



# **Port of Wells**

## **Port Marine Environment & Sustainability Policy**

**Harbour Master: Robert Smith 07775 507284**

**Old Lifeboat House**

**Wells-next-the-sea**

**Norfolk NR23 1AT**

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# Authority

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Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC) is a Trust Port, whose powers and authority are most recently constituted in the Wells Harbour Revision Order of 1994. WHC is a self-financing commercial business with certain statutory powers and responsibilities for ensuring safe navigation and conservancy within the Port Limits.

## Introduction

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This document sets out the principles that guide the Port of Wells management in conserving and improving the environment and fulfilling its' environmental duties as required by the Harbours Act 1964 and other relevant legislation. It is WHC policy to maintain and develop Wells Harbour as a working port, achieving a balance between economic, social and environmental benefits.

WHC recognises our environmental responsibilities to reduce to a minimum the environmental impact of our activities to as low as reasonably practical, to seek ways to conserve natural resources and continually strive to improve the environmental performance of the port by operating the Port in accordance with procedures designed to prevent incidents that may cause environmental damage. This is based upon the principle of Best Available Technology Not Entailing Excessive Costs.

WHC takes a responsible and forward-looking approach to environmental issues and we recognise the mutual benefits of incorporating sustainability into our business strategies and of dealing appropriately with any impact on the environment caused by our proposed developments.

In order to achieve this we will comply with all applicable legislation, regulations, codes of practice and other requirements to which we subscribe including the Port Marine Safety Code and take guidance from the "Modernisation of Trust Ports" (MTP) published by the DfT. Section 1.4.3 of the MTP states there are a wide range of ways in which a trust port's surpluses may be, and are, justifiably employed which constitute a stakeholder benefit and can include investing in infrastructure, or another good such as environmental protection, to a higher standard or greater extent than might maximise profits, but where this brings direct quantifiable benefits to stakeholders. WHC also aims to achieve the best practice framework set out in the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO)'s 2012 'Green Guide: Towards Excellence in Port Environmental Management and Sustainability'.

## The scope of WHC activities includes:

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- Conservancy
  - Loading & Unloading of vessels
  - Movement of vessels,
  - Handling cargo at the Quay and Outer Harbour
  - Maintenance of infrastructure and equipment,
  - Construction work,
  - Emergency response,
  - Port security,
  - Providing berths and facilities to visiting vessels
  - Maintaining moorings and berths for residential boat owners
  - Estate management and Administration
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## Objectives of this policy:

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WHC has the following objectives in support of this policy and lists the intentions to support these objectives where appropriate to the varying requirements of our business:

### **A Introduce the concept of sustainability into our business – Timeline ongoing**

- i) Communicate this policy to all persons working for or on behalf of WHC and make this policy available to the public.
- ii) Systematically identify and assess environmental risks associated with our activities.
- iii) Set measurable environmental objectives and targets supported by a management programme that measures and monitors performance, reviews effectiveness and evaluates compliance.
- iv) Investigate sustainable sourcing of products when ordering new supplies or services.

### **B Use best endeavours to reduce or prevent environmental damage from pollution - Timeline ongoing**

- i) Mitigate and control identified risks in order to manage our activities in an environmentally responsible manner.
- ii) Develop, maintain and test emergency response plans and procedures.
- iii) Ensure that WHC employees, contractors and others working on our behalf are competent to carry out their work and understand the impact their actions and behaviour may have on the environment and provide them with adequate information, training and supervision to enable them to understand and discharge their responsibilities for compliance with this policy.
- iv) Clear-up discarded fishing and other rubbish in the Harbour in a timely fashion
- v) Aim to establish the limitation and specification of anti-foul, paints and other marine substances in the Harbour.

### **C Educate stakeholders on the marine environment – Timeline ongoing**

- i) Educate dog walkers about disturbance of ground nesting birds in the Harbour.
- ii) Erect wildlife interpretation boards
- iii) Erect a bird viewing 'hide' at the East End bank overlooking the marshes.
- iv) Encourage the nesting of birds at the Outer Harbour by keeping the public off the berms.

### **D Help to reduce waste generation at our properties and increase the proportion recycled under the concept of "Reduce, Re-use, Re-cycle" - Time-line 3 years.**

- i) Seek to re-use paper (double sided copying and printing, re-use paper for scrap wherever possible).
- ii) Look at introducing recycling bins for compostables and 'green bin' paper, plastics, cans etc for WHC trade waste and for visiting vessels.

### **E Seek to reduce the consumption of energy, water and natural resources in our properties to appropriate levels commensurate with the operational needs of the business and the requirements of occupiers – Timeline 3 Years.**

- i) Investigate a switch to a green tariff for electricity consumption.
- ii) Introduce the monitoring of water consumption and leaks.
- iii) Investigate methods for the generation of own electricity.
- iv) Investigate the reduction of night lighting where appropriate.

- F Apply best practice in the design, construction and management of buildings and their surroundings – Timeline ongoing**
- i) Sustainable infrastructure will be investigated and considered for all future building projects. The use of lower carbon fuels e.g. biodiesel, less toxic paints, recycled card, board or wood where appropriate.
  - ii) Involve and consult interested parties on environmental issues if and where appropriate.
- G Minimise the impact of travel on the environment and optimise travel costs – Timeline ongoing**
- i) Seek to minimise the impact of travel by using teleconference technology to avoid travel where appropriate.
  - ii) Seek to understand the environmental impact associated with our business related travel.
  - iii) Encourage Harbour staff to use sustainable methods of transport wherever possible.
  - iv) Consider environmental performance when purchasing vehicles and designing traffic systems.

