



Falmouth Harbour
Commissioners

MEDIA RELEASE

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners and University of Plymouth Present new award to Plymouth Student

University of Plymouth student Duncan Shaw became the first person to receive an innovative new award from Falmouth Harbour Commissioners (FHC) and the University at a postgraduate award ceremony on Friday 18 December.



Dr Sarah Tuck, Duncan Shaw, Harriet Knowles, Dr John Dinwoodie

The award recognises outstanding achievement in assisting with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) and in particular the KTP which is currently ongoing in Falmouth via FHC.

Duncan Shaw was presented with the award and a cheque for £100 by KTP associate, Harriet Knowles, at the ceremony held at the University.

Knowledge Transfer Partnership is one of Europe's largest recruitment programmes which aims to help businesses improve their competitiveness and productivity through better use of the knowledge, technology and skills that are found within the UK knowledge base. Graduate environmental scientist Harriet Knowles was placed in the role of Maritime Sustainable Development Officer at FHC through the KTP project.

Harriet has been researching a number of environmental issues since her appointment in October 2008. Now, half-way through the project, Harriet says that the level of research gained would not have been possible without the help and support of academics and students at the University of Plymouth.

"We are investigating topics which have not been previously researched in the UK ports industry, so these are very exciting times for Falmouth," says Harriet. "The support of my supervising academics and the students at the University, have been invaluable in helping to gather the information we need in order to make the project work.

"The new award has been designed to recognise the significant amount of hard work and effort that individuals have contributed to KTP projects. We hope that this will become an annual ceremony that will encourage other students to get more involved with the port of Falmouth as part of their degree."

Duncan, who achieved an MSc in international supply chain management, conducted a comprehensive investigation into environmental management in small UK ports as part of his degree. The results are going to be used in

wider research into the effects of anchoring in Falmouth Bay.

Mark Sansom, Chief Executive of Falmouth Harbour Commissioners, is delighted with the progress made so far. He said, “We now have a significant amount of data and evidence surrounding the socio-economic and environmental effects of anchoring in Falmouth Bay. Whilst we still have a long way to go to completion, the information we have gathered so far proves just how useful projects such as KTP can be to organisations like ours. The support we have had from academics at the University has been excellent, and relevant student projects such as that undertaken by Duncan Shaw add significant value to the project.”

As well as researching the visual and audio impact of ships anchored in the bay, and the potential impact this has on tourism in the area, the anchoring project also looks at the environmental impact of anchoring. This includes research into the effect of anchoring on the seabed, a particularly contentious issue given Falmouth’s Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status.

Harriet explained, “In investigating these issues, we have to be conscious of balancing environmental and operational needs. By having a greater understanding of the aspects of port activities we can concentrate our resources on addressing and managing the environmental impacts and ensure Falmouth is a sustainable port.”

Kevan Cook, of Natural England, is wholly supportive of the project, he said: “The work Harriet is doing at FHC through the Knowledge Transfer Partnership is fantastic and has a lot of value to it, both for Falmouth and nationwide. By tackling these issues head on, FHC is really taking the initiative in balancing operational needs with the wider social, economic and environmental impacts.”

The current project will continue to run for another 16 months, during which the results will be published for public viewing.