

MEETING	Abermaw Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	24th March 2020
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
AUTHOR	Abermaw Harbourmaster

1. Navigational Issues

- 1.1. Throughout the winter period the navigational aids marking the channel approach to Abermaw harbour have, for the most part remained on station. The exception to this was the Port hand mark No 2 Buoy, which washed ashore at Fairbourne Point, at the same time and in the same location as the new Fairbourne outfall starboard hand buoy, owned by Welsh Water. Local Notice to Mariners were issued regarding these navigational aids and it is hoped to have the buoys back on station as soon as possible in conjunction with Welsh water and the mooring contractor.
- 1.2 In accordance with routine maintenance, it is anticipated that the navigation marks in the channel will be subject to inspection during the forthcoming months. This includes the Perch Rock South Cardinal Mark and the Breakwater Perch Navigational aid. Subject to the working commitments of an appointed mooring contractor, any worn or damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced. It is also the intention of the Service to renew the ski markers present in the estuary situated near to the rail bridge.
- 1.3 The current illustration of the navigable channel is similar to that as issued last September. Further surveys of the navigable channel are expected to be undertaken before the Easter period and any necessary movement of the channel marks will be undertaken thereafter. The Service regularly inspects the channel at low tide in addition to utilising the harbour patrol craft whenever practicable to conduct surveys, in order to ensure that the navigational aids are in the most suitable location.

2. Operational Issues

- 2.1 Staff working on behalf of Network Rail are currently in the process of conducting detailed surveys of the required work to be undertaken on the Abermaw rail bridge. Two safety boats are in attendance whilst this process is being undertaken. Once completed, a better understanding of the extent and scope of the works is expected together with the machinery and access routes required to perform the refurbishment of the structure.
- 2.1.1 It is understood that a number of gabion boxes will be removed as part of the programme of works to be conducted on the bridge, which, is to extend over a three year period. Although the existing gabion boxes are to be returned in due course, the Service understands that no additional gabion boxes will be put in place during the works programme.
- 2.2 Harbour staff will continue to liaise and seek assistance from the relevant managers and staff based at the local caravan parks in an effort to combat the anti-social use of personal watercraft on the near coastline and within harbour limits during the summer season. To assist in the process, the harbour 'Powercat' patrol vessel has recently been upgraded for operations 'at sea' and subject to operational guidelines and certificated

restrictions, will now be able to patrol beyond the Maritime and Coastguard Agency defined 'Categorised Waters' for the estuary.

3. Moorings

- 3.1. Harbour Staff will continue to number the moorings located in the harbour and identify the position of each mooring. The local mooring contractor is aware of the need to undertake such a task and of the requirement to report to the harbourmaster should there be a direct approach from a customer to install. Harbour users are reminded of byelaw 4 of the Aberdyfi and Barmouth Harbour Byelaws 1985 which states that; *"No person shall lay or cause to be laid within the harbour moorings for any vessel without the written permission of the harbour master and in accordance with the terms of that permission"*.
- 3.2 It is unfortunate that the service has received a number of incomplete mooring confirmation forms which have had to be returned to individual customers. In consequence the service wish to remind harbour users of the need to comply with Byelaw No 5 of the Aberdyfi and Abermaw Harbour Byelaws 1985 which states that; *"The owner of mooring equipment shall inspect his mooring equipment annually in order to ensure that it is in good working order, and he shall produce to the Council a Certificate to this effect when applying for reallocation of mooring"*.
- 3.3 The Service is aware of a derelict mooring located near to the 'Clockhouse' upstream of Barmouth rail bridge. Ownership of the mooring is known to the harbourmaster and arrangements are to be made in conjunction with the owner and mooring contractor to have the mooring replaced or removed.

