

Harbour *Life*

Winter 2021/22

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What does COP26 mean
for the Harbour?

Enjoying Electric Boating

Return of the Tern

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HARBOUR
CONSERVANCY

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- Our friendly team on hand to assist you

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Welcome

Welcome to the winter edition of Harbour Life. In this issue we are focusing on nature recovery and conservation with features on two exciting initiatives – the Chichester Harbour Recovery of Nature Partnership and the Return of the Tern project. Both plan to make measurable change in the environment of Chichester Harbour and have the possibility of being exemplars to other conservation activities around the country.

Also in this edition we meet James Wallace, Lead Technician, and learn about his winter work, and take a walk alongside Ranger, Tristan Brougham, on his favourite Harbour route. Look out for some interesting wildlife in the Spotter's Guide and check out the What's On? section for activities in the winter months.

Richard Craven,
Director and Harbour Master



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ChichesterHarbour



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chichesterharbourconservancy

We'd love to hear your stories about what you love about Chichester Harbour, and how you use it. Share your thoughts and photos on our social media channels or contact us at the Harbour Office.

News in *brief*

Chichester Harbour on the Small Screen

Every year Chichester Harbour is chosen as a location shoot for many television programmes. Last year we welcomed the BBC Countryfile team and earlier this year ITV joined us for their Spirit of the South feature. In the last few months, we welcomed the BBC once again as part of Michael Portillo's *Great Coastal Railway Journey* series. Michael joined our team to look at the saltmarsh project at Cobnor and took in Chichester Marina and Fishbourne too. And most recently we hosted *Grace's Amazing Machines*, the CBeebies series which explores how things work. Grace and her team joined Adrian on the barge before retuning to find out more about our solar boat, *Solar Heritage*.



We'll share the dates when each programme will be broadcast as soon as we know – keep an eye on our social media channels so you don't miss them!

Kelp Project Celebrates First Milestone

The **Sussex Kelp Restoration Project** is a local project aimed at regenerating this important ecosystem from Selsey to Shoreham. Kelp forests are one of the most productive and biodiverse habitats on the planet but over 96% of kelp in Sussex has disappeared since 1987. Kelp can help us in many ways; creating biodiversity, sustainable fisheries and a healthy and thriving climate resilient coastal community. In November more than 100 people, from international experts to local fishermen, gathered at the Ropetackle Arts Centre in Shoreham-by-Sea to celebrate the journey of the first six months of the Project. Work to date has included mapping the remaining kelp, seabed carbon sampling, and benchmarking and monitoring the current wildlife, including commercial species such as lobster, bass and black sea bream.



Improving Salterns Way

The Salterns Way remains a very popular cycle route and so is subject to a considerable amount of wear and tear. In order to make improvements to the surface along the worst affected stretches, we sought funding from the Friends of Chichester Harbour and the Woodger Trust who both generously contributed £45,000. This, along with money allocated by the Conservancy, enabled the project to go ahead. The work is being carried out by AL Civil Engineering Ltd and comprises four phases: Phases 1 and 2, Sheepwash Lane and Itchenor Park Farm have been completed and phase 3, Westlands and Lippering Farm is underway, with the final phase at Itchenor Caravan Park and Oldhouse Farm scheduled for completion by the end of January.

Join our Harbour Patrol Next Summer!

We're already on the look out for our Seasonal Patrol team for next summer. Full and part time options are available between 1st April and 31st October 2022. You'll need to be over 18, active and responsible, hold a RYA Powerboat Level II certificate and a VHF operator's licence and have good knowledge of Chichester Harbour. If you don't have these yet, there's plenty of time to qualify before the 2022 summer season. Applications formally open in February 2022, but feel free to call Ed Carter, Senior Deputy Harbour Master on 01243 512301 for a chat about the role.



Photo © Paul Adams

Improvements Planned for Harbour Office

As part of our 50th anniversary, we've embarked on a range of projects to help ensure Chichester Harbour remains relevant for the future. The latest of these projects has been agreed following a review of the current Harbour Office and Jetty.

Over the years the tides and public jetty have made Itchenor an important hub of boating activity. Conscious of the need to support sailors, and offer better facilities, including charging for electric vessels, we're planning some improvements including:

