

## **The Hazardous Project Site Report - October 2005.**

### **Introduction**

Although an extension to last years licence was sought and granted for the winter months, we were unable to make any trips to the site, due mainly to very unfavourable weather conditions.

These weather conditions caused major shingle movement along the coast from the east; this resulted in making the slipway (less than one thousand metres from the site) unusable. The next nearest launching point is one hour and fifteen minutes by rib away from the site, this was deemed not practical in the very changeable sea conditions that prevail at that time of year.

This year as in the three years previous it was decided to use one full weekend a month, starting in April and utilising the best neap tides for work on site and running the diver trail.

The first inspection dive on site this year, was made at the end of March in poor visibility, however it was noted that seabed sediment movement had taken place along the west side of the site, undermining some of the iron guns and exposing hull timbers on that side, to a greater depth than in previous years.

Some preliminary measurement of the 'dummy' artefacts, laid last season was carried out, but was not completed due to worsening weather conditions.

No physical damage to the site was noted at this time, however an amount of fishing line and discarded tackle was removed from the diver trail cable.

On two occasions this season, rod and line fishermen have been found over the site, within the restricted area.

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### **Year 2005 Objectives**

Continue monitoring variations in seabed levels and timber degradation, using points set up in 2002.

Survey position of 'dummy artefacts' for ongoing research into environmental effects on site conditions and distributions.

Carry out further planning of areas / artefacts exposed due to erosion.

Survey and recover artefacts exposed by erosion and under threat of loss or damage.

Continue with conservation of artefacts in wet storage at present.

Continue operation of the diver trail.

Continue developing site exhibit at Earnley Gardens.

Complete archive assessment and enhancement project being undertaken in conjunction with HWTMA (funded by EH)

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### **Field work**

Nine days of diving have taken place on site this season, during this time datum monitoring work was carried out, the diver trail underwent running repairs and six escorted trips for visiting divers were arranged.

The replacement marker buoy funded by English Heritage, was sign written and placed on site in August.

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## **Results**

The development of a digitised site database has been completed as part of the archive assessment project and this year's data will be added to it over the winter months.

Cleaning and repairs, plus redesign and replacement of all numbered points around the diver trail were required before it was opened this season. The trail and numbered points was checked and cleaned at the start of each trail day. Trail days continue to be popular, however because of the very unpredictable conditions this season three trips had to be cancelled, some are being re-scheduled for next year. As a result the number of visitors this season was only twenty, they all made positive comments. This initiative will continue in future years.

Due to the unpredictable weather conditions and persistent poor visibility this season it was not possible to carry out any site planning. However seabed level monitoring points were measured at intervals through the season along with timber degradation measurements and will be added to the information gathered in previous years.

Research is ongoing into the artefacts and site formation of the Hazardous by a post-graduate student from the University of Southampton and this season, the movement of the 'dummy artefacts' placed around the site last year have been monitored at regular intervals. The results of this initiative have yet to be fully assessed.

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## **Observations**

Weather conditions generally in the bay area this year, were far less favourable than for many years. This resulted in the cancellation of many of the planned diving weekends and of those that presented good surface conditions, several presented poor visibility below water due to a marked increase this year, in suspended sediment in the water column.

Over the course of the season increased turbulence on site has caused the undermining of some of the guns on the west side of the site and during the last two dives of the season it was noted that the hull structure which supports the cannon ball mound has been undermined by up to half a metre on the east side. If this trend continues through the winter months, serious destabilization of the hull remains in this area could result.

This will add further to the 33% loss of wreck and associated information, witnessed by the author in the last twenty-three years

On two occasions this season rod and line fishermen were found within the restricted area. However when it was pointed out that they were within the exclusion zone they were most apologetic, but in defence said they were unaware that they were breaking any rules; generally it was thought that the exclusion only applied to divers!

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## **Artefacts**

No uncovered artefacts were found or recovered from the site this season. Work continues on stabilization of artefacts in wet store.

Conservation work on a number of fragile artefacts is ongoing at The Mary Rose Trust.

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## **Public Relations**

All visiting divers were given lectures on the history, discovery and present work, taking place on the site, along with an overview of the flora and fauna of the area. Included was a visit to the museum display, which continues to be well received by both public and divers alike.

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## **Archive Project and Future Research Initiatives**

The project funded by English Heritage to assess and consolidate the Hazardous archive has been completed. One of the primary objectives of this project was the deposition of a security copy of the archive in a publicly available archive; this copy is now at the National Monuments Record. The project also includes a conservation assessment of the material culture. This project is phase one of a four-stage programme outlined for the Hazardous site which will result in research and publication of the current site data and information. It will also address the urgent need for further excavation on the site, which is constantly being eroded with the resulting loss of our nations maritime heritage.

The second stage of this project is an assessment of the environmental conditions on the site remains. The quantification of the threat to the physical remains of Hazardous on the seabed will enable the formulation of a strategy for further investigation of the site in the face of on-going erosion.

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### **Diving Schedule**

Diving operations were carried out on nine separate days. This resulted in 2093 working minutes spent underwater by nine divers.

In excess of 900 minutes was spent underwater by 20 visiting divers.

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### **Intentions for 2006**

Continue monitoring variations in seabed levels and timber degradation, using points set up in 2002.

Continue surveying position of 'dummy artefacts' for ongoing research into environmental effects on site conditions and distributions.

Carry out further planning of areas / artefacts exposed due to erosion.

Survey and recover artefacts exposed by erosion and under threat of loss or damage.

Continue with conservation of artefacts in wet storage at present.  
Continue operation of the diver trail.

Continue developing site exhibit at Earnley Gardens.

Undertake project assessing the environmental impacts on the site to enable long-term investigation strategy to be formulated.

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