



# C. A. Y. F. Newsletter

*This is an occasional newsletter from the Crouch Area Yachting Federation for affiliated Clubs, issued only when there is something of interest to tell your members. Designed to be pinned on noticeboards*

**Issue: January 2019**

## **Havengore Bridge Issue**

**Meeting held on the 27/11/18 about Havengore and Potton Bridges meeting at House of Commons Westminster**

**Preamble:-** Meeting was instigated by Mark Francois MP after concerns raised over many years by Ken Wickham CAYF representations over issues concerning the operation of the MOD site on Foulness Island in particular the access bridges to and from Foulness ranges. Issues came to a head this year with permanent closure of the Havengore Bridge for some months stopping any access from the Roach to the Thames.

Meeting was opened by MF and KW was asked to start with an outline of the problems as seen by the river and seaway users of the area.

### **Points raised were:-**

- a) Revenue loss to the yards in the area of small and medium craft coming in for servicing and haul out. Loss of access by smaller fishing boats to traditional grounds for fishing.
- b) Lack of communications of when the bridges/ranges were operational or not. Use of social media to convey messages which were not available at sea. Suggested use of VTS and Coastguard broadcasts as the real means.
- c) Concerns of the lack of bridge preventative maintenance for both Havengore and Potton and the time taken to instigate repairs. It was noted in the past that excuses for closure for maintenance sometimes hid the fact of lack of operational staff.
- d) Suggested methods of allowing through access under Havengore Bridge when it had failed in its down position. Possibility of raising the boom at those times was asked to be considered
- e) Lack of navigation and control lights on Potton bridge
- f) Possible Bye Law changes to allow possible movement of the ranged northern boundary in the Crouch also the opening of the Inner seas and the Havengore Bridge during the night for through passage.
- g) When the bridge is working it takes 1 hour to steam the 14 miles from Southend foreshore to Rochford yard. When the bridge is closed the same journey takes 2hrs 40 mins and increases to 41 miles. This also requires vessels to take the route around the Whitaker Beacon on the tip of the Maplin sands. This can be quite difficult in moderate south easterly winds and it becomes impossible to access Rochford and Wakering yards at low tide.

- h) The issue of the RNLI being restricted by the lack of access when an emergency was called requiring access through a closed bridge. An example was given when an injured person was required to be moved from Wakering Boatyard by sea.
- On the communications section we also agreed that medium to long term closures, including maintenance closures, should be published via a notice to mariners with the PLA. This is important for vessels steaming from outside the Thames area.
  - QinetiQ conceded that after their own investigation of our correspondence and their own records for just the past 3 years they had failed in a few quarters.
  - Primarily the bridges were not preventively maintained, just repaired on breakdown. Havengore had original design faults which had been known but have only recently been accepted and more issues are ongoing with the new contractors as fault finding continues.
  - They are instigating a new regimen with bridge keepers, maintenance staff and contractors. Breakdown call out times should be cut but they realise there will still be issues with the bridges due to their age, design and previous poor maintenance which was generally accepted by the meeting.
  - Communications with local marine users and residents was not good. They had investigated their main e-mail system server and found faults in held transmissions of messages. They had assumed social media was the best method of communication. They were now prepared to investigate standard means of marine communication such as the VTS system operated by PLA and as suggested recently Coast Guard message systems. Operational status of the bridges would also be transmitted on the media rather than just closures. These proposals will be investigated as to whether those who operate the systems would be prepared to transmit the information. We also agreed that medium to long term closures, including maintenance closures, should be published via a notice to mariners (NTM) with the PLA and Coastguard. This is important for vessels steaming from outside the Thames area.
  - The proposal to investigate raising the boom under the main section of the Havengore only when the bridge had failed down and the range was not in operation would be investigated and costed. If acceptable MF will present the case to the MOD for action.
  - The alteration of boundaries of the ranges alongside the Crouch may be a safety issue. Some experiments require a wide arc of clearance. Along with night opening of the Havengore and inner sea would if acceptable need a change in the 1936 act which was agreed by all needed urgent updating. QinetiQ will consider this and will report back. MF agreed that if a consensus could be achieved, he would be prepared to raise this with the MOD and in Parliament.
  - Thus, at this time it was agreed by all that a 3 monthly meeting of all parties would be convened to consider the workings of any problems including the updating of the Bye Law. This in time could become 6 monthly but it was felt needed to be held as to stop any further misunderstandings and solve issues which may arise. A continued dialogue is required by all. Also the bridge maintenance contractors should be invited along so a full understanding if any issues could be relayed.

- The navigational issue of no navigation lights, a suggested Trinity House requirement, on Potton Bridge will be investigated and again costed. If acceptable it again would be presented by MF for sanction to the MOD.

## **Clam Dredging on the Upper Crouch**

Trawling for Clams in the Upper Crouch is becoming a serious issue with trawlers dragging metal dredges repeatedly at depth over the river bed and between moorings, destroying the riverbed and their eco systems. The boat Clubs on the Upper Crouch and Roach have expressed their concerns about the destruction of the riverbed. CAYF contacted The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority about the issue who have recently passed a byelaw prohibiting bottom towed fishing gear in the Crouch and Roach, but as clams are not a recognised UK native shellfish the byelaws do not apply to bottom towed or suction dredging of these clams.