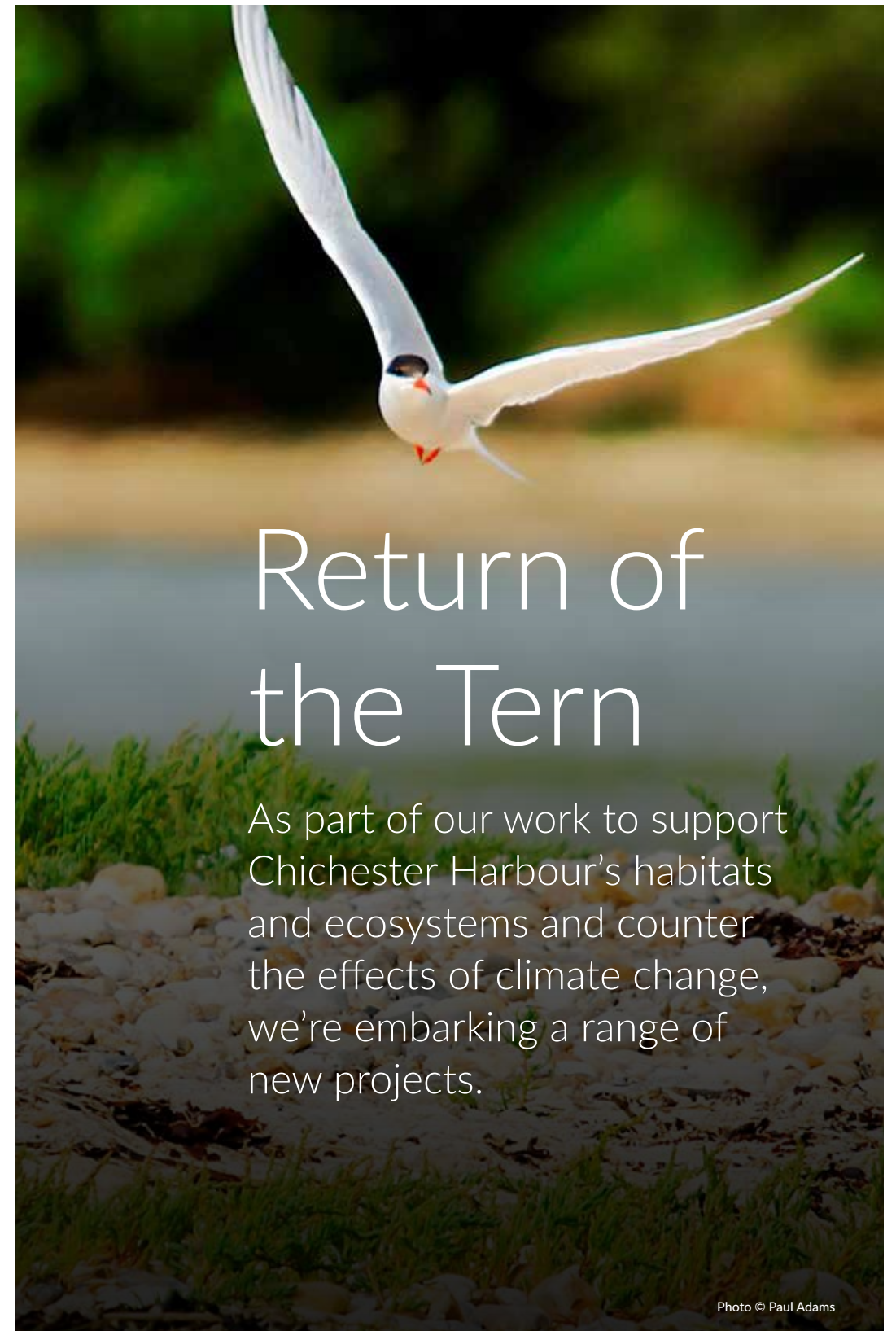
- A new welcoming reception space at the Harbour Office with improved Wi-Fi
- Enhanced shower and toilet facilities
- Changes to the Jetty to ensure all tide access and additional space for vessels to allow for short stay visits during the day and overnight stays for visitors
- Walk ashore berths to minimise safety risks to visitors
- Space for extra services including recharging stations

As part of the refurbishment plan the Harbour Office will also be made more resilient to flooding and the building upgraded to minimise carbon emissions.

These improvements will be the biggest step forward in 50 years in our offer to sailors and Harbour users helping tackle issues of access, safety and resilience to sea level rise. They'll also help us to make a significant move in helping to decarbonise boating in Itchenor and improve wider sustainability.



We will be holding a public consultation on the plans with details available early in 2022.



Return of the Tern

As part of our work to support Chichester Harbour's habitats and ecosystems and counter the effects of climate change, we're embarking a range of new projects.

Jess Vagg, our new Nature Recovery Officer, has joined us from the Woodland Trust working on habitat restoration, wildlife monitoring and conservation engagement projects. She has a Master of Science in Conservation Science and Policy from the University of Exeter. Here she explains her role and the first project she's working on.



This November, I joined the Conservancy to head up the "Return of the Tern: Nature Recovery on the Southern Coastal Plain" project.

Early in 2021, Friends of Chichester Harbour secured funding for this project from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, the UK Government's £40 million fund to help the nation build back greener from the coronavirus pandemic.

The Return of the Tern project will work with landowners, agencies, partners, local groups, businesses, and individuals to help restore, conserve and enhance the habitats of the Southern Coastal Plain.



The project's aims include:

- Establishing a Southern Coastal Plain Nature Recovery area
- Building on the Conservancy's work deploying tern rafts around Chichester Harbour to support nesting pairs in the breeding season
- Increasing our understanding of how terns use the Harbour and what they feed on, for example, by conducting fish population surveys
- Providing shingle recharge at appropriate sites to enhance tern breeding habitats

In my first few weeks I've focused on getting to know stakeholders and researching and exploring ways to achieve the project's objectives. All of Chichester Harbour is designated for its environmental features, so there are consents, licences and permissions that we need from various organisations before we start work; certainly a lot to do. I'm excited for the opportunity to work on this project over the next 18 months and will be sharing updates throughout 2022!

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is being delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency. It's part of the Government's 10 Point Plan to kick-start nature recovery and tackle climate change.

The project is one of 90 nature projects across England to be successful in the funding and is the only West Sussex-dedicated initiative.

