

AGENDA
ITEM

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SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	Salcombe Harbour Board
DATE	09 February 2015
REPORT TITLE	2014 Opinion Meter Survey
REPORT OF	Salcombe Harbour Master
WARDS AFFECTED	All South Hams

Summary of report:

To report the results of the Harbour Authority 2014 Opinion Survey.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications from this report. However, there may be implications if the Board make changes to harbour infrastructure or policy to address the concerns raised by the survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Harbour Board RESOLVES to:

- a. **Note** the report;
- b. **Consider** the contents of the report when formulating policy for the future.

Officer contact:

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 An opinion survey of harbour customers has been undertaken annually since 2007 in order to gauge the opinion of harbour users which then informs Harbour Board decision making.

1.2 The 2014 survey took place between May and October in the Harbour Office reception and online using SurveyMonkey. There were 335 responses in total.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

2.1 **Validity.** The number of responses (335) is statistically significant (providing a 95% confidence level +/- 5% confidence interval) but only if the assumption that the respondees are truly random is also true. Given that 97% of the responses were generated in the Harbour Office, this may not be the case since many will only have visited to resolve a query and their answers may therefore be skewed to their query rather than being truly random. Additionally, year-on-year variance analysis should be treated with caution since most of the variances are less than the confidence interval (eg the difference with previous returns is <5%). For these reasons, caution must be exercised in analysing the data.

2.2 **Responses.** The following table gives a summary report of the survey:

Question	Answer	n	%
Are you a Resident or a Visitor?	Resident	142	42
	Visitor	193	58
Have you noticed any improvement in the service and facilities Salcombe Harbour offers to you?	Yes	241	72
	No	94	28
Do you use the water taxi?	Yes	179	53
	No	115	47
Have you made use of the water taxi discount tickets?	Yes*	64	36
	No	115	64
	N/A	156	-
Do you consider Salcombe to be a safe harbour?	Yes	307	92
	No	28	8
Has speeding and anti social behaviour from other harbour users adversely affected your enjoyment of the estuary?	Yes	87	26
	No	248	74
Have you been the victim of marine crime in the last 12 months?	Yes	33	10
	No	302	90
If yes, have you reported the crime to the police?	Yes*	24	73
	No	311	27
Are conservation issues important to you?	Yes	268	80
	No	67	20
Do you consider the Harbour Staff welcoming, friendly and helpful?	Yes	307	92
	No	28	8
Do you consider Salcombe Harbour offers Value for Money?	Yes	283	76
	No	52	24

Will you consider using the Harbour again in the future?	Yes	313	94
	No	22	6
On a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied are you with the services provided by Salcombe Harbour?	Avg	8.64	

* Of those who responded 'Yes' to the previous question

2.3 Comments from customers who scored the Harbour's performance as less than 10 were invited to state why. While 107 of these were blank, nonsensical (eg random characters) or stated that they didn't give a 10 on principle, the other comments were as follows:

Comment	Number of responses for this comment
Better shower facilities (eg basins, mirrors, more showers)	8
Improve facilities (walk-ashore access, electric/water on pontoons, free wi-fi)	8
Affected by speeding in estuary	3
Normandy/Whitestrans too busy in summer	2
Reduce the waiting list	2
Boats under 5m should not use Normandy	1
Like the idea of protecting skegs with buckets	1
Introduce wakeboard/waterskiing inside estuary	1
Kingsbridge slipway needs major repair	1

2.4 Discussion.

2.4.1 **Better shower facilities:** Although the recent installation of 2 showers on Whitestrans was a big improvement on the previous situation, there is clearly further to go. At present our business model sees visiting yachts (up to 150 vessels per day in peak season) using the public's toilets, which is sub-optimal (and will further be degraded if plans to start charging for access are implemented). We are in discussions with Environmental Services and Assets to scope possible options to provide further ablution facilities in Whitestrans.

2.4.2 **Improve facilities:** There were 2 comments apiece requesting better walk-ashore access, electric on the Visitors' Pontoon, Water on the Kingsbridge pontoon and free wi-fi. All of these are already regularly reviewed as follows:

- More walk-ashore access: Allowing vessels to berth alongside Normandy overnight (as is currently the case on Whitestrans) would generate up to 6 new deep-water walk-ashore berths and there is also potential in the medium term to extend Shadycombe, Kingsbridge and Batson pontoons.
- Electric on the VP: Provision of shore power would likely be very expensive and legally problematic as easements over several land-

owners' properties would be needed. Local generation might be an option but could prove too noisy for 24 hour provision.

- Water on Kingsbridge pontoon: Water is already provided on the adjacent promenade. It could be extended but would be costly and provide very little additional benefit.
- Free wi-fi: Uptake of wi-fi by customers is very low for several reasons
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 - Coverage across the harbour is very limited (exacerbated by the aerial on Egremont no longer being in use);
 - There is free access ashore (whereas we charge); and
 - Speed is relatively slow.These issues are being addressed: a coverage survey will be undertaken by Wi-Fi spark (our providers) in Jan 15 and a modified solution designed which may include provision of free access. A further report will be made to a future Board meeting.
- Affected by speed in the estuary: These comments reinforce anecdotal evidence that 2014 witnessed an upsurge in the number of speeding vessels. Plans for the 2015 season include a 'rolling patrol' on the Bar and Widegates and a high profile media campaign to further educate the public on the speed limits.

