

Democracy Service Swyddfa'r Cyngor CAERNARFON Gwynedd LL55 1SH

Meeting

PORTHMADOG HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

5.30 pm, TUESDAY, 1ST OCTOBER, 2024

Location

Virtual Meeting

(for public access to the meeting please contact us)

Contact Point

Eirian Roberts

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(DISTRIBUTED 24/09/24)

MEMBERSHIP:

Cyngor Gwynedd:

Nia Wyn Jeffreys Gwilym Jones June Jones

Co-Opted Members:

Dr Melfyn Edwards To be confirmed To be confirmed

Ian Roberts Robert Owen Will Walker-Jones

Representing Porthmadog Town Council Representing Landowners' Interests Representing Harbour Interests Representing Leisure Interests Representing Industrial Interests Representing Commercial Interests

Representing Criccieth Lifeboat Insitution

Local Member

Local Member

Local Member

Observers:

Desmond George David Williams

Stephen Tudor

Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee Deputy - Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee Pwllheli Harbour Consultative Committee

AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

To elect a Chair for 2024/25.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

To elect a Vice-chair for 2024/25.

3. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items which are urgent matters in the opinion of the Chair.

6. MINUTES

4 - 7

The Chair will propose that the minutes of the meeting of this committee, held on 27th February 2024, be signed as a true record.

7. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS 8 - 19

To submit a report by the Senior Harbours Officer.

8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee will be held on 4^{th} March, 2025

PORTHMADOG HARBOUR CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 27/02/24

PRESENT:

Councillor Gwilym Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd) (Chairman) Councillor June Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd) (Vice-chair)

Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Cyngor Gwynedd) and Will Walker-Jones (Cricieth RNLI Representative).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Bryn Pritchard-Jones (Maritime Service Manager), Malcolm Humphreys (Porthmadog Harbourmaster) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

OBSERVER: Desmond George (Aberdyfi Harbour Consultative Committee)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Aled Griffith (Porthmadog Town Council), Llyr Beaumont Jones (Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department) and Arthur Francis Jones (Senior Harbours Officer).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 3 October 2023, as a true record.

5. UPDATE ON HARBOUR MANAGEMENT MATTERS

The following reports were presented, and members were invited to give feedback on the safety matters and harbour operational matters.

(1) The Senior Harbours Officer's report, giving a brief update to the committee on harbour matters for the period from October 2023 to February 2024.

(Due to the sickness absence of the Senior Harbours Officer, the report was presented by the Maritime Services Manager).

The Senior Harbours Officer was thanked for preparing the written report, and best wishes were extended to him for a speedy recovery.

Math Roberts was congratulated on his appointment to the full-time post of Beaches Officer. In response to a question, it was noted that it was not currently envisaged that the Beaches Officer would need to attend harbour committee meetings as the beaches would be the main focus of his post, however, it was explained that the officer would also assist harbour staff with harbour matters when required.

As part of the report, the Maritime Service Manager gave a short summary of the Harbour's budgets 01/4/23 - 31/3/24 (November 2023 Review), which was included as an appendix to the report. Details were given on following elements of the budget:-

Employees

It was explained that the anticipated overspend under this heading was mainly due to staff overtime costs as they had been called into work during periods of leave / outside normal working hours during the year to deal with incidents, not only in Porthmadog Harbour, but also on other beaches and harbours in Gwynedd.

Staff were thanked, and especially the Harbourmaster and Assistant Harbourmaster, for their commitment to assist with these incidents.

Property

It was explained that additional finance had been included under this heading in case there was a need for significant expenditure on infrastructure, the harbour wall or the land surrounding the harbour. Since there had been no significant costs this season, an underspend was anticipated in the budget.

One-off spending - Funding from the Department's Funds

It was explained:-

- As a result of charging fees, the Maritime Service and Hafan Pwllheli had funds where money had accumulated for years, and there had been a direction to identify schemes across the Service where this money could be used to improve maritime facilities.
- That several projects had been put forward, with some being realised in the current financial year, and others in the next financial year.
- One of the main projects in Porthmadog Harbour was to renew the anchoring chains, and significant finance had been invested in this, as well as maintaining the buoys, installing new ladders on the side of the harbour wall and contractor costs to undertake all the work.
- That approximately £28,000 had been spent thus far, and a further expenditure of between £7,000 and £8,000 was anticipated before the end of March on other sundries, including improving the compound, repositioning slabs in the area behind the harbour building and upgrading the CCTV system.
- That this expenditure would have no impact on the budget as £36,000 had been transferred from the Department's funds to meet the costs.
- There was more money in the budget to make improvements on harbour land, although it was not envisaged that this money would be spent by the end of March.
- It was also intended to use money from these funds for all kinds of improvements in the harbour over the summer and throughout the year.