"This is an incredibly exciting project for the Friends, and being entrusted with this amount of money shows how we are regarded, and what an important role we play in conserving Chichester Harbour and the AONB."

Oliver Chipperfield, Friends of Chichester Harbour



ELECTRIC DRIFTEAMS



Although the majority of boats today are powered by diesel or sail, the concept of electric boats is not new. In fact they've been around for over 120 years, with electric boats very popular from the 1880's until the 1920's. And with environmental focus growing in recent years, electric boats are certainly returning to the waters.

A group of boaters based on Hayling Island were so taken with the possibilities of electric engines that they started a company to sell them. After installing electric motors on their own boats, Alan, Sarah, Ed and Carolyn, co-founders of eSolent, were evangelical converts to electric power.

The team at eSolent have also been spurred on by the ecological benefit of using electric engines. And as lifelong sailors, they feel a great responsibility to preserve the environment for the next generation.

The Conservancy have also recognised the potential of electric powered vessels, running

trips around the Harbour for many years aboard *Solar Heritage*, which is powered by solar power. We've also begun the process of converting other vessels to electric with one outboard already in use and another one on order.

The technology associated with electric motors is progressing at speed. Motors are becoming increasingly efficient and propeller design takes inspiration from submarines, leading to greater power in a smaller package. This, coupled with the engines being virtually maintenance free and low running costs, has led to a surge in interest of boaters wanting to turn electric.

Other benefits include super quiet running, greater manoeuvrability and no diesel fumes. Converting boats with onboard engines to electric also frees up valuable space in the hull as the motors are attached to the outer hull and there is no longer a need for a fuel tank.

Charging the electric motors is simple too. Outboards can be easily charged at home and in Chichester Harbour there are charge points

at Emsworth, Itchenor, Northney Marina and Sparkes Marina. With options for recharging using hydrogenation, wind and solar, separately or in combination, range anxiety is not an issue.

Electric power for vessels is only going to become more popular as people realise the many benefits both for their personal boating experience and for the wider environment. We look forward to the day that diesel engines are a thing of the past.

“Once you've tried an electric motor you'll never go back to diesel. Refilling a diesel tank invariably results in spillage, often into the water, and mess, and powering the engine is noisy and smelly. On the other hand, using an electric motor is simple, clean and quiet. Electric power makes our time on the water so much more enjoyable as well as being good for the environment.”

