



## *Lymington Harbour Commissioners*

*Harbour Office  
Bath Road  
Lymington  
SO41 3SE*

*From the Chairman*

*To all berth-holders at Lymington Marina*

As I expect many of you reading these lines will already know through the local press, the Commissioners, using their statutory powers to levy harbour dues, have decided to establish a fund to pay for future harbour protection works. From 2004 all boats permanently moored in Lymington Harbour, including the private marinas, will pay an annual sum based on the vessel's length at the rate of £5.75 per metre of boat length this year. In the case of craft moored on Harbour moorings, this will be in addition to the normal mooring fee. Boats using the slipway regularly will be charged. Wightlink will also contribute a proportionate amount. In the following paragraphs I will explain the reasoning behind this somewhat radical step.

Lymington Harbour Commissioners, under the 1951 Lymington Harbour Act, have a statutory duty to maintain and conserve the harbour. For many years, the harbour has operated in a relatively benign environment, the upper reaches well sheltered by the outer saltmarsh. However this marsh is eroding apace. The prospect of stemming the rate of erosion is remote. After the severe storm of 15 October 1987, when storm force winds from the S.S.E. caused damage to moored craft, the present wavescreen was erected. This has proved successful in reducing wave action in the upper harbour in south easterly winds. The wavescreen was designed however to act within the relatively sheltered conditions provided by the outer marshes.

The illustration of marsh regression provided by the N.F.D.C. Coastal Engineers is self-explanatory. Faced with the progressive loss of protection to the harbour, the Commissioners are faced with two alternatives. To do nothing is, I believe, to shirk our responsibility to maintain the harbour for future generations to use as we all do at present. We have therefore asked our consulting engineers to prepare plans for an outer line of harbour defences as shown in the accompanying map.

At present, the favoured approach is to construct rock groynes or bastions. In the light of site investigation, consultation with the various regulating agencies etc. this plan may need to be modified. One fact is unlikely to change however. A project of this nature will be expensive and is likely to cost in excess of £1,000,000. The Commissioners consider the correct approach is to build up a fund incrementally in order to pay for this work, rather than wait until the harbour becomes so exposed that swingeing harbour dues have to be levied.

We shall, of course, explore the possibility of obtaining help with funding this project. The Crown Estate, who as landlords of the harbour are paid an annual rent of £135k by the Commissioners, will be approached. Close co-operation with the N.F.D.C., as the coast protection authority, will establish the extent to which DEFRA grants can help us.

The Harbour Protection Fund as envisaged will raise £100k p.a. The fund will be "ring fenced" and will only be used for protective work in the harbour. The Commissioners will take the best advice in order to minimise tax liability whilst the fund is accruing, bearing in mind this is a long-term project. I fully realise that some of you who will be contributing, myself included, may retire from "boating" before the scheme comes to fruition, but the scale and cost of these works dictates we must start raising money now.

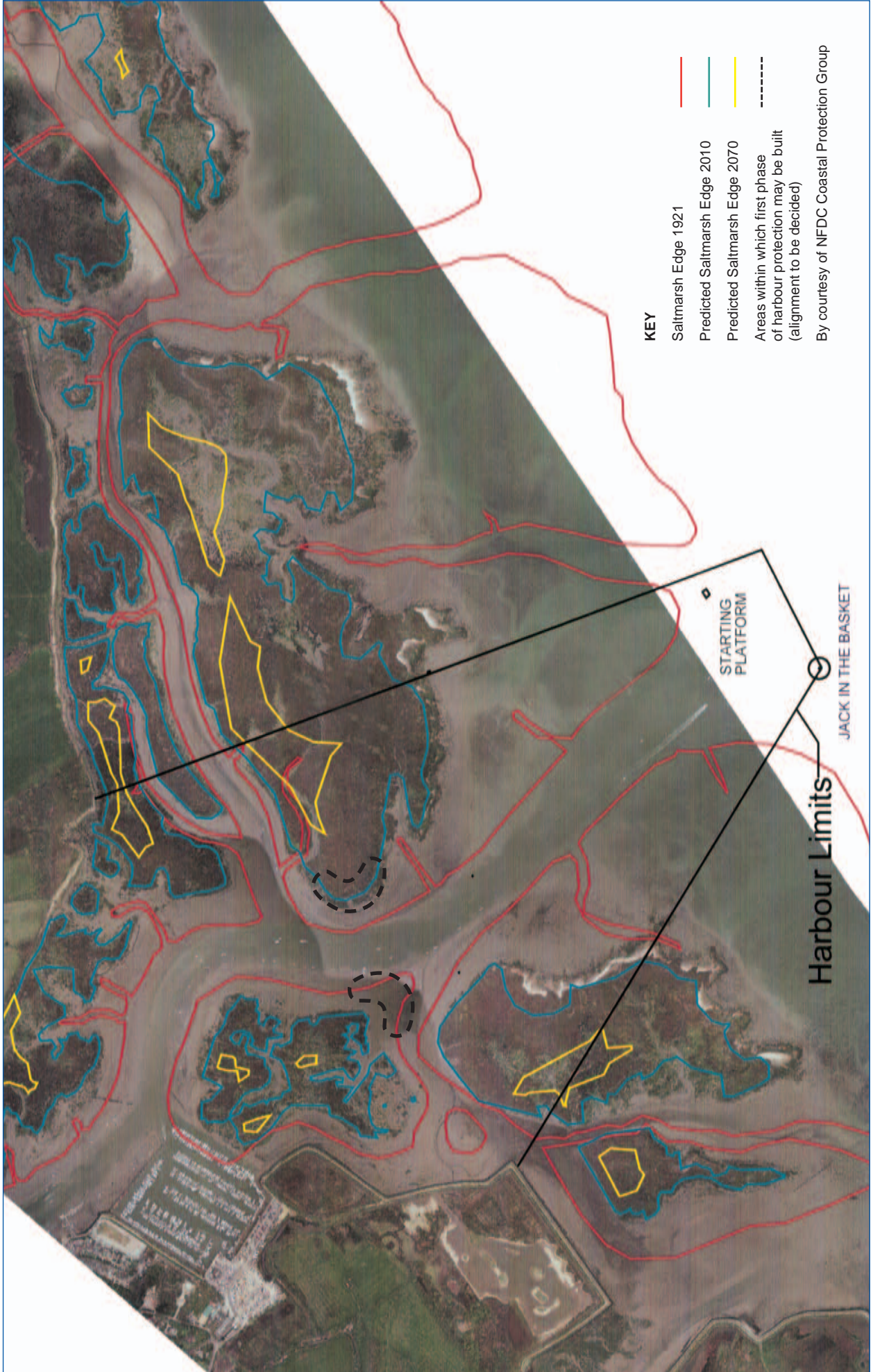
The Lymington Harbour Commissioners have historically managed the harbour in a prudent and economical manner. We intend to continue in this fashion.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Butler  
January 2004