<u>Income</u>

It was explained that the income was slightly lower than expected due to the bad weather last summer.

In response to a question, it was explained that the costs of all maritime vehicles were centrally funded from the beaches budget.

Then the Maritime Service Manager detailed the 2024/25 fees and charges, stating:-

- That the service intended to adjust the fees for 2024/25 in line with the rate of inflation, which was 7.49% at the time.
- Although berthing fees had been raised above the level of inflation in some other harbours, an increase in line with inflation had been suggested only at Porthmadog Harbour as mooring fees had historically been higher there than in harbours such as Aberdyfi and Barmouth.
- That launching and registration fees had been raised just above inflation. As the launch fee had already increased from £10 in 2020 to £22 last year, it was suggested to retain the fee at £22 for 2024/25 with the registration fee rising from £60 to £70 (an increase of nearly 17%), namely registration and the seasonal and launching ticket rising from £170 to £180 (an increase of 6%).
- (2) The Harbourmaster's report, summarising the Navigational and Operational matters that had arisen between October 2023 and February 2024, including maintenance matters.

Before starting to present his report, the Harbourmaster offered condolences to the family of Michael Holt from Porthmadog, who recently died while rowing across the Atlantic Ocean in a bid to raise money for two charities.

Further to the content of the written report, the Harbourmaster noted:-

- That all work on the moorings in the harbour had now been completed.
- That the work of upgrading the CCTV equipment facility in the harbour would be completed in the next three weeks.
- The Council's Highways Department and a local company had been asked for a price for re-positioning the pavement slabs that had been raised by tree roots around the harbour.
- The Parkingeye was now live in the Centre.
- A complaint had been received from a member of the public that defibrillators at Morfa Bychan had been removed from their sites, and this had been done due to the lack of an electricity supply to the boxes that stored them, as there was a risk that the gel pads could freeze and the batteries could become flat and vapour could form as a result of a lack of heat in the box. It was hoped that the defibrillators would be back on their sites next week.
- That two or three responders to a recent questionnaire had questioned whether it was possible to install a web camera in the Harbour, and this was possibly something that Porthmadog Town Council could be asked to consider undertaking in conjunction with the Maritime Service.

During the discussion, the following matters were raised:-

The Service was congratulated on satisfying the inspector from Trinity House that all was in good order and efficient in terms of records of the availability of the local navigational aids under the control of Cyngor Gwynedd and there were no matters arising that required further attention.

In response to a question regarding the cost of handling the Dwyfor boat and the 'Powercat' patrol boat, it was noted that specific funding had been set aside for maintenance work on the Dwyfor boat. It was explained that the Dwyfor boat was running well due to the completion of significant work on it prior to the Covid period, including reconstruction of the engine, but that the regulations regarding boat coding etc. had now changed. It was also noted that there were no significant costs on the 'Powercat' patrol boat.

The Service was thanked for the maintenance work programme for seating benches and stone walls near the pilot's former docking area at Borth y Gest.

The Harbourmaster's words regarding Michael Holt were reiterated and the Harbourmaster was thanked for all his work with the defibrillators at Morfa Bychan. Thanks were also given for the report and for the installation of ladders on the harbour wall, etc., and support was expressed for the idea of having a web camera in the harbour. It was expressed that it was hoped that the Dwyfor boat and the 'Powercat' patrol boat would be back in service by the summer. In response, it was noted that the boats were likely to be back in service before Easter, but that boats from other harbours could also be used in the meantime if a boat was really needed on the water in the harbour. It was further stated:-

- The requirements for this season had been met in terms of the coding regulations.
- That the coding of the Dwyfor boat differed from the Powercats as it raised buoys and there was concern, should the requirements of the Code change, then there was a risk that the Dwyfor could not be used to carry out any work out at sea, and therefore we would be dependent on a contractor, which would increase costs.
- That a specific budget was set aside for the maintenance of the Dwyfor boat, but that the actual cost may be higher than assumed due to the need to carry out additional work that was not anticipated.