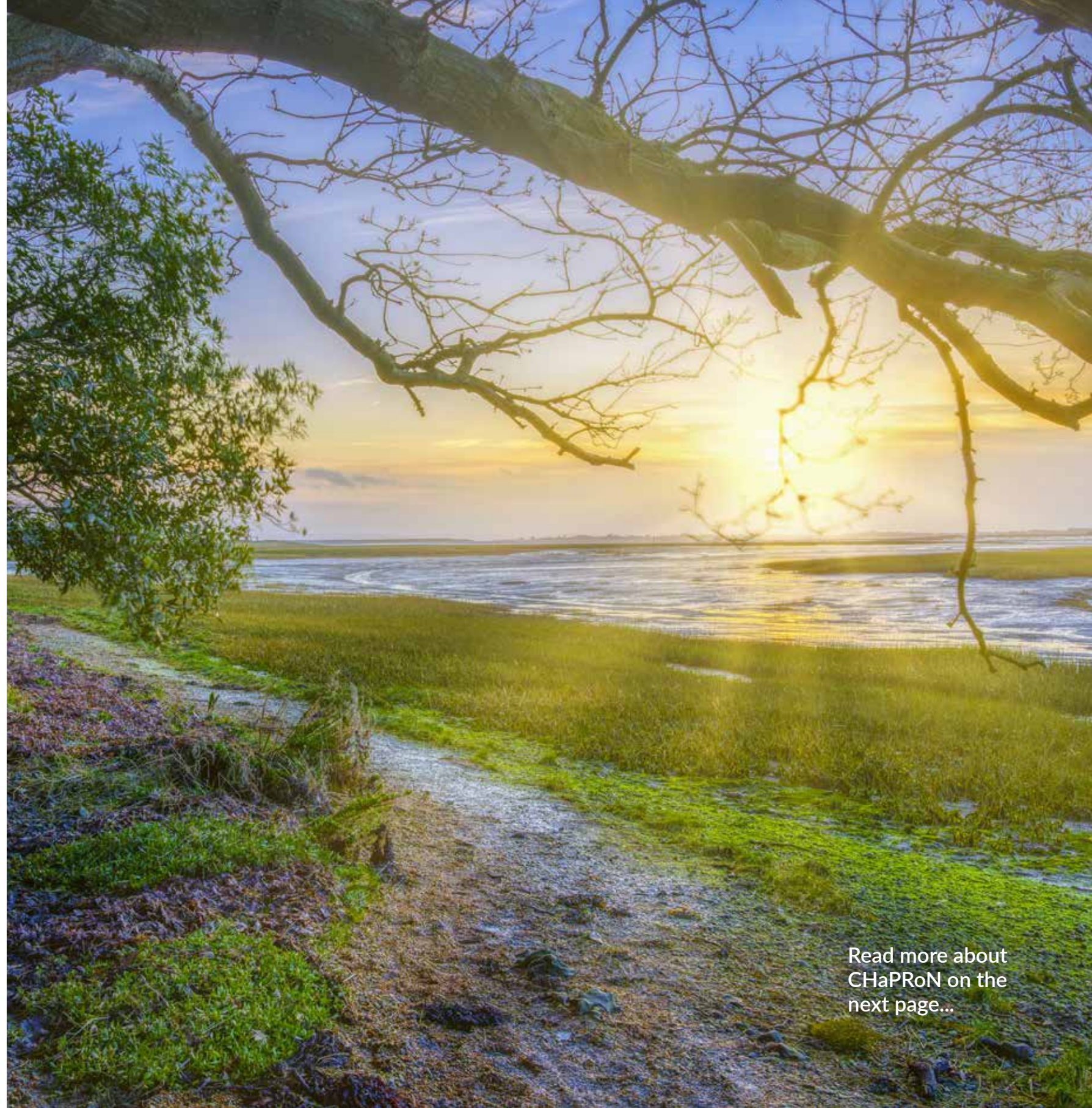
Alan Charters, eSolent.co.uk

COP26 – What does it mean for Chichester Harbour?

Those involved with protected spaces, and working in conservation, were keen to see what impact COP26 – the recent summit which focused on halting the disastrous effects of climate change – would bring. Although an agreement was reached, some of the proposals were watered down late on, leaving the distinct feel that whilst conference began to close gaps it didn't offer actual solutions to the issues facing us.

Reassuringly the final conclusions did state that greenhouse-gas and carbon dioxide emissions must be reduced to help curb global warming. The goal of 1.5C maximum for global warming, halving global emissions by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050, have been accepted. A priority must be for China to reduce its emissions (which account for 27% of global greenhouse gas pollution). Initiatives include the West supporting South Africa in closing coal plants and converting to a clean energy economy. There's also a focus on a 'just transition' from fossil fuel dependency, cutting methane, slowing deforestation and a switch to electric vehicles.

Here in the Harbour, we're aware of the effect that certain habitats can have in reducing the impact of climate change. Coastal habitats have enormous potential – enabling the storage of carbon, nitrates and phosphorus, which can help mitigate against climate change. Our new CHaPRoN project (Chichester Harbour Protection and Recovery of Nature) is focusing on saltmarsh, which is at the biggest risk of further loss, but is great at carbon fixing. This is both an essential part of our fight against climate change and the improvement of the habitats for the species that rely on Chichester Harbour. Our work continues and we look forward to policy catching up now that we know how much more there still is to do.



Read more about
CHaPRoN on the
next page...

“

“It is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global. Through transformational change, nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably”.

The United Nations

”



Saving grace



CHaPRoN is a partnership, led by the Conservancy, working collaboratively with specialist organisations including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Sussex IFCA, Coastal Partners, RSPB, Chichester District Council and Southern Water.

Chichester Harbour is one of the UK's most important sites for wildlife, designated for its international importance. Sadly, even our protected landscapes haven't escaped the dramatic decline in nature being seen across the globe. Climate change and human pressures are placing ecosystems under increasing strain, impacting wildlife and biodiversity.

Over recent years we've seen growing evidence of the impact of climate change on Chichester Harbour's important habitats. A report by Natural England in February 2021 highlighted a 60% decline in saltmarsh since 1946 due to coastal squeeze, caused by hard sea defences combined with rising sea levels, and excess levels of nitrates. Wintering birds have also declined within the Harbour, some species by more than



Photo © Paul Adams



Photo © Paul Adams

70%. The Chichester Harbour SSSI has been downgraded to an 'unfavourable declining' condition due to this continued saltmarsh loss, the poor quality of the saltmarsh and mudflat habitat, and ongoing decline of several bird species. Without urgent action this deterioration will only accelerate with the impacts of climate change. Yet alongside this society is increasingly realising the importance of coastal habitats, not only for wildlife reasons, but also as valuable natural capital providing vital ecosystem services for people and the economy. These services include:

- Water filtration and purification
- Natural sea defences
- Carbon sinks to counter climate change and contribute to 'net zero'
- Nursery grounds for young marine creatures supporting sustainable fisheries,
- Health and well-being benefits
- Ecotourism

The hidden value of these habitats makes recovery even more critical for the future.

How can CHaPRoN help?

Chichester Harbour Protection and Recovery of Nature (CHaPRoN) is a long-term initiative to help respond to these increasing pressures and protect, enhance and drive the recovery of nature in Chichester Harbour. To begin with we're focusing on the subtidal and intertidal habitats of saltmarsh, seagrass and native oysters, with our remit extending to wider nature recovery network over time.

CHaPRoN's key aims are to:

- Restore ecosystems to favourable condition
- Increase biodiversity
- Achieve greater resilience to climate change
- Sequester blue carbon and contribute to net zero
- Improve water quality
- Maximise nature friendly farming opportunities
- Connect people with nature

These aims are tied in with other objectives including our own Management Plan, Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan and the new Environment

Act 2021. By bringing efforts together it's hoped more impact can be made, especially against a backdrop which has seen ecosystems deteriorating for many years.