2.4.3 **Normandy/Whitestrand too busy in summer:** The number of tenders off the town is a recognised problem with no easy solution although more proactive patrolling of the town's pontoons does partially mitigate the problem, so we will redouble our efforts in future. This also illustrates the importance of the water taxi service. Potential courses of action include extending the pontoons or discouraging tenders through price, although neither will solve the problem.

2.4.4 **Reduce the waiting list:** This is only achievable if additional berths are developed within the harbour which is counter to current moorings policy. There is capacity to accept a number of additional berths through sensitive extension of existing pontoons and this should be actively considered.

2.4.5 **Boats < 5 m should not be allowed to berth on Normandy Pontoon:** The improved Salcombe Town Landings have been a great success, particularly the short term berthing for vessels up to 5.5m on the Normandy Finger Berths. The success of this facility has meant that during the high season it is not always possible to get a short term berth immediately. It is not considered appropriate to exclude the smaller boats from using this facility.

2.4.6 **Introduce waterskiing/wakeboarding in the harbour:** This comment was probably included during the debate on this issue earlier in the year.

2.4.7 The following table provides the overall 2014 response and compares it to that of previous years.

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Trend
Question								
1	Have you noticed any improvement in the service and facilities Salcombe Harbour offers to you?	83%	57%	61%	69%	71%	72%	↑ 😊
2	Do you use the water taxi?	73%	57%	48%	50%	56%	53%	↔ 😊
3	Have you made use of the water taxi discount tickets?	40%	14%	34%	32%	23%	36%	↑ 😊
4	Do you consider Salcombe to be a safe harbour?	85%	100%	84%	90%	91%	92%	↑ 😊
5	Has speeding and anti social behaviour from other harbour users adversely affected your enjoyment of the estuary?	37%	28%	26%	20%	25%	26%	↑ 😞
6	Have you been a victim of Marine Crime in the last year?				10%	17%	10%	↓ 😊
7	Have you reported the crime to the police?				42%	10%	73%	↑ 😊
8	Are conservation issues important to you?	83%	100%	71%	72%	74%	80%	↑ 😊
9	Do you consider the Harbour Staff welcoming, friendly and helpful?	83%	100%	80%	87%	87%	92%	↑ 😊
10	Do you consider Salcombe Harbour offers Value for Money?	75%	71%	66%	76.2%	82%	76%	↓ 😞
11	Will you consider using the Harbour again in the future?	90%	85%	86%	94%	91%	94%	↑ 😊

Table 1: Table of 2014 responses compared to previous years

2.5 Analysis

2.5.1 Although table 1 provides an overall response, there are some significant differences between resident and visitor responses, as detailed in table 2.

Topic	Combined return (from table 1)	Resident response (%)	Visitor response (%)
Noticed an improvement	72%	90%	61%
Used the water taxi	53%	60%	49%
Victim of crime	10%	18%	3%
Consider the harbour safe	92%	92%	92%
Consider harbour offers value for money	76%	87%	61%

Table 2: Differences between Resident and Visitor returns

2.5.2 Pleasingly 90% of resident responses noted an improvement in the harbour, although only 61% of visitors agreed. The disparity might be due to several factors:

- Recent improvements have been to residents' facilities (eg Kingsbridge pontoon).
- Residents are more aware of the previous standard of facilities offered, whereas visitors are less so.
- Visitors are more likely to be comparing our harbour facilities to those offered elsewhere.

Although the improvements have been noted there is further room for improvement, as indicated elsewhere in the survey responses.

2.5.3 More residents than visitors appeared to use the water taxi. This can be interpreted in several ways:

- The pricing structure is about right since residents appear content not to use their own tenders.
- Visitor awareness of this facility may need to be improved.
- There is scope to reduce tender congestion if taxi take-up can be improved.

2.5.4 The 3% return from visitors vindicates the ongoing security arrangements undertaken by the harbour. Additionally, the 18% positive response of residents is not borne out by the number of reports made to either the harbour office or police. A more likely explanation is that crime victims are statistically more likely to complete a customer feedback return than a non-victim. However the harbour is not complacent and further security improvements continue to be implemented.

2.5.5 More residents than visitors consider our fees and charges to be value for money and this should be taken into account when future budget considerations are under way.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Statutory Powers: Local Government Act 1972, Section 151. The Pier and Harbour Order (Salcombe) Confirmation Act 1954 (Sections 22-36).

3.1 There are no other legal implications to this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report, however any policy changes or improvements which are implemented as a result of this report will have to be budgeted for.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The risk management implications are:

Risk/Opportunity	Risk Status			Mitigating and Management Actions
	Impact/Severity	Likelihood/Probability	Risk Score	
Opportunity: Robust feedback mechanisms ensure that Harbour Board decisions reflect the needs and wishes of harbour users. Risk: Potential loss of reputation or income if not conducted.	3	3	9	Proactively requesting customer feedback, along with the other harbour fora, will ensure that the harbour board is in a strong position to continue making the correct decisions in the future

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community Life Economy Environment
Statutory powers:	Local Government Act 1972, Section 151. The Pier and Harbour Order (Salcombe) Confirmation Act 1954 (Sections 22-36).
Considerations of equality and human rights:	None
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	None
Crime and disorder implications:	None
Background papers:	None
Appendices attached:	None