

Solent Dolphin Review - 2022

After having experienced two pandemic years with reduced trip numbers we all looked forward with enthusiasm to getting back to 'normal' operations this year.

Crew vacancies occurred early in the season after some long serving, loyal volunteers had retired or moved away.

We were pleased to welcome over **20 new volunteers** and, if you are one of them, then may I wish you a warm welcome, with the hope that you will enjoy volunteering with us for many years to come.

You are joining an organisation conceived in 1987 and now with **10 Trustee Board members, 19 fully qualified Skippers, 24 Senior Crew** and another **81 volunteers** but, for the first time in many years, no crew waiting list!

We are, however, looking for some important 'back office' help and if you or anyone you know has some time to spare please contact me in the first instance.



Events dictated that there were a reduced number of trips this year with low take-up in the early months and a reduced offering in September following the sad and untimely death of Byron, our good friend and colleague. Byron had been involved with Solent Dolphin since the beginning, and had volunteered as our Bookings Co-ordinator since 2014.

We will all miss his dedication and good humour.

Nevertheless, **282 trips** did take place with **2966 passengers; 256 in wheelchairs**.

In comparison, during 2021 we only operated for 4 months with no scheduled evening trips when we had **222 trips** with **1208 passengers** including **164 in wheelchairs**.

We are enormously grateful to John Brown of TLC Online who volunteered to design our new website and is presently working on an automated Bookings System which we hope will enable us to get back to pre-pandemic levels next season.

Indeed, we sincerely thank all our volunteers for their flexibility and commitment.

Income and donations have reduced somewhat and, as usual, operating costs are carefully managed, although the price of diesel has increased exponentially.

We take this opportunity to thank Associated British Ports and in particular MDL Marinas for their ongoing support.

M/V Alison MacGregor remains in good health, is well looked after and is currently undergoing winter maintenance.

It should be some years before a replacement boat is needed.

All the best for a healthy and happy 2023.

Pete Wales
General Secretary
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