



Harbour Watch News

2009

Dear Harbour Watchers

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year for 2010, which has got off to a chilly start so far! This gives us a chance to look back over the past year and celebrate the successes of the Harbour Watch Scheme in 2009. We hope that you enjoy this report, and thank you for your ongoing support.

As always, if you have any feedback on the way the scheme works, please do let me know. Likewise, if you need any additional forms, equipment or clothing, please get in touch.

We hope you have a great year ahead and look forward to working with you all throughout 2010.

Kind regards, Nicky Horter, Countryside Officer



Nicky with David Suttle on the hard at Itchenor

The new reporting system

Despite a few teething issues, the new reporting system now seems to be working well. The online form is up and running on our website www.conservancy.co.uk – go to *Get Involved > Harbour Watch*.

If you prefer to use paper copies of the form, please let me know and we will send you a new supply, with return envelopes. To save paper, we are not sending hard copies to everyone this year.

If you are not sure of your section number, please just ask.

Please direct all queries to:
Nicky Horter, Harbour Office,
Itchenor, Chichester PO20
7AW. 01243 512301.
nicky@conservancy.co.uk

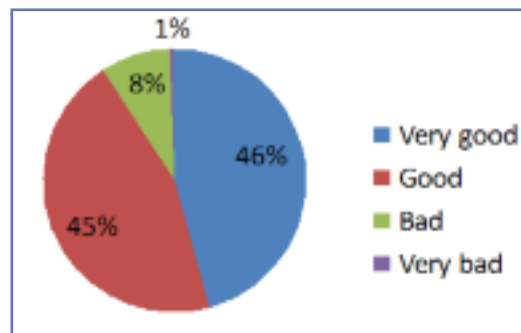
Meet the Rangers

The Conservancy's two Countryside Rangers are Georgia Siddle and Keith Rathbone. They offer vital support to the Harbour Watch scheme and are the first to check and respond to any problems reported through the report forms. They also go out by boat to pick up bags of litter collected from the designated collection points. If you get the chance to meet them whilst out and about, please do stop and say hello.



Footpath Condition

Your reports have again this year been invaluable in helping us to target problem areas. Your reports told us that path surface was overall good (87% ranked positively), and that surface vegetation was mostly clear (98% positively). Overall this year, footpath condition has been rated overwhelmingly as good or very good. However there is always room for improvement and if you know of a particularly tricky spot let us know and we'll do our best to repair it.



Footpath projects

We have carried out a number of footpath improvement projects this year, including the resurfacing of the coastal path running north from Dell Quay. We have also extended the surfaced path at Prinsted all the way to the Point. We finally managed to tackle a particularly difficult stretch at east Bosham, where we have laid a new sub-base and re-seeded the path. Needless to say these projects are costly, and we are very grateful to the Friends of Chichester Harbour for funding support, as well as our other partners, including Natural England, and West Sussex County Council.



The Friends of Chichester Harbour have also helped us with practical projects. We have constructed a second boardwalk south of Itchenor, and have re-surfaced stretches of footpath at Itchenor and Birdham.

A big project is in the pipeline to improve sea defences and surface the shoreline path to the south of the Thorney Island Sailing Club.



The Friends of Chichester Harbour have undertaken practical footpath maintenance tasks and helped fund new projects such as the installation of a second boardwalk at Itchenor



Footpath Audit

The Harbour's 38 km of coastal footpaths are a valuable asset and enjoyed by thousands of residents and visitors each year. However, many are at risk from coastal erosion and sea level rise.

The Conservancy realised that to be able to plan our long term footpath maintenance programme, we need to carry out a baseline survey of the condition of coastal paths to be able to prioritise future works. The survey will help us to identify those sections of footpath most at risk, allowing us to focus our resources more effectively.

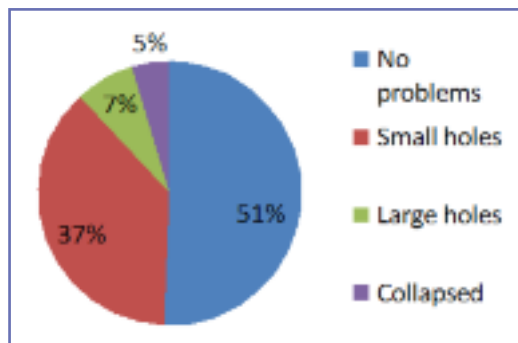
A pilot survey was carried out by a specialist team of surveyors from Worthing Borough Council looking at footpaths each side of the Thorney Channel. The results are due in soon. If successful, we will roll out the study Harbour-wide during 2010.