The Harbourmaster and staff were thanked for their hard work in trying to keep the Porthmadog Channel clear and marked, and it was noted that a web camera in the harbour would also be of assistance to the RNLI.

It was asked what the cost would be to install a web camera in the harbour. In response, it was noted that the Harbourmaster could make enquiries regarding this, but that it was thought that such a resource would be a very good investment for the harbour. A comment was also made that it was worth investing in a quality web camera.

RESOLVED to note and accept the report.

6. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 1 October 2024 (subject to confirmation by the Full Council on 7 March).

It was noted that the other three harbour committees now met during the day, and it was asked if the members were also interested in holding this committee during working hours.

It was noted that it was usual for this committee to meet at 5.30pm on a Tuesday, and it would not be practical for it to be held earlier in the day due to the other commitments of some members. Therefore, it was agreed to leave the time as it currently was.

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm and concluded at 6.10pm.

<u>CHAIR</u>

Agenda Item 7

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee	
DATE	1st October 2024	
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters	
AUTHOR	Senior Harbours Officer	

1. Introduction.

- 1.1 The Committees main function is to consider, discuss and advise on matters relating to the management, safety and development of the Harbour and to receive Member's observations on matters relating to Porthmadog Harbour.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update for the attention of the Committee on harbour matters for the period March 2024 to October 2024, in order to receive feedback from the members on safety matters and the operational matters of the Harbour.
- 1.3 The Porthmadog Harbour Committee is a statutory Harbour Committee, set up in accordance with Section 6(2) (a-j) of the Porthmadog Harbour Revision Order 1998. The order provides that fifteen (15) members serve on the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee. A comprehensive list of the groups and organisations represented on the Harbour committee can be seen in the Harbour Order.
- 1.4 The Harbour Committee's of Abermaw, Aberdyfi and Pwllheli were established under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act of 1972.

2. Porthmadog Moorings and Boat Registration.

- 2.1 There have been 109 boats on annual moorings within the harbour of Porthmadog in 2024. This compares with 106 boats on moorings in 2023.
- 2.2 As last year, there has been an increase in the number of customers wishing to have a mooring at Porthmadog harbour. It is hoped that this upward trend will continue in 2025.
- 2.3 The majority of the public wishing to register their powered watercraft to use along the Gwynedd coastline now do so on-line, through the Cyngor Gwynedd website. This season 1013 power boats and 1044 personal watercraft were registered. In addition to these figures, 84 power vessels with an engine rated under 10hp were also registered, making a total of 2141 of registrations for the season.
- 2.4 This number of vessel registrations is less than last year when a total of 2509 watercraft were registered. The unseasonal weather we have experienced this year, in association with the existing financial climate, may well be factors in determining the reduction in vessel registrations this season.

3. Port Marine Safety Code.

3.1. The Port Marine Safety Code ('PMSC') sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the port marine environment. It applies to all Statutory Harbour Authorities.

The Code represents good practice as recognised by a wide range of industry stakeholders and Gwynedd Council understands that a failure to adhere to good practice may be indicative of a harbour authority being in breach of certain legal duties.

3.2 The Service regularly reviews the Port Marine Safety Code for the harbours under its jurisdiction in order to remain in full compliance with the current requirements of the Code. As part of the review process, it is necessary to receive the comments and views of Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Port Marine Safety Code and to regularly receive observations on its contents, particularly with relevance to the harbour activities, navigational aids, suitability of by-laws, safety matters and general day to day work at Porthmadog Harbour.

4. Staffing Matters.

The staffing level at the harbour of Porthmadog has remained unchanged since the previous report to the Committee. The Harbourmaster Mr Malcolm Humphreys is supported in his work by the assistant harbourmaster Mr Richard Hughes. Despite the unseasonal weather, the harbour staff have been busy over the summer period. As and when necessary the staff have also assisted staff working at Barmouth harbour and on the beach at Morfa Bychan.

4.1 The Service is also able to call upon staff based at the harbours of Abermaw and Aberdyfi to assist with any work in the harbour of Porthmadog if required.

