

THE ASSOCIATION OF BARGEMEN
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Gulliver Immink Esq
24 November 2018
Faversham Creek Trust
The Purifier Building
Morrisons Wharf
Faversham, Kent ME13 7DY

Dear Gulliver

Faversham Creek Bridge

We wrote to you in February last year, to thank the Trust for your time and hospitality when our Committee had visited the Purifier Building. We had all been most impressed with the Trust's ambitious and far-reaching plans for the future of Faversham Basin and the revival of Faversham's maritime heritage and facilities. We had been encouraged, then, that replacement of the Faversham Creek Bridge appeared to be imminent. It is most disappointing to hear that this is still delayed.

We are writing now to say how important it is, from the point of view of the Association of Bargemen, that the Faversham Creek Bridge becomes once again possible to open, as soon as possible. This is clearly the key next factor in enabling the Faversham Creek Trust to be able fully to develop its programmes for education and training in the skills necessary for boat and ship building, repair and maintenance, particularly for traditional craft. Also in providing facilities fully accessible by all types of craft to come to and go from The Basin, as a base to access those services and skills, as well as possibly for overwintering moorings for craft being laid up between sailing seasons.

Together, of course, the Trust's programmes will provide facilities, as well as jobs and training of benefit not only to Faversham, but also to the wider sailing community. As you know, to this end, we are already working with the Trust to achieve placement of shipwright apprentices and/or of local schools parties for trips on barges, both for application of newly acquired skills and to encourage more general enthusiasm for taking part. We also see the potential for links and possible exchanges with similar training facilities elsewhere.

The Association of Bargemen represents the whole Thames Sailing Barge community, including most owners, and we also support programmes, such as the Trust's, of benefit to traditional sail craft generally. We are sure that once the Bridge is again opening and The Basin again usable, there will be great support from Thames Barges, which used once to be such an iconic feature of Faversham and its Creek and Basin, as well as from the wider sailing community.

Yours sincerely

Cyril Varley
Chairman

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