4. Maintenance

- 4.1 The harbour railings protecting the quayside and the associated harbour ladders on the quay wall have received damage from vessels moored on the quayside during the recent winter storms. The Harbourmaster has been in contact with the owners of the vessels concerned with a view to recovering costs incurred as part of the repair process which is yet to be completed.
- 4.2 The harbour barrier which provides access to the harbour front and diesel pump area has also been damaged requiring maintenance work to be carried out by harbour staff. This occurred when an unknown vehicle reversed into the barrier. The matter was reported to North Wales Police at the time, but so far inquiries undertaken have failed to identify the vehicle responsible.
- 4.3 The Service has been in contact with Gwynedd Consultancy (Coastal Protection) regarding required repairs to the ferry steps on the harbour front. Members of that department have examined the steps and the Service awaits further information with regard to when the repairs will be carried out at this time. The situation will be monitored until the repairs have been effected.
- 4.4 The winter storms, in particular the named storms 'Ciara' and 'Dennis' were responsible for damage to the safety railings and the Highway situated towards the North end of the promenade. Harbour staff did commence repairs to the railings in that area however

following severe additional damage caused on the 12th March this work will be suspended pending a full inspection by engineers. The harbour staff continue to monitor the slipway and surrounding area at the North end of the promenade which is particularly prone to the growth of algae as repair works are undertaken.

- 4.5 The Harbourmaster will summarise the maintenance work programme carried out at Abermaw harbour during the period October 2019 – March 2020.

5. Other Matters

- 5.1 **Harbour Dredging.** At the previous Harbour Consultative Committee meeting, it was agreed to discuss the possibility of harbour dredging operations and an opportunity was identified to apply for funding from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (Cardigan Bay Fisheries Local Action Group) to carry out an option appraisal in respect of siltation levels within the main navigational channel.

- 5.1.1 In a subsequent meeting of interested parties, it was agreed that a draft 'expression of interest' would be prepared and circulated for comment in an effort to secure such funding. This has since been undertaken. At the time of writing this report, it is proposed to submit the relevant paperwork before 11th March, in advance of the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) meeting on 18th March.

- 5.2 **Fisherman's Compound.** The Service are currently assisting users of the compound in the clearance of unwanted waste materials from the site. Once completed, it is the intention of the Service to review and re-enforce the extent of individual harbour plots. In this respect, the Service wish to remind compound users of the requirement to keep individual plots clean and tidy, in compliance with relevant Health and Safety Legislation and in accordance with the terms and agreement undertaken with the Service.

- 5.3 **Harbour Parking.** The Service continues to appoint designated parking bays on Compound Road to assist water based Commercial Operators to continue their activities within the harbour environment, whilst keeping the harbour frontage clear of commercial vehicles. As reported previously, the Service advises that for the purposes of cost recovery and maintenance, a charge at a rate yet to be determined is to be requested from commercial operators utilising the parking facility.

- 5.3.1 The Harbour Authority would like to remind service users of the need to maintain an effective use of the barrier sited at the entrance to the facility, in order to prevent indiscriminate parking by unauthorised users.

- 5.3.2 Assistance has been and will continue to be sought from enforcement officers as and when required, to facilitate free and unobstructed access to the slipway for harbour users, in respect of the road markings by the 'SS Dora' building and harbour slipway approach.

- 5.4 **Sand. Maritime** Service personnel installed chestnut paling fencing at strategic points on the beach over the winter period in order to reduce sand and in order to encourage dune development in this area. The aim of the fencing is to prevent excessive wind blown sand from encroaching onto the promenade, road, car park and harbour frontage. Similar fencing has also been erected to prevent sand from covering the access to Ynys

Y Brawd. Early indications show that the project has been a worthwhile venture, but the situation will continue to be monitored.

5.5 **Car Park Winter Storage of Vessels.** The option provided by the Service for the winter storage of vessels on the car park near to the Leisure Centre has not been taken up by any owners of vessels this winter. Following on from the previous year when only two vessels occupied the facility, the service is now reviewing the viability of the option.

6. Events

6.1 To date, applications have been received to hold the following events at Barmouth Harbour in 2020:-

- Three Peaks Yacht Race
- Charity Jet-Ski Event Porthmadog - Abermaw – Aberdyfi (Black Rock Blast)
- Kite Festival
- Abermaw Food Festival
- Motorcross Event
- Paddle Sports Festival
- Swim Society 'Hurly Burly Event'

6.2 The Service would like to remind members that it is essential the Harbour Authority is advised and permission sought for any proposed event in the Harbour at the earliest opportunity.