5. Financial Matters.

- 5.1 A brief summary of the harbour budget and current financial situation up to the end of the quarter will be provided by the Maritime manager.
- 5.2 During this period it was necessary to commit financial resources for the following;
 - Maintenance of navigational aids and beacons
 - Purchase and Maintenance of harbour tools and equipment
 - Inspection and maintenance of Council moorings
 - Maintenance and operation of the of Harbour Powercat patrol vessel
 - Maintenance of the vessel 'Dwyfor'. Investment to maintain the boat in order to meet the Code of Practice requirements and maintain lifting apparatus.
 - Maintenance of lands and benches

5.3 **Fees and Charges. 2025/26.**

With regard to the prospective fees and charges for Porthmadog Harbour together with the Powerboat and Personal Watercraft launching fees for 2025/2026 season, on previous occasions the Service has adjusted fees in line with the prevailing rate of inflation at the time. However, no decision has yet been made with regard to the level of fees to be applied next season.

 Harbourmasters Report. The Harbourmaster at Porthmadog will provide a summary of the Navigational and Operational matters undertaken and encountered during the period March 2024
October 2024 inclusive, including maintenance issues. A copy of his report is attached.

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee		
DATE	1 st October 2024		
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report		
AUTHOR	M.Humphreys Porthmadog Harbourmaster		

H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 The navigable channel to the harbour of Porthmadog has been monitored by harbour staff over the summer period. The channel approach from seaward has remained relatively stable, with little re-positioning of the navigational aids required.
- 1.2 Harbour staff will continue to monitor the course of the channel and move the navigational aids as and when necessary, to ensure the aids to navigation provide the safest route in and out of the harbour.
- 1.3 The Service advises that all necessary navigational marks are currently on station and there are currently no Notice to Mariners in being.
- 1.4 The Service would like to remind mariners of the need to navigate the channel 1.5 hours either side of high water when navigating a vessel with a draft exceeding 1.5 metres.
- 1.5 Mariners are also reminded that contact should be made with the harbour office prior to any approach or departure from the harbour, to obtain the latest navigational and weather information. Any changes to the navigational aids will be circulated via Local Notice to Mariners.

H 2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 Vessel movements have continued throughout the summer period, with visiting vessels accommodated on the 'trot moorings' within the inner harbour and on the pontoon structure belonging to the Madog yacht Club.
- 2.2 Unseasonal weather has been a continuing trend this summer with rain accompanied by south-westerly winds a predominant feature. This has affected the number of visitors seen in the harbour this year.
- 2.3. On Friday 21st June, harbour staff were called to assist a local sailing vessel near Morannedd beach, Criccieth, as the skipper had fallen unwell whilst sailing the vessel. With the assistance of Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) vessels, the yacht was anchored a distance from the beach and the skipper safely recovered from the vessel.
- 2.3.1 Unfortunately later that day, during efforts by the owner to recover the vessel, the propeller became fouled, and the vessel became overrun by the tidal waves. It then washed ashore onto the beach.

- 2.3.2 The vessel was subsequently recovered from Morannedd beach on the 9th July by a local vehicle recovery firm utilising heavy lifting equipment, in consultation with the owners insurance company.
- 2.4 On Monday 24th June, a local sailing vessel got into difficulties in the Porthmadog channel whilst heading out to sea. The vessel became stranded on a sandbank causing damage to the hull below the waterline and it thereupon took on water.
- 2.4.1 With the assistance of Criccieth lifeboat, the occupants of the vessel were safely removed ashore, before the vessel became submerged.
- 2.4.2 In association with Holyhead Coastguard, harbour staff followed all necessary procedures in dealing with the incident, and later towed the stricken vessel closer inshore towards Borth-Y-Gest, where the damage to the hull could be better examined.
- 2.4.3 Upon observation of the hull damage, the owner decided that the vessel was beyond economic repair and with the help of harbour staff and local contractors, the vessel was towed further inshore and thereafter removed from the water at the owner's expense.
- 2.5 The Service wish to thank the firm of Robert Owen Marine Porthmadog, for the continued provision of a personal watercraft. The craft has greatly assisted the maritime staff in overseeing safe operations at the vessel launch site on the beach at Morfa Bychan, and with personal watercraft movements in the Porthmadog Channel.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 Before the start of the busy season, maintenance work on the large, heavy ground chain on the bed of the harbour and the associated harbour moorings, was completed by local mooring contractor.
- 3.2 A programme of inspection of the navigation marks in the channel is to be undertaken by the harbour staff during the winter period. Navigation marks will be lifted and where required, brought ashore for refurbishment.
- 3.2.1 The much larger 'safe water' navigation mark, known as the 'Fairway buoy', located at the seaward side of the channel, is to be lifted by a local contractor for maintenance. A new lantern for the buoy is now required at what will be a net cost to the Service of £800.
- 3.2.2 The Maritime Service currently awaits an annual audit of the navigational marks and associated maintenance records by officers from the Lighthouse Authority, Trinity House. The audit is scheduled for late autumn. The Committee will be advised of the result of the audit, once the inspection has taken place and a report on their findings received.
- 3.3 Before the start of the busy summer period, work was undertaken to repair the broken and lifted paving slabs located around the harbour environment. The extensive work was undertaken by a local company at a net cost to the Service of £3349.

