

RIVER HAMBLE HARBOUR AUTHORITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Introduction

This document forms the Strategic Plan for the River Hamble Harbour Authority. It has been developed by the Harbour Board, with advice from the Management Committee and officers of Hampshire County Council. It sets out the framework for what the Harbour Authority must do, and what it would like to do, over the next ten years or more. The Strategic Plan and its supporting documents will be used to inform decision-making by the Harbour Board. Detailed planning for each year will take the form of an annual Business Plan and forward budget. This will be based on the Strategic Plan but will need to be more flexible and responsive as unanticipated issues and problems arise.

2. The River Hamble

Situated at the heart of the Solent, the River Hamble is widely recognised as a major centre for recreational boating, important both regionally and nationally. Commercial activities on and around the River bring considerable benefits to the local economy and are a significant factor in the local employment market. The River is also a very important part of the local environment and supports many species of birds, plant-life, fish and invertebrates. The Hamble valley is covered by several national and international environmental designations in recognition of its importance as a rich and diverse habitat. The navigable part of the River extends over 6 nautical miles from Southampton Water as far upstream as Botley and Curbridge. It is home to over 3000 recreational craft berthed afloat and many more kept ashore. Leisure activities on and near the River include yachting and power-boating, dinghy sailing and windsurfing, rowing and canoeing, fishing, bird-watching, rambling and sightseeing.

3. Mission Statement

3.1 Hampshire County Council is the River Hamble Harbour Authority and delegates its executive decision-making function to the River Hamble Harbour Board. The Management Committee provides policy advice and scrutinises the Harbour Board's decisions.

3.2 The Mission of the Harbour Authority is:

"To ensure that the harbour is operated safely and efficiently so as to safeguard the harbour, its users, the public and the environment, both now and in the future. It is committed within its powers to fulfilling all its duties and responsibilities in a safe and efficient manner, so that the Hamble is accessible and enjoyable for all."

3.3 The Harbour Authority will:

(i) Comply with all legal requirements (as listed at Appendix 1).

(ii) Aim to meet the national requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code.

(iii) Heed the Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations, published by the Department for Transport (Ports Division).

3.4 The Harbour Authority's functions will be conducted openly and transparently in the overall long-term interests of the harbour's River users and other interested parties and beneficiaries.

4. Port Status and Governance Arrangements

4.1 Responsibility for the governance of the River Hamble was transferred to Hampshire County Council in 1970 and the harbour has been operated as a municipal port ever since. It is assumed that this arrangement will continue for the foreseeable future. Hampshire County Council is also a major riparian landowner. The County Council and the representatives on the Harbour Board form a democratically accountable body responsible for overseeing the operation of the harbour and the impacts arising from it. The Management Committee (constituted in accordance with the River Hamble Harbour Revision Order 1969 (as subsequently amended) provides advice to the Harbour Board and is responsible for scrutinising its decisions.

5. Planning Constraints

5.1 Although Hampshire County Council is the statutory harbour authority for the River Hamble, it is not the local planning authority for the River. Planning for development on and around the Hamble is covered by the Local Development Frameworks produced by the riparian local Borough Councils; all structural development on the River which is attached to the land requires their planning permission. However, no structural works can take place on the River without the works consent of the Harbour Authority (Southampton Harbours Act 1949). In order to assist with decision-making on works consent issues, the 'Strategic Principles to Guide Development on the River Hamble' (the 'Strategic Principles') were produced in 2004. Additional factors for consideration when determining applications for Harbour Authority works consent are contained in the Port Marine Safety Code, environmental legislation (see Appendix 1) and the River Hamble Estuary Management Plan.

6. The Harbour Authority's Long-Term Vision

6.1 There is little doubt that the River Hamble will continue to play a major role in recreational boating for years to come, not just as a place for people to keep their boats, but as a centre of excellence for organised events and a world class repair and maintenance facility. The Hamble is at the heart of the Solent and has excellent transport links with the rest of the south coast, London, and beyond. It is these transport links, and the proximity of the Solent, which makes the Hamble far more than just a 'local' harbour. Unfortunately, regional and national importance has disadvantages as well as advantages - it brings people and money to the area, but there is a risk of displacing locals as the limited number of moorings available forces prices to escalate in response to supply and demand. The balance of this equation is further influenced by the role of The Crown Estate as the owner of the river bed. The Crown Estate is required to maintain and enhance the return from the Crown's land holdings and this means that market prices must be charged for mooring spaces.

