

FAVERSHAM & OARE Heritage Harbour Group

FAVERSHAM & OARE CREEKS, the adjacent communities and coastal landscape, along with Swale & Medway and Maldon & Heybridge, have been nominated as the first three UK Heritage Harbours in a network of maritime centres being developed as part of the National Historic Ships Shipshape Network.

The concept of the Heritage Harbour has already been adopted by historic ports in Holland, Belgium and Germany. It is intended to promote and preserve a local and specific maritime heritage, particularly traditional boats and ships, significant sites and buildings, together with the wider natural landscape. This is combined with

support for existing and new businesses, local fisheries, recreational users, nature reserves and, more widely, all local residents. An increase in both economic activity and tourism are important objectives.

Faversham's maritime history reaches back to Roman times, embraces the history of the Cinque Ports, and offers a vivid picture of the development of coastal fisheries and merchant sail in the nineteenth century, and shipbuilding until the 1970s. This wonderful maritime history, and its physical assets, defines so much of Faversham's identity, and its rediscovery is critical for the retention and enhancement of the character of the town in the years ahead.



Faversham Creek, once a bustling port. © Roland Hilder estate

OUR OBJECTIVES

 To promote a wider understanding and recognition of Faversham's unique maritime traditions, its regional historic vessels and quayside architecture.

 To encourage and assist businesses, boat owners and other recreational users to preserve the working and historic maritime nature of the creeks.

 To attract a diverse fleet of traditional ships and boats to use the facilities of the creeks, and encourage them to base themselves here. We are already well placed to fulfil the needs of such vessels.

 To identify and help maintain existing waterside businesses, such as shipwrights, fishermen, sailmakers etc, to encourage new ones along with associated trades and skills, and help develop apprenticeships.

 More broadly, to develop partnerships with landowners, developers, clubs, and local and port authorities in order to promote the maritime vision.

 Specifically to encourage the development of launching sites, suitable moorings, both short- and long-term, particularly at the head of the creek, continued maintenance dredging and the ongoing navigation of the creeks.

 Encourage greater use of the creek by ensuring access routes and footpaths as well as greater integration into the life of the town.

 Highlight the problems associated with waste disposal, particularly sewage and industrial effluent, and promote the highest standards of environmental protection in the creeks.

 To engage with local schools and foster an understanding among young people of the unique maritime world on their doorstep.

DELIVERY

An ageing port like Faversham, with its commercial life behind it, offers huge opportunities for reinvention and for the development of its maritime patrimony. As a Heritage Harbour those opportunities, skilfully and energetically promoted, can be grasped for the benefit of the town and the wider world. This vision is being co-ordinated by the Faversham & Oare Heritage Harbour Group chaired by Sir David Melville CBE.

Please contact us at the addresses below with your comments and suggestions.



Above: barges at Standard Quay

Below: Pollock's yard, c1960

