



## SOUTHWOLD HARBOUR LANDS JOINT COMMITTEE

Monday, 26 October 2015

### PROGRESS REPORT (REPSHLJC03)

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive an overview of the operational performance of Southwold Harbour and Caravan Site.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Southwold
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<b>Supporting Officers:</b>	Arthur Charvonia, Strategic Director Lesley Beevor, Town Clerk
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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the operational performance of Southwold Harbour and Caravan Site.

## **2 SOUTHWOLD CARAVAN SITE**

2.1 2015 has been a very successful season for the Caravan site. Financially the service is ahead of budget and continues to perform well.

2.2 Key facility investment this season:

- White block: cladding of all external areas, new showers, plumbing system.
- Owners block has had new heating system installed which will support usage in the colder months.
- Camping field block, significant plant as plumbing investment to improve customer experience.
- This season we have received a number of compliments including SCOA and ward members stating in pre-season meeting that it's the best condition the site has ever been in recent memory.

2.3 The online booking system continues to prove successful and has seen some improvements to support site administration and customer service

2.4 Static site waiting list terms and conditions have been developed for the first time and this will support improved allocation of pitches. This has always proven problematic and very sensitive area as demand is high.

2.5 The site has been subject to a LGO ombudsman review relating to charging for the second row as a premium site. Unfortunately the Ombudsman has ruled that this practice has insufficient justification and we need to process refunds to customers. We disagree with the decision and believe the site should be able to assess supply and demand to make commercial decisions on price. Site staff are now working on a process of communication and refund.

2.6 This season has seen the partnership with SURFWOLD on the camping field which has introduce surf lessons and cycle hire to visitors and customers. Initial feedback has been positive from customers and been welcomed by camping field customers. However SCOA committee raised concerns of over commercialisation of the site and impact of additional customers on their experience.

2.7 Site staff has worked very hard throughout the season and again it's proven very successful with very few concerns raised on what continues to be a very popular holiday destination.

2.8 A pre-season review of the model standards risk assessment was complete and all actions within the uneducated control have been complete, awaiting significant investment and infrastructure change to ensure complete compliance.

## **3. SOUTHWOLD HARBOUR**

3.1 2015 has again been a very successful season, that has seen a number of improvements in the harbour but also a number of challenges.

3.2 Financial performance is good and ahead of budget.

### 3.3 Key facility improvements:

- Staff have developed in house the office to include toilet and shower provision for visiting vessels. This proactive approach by the team has seen the project delivered with significant savings.
- Extension to WDC 10 to include new pontoon has been completed and has been well received.
- The Harbour has purchased a tractor which has enabled increased maintenance programme on the road.
- An extensive clean-up programme has been undertaken by staff and customers to ensure the flood banks are clear for EA maintenance work. However there needs to be further work completed with some businesses and huts, who have encroached onto this structure. This work continues.

### 3.4 Car parking:

- After extensive consultation we introduced a parking control system via a temporary road traffic order.
- This has proved very successful and for the first time the Harbour has a controlled system.
- The Harbour Team have been trained and have ability to issue fixed penalty notices.
- SHRUBA have confirmed they are pleased with the scheme and support its permanent inclusion.
- Plans are underway to make the order permanent when the temporary notice expires in February 2016.

### 3.5 Dock Wall:

- The project and wall installation has proven successful in re-instating a failing structure of the harbour.
- However the fishing compound and fuel service is proving to be a burden on the current operations team.
- There are a few property build issues that have been flagged with the build contractor and we are now working on this with the Councils solicitors.

### 3.6 Key areas that need work and consideration this winter are:

- Improve operating systems, processes and risk management.
- Plant, M&E and the servicing of equipment needs an improved programme to ensure compliance with safety at work and warranties.
- Review of staff structure and consider the need for more resource to support the wall operation.
- Review the fuel service to ensure it's a profitable supply. This will include supplier purchase price and sale price.

## 4. PORT MARINA SAFETY CODE

- This is an operating standard that all UK ports need to ensure they comply with. It is monitored and reviewed by the MMO.
- Southwold engages a Master Mariner to undertake an independent audit of the harbour and develop a action improvement plan.
- Over the past 18 months the site team and Sentinel staff have worked very hard to ensure a number of actions have been completed and in turn this has seen significant improvement.
- The addition of the dock wall services has completely changed the complexity of the PMSC requirements and moved the harbour from a leisure port to a more commercial port.
- We have planned a series of 'harbour board' meetings (defined by the PMSC) which will be reviewing the new requirements and developing a plan to achieve these.

## 5. FUTURE PROJECTS

- The primary concern is to undertake a scheme to improve the 'crabbing' area west of coastal voyager.
- This currently represents a significant H&S risk as crabbing in this area has increased and a number of children are accessing the water there.
- The Harbour Team have developed a scheme and capital from WDC programme has been identified to undertake the work this closed season.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1 Both the harbour and caravan site teams hold regular management meetings with representatives of SCOA and SHRUBA respectively. These meetings offer both sets of users an open forum to discuss any concerns, share feedback and play a proactive role in service improvement. Although at times the meetings prove challenging, they are very well received and play an important role in communications and relationship management.
- 6.2 These meetings will play a key role in the communication of the Harbour project and the progress of the Joint committee.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the update report on the operational performance of Southwold Harbour and Caravan Site be received.

**APPENDICES** - None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS** - None