CHaPRoN's central strategy is structured around three core themes:

- Reducing pressures on the natural environment to improve conditions for natural recovery
- Restoring habitats through active interventions
- Realising benefits by quantifying and valuing the services society obtains from these ecosystems

CHaPRoN's ambition involves finding a better balance and exploring different ways of doing things, enabling people to enjoy the Harbour and its health and well-being benefits, whilst allowing space and time for nature to recover, increasing biodiversity and the Harbour's resilience to climate change.

Over the next year, we'll be raising awareness of the value of our important coastal ecosystems, and starting work to reduce pressures on them, whilst researching and planning potential

Nationally, England has lost 85% of historic saltmarsh, all its seagrass in more than 50% of its coastal waters and 95% of its native oyster reefs.

restoration initiatives for these habitats. At the same time, the metrics for the value of the services these habitats provide will start to evolve from the work of our wider partners. Collectively, we will learn from all this work to help inform opportunities to develop green funding streams to sustain restoration efforts within the Harbour in the future.

We hope our vision for Chichester Harbour in 2050 will be achieved, creating a Harbour that functions naturally as a healthy and thriving ecosystem, maximising ecosystem services benefits and supporting nature recovery for generations to come.





A DAY IN THE LIFE

James Wallace | Harbour Technician

James joined full-time us in 2019, but has been around boats and the Harbour his whole life with local family boatyard connections and a long stint running the ISC ferry. He trained in military marine and electrical engineering at HMS Sultan before joining the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. He now manages our maintenance and moorings programme.

What do you do on a typical day?

Well, there is no typical day; the only certainty is that the tide will come in and go out again! During the winter months we predominantly work on servicing the moorings and other marine infrastructure. We need low spring tides for most of our work so the day could begin as early as 5am if the tide is right. We only get about 3 hours to work on each low tide as the ebb tide is too strong so we have to judge how it's running each time - it's different every day with the atmospheric conditions, wind direction and so on, which all have an effect.

As soon as we start work we're time pressured; it's a ticking clock because the tide is relentless. It's very visual as you can see the sea rushing in

to cover the mud and the time running away with it. One unexpected technical challenge could put a whole day's schedule out, so we try to be prepared for every eventuality.

What's the main focus in winter?

Moorings and infrastructure maintenance take up most of our time. If we're out on the barge, *Regnum IV*, servicing deep water moorings, we start by dropping a replacement sinker complete with new chain onto the seabed next to the mooring we're working on. This ensures that the mooring keeps the same position. Then we lift the old sinker using a combination of the winch and HIAB (a type of crane) and move it onto the deck of the barge. We detach the mooring buoy and transfer it to the chain on the replacement sinker and then release

the mooring back into the water. Next we replace the old chain attached to the sinker left on deck, move to the next mooring and drop this sinker to the seabed repeating the process.

We maintain the Navigation marks on a strict maintenance schedule which involves cleaning, painting and checking them over. The lit marks are checked monthly and as the bulbs are now all LED they don't need to be changed so often. Other infrastructure, like jetties and pontoons, are maintained and monitored all year round but need extra attention during the stormier winter weather. We also complete private work for customers using our specialist equipment and expertise.

How do things change through the seasons?

The summer months are very different. In the sailing season, alongside my work in the workshop, I have responsibilities on the patrol team, being Duty Officer every other weekend. Then, I lead the Patrol Team and deal with many and varied challenges, helping Harbour users, towing vessels, taking Harbour dues and

responding to incidents as required.

However, I prefer the winter season as we have the Harbour to ourselves and on a clear, sunny day it's the best place in the world.

How do you feel about working for the Conservancy?

Although I've travelled all over the world in my previous career in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, I always seem to end up back in Chichester Harbour; I grew up in the Harbour and looked forward to returning each time I was home from sea. In my spare time I crewed on *Solar Heritage* and when the Harbour Technician role became available, I jumped at the opportunity to join the Conservancy full time.

What's been the highlight of your role?

Completing the winter maintenance programme in the knowledge that it has been a job well done.

What's your favourite Harbour spot?

It has to be Bosham foreshore and getting an ice cream from Dave's van, it brings back happy childhood memories.

My favourite walk

West Wittering to Itchenor



Tristan Brougham
Ranger

My favourite walk in Chichester Harbour runs from West Wittering to Itchenor. It's known as Footpath 1 in the Ranger team but is marked on an OS map as New Lipchis Way. I seem to have spent more time on this section than anywhere else in the Harbour this year, due to various projects and the ongoing maintenance, so I feel an extra sense of pride and ownership over this stretch of path. When out walking with friends I enjoy pointing out every little bit of work I'm responsible for, much to their annoyance, but I'll do the same here!

Starting at West Wittering car park, you'll head north along the shoreline with East Head on your left and Snowhill Marsh on your right. There's a large ammonoid fossil on the first section of the rip rap sea defences you find and, in the summer you could catch sight of breeding avocets on the marsh. Continuing northwards, you'll be walking through trees and hedges planted by the Conservancy; the planting to the south of Rookwood was from 1990 and around Ellanore in 2001. Trying to keep on top of the growth in the summer to keep the path open is an endless task and recently, with the volunteers, we've been cutting back sections to open up the view again.

Further north you'll find Ellanore Spit, a crucial refuge for the wintering waders. When the sun starts to set in the winter you can sometimes see a murmuration of golden plover here or out towards Stakes Island. We've erected a fence to keep people and dogs away from the end of the spit to protect the high tide roost. The fence never lasts too long as the spit is always shifting and digging in coarse shingle is never an easy job!