## **Existing Environment/Sustainable Activities**

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WHC are represented on a number of bodies relevant to the pursuit of this policy, including:

**North Norfolk Renewables** - <http://www.northnorfolkrenewables.org/>

North Norfolk boasts a surprising number of specialist businesses with the engineering, service and operational expertise to help meet the increasing needs of the fast growing renewables sector. This growth stems from a strong track record of large scale energy sector projects both on and offshore. Reinforced by WHC's strategically positioned commercial harbour and the support of the local district council, the North Norfolk coastline is well placed to support offshore wind turbine development, as well as offering a viable prospect for future carbon capture and storage.

North Norfolk Renewables (NNR) is a consortium of public and private sector parties which has come together in a co-ordinated way to use opportunities presented in terms of inward investment, employment and local contracts associated with the development of major offshore wind energy proposals off the North Norfolk coast.

NNR brings together Wells Harbour Commissioners (WHC), North Norfolk District Council, and the Holkham and Walsingham Estates in order that there is a shared understanding of the infrastructure and site and premise requirements of companies involved in the development and operation of offshore wind energy schemes off the North Norfolk coast.

Key objectives for NNR are to:

- Promote the area to offshore wind energy companies and their suppliers/subcontractors.
- Co-ordinate the provision of appropriate infrastructure, sites and premises to accommodate businesses operating in this new economic sector.
- Promote supply chain opportunities.
- Promote skills development and training opportunities amongst local people so they can seek to secure new jobs and opportunities within this growing sector of the economy.

NNR aims to provide tools, resources, information and support for all those individuals and companies who can benefit from the inward investment to the area from this growing sector of the UK's economy.

WHC's Outer Harbour, constructed in 2009, has 165m of shore accessed pontoons providing berthing facilities for vessels engaged in the operation and maintenance of the offshore wind industry.

**WNNEMS** – Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site <http://www.wnncems.co.uk/>

In recognition of its important wildlife, the Wash and North Norfolk coast has been designated a European marine site under the UK Habitats Regulations. This designation helps protect the biodiversity that makes this area so special by placing new and stronger responsibilities on public authorities and agencies to work closely together to safeguard the nature conservation interest of this outstanding site, in balance with the needs of its many users. WHC sits on the North Norfolk Advisory Group which contributes to the objectives of these designations.

#### **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)/ North Norfolk Coast Partnership -**

<http://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/>

Wells Harbour lies at the mid point of the main section of the North Norfolk AONB and Heritage Coast, and the Partnership provides the main forum for planning and landscape management matters.

Its aims are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, to facilitate and enhance the public enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the area and to provide sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty.

## **Other Activities:**

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### **Sustainability of Wells Fishing Fleet**

In March 2010 WHC worked with NNDC to develop a new Shellfish handling facility to support the continued operation of the fishing fleet in Wells. WHC took possession of the freehold of the completed facility in 2013 and leases it to the Wells Fisherman's Co-operative Ltd on a peppercorn rent. The purpose of the facility is to support the sustainability of the residential fishing fleet with the aim of reducing the mortality of shellfish landed in the Port by approximately 15%, to safeguard employment, and to retain and add value to products landed. The Wells Fisherman's Co-operative are required to adhere to and enforce WHC's Waste Management Plan.

In addition WHC supports the fishing fleet by permitting berthing at the Outer Harbour where practical to allow vessels to exit earlier on the tide. No bait or catch are permitted to be unloaded or loaded at the Outer Harbour.

### **Outer Harbour environment**

WHC has recognised that in constructing an Outer Harbour this has provided a nesting site on the berms for birds including Little Terns which are a schedule one breeding bird and are therefore legally protected. WHC has fenced off the area and erected signs advising the general public to keep off the berm and keep dogs on leads.

In addition the berms have provided a new habitat for a diverse number of plant species, over 52 have been recorded in the area.

### **Recreational leisure**

Recreational leisure is a growing stakeholder in the port with visiting vessels from all over Europe. WHC encourages good management of this sector within wells harbour by providing inner harbour visiting pontoons and waste disposal facilities.

## **Other Bodies**

In addition, WHC frequently responds to consultations and interacts with statutory bodies concerned with the environment and community and economic development, including the Environment Agency (on matters of flood control, defence, coastal systems and pollution), Natural England (on biodiversity), CEFAS (fisheries, including the mussel beds within the Harbour), and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), on licensing of dredging activities and marine planning more widely.

## **Responsibilities, Staffing and Training**

Robert Smith, Harbour Master, has responsibility on behalf of the Wells harbour commissioners for overseeing compliance with statutory environmental requirements, and development of the Port Sustainability Plan. He holds an MCA 5P Exec Commander Oil Spill Response and IMO Level 2 Oil spill response for online commander.

## **Other associated environmental plans**

- Oil Pollution Contingency Plan

This plan is designed in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollutions Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Convention (OPRC) 1998 to guide WHC personnel through management of an oil spill originating from or approaching the Port of Wells.

- Port Waste Management Plan

This plan has been produced to comply with Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Port Waste Reception Facilities) Regulations 2003 and subsequent amendments. The plan describes WHC's control, management and commitment to the handling and disposal of waste in the correct manner.

## **Policy Review:**

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This Policy Statement is periodically reviewed by the Executive to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate to the scope of activities conducted by Wells Harbour Commissioners.