



## **Solent Dolphin Review - 2020**

We are sure that you all agree that this really has been a year of two halves. Before Covid-19 all was going well. The boat was back in the water in pristine condition with all Skippers and crew well prepared to commence the usual training programme in the Spring. Bookings were running at near capacity with the Charity being approached to join significant celebratory events. These included most notably Mayflower 400 which was unfortunately cancelled and passed almost without notice.

The second half of the year has been blighted by the pandemic. The boat has periodically been out on Southampton Water for sea trials but has now been lifted out of the water for the winter: stored ready for action as soon as we are able in 2021. So sincere thanks go to Martin Stokes and his small band of helpers for keeping her clean and maintained. Despite the bookings no passengers were able to be carried during 2020. Thanks also go to Byron Oliver who unravelled the stream of cancellations.

Income and donations have this year, perhaps predictably, only been a small fraction of what we would normally enjoy. However, this has been offset, where possible, by minimal operational outgoings outside the unavoidable fixed costs and depreciation.

Planning for the future is taking place frequently. We are continually monitoring Government guidelines and virus trends plus keeping in touch with our medical advisors and liaising with a cross section of client groups to ascertain concerns and demand. Following the optimism that a vaccination programme might be available with a form of normality returning by Easter we are currently planning to complete crew training in April and start the 2021 season of trips on 1st May as usual. In all likelihood this will be a mix of reduced trips, passenger and crew numbers together with pragmatic and proportionate amendments to our onboard seating arrangements and operational procedures until restrictions are fully lifted. Mindful of safely coordinating individuals, groups and social 'bubbles', Byron is drawing up plans to take personal rather than computer based bookings closer to the start of the 2021 season. The focus beyond a limited service for now is to make sure that we are prepared for a safe return to serve the community which has been our hallmark for the last three decades.

We have all missed the Charity's activities - crew and clients alike from whom we have had both supportive and encouraging comments. Please stay safe and we look forward to seeing everyone again soon. THANK YOU.