

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	07 March 2018
TITLE	Update on Harbour Management Matters
AUTHOR	Maritime and Country Parks Officer

1. Port Marine Safety Code

- 1.1 The Safety Code is a 'live document' and is regularly reviewed by Service harbour staff. It is necessary for the Service to receive the comments and views of Consultative Committee Members on the suitability of the Marine Safety Code and to regularly receive observations on its contents, in order that it may be reviewed as relevant to the harbour activities, navigational aids, suitability of the by-laws, safety matters, and general day-to-day work at Porthmadog Harbour.
- 1.2 Between the 19 and 21 September 2017, a thorough inspection was carried out by the Coastguard Agency's auditors on the current safety arrangements and systems of Gwynedd municipal harbours in order to ensure compliance with the Ports Safety Code.
- 1.3 Following the Coastguard Agency's review which was undertaken in September 2017, the Service has received a subsequent report pursuant to the inspection by the external expert. A copy of the report is appended and the Service will implement the recommendations of the inspector in the coming months. The Committee members' observations on the content of the report are welcomed.
- 1.4 As reported to the Consultative Committee in October, the inspectors' initial opinion was that the Council complied generally with the requirements, but that some aspects relating to recording duties and noting the Duty Holder and Designated Person needed to be revised.
- 1.5 During the inspection, the inspectors visited the harbours of Aberdyfi, Porthmadog (the centre of the inspection work) and Pwllheli. They did not visit Barmouth due to time restrictions.
- 1.6 It is emphasised that no improvement notice was issued relating to serious safety issues or shortcomings at the harbour. The inspectors noted that there was an opportunity to improve the general appearance of the area around Aberdyfi harbour quay as effects and ropes have been left on the quay in a way that could pose a risk. Service staff must address these matters during the winter months. Observations were submitted regarding the lack of the width of the channel in Pwllheli harbour. No observations were submitted on Safety matters in Porthmadog harbour.
- 1.7 Although the Ports Safety Code is regularly reviewed by the service, Members of the Consultative Committee must be reminded of their duty to submit observations on the suitability of the Safety Code and to receive observations on the work arrangements of the harbours so that the Safety Code can be reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to harbour operations, local propriety
- 1.8 The Coastguard Agency inspectors will revisit the Council next Autumn. It is intended for a follow up to the review to be held at the same date as a meeting of the Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee; members of all of Gwynedd's Harbour Consultative Committees will be invited to the meeting to be given a presentation from the inspectors on matters

related to the Port Marine Safety Code. This will also be an opportunity for Members of the Consultative Committee to ask the experts about matters related to the Port Marine Safety Code and for the Inspectors to confirm the responsibilities for the content and operation of the Safety Code.

2. Operational Issues

- 2.1.1 It is anticipated that a detailed inspection will be carried out on the Barmouth navigational aids by Trinity House Lighthouse Authority inspectors on 14 August 2018.
- 2.1.2 Three Mariners' Notices are in operation in Porthmadog harbour.
- 2.1.3 52°52.543' N 004°09.620' W Port Navigation Aid - Number 2 QFI R is not in its proper station.
- 2.1.4 52°54.021'N 004°09.137'W Starboard Navigation Aid - Number 9 FI G 4 (15s) is not in its proper station.
- 2.1.5 52°52.746'N 004° 09.211'W Port Navigation Aid - Number 4 FI R (2s) is not in its proper station.
- 2.1.6 The Dwyfor vessel was being maintained to ensure that the boat complied with the Code that was relevant to working vessels. The Navigational Aids will be relocated once the work on Y Dwyfor has been completed.
- 2.1.7 The Navigational Aids maintenance work programme has been completed in accordance with the agreement, instruction and guidance of the Consultative Committee. The Senior Harbours Officer will give Members an update on the current situation at the meeting.
- 2.1.8 The Porthmadog Harbour navigation channel has changed considerably over the winter months. The Service regularly inspects the channel at low tide in order to try to ensure that the navigational aids are in the most suitable location. Due to constant changes to channel, ensuring that the aids are in the proper position is very challenging.