Inevitably, whilst demand is high, prices will also be high. This is outside the control of the Harbour Authority and in stark contrast to the wishes of those who already have a mooring on the river for their boat. Most would prefer to see prices kept to a minimum, but not at the expense of an increase in moorings density. The Harbour Authority is in a difficult position, constrained on one hand by the safety, environmental and planning considerations that restrict the number of boats which can be accommodated on the River, and on the other hand by economic factors, which tend to force prices upwards and create pressure for ever more space be made available for boats. The Harbour Authority aspires to influence thinking about possible changes to the current arrangements for measuring capacity, whilst seeking to maintain a balance of the often conflicting demands. It will also seek to influence the Crown Estate on their pricing policy, and use the Harbour Authority works consent process to ensure that a range of mooring types is retained on the River.

6.2 The long-term vision for the River Hamble Harbour Authority is:

"To work towards a harbour where the often contradictory needs of recreational boaters, the local economy and the environment are harmonised by means of influence, consultation and consensus-building. The harbour should retain its unique character and environment whilst providing modern, safe and reasonably priced facilities for all who use it."

7. Strategic Objectives

7.1 The Harbour Authority has the following strategic objectives for the coming years:

- (i) Governance: To govern the River Hamble in compliance with the Department for Transport's 'Municipal Ports Review'.
- (ii) Navigational safety: To make the Port Marine Safety Code the central pillar of everything which the Harbour Authority and its staff does to ensure the safety of all those who use and work in the harbour.
- (iii) Environment: To discharge its responsibilities under the Habitats Regulations and all other relevant environmental legislation through conserving the environment and maintaining approved pollution prevention and nature conservation measures.
- (iv) Public Relations and Communication: To enhance the public perception of the Harbour Authority through building and maintaining the confidence of River users and other interested parties by informing them of progress and achievements.
- (v) The Crown Estate: To maintain a productive relationship with the Crown Estate and its agents.
- (vi) Moorings: To manage the mid-stream moorings efficiently and fairly, on behalf of the Crown Estate.
- (vii) Climate Change: To be pro-active in monitoring the River for the impact of climate change and identifying the implications.

(viii) Planning and Consents: To plan for the future of the River Hamble, providing a clear and effective works consent process as the primary decision-making authority on matters affecting safety and ease of navigation in the harbour, and having due regard to the Harbour Authority's responsibilities for environmental protection.

(ix) Consultation: To listen to ideas and suggestions put forward by River users and other interested parties and consult with them when appropriate.

(x) Visitors: To promote the provision of appropriate facilities for visiting yachtsmen, both afloat and ashore, and manage them as efficiently as possible.

(xi) Policy: To ensure whenever possible that its views are taken into account when future government policies on ports, harbours and the marine environment are under consideration.

(xii) Future Trends: To respond appropriately to new trends in recreational boating, for example: larger boats, Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs), Personal Water Craft (PWCs) and dry-sailing.

(xiii) Financial: To maintain and manage the harbour cost-effectively, and within the available resources.

(xiv) Staff: To employ and retain a well-motivated, properly trained staff and provide regular training for Harbour Board and Management Committee Members.

(xv) Equalities and accessibility: To ensure that it complies with all equalities and accessibility legislation.

(xvi) Risk Management: To identify, review and manage risks, and maintain a risk register as part of the Safety Management System.

(xvii) Review: To review plans, policies and procedures at intervals of five years or less.

8. External Pressures

8.1 The following external pressures have been identified:

(i) the complex needs and conflicting interests of River users and other interested parties need to be understood and balanced against the statutory and business constraints within which the Harbour Authority operates;

(ii) the Crown Estate, motivated in part by its requirement to maintain and enhance income from the River, creates an added pressure, outside the control of the Harbour Authority;

(iii) there is a lack of understanding by many River users about the respective and different roles and responsibilities of Hampshire

County Council, the Crown Estate, the Harbour Board and the Management Committee.

