



St Helier Boat Owners Association

Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting held at St Helier Yacht Club on 20th November 2018 at 1930 hours.

Present	The Officers, Committee members and approximately 50 members.
In Attendance	Representing Ports of Jersey: Myra Shacklady, Key Accounts & Marketing Director (MSh), Bill Sadler, Harbourmaster (BS) & Mike Tait, Leisure Manager, Marinas (MT).
Introduction	The Chairman, Will Simpson (WS), opened the meeting by welcoming members and MSh, BS & MT who would answer questions directed through the chair during the open forum. He thanked the Yacht Club for their generosity in allowing the use the Club for the AGM & committee meetings throughout the year & asked anyone who was not a club member to enter their names on the list being circulated.
1. Apologies	Apologies had been received from Tony Olsen, David & Jan Ballingall, Chris Gladish, Laurence Carter, Iain & Julia Norris, Nick Bailhache, Phil Carter & Len & Noelle Stevens.
2. Minutes	WS said the minutes of the last AGM held on 21 st November 2017 had been available on the website, he proposed they be taken as read and they were approved on a proposition by K Hennelly, seconded by M Stevens.
3. Matters Arising	There were no matters arising.
4. Chairman's Report	The Chairman read his report covering the main issues and activities dealt with during the year. His report is attached to & forms a part of these minutes. The Chairman's Report was accepted on a proposition by P Mourant seconded by P Mitchell.
5. Hon Treasurer/ Membership Secretary's Report	MP summarised the accounts for year to 30 Sept 2018, which were available on the website & copies had been placed on the chairs. He highlighted the higher subscription receipts following the increase agreed at last year's AGM, but said that this had led to a number of resignations & some changing from joint to single membership. He was continuing to chase those who had not changed S/O's, which had amounted to 140 at the beginning of the year. WS asked for any questions & M Stevens asked for the current membership number. MP said he was uncertain having sent 64 reminders with the AGM notice. He had received 17 replies so far & wouldn't have a definitive number until this year's subs were in. WS said that when the number was available he would put in a newsletter. The accounts were approved on a proposition by P Hatter, seconded by K Hennelly.
6. Election of Officers	N Wood took the chair & thanked WS for his hard work as Chairman, during which he had arranged regular meetings with Ports' officers & participated in Marine Development Group meetings. He then read the nominations for officers & committee members as follows: Chairman – W Simpson Vice Chairman – N Wood Hon. Secretary – P Donne Davis

	<p>Hon. Treasurer – Mark Peters.</p> <p>Committee Members:</p> <p>P Carter M Clarke G Gaudin K Hennelly P Rose V Walker</p> <p>There being no further nominations, WS declared that the above-mentioned were duly elected, to applause.</p>
7. Election of Independent Examiner.	WS said Tim Scott Warren had been proposed by himself & seconded by P Carter & declared him re-elected. He reminded the meeting that a successor to this post would be needed next year.
8. Subscriptions	WS said the Committee's recommendation was that subscriptions for the year commencing 1/12/19 remain unchanged & this was agreed on a proposition by K Hennelly, seconded by A Manning.
9. Donations	<p>WS said that the Committee had not felt able to make a lifeboat donation this year, due to the uncertainty. Their recommendation to the meeting was that the £500 be carried forward & donations of £500 each be made to RNLI, JLA & CIAS & he opened discussion from the floor. P Mourant asked about the current situation with JLA & WS asked if BS could provide an update. BS indicated that JLA had yet to achieve approval. P Mourant suggested this matter be adjourned, but WS said that would require a further meeting.</p> <p>M Stevens proposed that £500 be donated each to RNLI & CIAS & the donation of £500 to JLA be left to the committee to decide, when/if they achieved the necessary licensing & approvals to operate. This was seconded by P Mourant and carried unanimously, an alternative from P Hatter that £250 each be given to RNLI & JLA having been rejected.</p>
10. Changes to Constitution and Rules	PDD said the new Treasurer wished to keep the Association business separate from his personal work & had purchased a laptop & Microsoft Office at a cost of £392.99. He proposed that the Treasurer be reimbursed & that the laptop remain in the Association's ownership. This was seconded by V Warren & carried unanimously.
11. Open Meeting	<p>WS invited MSh, BS & MT to come forward to answer questions. (responses in italics).</p> <p>WS opened the session by asking if they had any contradictions or further news on matters in his report. <i>BS: He has recently met with the seaplane operators & there was much work to be done, assuming they still want to move forward after they have read the risk assessment report, which had been posted on the Ports website that morning.</i></p> <p>Canada has strobe lights to warn of aircraft movements, could some be placed on the end of Elizabeth castle breakwater? <i>BS: we are not at that level of detail yet.</i></p> <p>The yellow buoys in St Brelade's Bay have a gap allowing speeding outside & need to be extended. <i>BS: The new speed limits are not directly a result of the jet-ski accident, but to improve safety for the variety of activities of beach users. He will be meeting next year with all interested parties to discuss the effectiveness.</i></p> <p>The pontoon on South Pier is dangerous with flooded dinghies & some unused for years, can it be extended & unused dinghies removed? <i>MT: Together with the Association his staff have conducted culls removing 18-25 annually for the past few years. He sees this as a community issue with users encouraging good practice.</i></p> <p>NW: there needs to be an access channel for boats in the front row, but an extension</p>