Beyond Ellanore is where you'll find the ancient, desiccated oaks which are slowly slipping into the Harbour as the bank retreats. The grain of the gnarled wood splits open as the tree dries, which I'm sure would make a great picture but my attempts never seem to do it justice.

Next is the first of the new boardwalks, of which I'm particularly proud. It's very satisfying seeing a plan go from a scribbled design on the desk to being completed and solid in the ground. The previous boardwalks had come to the end of their lives after 11 years of high tides trying to carry them away - and succeeding once.

In between the two new boardwalks is our brand-new bridge, spanning the ditch at the southern end of Birch Copse. The bridge was supplied by West Sussex County Council, and we were asked to install it on their behalf. This is the first bridge of this size we've put in and it presented plenty of challenges. Access to this area is only possible in a

short window, after harvest and before the field is ploughed or becomes too wet. We delivered the bridge to the end of the adjacent field on a trailer, but the rest had to be done by hand. Out came the round posts to roll it on, with long posts to use as levers along with the ropes and pulleys. The three of us that make up the Ranger team now have a greater understanding of how they built Stonehenge...

As you follow the Chichester channel round to the east to finish off the walk, you'll pass Chalkdock Marsh. This can be a great place to spot the roe deer that roam Old Park Farm or, in the summer, observe the heronry overlooking the water. Reaching Itchenor, there's time for a coffee at the café in Northshore boat yard before returning.

Please always take care on the footpaths - it can be slippery in the cold and wet weather and it's sensible to always choose appropriate footwear.

what's *on?*

Getting out
and about safely

Events Update

Although much of the Harbour is quiet during these colder months, there's plenty to do. Winter is a great time to be outdoors and wildlife spot, especially now the trees have lost their leaves. It's always a special time, giving the opportunity to enjoy nature against a crisp backdrop.

Don't forget that our over-wintering birds are with us to feed and build up their energy for their flights north in the spring. So if you're walking or out and about with dogs, please take care and stick to the paths to avoid disturbing the birds.

Organised Events

There are plenty of walks to enjoy with our Ranger team, and a very special two-part photo session for those keen to capture the Harbour by camera. And don't forget our family activities for half-term.



Sunday 16 January

Walk with a Ranger. A six mile walk on the Chidham peninsula with one of the Ranger team with a few stops to hear about Chichester Harbour and the work of the Conservancy.
Chidham, 9am - 3 hours

Saturday 22 January

Photography with Iain McGowan. Be inspired by the boatyard location and the guidance of professional photographer, Iain McGowan to take great photographs in Chichester Harbour. Beginners to experts welcome. A half day review session takes place in March to share your work.

Paynes Boatyard, Thorney Island

Thursday 27 January

Walk with a Ranger. Our monthly walk in January is a stroll at Sandy Point in the company of a Ranger with stops to hear about Chichester Harbour and the work of the Conservancy.
Sandy Point, 10am - 1 ½ hours

Wednesday 2 February

Bird Watching Walk for World Wetlands Day. A walk of up to 2 miles in the company of birder and all-round nature enthusiast John Arnott, taking time to look for and identify the shoreline birds.

