

# TAW TORRIDGE ESTUARY FORUM



Minutes of the quarterly meeting held 7.00pm Mon. 21st October '24  
at Beechfield Centre, Fremington.

## Present:

Tony Pratt	ND Yacht Club & Chair
Jeff Needham	Tawstock P C & Vice Chair
Mark Haworth-Booth	Westcountry Rivers Trust
David Dixon	Barnstaple Gig Club & Fremington P C
Tony Nichols	Rolle Canal Society
Chris Dee	BTO WeBS
John Puddy	Steamship Freshspring Trust
Tristan Otten	Torrige District Council
Tony Bown	Observer
Tom Humphreys	N. D. Biosphere
Emily Clarke	Womens Institute Torrington
Sally Ramsden	Womens Institute Torrington
Aaron Lowe	Skern Lodge
Sandra Knight	Coastwise North Devon
Debbie Frazer	Devon Wildlife Trust
Helen Cooper	Save Our Sands
Sue Prosper	Love Braunton
Andy Bell	North Devon Biosphere
Andy Cox	Bideford Amateur Rowing Club
Brian Hopkins	Bideford Sustainability Group
Mike Teare	Bideford & R. Torrige Heritage Harbour
David Holt	Heanton Punchardon P C
Ricky Knight	N D C
Wendy Lo-vel	T D C
Matt Edworthy	Gaia Trust
Adrian Bryant	Braunton P C

The Chair welcomed Members, noting that there are several new members present. He asked for them to introduce themselves.

**1. Apologies:** Ian Crawford (Hon Sec), Tim Jones (WEBS & Biosphere Recovery), Graham Bell (Braunton P.C.), Paul Brown (Bideford Harbour Master), Chris Salisbury (T&T Wildfowling), Justin Gillett (N E) Mark Cann (Braunton P.C.)

**2 Guest Speaker;** Chair introduced Olly Hicks of Algapelago  
The speaker opened with brief biographical details.

There are around 12,000 species of seaweed of which the most familiar is brown called kelp which is to be farmed. Most commercial seaweed in Europe is wild harvested. The amount of CO2 uptake is still open to question. Importantly seaweed absorbs the chemical agricultural runoff once it has reached the sea. It also improves the density of fish stocks and improves the environment. Seaweed farming also helps the local economy near the farm sites.

Wild seaweed is harvested and attached to ropes. The farm is in the middle of Bideford Bay. At night the boundaries of the farm are marked by lit large yellow buoys.

The kelp is grown near the sea surface and also on the rope, underneath the seaweed mussels are grown. The market for seaweed at the present time is small and the Bideford Bay projects is in its third year.

The project is hoping to have space in the Clean Maritime Centre, Appledore.

Questions were answered on;

a) polypropylene ropes and effect on environment. Answer no real alternative at the present time.

Remark from the floor, better to stop run off at source.

b) opposition and cetaceans. Answer Keep farms away from popular tourist areas. To prevent entanglement keep lines tight.

c) Why N Devon; not much conflict as fishing much reduced. Study by CEFAS (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science ) said N Devon very suitable.

Vote of thanks to speaker from the Chair.

### **3. Refreshment Break**

**4. Minutes of meeting 15 July:** were adopted and signed after Sue Prosper's name was added to apologies.

### **5. Matters Arising**

a)The Chair told the meeting that Jeff had volunteered to take over the role of Treasurer. Jeff was approved as treasurer until AGM. He told the meeting that he was digitalizing the accounts, setting up internet banking and that the accounts for 2023, 2024 would be presented to the AGM in 2025.

b) Consitution will be circulated for AGM The Chair thanked Jeff for his work on the revision of the Constitution.

c) Right to roam not part of TTEF brief. All can access the Estuaries via public slipways.

d) Any other matters arising - None

## 6.Reports

a) **P&CC report** (circulated) The Chair informed the meeting that Jim Bell had resigned from the TTEF as Fremington PC representative and also from the P&CC for personal reasons. The Chair told the meeting he had sent a letter of thanks to Jim for his long service to the Forum. He also thanked those Members who had sent reports for circulation. There were no questions

Thanks to Chris Dee for the website.

Suggestion from the floor that TTEF set up a facebook page. This to be considered by the P&CC.....**Action P&CC**

### b) Estuary Reports

**Bideford Harbour Master;** Water testing by environment agency at multiple sites on Torridge estuary. Saving on road transport is a good spinoff of unloading ships with agricultural supplies at NHarland & Wolff/Newquay wharf. Fact that TDC will not extend port boundary is disappointing. P&CC asked to take up this matter again. **Action P&CC**

**Heritage Harbour** website well visited, walks and talks doing well.

c) **ND Biosphere:** Andy Bell reported that the Biosphere has catchment management plan with multiple agents and lot of work going on. Working long term planning on estuary matters, work on water quality on estuary. Reappointing staff member for marine matters. Tom Humphreys added that Climate Action Groups were going well. Question; re non reply from UNESCO about White Cross. Answer; UNESCO has no way of responding on matters to be handled by a Country.

d) **North Devon Coast National Landscape** - No report

e) **Natural England** - no report

f) **Devon Wildlife Trust:** In addition to Debbie Frazer's report there is concern about shooting on Horsey Island

g) **Other reports:** Tony Bown reported concerns about the effect on glow-worms from bright lights at Oil Terminal Yelland.

**7. Urgent matters brought forward by Chair;** Volunteers were required to boost P &CC

### 8. Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

- a) Constitution
- b) Treasurer

### 9) AOB

a) How to clear up old boats at Vellator Quay and old vessels on Taw Estuary - P&CC to pick up..... **Action P&CC**

b) Can TTEF help Environment Agency and Natural England attend meetings. **Action IC**

**10) Date of Forthcoming Meetings: AGM January 20th 2025**