	<p>might be possible as there is less use of the wall.</p> <p>When boats are lifted out or on a winter marina contract, could owners be required to remove their dinghies? <i>MT: a good idea for consideration.</i></p> <p>KH: a one-way valve as fitted by Chris Fairbairn was a good method of avoiding flooding.</p> <p>WS said the committee would liaise with MT to progress a solution.</p> <p>What is the plan for the Sailors Rest? <i>MSh: the lease ends on 30th November & the site will be cleared as a temporary car park for Port users. In anticipation of the relocation of the skate park, plans will be developed for the area which is reserved for marine leisure.</i></p> <p>Are there plans to remove the drying pad from St Helier Marina? <i>MT: the current plans under discussion for renewing the marina do not include a pad, in order to allow adequate fairways. An environmentally safe space is needed for washdown.</i></p> <p>Such a space exists in Plouer & should be installed before the pad is removed. <i>WS: This issue is on the Committee's agenda.</i></p> <p>What are the rules for livaboards? <i>MSh: They must obtain a licence for one year, which is reviewed before renewal. BS: safety is of importance, so licences are not granted in the drying harbours.</i></p> <p>What has happened to the Jersey wave buoy? <i>BS: it was damaged. It is owned by the Met Office, but maintained by Ports.</i></p> <p>Why is wind speed not being shown on Ports website? <i>BS: will check.</i></p> <p>Could a holding pontoon be placed on the end of New North Quay? <i>BS: much work has been involved in getting an ISPS code certificate for the quay, which could be at risk.</i></p> <p>What can be done to reduce the time spent by commercial RIBs on 4/5 pontoon & then overnighting on La Collette holding pontoon leaving no space? <i>BS: this is a challenge, but the RIBs provide good business for the Island.</i></p> <p>Why is there no marina VHF? <i>BS: because commercial & leisure traffic takes place in such a small area, it is considered safer & more beneficial for all to use channel 14 to be aware of all movements.</i></p> <p>WS said a question had been submitted asking if lack of maintenance had been an issue in the failure of the tide meter & gate in Elizabeth marina. <i>MT: the tide meter was an embarrassment and spare parts were awaited. There had been damage to the storm gate last week & the tidal gate was being kept up while checks by divers was being undertaken.</i></p> <p>WS: another question submitted was why Ports had accepted responsibility for maintaining the historic harbour walls. <i>MSh: this was one of the public service responsibilities imposed as a condition of incorporation.</i></p> <p>Finally WS asked if the officials had any ideas about the impact of Brexit. <i>MSh: officers had attended meetings with a number of States bodies, including Customs, Immigration & Economic Affairs. There was much uncertainty, but precautionary plans were being developed to strengthen harbour controls & identifying extra space for storage of goods at the harbour.</i></p> <p>There being no further questions, WS thanked MSh, BS & MT for attending, particularly MSh & BS, who were on crutches.</p>
Termination	<p>WS thanked everyone for attending & invited them to partake of the buffet. The meeting closed at 2105.</p>

Addendum:

Chairman's Report 2018

Good Evening everybody, it is my pleasure to Welcome all Members who are here tonight to the Annual General Meeting of the St Helier Boat Owners Association

I would also like to extend a special welcome to our guests this evening from Ports of Jersey: -

Myra Shacklady, Group Commercial Director, Ports of Jersey,

Bill Sadler, Harbourmaster

Mike Tait, Group Leisure Manager, Jersey Marinas

They will answer questions directed through the chair during the open forum.