West Wittering, 10am - 2 hours

Friday 11 February

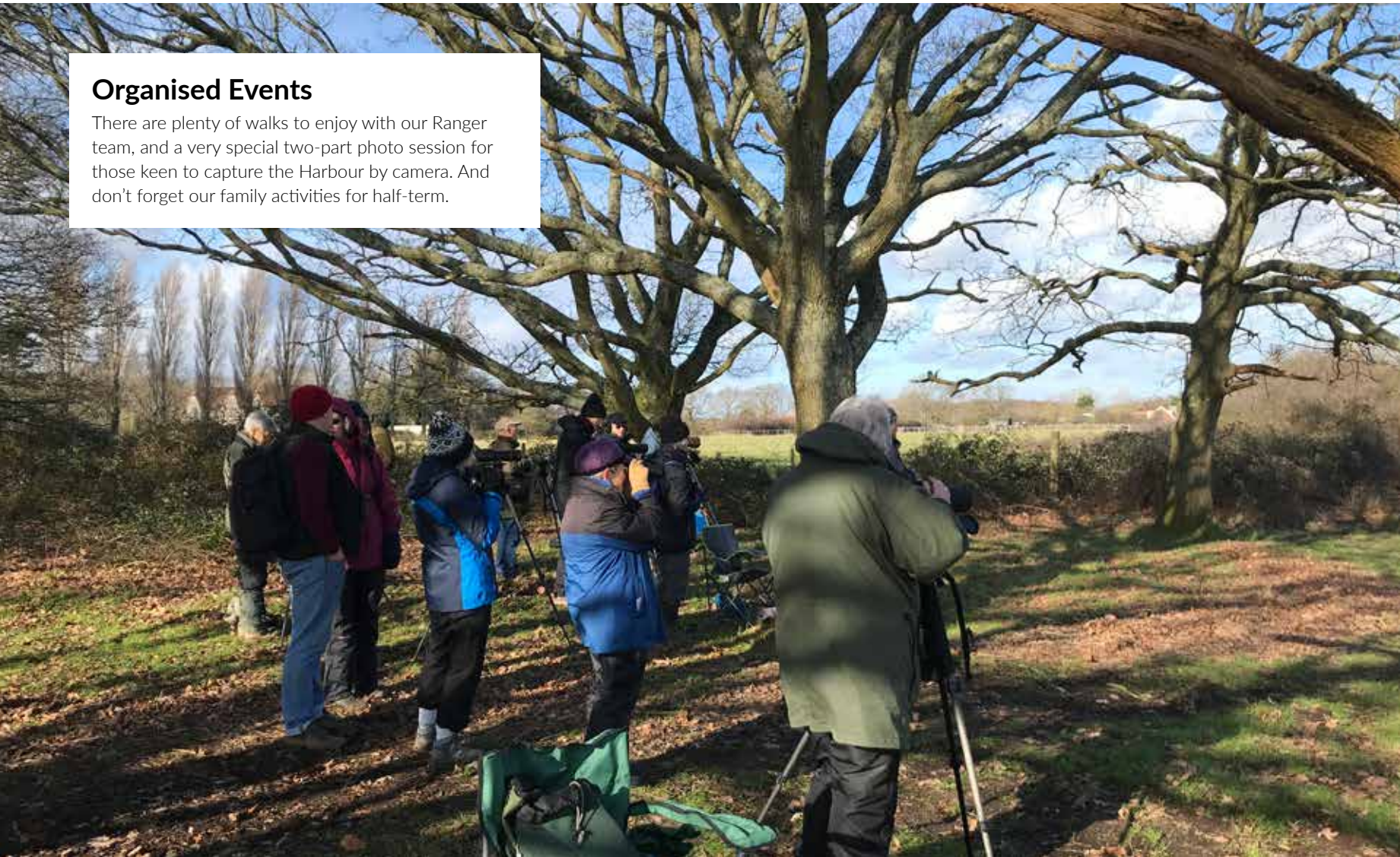
Walk with a Ranger. A 13 mile walk linking the South Downs National Park with Chichester Harbour. The route takes in the Chalk Stones Walk created by environmental artist Andy Goldsworthy, West Dean, Lavant and the Centurion Way back to Fishbourne and Dell Quay.
Down to Dell Quay, 8.30am - 7 hours

Thursday 17 February

Walk with a Ranger. A circular stroll from West Wittering Village Green to the beach.
West Wittering, 10am - 1 ½ hours

Wednesday 23 February

Harbour Activities for Families. A morning of half-term fun with activities indoors and outside for families (for 5 years+). Drop in to make clay ducks, try some seed planting and a enjoy mud walk.
Dell Quay Education Centre, 10am to 1pm



Fun for *families*



Spot the stars

Stargazing is a great way to experience the natural world as long as you wrap up warm. Chichester Harbour has three Dark Skies sites – the perfect place to stargaze and maybe even see a shooting star and some of the Harbour's nocturnal animals. Don't forget to take a blanket and some hot drinks. A star guide can help identify some of the constellations.