9. Internal Pressures

9.1 The following internal pressures have been identified:

(i) the Harbour Authority is funded almost entirely by River users and visitors and must be operated as economically and cost-effectively as possible;

(ii) the Harbour Board's statutory responsibility to ensure safe navigation dictates that the Harbour Office staff must be available to monitor and supervise activities on the River outside normal working hours. This places considerable pressure on staff who are frequently required to work unsocial hours and at weekends.

10. Finance

10.1 The Harbour Authority operates as a quasi-independent business unit of Hampshire County Council. Annual income is ring-fenced and the Harbour Authority operates a separate reserve. An annual budget is produced and the accounts are audited by Hampshire County Council and the Crown Estate.

10.2 The management of the reserve and the routine replacement of capital assets belonging to the Harbour Authority when they reach the end of their life forms an important part of this strategic plan. A list of capital assets, together with their life expectancy and estimated replacement dates over the next 25 years is shown at Appendix 2. An annual sum will be set aside to fund the replacement programme.

11. Equalities Impact Assessments

11.1 The facilities of the River Hamble are openly available to all, regardless of age, gender, disability, race or religion, in accordance with current equalities legislation. Equality Impact Assessments for the services and facilities provided by the Harbour Authority have been prepared and are held in the Harbour Office. These Assessments include a requirement to collect and analyse data about customers and their needs, so that appropriate measures can be taken to ensure that everyone who wishes to use the services and facilities provided by the Harbour Authority can do so on equal terms. However, simply understanding who the Harbour Authority's customers are and identifying their needs is not sufficient; the Harbour Authority is obliged to be proactive in taking steps to ensure equality of access for all. To that end, all decisions of the Harbour Board must be considered in terms of the impact which they might have on equality of access to services and facilities, and identify actions which must be taken as a result. Every reasonable effort must be made to ensure that all users are treated equally and that appropriate information and facilities are provided to all.

12. Staff Training and Development - Investing In People

12.1 Hampshire County Council is an accredited 'Investor in People', a significant element of which is to ensure that staff receive the training which they require to do their job, and such additional training as may be required to encourage their career

development. Maintaining accreditation as an 'Investor in People' requires that all training undertaken is assessed in terms of its contribution towards the aims and effectiveness of the organisation. Development training will be provided for permanent staff as appropriate to their current role and future aspirations as officers of Hampshire County Council.

APPENDIX 1

Harbour Authority Statutory Responsibilities

A harbour authority has a wide range of statutory responsibilities. All the legislation listed below must be complied with - non-compliance would result in enforcement action being taken, and, in the case of environmental statutes, this could be in the European Court.

(i) The River Hamble Harbour Revision Order 1969 (as amended in 1982 and 1989) transfers responsibility for the River Hamble to Hampshire County Council.

(ii) The Harbours Act 1964 (inserted by the Transport and Works Act 1992), places specific duties on the Harbour Authority, particularly with regard to nature conservation and other related environmental considerations.

(iii) The Southampton Harbour Act 1949 requires that the River Hamble Harbour Authority gives consent in writing before any structural works take place in the harbour.

(iv) The Port Marine Safety Code is not, strictly speaking, statutory, but compliance is not voluntary. It sets a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety and requires that duties and responsibilities are carried out in accordance with a Safety Management System.

(v) Under Regulation 3(4) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994, commonly known as the Habitat Regulations, there is an obligation to have regard to the requirements of the European Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and to wild fauna and flora ('the Habitats Directive') so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions. This obligation applies where a Special Protection Area for Birds or a Special Area of Conservation has been designated under the Wild Birds or Habitats Directives.

(vi) Under the Habitats Regulations, the Authority must ensure in the exercise of its powers and functions that it has regard to the direct and indirect effects on the interest features of the European Marine Site.

(vii) Under Section 28G of the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981 (inserted by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), there is a duty on the Harbour Authority, in exercising its functions, to take reasonable steps to further the conservation and enhancement of the flora, fauna or geological features of a Site Of Special Scientific Interest.

(viii) Section 28H of the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981 also imposes a requirement on a harbour authority to give notice to the relevant nature agency before carrying out, in the exercise of its functions, operations likely to damage any of the flora, fauna or geological features by reason of which a Site of Special Scientific Interest is of special interest.

(ix) Under the Water Resources Act 1991 it is an offence to cause or knowingly permit the discharge of polluting substances into controlled waters, irrespective of whether the release was accidental or not. This is regulated by discharge consents from the Environment Agency.