Before we get going, I would like to record our thanks to St Helier Yacht Club for allowing us to use its facilities this evening to host this meeting. Of course, we have no premises of our own and the Club has always been generous and very accommodating towards us, not only for the AGM, but also for our Committee meetings throughout the year.

Speaking of which I consider myself lucky to be supported by such an excellent committee, and I particularly appreciate the good works of the officers, Nick Wood (Vice Chairman) . Peter Donne Davis (Secretary) &. Mark Peters (Treasurer).

And.... I would like to Welcome to the committee a recent recruit, George Gaudin, who has allowed himself to be co-opted to our ranks and who will stand for election with the rest of us in the course of this meeting.

Finally, our thanks to Tim Scott Warren who once again has assisted the Hon Treasurer in producing and reviewing our annual accounts as Independent Examiner. Tim has undertaken this function for many years now, and has indicated that 2019 will be his last year in this role. We really are very grateful for his good work over this time..... So with effect from 2020 we will need to identify a new Independent Examiner. If any of you would like to take this role on, or can recommend a suitable candidate please do let us know. May I suggest that you approach us afterwards when we are having a drink if you are interested, rather than provoking an immediate stampede of members to the front to stake your claims for this plum role!

This has been quite a busy year for the association. The committee has met every month (excluding High season when we all go boating) and ahead of these meetings, I almost always sit down with Mike Tait at Jersey Marinas, for an exchange of news & views on what is happening in the harbours. I think we both find this a very useful exercise, and as he also provides a really decent cup of coffee, there is every incentive to keep turning up. In addition to the coffee, with any luck I come away armed with a few bits Information for the committee that I & they didn't know beforehand.

Following the committee meetings, we have taken to producing the monthly newsletter, which the vast majority of you should now be routinely receiving on email. You may recall that we promised at this meeting last year to inflict this monthly epistle on you all, as well as reserving the right fire off further ad hoc emails as and when there is a hot topic that we think is worthy of your attention. Well, that is what we have done over the last year, and I think it's fair to say that a few hot topics did indeed arise, and some of them produced quite a bit of useful reaction from you. The big ticket items included: -

- Seaplanes
- Plans to reconfigure & modernise St Helier Marina

- The St Helier Marina gates – Heights & Opening Times
- The Master Plan for the Harbours

And, of course, there were other less weighty topics, some of which I will allude to later.

SEAPLANES

As most of you will be well aware, there is a proposal to start a seaplane service between the islands, focusing initially on Guernsey- Jersey, with up to 10 return trips per day. Earlier in the year this was a very hot topic indeed, and your association played its part, together with St Helier Yacht Club, the Royal CI Yacht Club, & The Rowing Club in canvassing our members and inviting reactions. And reactions there certainly were! What is more, the quality of some of them was extremely high and well considered. It's interesting to note that, from the perspective of Ports of Jersey, by far the most vociferous section of the harbour community were the leisure boaters – that's us – who were not at all backwards in pointing out a whole range of potential difficulties. By contrast, the other interested parties (Condor ferries, the freight companies, the Fisherman, & the Charter Boats,) had no particular objections to the proposals. When you think about it, that's not very surprising. For the most part these vessels operate infrequently, at predictable times, and they are sufficiently important – and substantial – that the seaplanes are going to give them a wide berth. However, we leisure boaters were rather less sure that this would apply to us, and while there are a lot of us, especially at weekends with good weather, we are individually not very significant. It's only when you look at us as a class that you realise that on busy days we would not easily share the space with seaplanes coming and going at high speed in the approaches to the harbour.

Anyway, the Ports of Jersey duly commissioned a risk assessment, in the course of which the views of leisure boaters were sought and many of you were good enough to take the time to spell out the difficulties you envisaged in operating such a service. That risk assessment has now largely been completed and Bill Sadler, the harbourmaster, was kind enough to allow me to cast an eye over the document a few weeks ago in its currently drafted form. We understand that when it is complete it will be published for all to see on the Ports of Jersey website *and indeed this may already have happened?* While it is probably not appropriate for me to go into much detail about what the report says, I can say that the basic flavour is, that it is for seaplanes to get out of the way of boats and not the other way around. The Report points out that while there are times when a lot of leisure boats are out and about, these occasions are fairly predictable in terms of the weekends when the tides and the weather are suitable. Also predictable are specific events such as yacht races. The view seems to be that on these occasions the seaplane service will have to be tailored to avoid disrupting the flow of traffic in the Small Roads. In short, Ports of Jersey has concluded that the Seaplane service is probably feasible but this will be subject to certain restrictions which include the operation of traffic lights at the pier heads as the planes enter and leave, and the introduction of certain disciplines in the Small Roads which are yet to be worked through.