*Chief Executive: Chris Harris Harbour Master: Alan Coster*

*Tel: 01590 672014 Fax: 01590 671823 e-mail: [harbouroffice@lymingtonharbour.co.uk](mailto:harbouroffice@lymingtonharbour.co.uk)  
[www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk](http://www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk)*



**KEY**

Saltmarsh Edge 1921

Predicted Saltmarsh Edge 2010

Predicted Saltmarsh Edge 2070

Areas within which first phase of harbour protection may be built (alignment to be decided)

By courtesy of NFDC Coastal Protection Group

Harbour Limits

STARTING PLATFORM

JACK IN THE BASKET

## **EXTRACT FROM LYMINGTON HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS ANNUAL REPORT 2008**

### **“Harbour Protection Project (Construction of Breakwater)**

In April 2008, we submitted our applications for the various environmental consents. The applications were supported by a Environmental Impact Statement which was informed by environmental, geomorphological, landscape and archaeological studies. In September 2008 Natural England issued their advice in relation to our application for the various environmental approvals required. This indicated that subject to the implementation of certain conditions to mitigate the potential effects of the works, there would not be a detrimental effect on the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). One of the key conditions agreed with Natural England was that the Commissioners would undertake a trial habitat regeneration scheme by using fresh sediment from maintenance dredging arisings to seek to restore 0.5ha of habitat in an area where it will be protected behind the new breakwaters.

The scheme will build two breakwaters (east and west side of the river) and will be built in 6 Phases over the next 30 years in response to the predicted loss of salt marsh through natural erosion. Please see our website at [www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk](http://www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk) for further details.

We are delighted to report that all of the environmental consents have now been received for Phases 1 & 2 and we are now in a position to proceed. The Commissioners have initiated a tender process with the intention that at least part of the Phase 1 breakwater construction works will commence in Summer 2009 with completion by Summer 2010 at latest. It should be noted that environmental considerations will restrict construction work to the summer months. Phase 2 is due to be constructed around 2014.

It will come as no surprise to learn that in the present uncertain financial climate, the Commissioners are reviewing the financing arrangements with a view to making prudent decisions going forward. As previously explained, the funds to pay for the project will continue to come from river users in the form of harbour dues. Based on a recent estimate of the construction costs for Phase 1, the Commissioners have decided that for 2009/10 the harbour protection levy for all boats moored in the river/marinas will increase from £6.76 to £9.92 per meter (including VAT). Previously this charge has remained frozen for 4 years while the project was being worked up to the point of achieving environmental consents. It is appreciated that this increase cannot be popular in the present climate, but it is unavoidable if we are to be in time to protect the harbour. This is a long term project (approx 30 years) and the Commissioners will remain alive to the possibilities of trying to secure grant funding / assisted finance facilities from new and previously explored sources.

The Commissioners would like to place on record their thanks for the considerable level of local support that we have received for this scheme over the last two years. We are in no doubt that this support has been a significant factor in encouraging the environmental regulators to take a pragmatic and realistic approach to the problem the harbour is facing.

The fourth year of accounting for the Harbour Protection Fund ended on 31 March 2008 when the position was:

	£
Balance at 1st April 2007	220,438
Harbour protection fees collected	111,700
Less: monies spent on project	<u>(52,367)</u>
Balance at 31 March 2008	<u>279,771</u>

The expenditure covered work by our consulting engineers, fees for the Environmental Impact Assessment, an archaeological study as part of the mitigation required for the project, and a small sum to fund a publicity campaign to inform and generate support for the scheme from within the local community.”