

Purbeck Marine Wildlife Reserve Committee

The 29th meeting of the Purbeck Marine Wildlife Reserve Committee was held on Thursday 17th April 2008 at 6.30pm at the Fine Foundation Marine Centre, Kimmeridge Bay.

Present:

Roger Turner (Chairman), Steve Etches (Fossil Expert), Sarah Welton (DWT Trustee), Brian Bleese (DWT), Julie Hatcher (DWT), Alan Lander (Fisherman), Peter Tinsley (DWT), Nick Ford (Fisherman), Jenny Penney (DCC), Ken Davies (MoD), Catherine Smith (PMWR volunteer) and Sarah Sherran (PMWR volunteer).

Apologies:

none

Minutes from the last meeting:

Were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising from the minutes:

JH was going to approach Smedmore Estate about the committee producing a code of conduct for kite surfers – this was not done. BB will now speak to them about this. **Action: BB**

RT confirmed he had written to the Lyme Bay Reefs consultation. The results of this have been published with 73% of respondents supporting option C. A decision is expected at the end of April.

Changes in access to Broadbench for watersports

RT explained that recreational watersporters are concerned about changes in access to parts of Kimmeridge Bay within the MoD firing template, including Broadbench. They represent a significant number of the Reserve's visitors and are an increasing group as a result of internet accessibility. KD explained why there has been a change – increasing pressure for training resulting from the Iraq and Afghan conflicts; a breach of boundary noise levels on the west side of the range meant heavier firing was moved to the east (including Tyneham) therefore the weapons danger area has changed.

KD said that the area is accessible 137 days per year plus early mornings until 9am and some evenings. It was agreed that there is some confusion with flags and notices that could be clarified. RT reported that a group had been formed – the Access to BroadBench Association (ABBA) which is going through various channels to gain wider access to Broadbench.

Update on draft MoA between fishermen and PMWR committee

AL confirmed he had held a meeting with Alex McKenzie, David Sales and 3 local fishermen on 27th Feb. They went through the draft MoA and chose a name for the fishermen's association – 'Purbeck Reserve Fishermen'. AL confirmed that the skippers of the 6 potting boats working in the area, and David Sales, had been informed of the meeting.

They were happy with the 1st section on Page 1, although they felt it could be abbreviated.

Several comments were made about the second page:

- they suggested the independent assessment of sustainability be carried out by a NOC student as the cost of an MSC pre-assessment was felt too expensive for just 3 boats. They fail to see the potential benefit for crab potters of having a MSC certification.
- they felt the 3rd point, '*Seek protection from damaging/unsustainable activities within PMWR for the benefit of the natural environment and of current users*' could be taken out but go for independent assessment if a damaging activity occurs.
- point 5, sharing data and information, needs some thinking about as not all the fishermen fish only from within the reserve and catch data is sensitive. It was suggested that maybe an independent party collecting data and screening-out sensitive information could be useful. Agreed it would be useful to pick out trends.
- The Agreed Definitions were agreed although including the local Sea Fisheries Committee in the wording of principle 3.
- it was pointed out that a chart is needed to define the boundaries of the reserve.

Everything else was accepted and it was agreed by the committee that this was a very positive response, although there was concern that only 3 reserve fishermen were present.

AL also brought up the map used as an illustration in the draft Marine Bill which shows example Marine Conservation Zones around the UK. It shows a MCZ within Weymouth Bay which some fishermen have interpreted as PMWR. PT explained that the map was purely illustration to show what a network of MCZs might look like and did not represent any planned MCZs. Another map shows the Olympic legacy area between Portland and Swanage. It is understood that the various maps in circulation at the moment do not help our local situation within the reserve but are beyond the committee's control.

PT agreed to re-draft the MoA taking the fishermen's comments on-board. It was agreed that ALL the reserve's fishermen need to be made aware of the meeting and outcomes. These minutes and the next draft of the MoA will be sent to them all. **Action; PT/JH**

Warden's report

JH tabled the Wardens Report (see attached). It was noted that AL had helped with the proposed Cuttlefish Trail by constructing a withy 'tent' to be used as an egg attachment structure.

Seafest on 3rd August was discussed, including the 30th anniversary celebration of the reserve. Invitations will be sent to all committee members. AL and NF have agreed to be involved with a withy pot-making demonstration and local seafood sales.

Reports from members

Volunteer marine wardens – SS tabled a Volunteer Wardens Report and reported there is a real feeling among the volunteers that it is a positive experience. They are getting a higher profile in the DWT magazine and even in the national media. Including the Young marine wardens there is now a big age range of people involved and they carry out a much wider range of tasks – this all adds to the enjoyment and sense of doing good. SS also mentioned the problem of kite surfers as one of the volunteers had been hit by a kite. Following some discussion it was agreed that promotion of best practice for the sport, via leaflets and posters, should be done and any incidents be recorded.

Jenny Penney – reported that the new path up to the tower is open and extra handrails have been put in. JH said quite a few people have complained about the steepness of the path and the slippery gravel.

Brian Bleese – DWT have a new Chief Executive, Simon Cripps, who is an oceanographer and former head of WWF World Oceans Programme. DWT are working with Finding Sanctuary and the Southwest Wildlife Trusts on a big marine education and awareness project proposal.

Steve Etches – his Lulworth exhibition is due to open in July but there are some financial problems.

Nick Ford – his new, larger boat has arrived but he cannot use it until the registration transfer has been completed.

Peter Tinsley – the seabed mapping survey is due to start soon.

Any other business

AL mentioned the issue surrounding the 12m byelaw. It was felt to be not appropriate for the committee to discuss.

Date and venue of next meeting:

18th September 2008, starting at 6.30pm at the Fine Foundation Marine Centre, Kimmeridge.