuary and surrounding areas. Information on estuary related news, clubs and services can be added to the website by requesting a members login from the Estuary Officer.

Contact us!
exeestua@devon.gov.uk

Kitesurfers - new Code of Practice

Concerns over safety risks to water users posed by the new sport of kitesurfing were very much in the public eye this summer. Kitesurfing (or kiteboarding) is a challenging, exciting sport which uses a small surf board attached to a line (up to 30m) and large kite. Responding to concerns, local kitesurfers in Exmouth have set up a new club with a committee who have drafted a Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment for consideration by kitesurfers and the wider community.

The Code of Conduct presents 'Kiteboarding Road Rules', general safety guidelines, advice on

equipment, flying skills, setting up/launching, landing advice and encourages kitesurfers to be aware of other water users. The club are advising that kiteboarding should never be attempted without proper instruction and third party insurance.

Copies of the Code and Risk Assessment are available from the Chairman of the Committee, Martin Rothwell (Tel: 01395 516667 / m.rothwell@btinternet.com) or the Exe Estuary Officer. (See back page for contact details).