Sea Defence Condition

Almost two-thirds of the Harbour's shoreline is protected by sea defences. Many of our footpaths run along the top of sea walls, so are vulnerable to coastal erosion. The Conservancy works with landowners and the relevant authorities to repair defences where the footpath is threatened.

Overall this year, your reports told us that around half of sea defences are not causing any problems, however a significant amount have minor damage and 12% are in bad condition. On the whole you reported sea defences to be the same, compared to the year before, although in some areas they have deteriorated.

The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan provides the overarching policy on Coastal Management for the next 100 years. It covers the shoreline between Selsey Bill and Hurst Spit – including the whole of Chichester Harbour. The draft document is going through public consultation from 1st February to 23rd April 2010. Public exhibitions will take place as below:

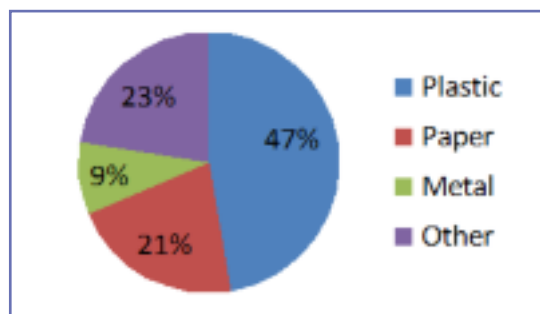


Hayling Island & Farlington to Emsworth	Havant Borough Council: Council Chamber, PO9 2AX	Tuesday 9th February 2pm - 7pm
Emsworth to Selsey Bill	Chichester District Council: Committee Room 1, East Pallant House, PO19 1TY	Thursday 11th February 2pm - 7pm

Litter Clearance



Again this year, we are grateful for your valiant efforts at keeping the Harbour's shoreline clear of litter. Together, Harbour Watch volunteers collected 250 bags of litter. Although this is a huge amount, encouragingly it is down by 76 bags on 2008. It may be that this is due to changes in the way we record litter clearance, but this figure does seem more in line with the amount collected in previous years, so perhaps 2008 was just a particularly bad year!



Much of the litter collected is made up of plastics, with 'other' items including glass, oil drums, crates, bits of old boat and of course dog mess.

Keith collecting bags left at one of the Harbour Watch rubbish caches

New Members and Farewells

This year we are pleased to welcome five new Harbour Watchers to the team. **Robbie Salter** lives in Emsworth and has taken on the west coast of Thorney Island from Wickor Point up to Emsworth Yacht Harbour. **John and Sue Pickup**, and **Jo Vickers**, all from Hayling Island, are now looking after Verner Common and Gutner Point respectively. **Nicola Wingrove** has taken on the vacant section at Bosham, from the end of Shore Road down to the ferry landing.

Last year we said goodbye to **Mike and June Tong**, **Jill Titlestad** and **John and Joy Gammon**. We would like to thank them for their support and wish them well for the future.

News & events

We would like to say a big 'thank you' to the residents of Bosham Hoe Estate, who carried out a clean up of the shore around the estate in April, collecting six bags of rubbish.

We were delighted to be able to offer a 'Harbour Watch' social event in September on board *Solar Heritage*. It was a lovely evening and great to see so many of you.



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The Conservancy and Local Authorities are becoming increasingly worried about the misuse of public footpaths by cyclists. A survey carried out in the summer of 2009 showed that on one August weekend, almost a third of footpath users at Itchenor were cyclists.

In response to concerns raised by walkers and landowners, we have been working with West Sussex County Council to promote the responsible use of public footpaths. We now have small 'No cycling' plaques on all finger posts and gates, together with the larger green 'Footpath Only' signs. These are designed to remind users that footpaths are for use by walkers only. Please let us know of any particular problem spots.

Cycling on Footpaths



Dog Fouling

Dog fouling of public footpaths by irresponsible owners is often reported by Harbour Watchers. Chichester District Council brought in a new Dog Control Order in June 2009 making it an offence for owners not to pick up after their dog. The Council's Dog Warden has the power to fine offenders £50 on the spot.

The Dog Wardens will investigate complaints from the public, so if you can provide details of time/day, location, a description of the owner and the dog, and if possible a car registration number, they can investigate complaints about offenders. Any complaint to the Council is treated confidentially.

Increasingly we are getting complaints of bags of dog mess being hung on branches. This will also be treated as an offence. You may notice the new signs appearing at problem locations. You can contact the Dog Wardens directly on 01243 534734.