2.2 Maintenance

- 2.2.1 The Senior Harbour Master will introduce the maintenance work programme he carried out at Porthmadog Harbour during the October - December 2017 period, along with an outline of the work to be carried out during the January - February 2018 period. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.
- 2.2.2 Tree roots are causing concern and are a risk in the harbour area. The harbour staff have received instructions to ensure that the risk posed to walkers because of the unstable nature of the paving slabs is reduced without delay.
- 2.2.3 All moorings in the harbour have been inspected by a Diving company. It has been identified that there is a need to renew 35 moorings. A quotation has been received for chains and shackles and the most competitive quotation is £5,100. It is anticipated that the work of installing the new moorings will be around £3,000

2.3 **Staffing Matters**

- 2.3.1 The employment period of the Porthmadog Harbour Assistant (seasonal) ended on the 30 September 2017. To ensure assistance with harbour work over the winter months, the contract was extended and came to an end on 31 December 2017.
- 2.3.2 At the beginning of January 2018, a request was received from the Caernarfon Harbour Trust asking for the right to discuss the temporary work contract with the Harbour Trust. The request was approved and the Officer is now employed by the Harbour Trust. This is advantageous to the Harbour as it will increase the Officer's experience by working in another harbour and we are confident that this experience will contribute to the knowledge and experience of working in other harbours in Gwynedd.
- 2.3.3 It is also a pleasure to report that the former Barmouth Harbour Assistant (seasonal) has accepted a post with the Coastguard Agency in Holyhead. His experience of working with the Gwynedd harbours team had increased his experience and given him a strong foundation in his job application. We wish them both the very best.
- 2.3.4 As part of the wider team, the seasonal harbour assistant (Aberdyfi) is continuing with the work contract and will be part of the wider team within the Maritime and Country Parks Service and will support and enable the Service to respond to incidents and complete the maintenance work programme at Aberdyfi and Barmouth harbours.
- 2.3.5 It is anticipated that the posts will return to a full-time basis in the harbours of Porthmadog, Barmouth and Aberdyfi on the 1st of April 2018 until 30 September 2018. The Maritime Service has seven full-time staff members and one who works part-time (admin) with nine staff members at Hafan.

2.4 **Other matters**

- 2.4.1 **Safety Signs.** The Service, jointly with the RNLI, has carried out a detailed review of all safety signage in the Harbour near the Morfa Bychan beach. In response to the inspection and in consultation with the RNLI, the Service intends to order new signs to be erected on several sites around the area of the harbour that abuts Black Rock Beach.
- 2.4.2 The main signs will be erected on the Main Entrance and the Ffordd Gwydryn access with smaller signs erected near Black Rock (coast path), the Greenacres access and the Cwt Powdr area.
- 2.4.3 It is anticipated that the total costs of the signage will be £4,000 with a cost of £500 (excl. VAT) for the design and preparatory work, i.e. preparing the templates. The signs will be sent to the harbour by the middle of June 2018 and it is very much hoped that the main safety signs will be in place before the main school holiday period. Due to the nature of the beach at Black Rock Sands, it is anticipated that there the signs will need to be removed from the site during winter months to reduce potential damage from severe weather. The expenditure was funded through the TAIS scheme, which is the Welsh Government Tourism fund.

3. **Financial Matters**

- 3.1 A summary of the Harbour budget is attached reporting on the current financial position. The financial position as at the end of February 2018 will be circulated at the meeting.
- 3.2 **Fees and Charges 2018/19.** The spreadsheet for Porthmadog Harbour proposed fees in 2018 has already been submitted to the Harbour Committee for comment. It was reported that the Harbour inflation for 2018/19 was anticipated to be at 1.85%, the percentage inflation has been revised following a number of factors that affect inflation. It is confirmed that the inflation rate for Porthmadog harbour in 2018/19 will increase to 2.19% with the average inflation rate for Gwynedd harbours being 2.9%. This means that the harbour's income target will increase to £79,180 in 2018/19.
- 3.3 The service has already corresponded with the harbour customers, the intention is to suggest that the fees and payments should continue to increase by 2% on average for the 2018/19 financial year. As there may be a deficit in the income, there will be a need to ensure that the Service identifies alternative income opportunities and reduces possible spending during the next financial year.
- 3.4 In 2017 the Council was required to charge a fee for every mooring, for all Harbours under the control and responsibility of the Council. The fee has been added by the Crown Estate which claims £25.00 from each individual with a mooring in the harbour. It is a requirement that the Council, as the Harbour Authority, charge and collect this fee on behalf of the Crown Estate. There is no VAT on the additional fee. The additional fee is also payable on visitor moorings and this payment will need to be funded via the Harbour budget.
- 3.5 As the agreement with the Crown Agent had not been confirmed, the fee was not payable in 2017/18. It is anticipated that a new lease will be confirmed by the Crown's Agent during 2018 and therefore the additional fee will be payable by all mooring holders.