



# TAW TORRIDGE ESTUARY FORUM

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting & Relaunch on Mon.16th Jan '23  
held in Fremington Parish Council Rooms at 7.00pm**

## **Present:**

Jim Bell	Yelland Action Group & Fremington P C
David Dixon	Barnstaple Gig Club
Paul Brown & Kelly	Bideford Harbour
Chris Fuller	Torrige District Council
Chris Northrop	Appledore Instow Ferry
Mark Haworth-Booth	West Country Rivers Trust
Sue Prosper	Love Braunton
Andy Cox	Bideford Rowing Club
Colin Frajbis	Westleigh P C
Russell Walters	RMB Chivenor
Jeff Needham	Tawstock P C
Chris Dee	BTO WeBS
Mike Tucker	Bideford Canoe Club
Corine Dyke	Natural England
Chris Hassall	CPRE/Rolle Canal Society/ ND Waterways
Val Deering	Appledore Residents association & Treasurer
Martin Batt	North Devon AONB
Norman Briden	Devon Birds
Jamie MacKenzie	Bideford TC / Torrige DC
Matt Edworthy	Gaia Trust
Sandra Knight	Coastwise ND
Andy Bell	ND Biosphere
Tony Pratt	ND Yatch Club & Chair
Ian Crawford	Secretary

**Apologies:** Ricky Knight, John Breeds, Rose Day, Peter Hames

**Annual Elections:** Chair - Tony Pratt  
Vice Chair - Jeff Needham  
Secretary - Ian Crawford  
Treasurer - Val Deering

TP announced that no honorariums were called for by elected officers

**Consultation & Planning Committee:** Current Members CH, JB, TP & IC agreed to continue. Other members are welcome to join. AONB rep. to be elected.

**Treasurer's Report & Annual Accounts:** An annual report was circulated to members present confirming funds stand at £4153.07. Accounts need to be audited, so Chris Northrop agreed to audit. It was announced that no subscription, usually £20/annum, will be called for 2023

**Minutes:** Minutes of AGM 2020 had been circulated and as these were over two years old, it was accepted that these should be noted.

**Matters Arising:** No matters were raised

## **Reports:**

### **a) Estuary Reports**

- Northam Burrows coastal erosion continues to expose an old landfill site. Approx £20million would be the cost of rectification. It is important that something is done to arrest the erosion due to the affect on the shape of the coastline not to mention impact on marine environment. The question of whether the golf club were concerned was raised. An invitation should be sent to the golf club and local Cllr. Douglas Bushby to meet with TTEF. AB was prepared to co-ordinate this matter.
- Richmond Dock had been the subject of development and continues to be a viable dry dock although ownership by a shipbuilder has not been confirmed as a continuing prospect for the dock.
- Port of Bideford's harbourmaster and pilot, Paul Brown introduced himself and Kelly ..... from Torridge District Council who will be managerial support. TDC hold the funds for work on the river bed and income for the port comes from shipping between Baggy Point and Hartland Point - 3 ships per year needed. PB reported that Richmond Dock and Middle Dock are to kept up to marine standard. Gig groups should be members of the harbour users group which is being set up.

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- CF reported that Torridge District Council is awaiting news following a funding bid to the Levelling Up Fund to create Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre. This would come forward at Middle Dock, next door to Harland & Wolff, Appledore's New Quay site. The centre, which would feature global-leading research into clean marine propulsion from the University of Exeter's Centre for Future Clean Mobility, and also a presence from the University of Plymouth, will bring together an exciting mix of university research and private sector businesses, whilst also supported by an expanded marine and engineering course range from Petroc. These proposals will support the development of a range of technical solutions. The Crown Estate currently has initial proposals for 4GW of Floating Offshore Wind 40 – 60 km NW of Appledore (enough to power approximately 3 million homes) and northern Devon is also home to a growing seaweed industry with significant growth opportunities.
- Houseboats / Liveaboards - Some are now on the Pill at Braunton. TP remind the meeting that the Forum are ok with these houseboats as long as the inhabitants comply with local regulations regarding sewage and waste recycling etc.
- Decommissioned boats/ships which should have been scrapped survive as obtrusive wrecks and one non compliant occupant on a tug called the Caris had been chased by the authorities for payment and moved from Instow to Chivenor. There are several vessels along the Westleigh straight and Natural England will perhaps take an interest. Ownership of land on the shoreline makes it difficult to allocate responsibility for dealing with problems arising. PB asked the Forum to get the message out that these vessels are not welcome.
- River Taw Bank at Seven Brethren - North Devon Council are picking up issues on the banks of the Taw in Barnstaple with a court case set for February 8th at Exeter presumably against the owner (? Steven Sherry) of the liveaboard associated with scrap bicycles heaped up on the bank.
- Appledore Instow Ferry - CN reported that funding for a new ferry vessel had been secured. It was hoped that the vessel would be in service from the beginning of March. Volunteers to assist with the ferry operation are called for and should make contact through the ferry website.
- Braunton Marsh - In view of the sea breach at Horsey, Devon Wildlife Trust are keen to extend the wetlands. AB mentioned the marsh inspectors
- Yelland Power Stn - Development is now going ahead unfortunately - the costs of a judicial review to challenge the decision are unaffordable. PAGE 3/4

**North Devon Biosphere:** TP asked what was happening on the Nature Recovery programme. AB reported on saltmarsh development. Investigation into seaweed and carbon sequestration. Review of Lundy integrated marine plan. Estuary wise there is a need to maintain grazing in view of the saltmarsh increase. Work to train the dunes to develop nearer the shoreline.

**North Devon AONB Partnership:** MB reported that the Nature Recovery Plan is progressing under the auspices of of AONB and the Plan can be found on the Biosphere website. The approach to protection of wading birds is a matter of educating the public rather than reliance on notices of prohibition. NDC are working with the South West Coastal Path to encourage awareness of wading birds habitat. Skern is a case in point and Home Farm Marsh.

**Report of Policy & Coordinating Committee:** TP mentioned development in the Skern which is unwelcome. Consideration of how more support can be given to the Anchorwood Conservation Area needs exploring to establish what North Devon Council plans are as they have jurisdiction over all conservation

#### **Matters brought forward by the Chair:**

Website - this has not been updated for many years - CD offered to help with activating the website.

#### **Members Concerns:**

Plastic on shore is a frequent occurrence and can be collected using pink bags provided by NDC. These bags can be used for any rubbish found outdoors and will be collected by NDC.

JM raised concerns about pollution from agriculture, both in the form of fertiliser run off or animal slurry, both of which are polluting the river Torridge. It was agreed that pollution of the estuary by agriculture will be an agenda item at next TTEF meeting

**Correspondence received:** None received

#### **Agenda Items proposed for next Meeting :**

Agricultural Pollution in Torridge &Taw

#### **Any Other Business:**

Weil's disease reported as contracted near Weare Gifford.

'Dirty Water' - public meeting 10.00am Sat. 28th January, Castle Green, Barnstaple

**Future Meeting Dates: April 17th, July 17th, October 16th  
at Beechfield Centre, Fremington Parish Council, EX31 3DD.**