3.4 Benches around the harbour environment continue to be refurbished as and when required. The service continues to receive requests for the placement of benches around the harbour with only limited space available.

H 4 Other Matters

- 4.1 **Donation**: A family of blacksmiths from the Wrexham area of North Wales, have made and donated a metal structure in the form of a Dragon named 'Dixie' to the Maritime Service. The donation has been made with the strict intention that the structure be situated on the harbour area at Porthmadog, in recognition of family memories at the harbour.
- 4.1.1 The structure is to be mounted on a slate plinth and located in a secure and safe position on the harbour, where all harbour users will be able to see it.
- 4.2 **Harbour Security:** The Service has received an upgrade in the CCTV system installed around the harbour area at a cost of £2290. New hardware and cameras have been installed and a further camera has been relocated to provide a better view of the harbour area.
- 4.3 **Harbour Compound:** Work has begun to tidy the harbour compound situated to the rear of the harbour office. A new set of gates is to be installed at the entrance to the compound during the winter period, and a concrete surface put in place within the existing fenced area.
- 4.3.1 Griselinia hedging is to be placed adjacent to the side of the compound facing the slipway, to conceal the fencing when viewed from outside of the compound. In so doing, it is hoped to make the area more visually appealing.
- 4.4 **Car Park**: The Service is hoping to upgrade the 'pay and display' machine, situated in the car park at the rear of the harbour office. The machine, which currently accepts coinage, is to be adapted to receive a 'chip and pin' facility during the winter period. The net cost of the work in providing the facility is estimated to be in the region of £4000.
- 4.5 **Borth-Y-Gest.** The Service would like to remind harbour users of the need for the gates to remain in the closed position during the winter period.

H5 Events

- 5.1 The following events were among those held at the harbour during the summer period;
 - RNLI Lifeboat Day
 - Celtic Longboat events held by the Madog Yacht Club
 - Vintage Motorcycle event
- 5.2 The Service wish to advise organisers of proposed future events on harbour premises of the need to provide the relevant information about the event at the earliest

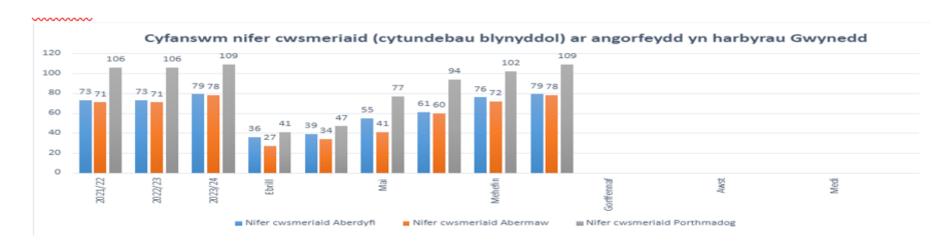
opportunity. This will assist the Service in determining authorisation, staffing and administration processes.

