



Friends of Langstone Harbour Newsletter

May 2015

News from The Harbour Environment Officer

At April's Harbour Advisory Group meeting Louise MacCallum updated us on the following subjects.

Stranded Dolphin.

The bottlenose dolphin that stranded in the north of the harbour in October 2014 died from Meningoencephalitis—an infection of the brain caused by bacteria or a virus.

Eastney Point

Work was on going in April to remove abandoned tenders and other vessels illegally placed above the high water mark. Two of the vessels were 'recycled' by being moved to be cleaned up, painted and installed as part of a free play area in Paulsgrove.

RSPB Islands

Electric fencing and new signs have been installed on the islands ready for the 2015 breeding season. The shingle added to the islands last year is still in place and has spread a bit so that there is now an attractive area for the terns to breed. Sandwich terns arrived in March and common and little terns at the end of April.

Eclipse Observations

Those watching the seabirds at the oyster beds on 20th March hoping to discover how the birds would react to the eclipse were frustrated by the cloud cover. There was no measurable changes in behaviour. Louise commented "It is hoped that observations in the colony during the next solar eclipse (12th August 2026) might yield more marked results!".

Subscriptions

If your subscription has already been paid there will be a note with this newsletter to that effect.

Otherwise we would be grateful if you would send your subs (£4 pa) to our treasurer at the address below.



Friends of Langstone Harbour Committee Members.

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Committee Members: Alan Thurbon, Chris Gilsenan, Steve Wiltshire (Wildlife Trust)



Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 13th October

at the St Andrew's Church Hall at 7.30 p.m.

The Speaker will be Scott Mills of the East Solent
Coastal partnership.

Please make a note of the date now. If there is a topic you want raised or a question you'd like answered please let us know in advance. These will be given priority over un-notified questions.

Hermitage Stream Restoration

The Hermitage Stream is probably the main stream feeding into Langstone Harbour. It runs down from the Queens Inclosure at Cowplain to Bedhampton.

Many years ago—probably in the 50s—many of its 'reaches' at the lower end were canalised as a misplaced flood protection measure. More enlightened considerations 15 years ago led the Environment Agency to naturalise the reach between Middle Park Way and Stockheath. This stretch of the stream is now an attractive area with much improved biodiversity without increasing flood risk.

More recently proposals have emerged for similar restoration of the reaches north and west of Middle Park Way but after two years nothing has been done.

Now the charity 'Groundwork' is spearheading initiatives to get the project off the ground among other things using a 'Friends of the Hermitage Stream'. FoLH have been asked to consider helping and the committee will shortly do so.

There is more information on the project at www.hermitagestream.co.uk.

Work Parties

Work Parties are our main activity but recent attendance has not been good. Partly for this reason work parties have not been as regular as we would like. Nevertheless the few of us attending have done good work.

So far this year we have picked up litter on our MSC adopted beach twice; worked clearing invasive scrub at the oyster beds on Hayling and manned a stall at the Watersports Centre Winter Wildlife Day.

We'd love to see you at our next task.

Saturday 27th June

Budds farm Beach Litter Pick

09:30 till midday

Meet at the south end of Southmoor Lane—gloves and litter pickers will be provided. For more information contact John Goodspeed 023 9222 1361 or john@havantnature.net.



Wednesday 20th May: Farlington Marshes for sea shore flowers and birds. Meet in the Farlington Marshes (car park SU679044) at 7 p.m. for a walk round the Wildlife Trust reserve looking at birds and shore line plants. Dogs on leads welcome. Suggested donation £1.50. Leader Andrew Powling 023 9225 8457 apowling01@btinternet.com.

27th June FoLH Work Party—see above.

Wednesday 1st July: Milton Common Wander round this interesting urban site looking for birds and wild flowers.. Meet at 7 p.m. and park in the car-park at the end of Locksway Rd Portsmouth PO4 8LT. Dogs on leads welcome. Suggested donation £1.50 Leader John Goodspeed 078 1143 5252 or john@havantnature.net

Tuesday 13th October—FoLH AGM—see above.



The Hayling Ferry

On 31st March 'The News' reported that the Ferry was up for sale with the erstwhile operators entering administration.

This is really bad news for the students and others for whom it was their daily trip to school or work. It's also bad news for us (FoLH) who rely on it as a key element in our annual walk round the harbour.

There have been difficulties for some years over the funding of the ferry linked to some extent by the costs the Harbour Board needed to recover for maintaining the Hayling jetty to the standard necessary for a public ferry operation. Funding and operation of the ferry is a transport matter and as such does not fall within the remit of the Harbour Board. The ferry was once subsidised by the Portsmouth and Hampshire Councils. When Portsmouth withdrew their subsidy funding became a constant problem.

Hampshire CC have been in contact with potential new operators so it is possible that the ferry may operate again. But our walk in September remains in jeopardy!

Coastal and shore path erosion

We have previously reported on the damage done last year to the shore paths and the Billy Trail.

So far the only area that has been tackled is the path round South Moor where the Environment Agency have managed decent repairs of the damaged sections.

The southern part of the Billy Trail continues to erode but as we noted before this is not a public right of way and none of the local authorities have a responsibility to maintain it.

Newsletter Delivery

If you have received this letter by post but would be willing to receive it by e mail please send a note to john@havantnature.net.