That said, and despite whatever you read occasionally in the press, the promoters of the seaplane project have evidently not been terribly active during the summer and early autumn. Newspaper articles might lead you to conclude that they have got all their permissions in the bag, but my understanding, gleaned from what the press refer to as “A person familiar with the situation” is that what they currently have is the permission of the aviation authorities to operate from the runway at Guernsey Airport to the runway at Jersey Airport & vice versa. In other words using the conventional runways not the harbours. Now, I understand that they will be meeting with the Ports of Jersey in the not too distant future to progress their plans, but it does seem that things have not been forging ahead at a mighty pace since earlier this year. In fact, rather the reverse. For their part the Ports of Jersey have pencilled in some time in their diary for trial flights to occur in the first part of next year (with no passengers), and until these trials have been conducted it seems that nothing is actually set

in stone. It therefore seems to your committee that there is not a great deal to be done until someone spots a real live seaplane in the harbour preparing to commence these trials.

RECONFIGURATION OF ST HELIER MARINA

As many of you will recall, earlier in the year Ports of Jersey announced a project to reconfigure & modernise St Helier Marina. It was envisaged that new pontoons and piles, all to the latest standards, would be installed in the basin that currently contains the existing Marina and that at the same time a good deal of new technology would be employed to ensure that the management of the facilities, both from the viewpoint of the marina office and also of the boatowners, was made as safe and efficient as possible. Obviously this project is going to provide a good deal of opportunity for enthusiastic debate between the harbour office and the existing berth holders, and in the relatively short period when we thought this project was about to become very active a number of interesting topics emerged. These included the precise future layout of the pontoons, the future location of the drying berth, and even drilled down the such small print items as the precise design of the mooring cleats on the pontoons!So it is with considerable disappointment that we learned a few weeks ago that the project is effectively on hold and that in the short term the only spending that is going to happen is essential items to ensure the continued safety of the existing facility. So why has this sad reversal come about?

The answer seems to lie with CICRA, The Channel Island Competition Regulation Authority who at some point during last year announced its intention to review the operations of the Ports of Jersey in all its guises (i.e. the harbours as well as the airport). As a consequence the harbour authorities have had to effectively freeze all their revenue streams including fees for marina berths and moorings. Since then, CICRA has spent the greater part of 2018 devising its plans for reviewing the harbour fees, apparently with a view to undertaking the review work during 2019 and producing its results at some stage after that, which might even extend into 2020.

Now, depending on your personal view of the world, this can be viewed as good news or bad news. For those among us who, when confronted with a half glass of red wine, see it as being half Full, this is definitely good news. Why? Because it means that your mooring & marina fees are not going to be subjected to any major increases in the immediate future!! On the other hand for those of us who tend to regard that glass as being half empty - and I have to admit that I am one of those - then there is the fear that at some future time there is going to be a step change upwards in our mooring fees in order to catch up on lost time,..... and in the meantime such projects as modernising St Helier marina are, out of necessity, having to be delayed. It is not the place of your committee to pass comment on this state of affairs but I will admit that if it was me trying to run the Ports of Jersey I would find the situation pretty frustrating!

Another major project undertaken by Ports of Jersey is the production of the Master plan for the future development of Jersey Harbour. We understand that this plan, which is quite well advanced, and is certainly ambitious in its scope, has been temporarily put on ice while a similar long-term plan for the development of the St Helier Waterfront is worked up by the Jersey Development Company. One can certainly understand the desirability of coordinating these two initiatives and we await a first look at this Master Plan with great interest.

Anyway, I think I have spent enough time on these big picture issues affecting our harbour so perhaps it's time to turn to some smaller local difficulties. No doubt our guests from Ports of Jersey will tell us later if there is more up to date news on any of this.