PORTMADOG HARBOUR	Financial Performance for the Period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 - August 2024 Review		
	BUDGET FOR THE PERIOD 1/4/24 TO 31/3/25	EXPENDITURE FORECASTED 1/4/24 TO 31/3/25	OVER (UNDER)
Employees	73,510	76,930	3,420
Buildings	28,590	9,912	(18,678)
Transport	800	39	(761)
Supplies & Services	13,660	30,518	16,858
One - Off Expenditure - Financed from Reserves.	0	525	525
Total Expenditure	116,560	117,923	1,363
Income Contribution from Reserves Towards One Off Costs	(86,110) 0	(80,900) (525)	5,210 (525)
Total Net	30,450	36,498	6,048

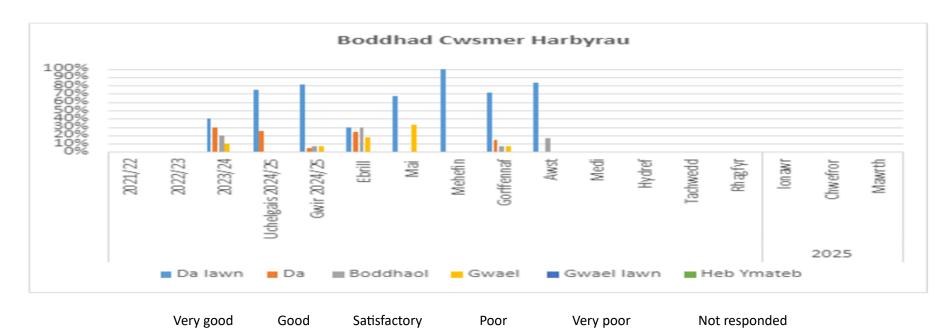
Economy and Community Performance Management Dashboard

Total number of customers (annual contracts) on moorings in Gwynedd Harbours

Dashfwrdd Rheoli Perfformiad Economi a Chymuned



The number of customers with a mooring contract increased by 6.5% in our harbours compared with the previous year, which is an increase from 250 to 266. The financial squeeze means that many customers have been attracted to Gwynedd because the cost is generally lower. Some customers have also returned following the end of Covid restrictions. A procedure of applying online for a mooring has been in operation since April 2023. A number of powerboat customers have also decided to have moorings rather than launching daily, which has contributed to keeping the number of moorings fairly stable. We have also managed to attract several new customers.



Harbours' Customer Satisfaction

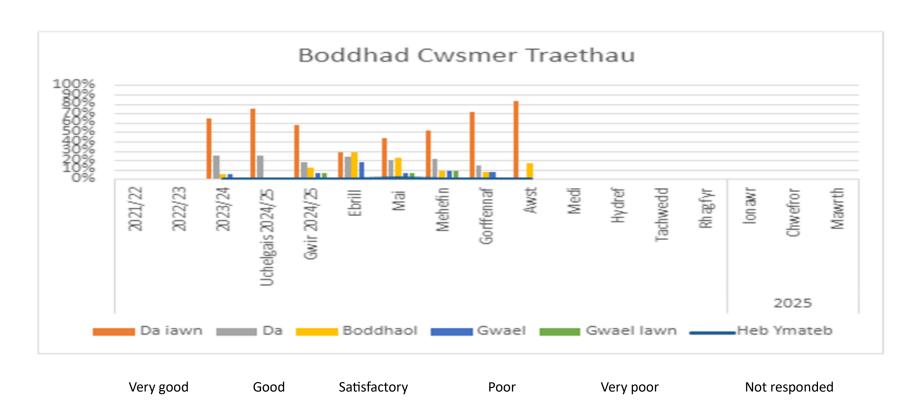
86% of the respondents were of the view that their experience of the harbours was 'Very Good' (81%) or 'Good' (5%) which is 23% higher than the percentage for the previous period. Positive comments were received about our officers' professionalism and attitude, with some stating that our officers are "knowledgeable" and had "gone out of their way to help".

Percentage of Navigation Aids within a harbour area and on the Cyngor Gwynedd coastline that were available on-site and in accordance with the Trinity House annual audit



Target 2024/25 / Actual 2024/25

No navigation aids were damaged or lost during the winter months, although many of them had to be re-positioned as navigable channels moved.



Customer Satisfaction – Beaches

76% of the respondents were of the view that their experience of Gwynedd beaches was 'Very Good' (58%) or 'Good' (18%) which is 16% lower than the percentage for the previous period. Many were of the opinion that the beaches are safe and clean, that staff are friendly and helpful and that there are effective management arrangements in operation. Some thought that dog mess, uncontrollable dogs and overflowing bins were a problem at some sites.