(x) Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, the Authority has a duty 'to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'.

(xi) Under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 it is an offence to discharge effluent which damages fish, their food, their spawn or their spawning grounds, into water containing fish.

(xii) The Environmental Protection Act 1990 is the basis for most of the environmental legislation in England, Wales and Scotland. Subsequent legislation has amended this Act. Part I deals with Integrated Pollution Control and Local Authority Air Pollution Control, Part II deals with waste and Part III deals with statutory nuisances and clean air.

(xiii) Under the Shellfish Waters Directive, transposed into UK legislation through the Surface Waters (Shellfish) (Classification) Regulations 1997, there is a need to ensure that activities under the control of the Harbour Authority do not adversely impact the water quality that would result in the alteration of the classification of shellfish beds designated and classified under the EC Shellfish Waters Directive (79/923/EEC).

APPENDIX 2

River Hamble Harbour Authority

List of assets and estimated replacement dates

Serial	Item	Current age	Life expectancy	Due replacement	Remarks
01	Cardinal Mark at River Entrance - piling only	7 years	30	2030	
02	Superstructure and cardinal top mark	7 years	15 years	2015, 2030	
03	Solar powered	4 years	5 to 8 years	2008 - 2010	Replace on

	light Cardinal Mark				failure
04	9 Beacons River entrance Plastic piling	7 years	30-50 years	2030 - 2050	Replace on failure
05	Sector lights Hamble Point/Warsash Superstructure	10 years	20 years	2015	Replace on failure
06	Sector lights x 2	10 years	15 years	2011, 2026	Bought as reconditioned units Could be replaced with new technology
07	Bridge to Hamble Jetty	19 years	30 years	2018	Replacement following engineers survey report completed every three years
08	Bridge to Warsash Jetty	17 years	30 years	2020	Replacement following engineers survey report completed every three years
09	Walkway to Warsash Jetty	25 years (estimate)	50 years	2032	Replacement following engineers survey - report completed every three years
10	10 support piles for Warsash Walkway	25 years (estimate)	50 years	2032	Further work may be required in shorter timescale following investigation by engineers
11	Warsash Jetty - piling - services - lighting etc.	1 year	25 years	2031	This period could be increased with good maintenance
12	Hamble Jetty - piling - services -	14 years	25 years	2016	This period could be

	lighting - etc.				increased with good maintenance.
13	Fisherman's pontoon/jetty	1 year	20 years	2026	Grants may be available for fishing industry
14	Visitors Pontoon	7 years	25 years	2025	Length now reduced owing to agreement with CE
15	Country Park Jetty	20 years	25 years	2012	Grants may be available - not really a HA asset but included as worst case
16	5 x port and starboard navigation marks/piles	30 years estimated	40 years	2017	Rolling programme as and when required Could be replaced with new technology
17	Patrol boats x 2	9 years	12 years	2010, 2022	Leasing option to be costed and assessed.
18	Dory	9 years	15 years	2013	Bought second hand and modified at a cost of £1,000
19	Sewage Pump out system	New	10 years	2017, 2027	Maintenance contract to be established which will also give warning of replacement period.
20	Signage	Various	5 years	Rolling programme	All signage to be corporate branded
21	River entrance signage	3 years	10 years	2014, 2024	
22	CCTV	2 years	20 years	2025	Replacement should be a rolling programme. More cameras could be fitted if costs reduce with introduction

					of new technology
23	Scrubbing Piles Warsash	5 years	25 years	2027	Surveyed every 5 years
24	Scrubbing piles Hamble	1989 (estimated)	25 years	2014	Surveyed every 5 years
25	Scrubbing piles Lands End	1988 (estimated)	25 years	2013	Surveyed every 5 years
26	Navigation Buoys Four in total, including ground tackle	2006	20 years	2026	Risers and some tackle replacement every 3 or 4 years(Revenue budget)
27	Maintenance Dredging Warsash	Completed 2006	8 years	2014, 2022, 2030	

The following items are also included for completeness

Serial	Item	Current age	Life expectancy	Due replacement	Remarks
A	Patrol boat engines x 4	Less than one year	Replaced annually	Annually (5 year trial now entering fourth year)	Rolling programme of replacement optimises value of used engines
B	Harbour Office	30 years	60 years plus	Outside scope of this plan	Annualised maintenance costs