An Environmental Science student at Exeter University was been engaged to carry out a research project involving the impact and environmental conservation and ecology of Clam dredging on behalf of CAYF. The role will be to assess the effect of clam dredging the riverbed and possible damage to the eco system and what effect this fishing is having long term.

The report concluded that there was no evidence of long term damage to the eco systems of the riverbed.(Report Attached)

## **RYA News**

*This is a new short report taken from the quarterly minutes of the RYA East Region Committee meeting. It informs clubs of developments and relevant news affecting affiliated clubs in our Region.*

### ***Summary Notes of 12th January 2019 held at West Mersea Yacht Club***

## **Change of RYA Council Structure**

The RYA Council has been disbanded with the role of the Regional Chairs reporting in an advisory capacity to the RYA Board probably named English Regional Forum. The Terms of Reference have yet to be agreed, but would incorporate representation from Personal Members and all forms of boating.

## **Havengore Bridge Issues**

A meeting took place with local MP Mark Francois, the MOD and QuinetiQ the management contractor. It was a helpful and productive meeting over the Havengore issue when a number of proposals were , A further meeting was planned for 27th February when it was understood that the MP would have costed proposals to remedy the bridge issues and put those proposals to the MoD.

## **Upper Orwell Crossing**

I think that all of us in the boating community will be pleased to hear that this project has been abandoned. Suffolk County Council, who were backing this project, have been unable to raise the necessary funds, therefore the project is all but certain to be abandoned. They are committed to building the smaller bridges, over the New Cut to the island and then putting back the old footpath over the lock gates, but again this is subject to the money being raised.

## **Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Crossings**

The meetings regarding the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth new crossings continue to be attended by East Region Representatives

## **Brightlingsea PWC pontoon**

Creating a PWC facility at Brightlingsea was deferred subject to further research by the Harbour Commissioners.

## **Dinghy Fleet Hire**

A stock check of the dinghies had taken place the following changes to the fleet hire were agreed: The deposit should be raised to £250; boats could be hired by authorisation of Commodore, Flag Officer or Officer of an RYA affiliated club; to buy two new Toppers out of fleet funds. A new flyer would be produced and sent to clubs via the Local Associations. A box trailer for exhibition material would be purchased, with a dinghy on top available to clubs for exhibitions and events..

## **Honda Youth Rib Competition**

A new leaflet has been agreed to distribute to clubs, and a budget of £766 to buy buoys, anchors etc for the scheme agreed. It was agreed that promotional materials for Local Associations be sent to their member clubs to gauge response; These could also be available to East Region Clubs at a reasonable hire fee.

## **Action Plan**

A 2019 Action Plan that how the Region could add value to clubs in the region was agreed. It includes an officer or committee member of RYA East should attend AGMs of Local Associations, explaining 'who we are, what we do and how we can help clubs. Also suggested that, Affiliated Clubs should be circulated before the East Region Committee meetings and ask if they had anything to raise or discuss.

### **Future RYA events coming up which you may find interesting.**

The first is a series of RYA Funding the Future workshops dedicated to us in the East region. These are FREE workshops for all to attend. Looking at grants and other funding options, these workshops outline the key ways to fund projects in 2019, whilst considering what makes a successful funding project and how to take an application for funding further.

They are at Grafham Water Sailing Club, Norfolk Broads Yacht Club, Royal Harwich Yacht Club and Blackwater Sailing Club, and they are all on weekday evenings. Here is the link for booking:

<https://www.rya.org.uk/rya-regions/east/club-development/Pages/RYA-East-Funding-the-Future-Club-Development-Workshops.aspx>

The second is the RYA Clubs Briefing at the Dinghy Show, at Alexandra Palace, London, on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd March. The RYA Club Briefing will be hosted on Saturday at 10:30 in the Londesborough Room, just off of Palm Court. This FREE event is your chance to hear the latest club updates from the RYA team. Tea and coffee will be available for attendees from 10:00. Each club can book up to two places and each attendee will receive a complimentary ticket to the show at the end of the Briefing. Here is the link for booking:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rya-dinghy-show-saturday-club-briefing-londesborough-room-tickets-53535726800>

## **Call for entries to Honda Youth Championships in East Region**

Would your Club relish the opportunity to 'Win' a 4\*6m RIB + 50HP Outboard ?  
Does your Club have young RIB drivers who might rise to this Challenge.

**Saturday 23 March 2019**

**Training runs and timed runs starting at 09:30 throughout the day**

**Categories:      8-12 year olds              13-16 year olds**

**Regional Heat at Oulton Broad NR33 9JR;    Final at the Southampton Boat Show September-2019);** <<https://www.rya.org.uk/programmes/honda-rya-youth-rib/Pages/hub.aspx>

Contact [OultonBen@icloud.com](mailto:OultonBen@icloud.com) for more information , closing date for entries: Friday 15 March, entry fee £20

### **CAYF Officers representing your interests in 2017**

Ken Wickham Chairman, representing the Roach Area Fairways Conservation Committee Email: [k.wickham.1@btinternet.com](mailto:k.wickham.1@btinternet.com) , Doug MacEwen representing River Crouch Clubs and associations Email: [dmacewen@btinternet.com](mailto:dmacewen@btinternet.com) , Clem Freeman Treasurer representing the River Roach Clubs and associations Email: [Clem.freeman@btinternet.com](mailto:Clem.freeman@btinternet.com)