Dark Sky Discovery Sites

North of the John Q. Davis footpath in West Itchenor

Maybush Copse, Chidham

Eames Farm, Thorney Island

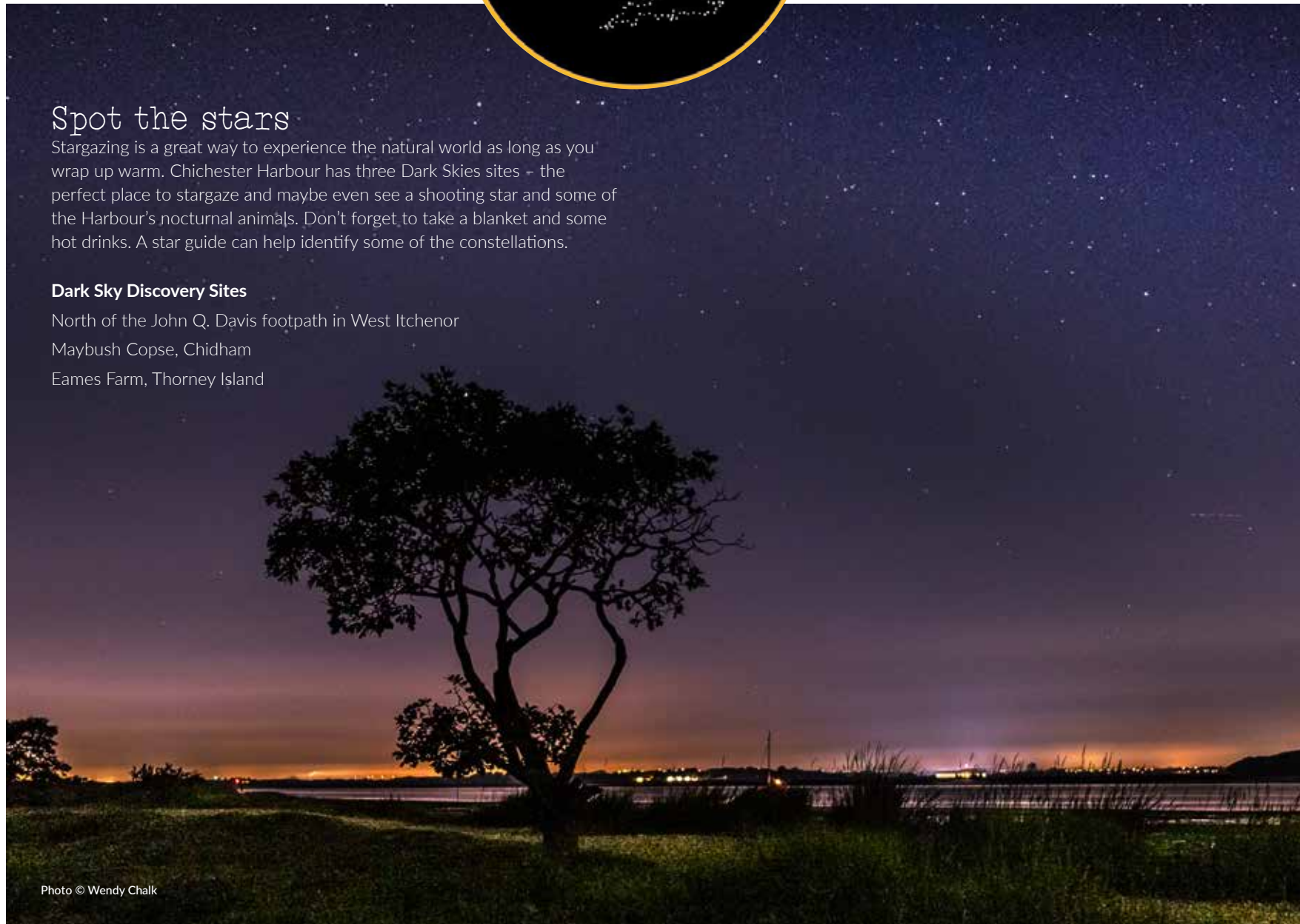


Photo © Wendy Chalk

Skim a stone



If it's a calm day, Chichester Harbour can be a great place to skim a stone. You might need to practice but if you can seek out some fairly still water and a flat stone which fits well in your hand you'll be ready to go! Aim to crouch down a little, so that you are level with the water, and flick the stone out of your hand so that it spins away from you and bounces across the water. Keep practising and don't forget to look out for the patterns on the water which the stone leaves behind!

Bark rubbing



Explore the textures and patterns of tree bark with some bark rubbing. All you need is some crayons and paper. Find a bumpy tree with interesting bark, pop the paper against the trunk and rub the crayon gently over to make a print of the pattern. You can try different trees and compare them - the Harbour has some lovely options including oaks and weeping willows. The Woodland Trust also has a free Tree ID app to find out which tree you've found!

Chichester Harbour

Spotter's guide

Against a crisp backdrop winter offers some very special nature spots. See if you can seek out these gems as you explore the Harbour this season.



Velvet Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)

What? A type of sea duck, almost entirely black but for a white wing bar and, depending on age and sex, white patches on its head and yellow bill.

Where? On the sea. Usually well off-shore, sometimes in the company of another black sea duck, the Common Scoter, which is where the white wing bar comes in handy for identification.

When? Scoters are autumn and winter visitors to the south coast from their breeding grounds in Scandinavia and the Baltic.

Did you know? Velvet scoters are generally scarce around Chichester Harbour; very few spend the winter in the Solent. Two have been spotted feeding off Ella Nore spit this autumn, giving unusually close viewing opportunities.



Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*

What? A small tree, or perhaps a large shrub, depending on how mature it is and where you stand on the tree-shrub debate!

Where? In hedges, woods and copses around the Harbour and nearby farmland.

When? All year, but spindles are most obvious in the autumn and winter when the extraordinary-looking pink seed-pods are hanging all over the plant. As the pods mature, they split open revealing bright the orange seeds within.

Did you know? If the leaves and seed pods have fallen in the winter, the tree can often be identified by its smooth, green bark.



Sea Purslane *Halimione portulacoides*

What? A pale grey-green plant, with elliptical leaves that are ever so slightly furry to touch. Sometimes it 'sprawls' and sometimes it is rather bushy. It grows up to about 80cm high and can form extensive carpets over saltmarshes.

Where? One of the most common plants of the upper saltmarshes, and can be found all over the Harbour; it often grows close to seawalls and shoreline paths.

When? It's a perennial plant so can be seen all year round.

Did you know? A favourite with foragers, the leaves can be eaten raw or cooked, added to salads or even made into pesto – it is, as you would expect very salty!



Mermaid's purses

What? Empty egg-cases of rays, skates or small sharks. Can be dark brown or black (rays or skates) or pale, sandy brown (catsharks, aka dogfish).

Where? Found on the strandline in the Harbour.

When? All year - the egg cases take months or years to break down. Often washed up ashore after winter storms.

Did you know? Around 10 species of skate or ray are found in the UK. Sadly the largest and most spectacular, the Flapper Skate (formerly known as the Common Skate) is no longer found in UK coastal waters due to over-fishing, so their huge egg-cases aren't seen in this area. However, the egg-cases of spotted rays, thornback rays and undulate rays remain relatively common.

Make a difference

join the

Your subscription provides much needed funds for projects aimed at conserving and enhancing Chichester Harbour, improving accessibility for all and providing educational opportunities.



Member benefits

- Get involved with practical conservation work, no regular commitment necessary.
- Enjoy exclusive members' talks and social events.
- Join a vibrant community.
- Recieve regular newsletters.



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