Further down the agenda we're going to have to vote on how we wish to deploy the funds that we have traditionally donated every year to the local Channel Islands AirSearch and to the lifeboats. At the last AGM we parked the question of the lifeboat donations

while it became clear who was going to be operating our local lifeboat. Well, as we now know, it would seem that for the foreseeable future there are going to be two lifeboats based in St Helier, each operated by separate organisations. Your committee has spent some time considering how best to allocate funds, as we are still sitting on £500 left over from last year as well as a similar amount available for lifeboat donations this year. As you can imagine all sorts of people have all sorts of different views on how we should proceed. However, at the end of the day, the committee takes the view that we are happy to make donations to any lifeboat that is prepared to put itself in harm's way in order to rescue us boatowners from our occasional follies & mishaps. Accordingly, our proposal will be that this year the Association will donate £500 out of last year's funds to one of the lifeboats, with £500 out of this year's funds going to the other lifeboat and of course continuing with our annual donation of £500 to the AirSearch rescue operation. You will shortly be asked, a little further down the agenda, to approve this proposal – or otherwise. I will say no more until we reached that stage of the agenda

Corbiere Light House Consultation

A Notice to Mariners has recently been published calling for consultation & comments on a proposal to convert the light in Corbiere Lighthouse to an LED bulb. This would reduce the range of the light in certain circumstances by about 2 miles to about 14 miles. Our view as a committee was that this proposal did not give us cause for concern but I draw it to the attention of the membership as the window for comment is very small and ends on Monday 26 November, so if you have strong views you do not have long to submit them.

There are a few clouds on the horizon which deserve mention at this stage. The trouble with clouds on the horizon is that you never know if they are going to turn into something sinister, or just fade away.

The first concerns speed limits and jet-skis. Many of you will have noticed that Ports of Jersey imposed a five knot speed limit in St Brelade's bay last summer, following an unfortunate episode when a motorboat was in collision with a jet ski. Of course, whenever these sorts of restrictions arise they tend to have unforeseen consequences. On this occasion, one of the consequences has been that quite a few of the JetSki community have moved their activities into St Aubins Bay and of course you do not have to be a genius to realise that if this leads to an increase in risk, perceived or real, then we can anticipate the imposition of a 5 knot speed limit there too. Now, in order to be absolutely clear, we are not currently aware of any initiative to impose such a speed limit in St Aubins Bay, it is purely our speculation and at this stage there is nothing more that one can do except keep a watching brief over the situation. We understand that the harbour authorities are encouraging the JetSki community to form their own representative association, which seems like a step in the right direction, but, reverting to my glass half empty view of life, I can certainly envisage a time when we might all find that boating in St Aubin's Bay has become rather more restrictive than hitherto through no fault of our own.

If you have read our latest newsletter you will be aware that we also can sense trouble brewing from another not unfamiliar source – namely the use of red diesel fuel for leisure boats. You may well have read in the Marine Press that the UK taxman – Her Majesties Revenue & Customs - recently lost a case brought against it by the European Union. All marine diesel is subject to excise duty in UK, but a rather weird concession has been applied there whereby boat owners who are prepared to sign a statement that they are using a reasonable percentage of their fuel for domestic cooking – as one does – then a lower rate of duty is applied to the purchase of diesel. The new ruling rejects this practice & seeks the imposition of the full duties on all diesel for marine leisure use. Hence, any use of red diesel by leisure boaters is likely to be the subject of suspicion going forward. We know that in the past this has caused problems when enthusiastic European customs officials inspect fuel tanks, and it now seems likely, red diesel will be even more politically incorrect. Now, it is premature to read too much into all of this, but until things have clarified, one uncomfortable truth remains; namely that

while we, here in Jersey, are legitimately allowed to use marine red diesel, we may nevertheless in due course find that on visits to France we are in potentially hostile territory as far as *Les Douanes Francaises* are concerned. Your committee will keep a watching brief on this, but in the meantime if any members have any experience of difficulties during the coming summer, please do let us know. When the position has clarified we may consider what steps we need to take, for example we might approach Jersey Customs for guidance on how boat owners should navigate around the problem should it arise.

Last but not least, in fact the elephant in the room, is Brexit. This time last year I envisaged that by now, with just a few months before the divorce becomes final, we would all know what new procedures would apply in future when we sail over to France. In the event, total Brexit chaos is the order of the day and I for one am not worthy to predict what will happen when Jerseymen sail over to French Ports next April. Quite probably things will carry on the way they always have, and maybe not. If we learn anything of value in the interim we will make it our business to tell you about it. As they say in the media, Watch This Space!

That concludes what I have to say this evening. Thank you for listening

Will Simpson