

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	5th October 2021
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
AUTHOR	M. Humphreys Porthmadog Harbourmaster

H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 The course of the navigable channel into the harbour has, in the main, been the same over the summer period, but a gradual movement of the channel entrance towards the direction of Harlech has been observed.
- 1.2 The course of the navigable channel will continue to be monitored and if necessary, with the appropriate consent from Trinity House, the Fairway buoy will be re-positioned towards Harlech to bring it more in line with the channel approach from seaward.
- 1.3 There are currently two Local Notice to Mariners in force concerning the navigation marks in the channel.
 - 1.3.1 Local Notice to Mariners No 1/21. The Starboard aid to Navigation No 3 Buoy at position 52° 53.177'N - 004° 09. 910'W is currently not on station.
 - 1.3.2 Local Notice to Mariners No 18/21. The Starboard aid to navigation No 5 Buoy located at position 52° 53.786'N - 004° 09. 339'W is currently not on station. This particular buoy had to be removed from the channel having suffered what appeared to be collision damage, causing the buoy to become partially submerged.
- 1.4 Following consent received from Trinity House, the Port aid to navigation buoy No 6 at position 52° 53.662'N - 004° 09. 509'W and the Starboard aid to navigation buoy No 11 at position 52° 54.449'N - 004° 08.965'W, were commissioned into service to assist mariners in safely negotiating the channel.
- 1.5 The Service is to receive its annual inspection of the Navigational Aids within the Harbour of Porthmadog and the channel approach by Trinity House staff on the 27th September 2021. A report on their findings will follow. The result of the report will be relayed to the Harbour Committee once received.
- 1.6 Mariners are reminded of the need to navigate the channel 1.5 hours either side of high water when navigating a vessel with a draft in excess of 1.5 metres. Mariners are also reminded that contact should be made with the harbour office prior to any departure or approach, to obtain the latest navigational and weather information.

H 2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 **Summer Season:** The harbour has seen a significant number of visitors to the area during this year, caused by the effect of the coronavirus restrictions on travel abroad. The harbour staff have been on constant watch both ashore and afloat, to ensure the safety of persons enjoying the environment, with regular patrols undertaken in the Porthmadog Channel.

- 2.1.1 Whilst the vast majority of visitors to the area were respectful of the harbour environment, there was a noticeable increase in the number of incidents of staff subjected to verbal abuse or gestures during the performance of their duties. The wanton discharge of litter around the harbour, and the ignorance of the existing Coronavirus epidemic by certain individuals has also been of concern.
- 2.1.2 The car park at the rear of the harbour office has been indicative of the busy summer period with an average income of £700.00 week, in what is a relatively small parking area.
- 2.2.1 **Mv Dwyfor:** As a consequence of necessary structural and mechanical repairs, the harbour vessel 'Dwyfor' has been out of service for the better part of the season.
- 2.2.2 In order for the vessel to comply with existing workboat legislation, a new bulkhead was required to be put in place between the engine bay and the cargo compartment. The vessel also required new main decking, including internal support structures installed aft of the wheelhouse, to a point aft of the engine bay. The work has been undertaken at a local boatyard at Pwllheli.
- 2.2.3 For the structural work to be conducted, the engine had to be lifted out of the vessel. Maintenance of the engine was then undertaken by a local marine engineering firm at Pwllheli, who also supplied and fitted a new propeller shaft to replace the existing worn shaft.
- 2.2.4 The vessel has now been returned to service with the extensive work undertaken on the vessels completed at a total cost of £15,212.53 to the Service
- 2.2.5 During the absence of the vessel 'Dwyfor' external contractor support has been utilised to assist in the movement of navigation marks when required.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 Inspection and maintenance of the moorings in the harbour was carried out at the beginning of April to enable the mooring contractor to replace any worn equipment. In total sixty-six (66) riser chains were found to be in need of replacement together with a number of mooring buoys which were also replaced. The total cost of the operation to the Service was £4740.00
- 3.2 The harbour grounds including grass verges and hedges have been maintained throughout the busy period. With the agreement of members of the Canolfan, harbour staff now undertake the maintenance of the grass verge bordering the harbour walkway adjacent to the harbour-side wall of the Canolfan. The harbour slipway has also been subject to regular maintenance.
- 3.3 The harbourmaster will introduce the maintenance work programme to be carried out at Porthmadog harbour during the period October 2021 – February 2022. Feedback from Committee members is requested on any additional work that will need to be considered and included in the work programme.

H 4 Other Matters

4.1 **Department of Transport Consultation Paper:** The Service wishes to bring to the attention of Committee members the Department of Transport consultation paper on “Strengthening enforcement of the dangerous use of recreational and personal watercraft”. In essence the consultation paper proposes altering legislation to bring recreational and personal watercraft within the scope of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, to ensure safe practices. The document is available for viewing on the United Kingdom government website by following the below link:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-enforcement-of-the-dangerous-use-of-recreational-and-personal-watercraft

4.1.1 Any comments should be sent to maritimesafety@dft.gov.uk.

4.1.2 The consultation closes at 11:45 pm on 1st November 2021.

4.2 **Harbour Benches:** Benches around the harbour environment have been refurbished with further work still to be completed. The service continues to receive requests for the placement of benches around the harbour and at Borth –Y-Gest, but there is only limited space available. A review of the matter is being undertaken by the Service and in consequence no further requests are being considered at this time.

4.3 **Beach Cleaning:** The Service remains grateful for the help received from local groups and individuals who have undertaken beach cleaning activities on the nearby beach of Black Rock Sands.

4.4 **Harbour Byelaws.** The Service continues to work towards updating the Porthmadog harbour Byelaws in association with the Legal department of Gwynedd Council.

H5 Events

5.1 Although a number of film and television companies have visited the area surrounding the harbour and nearby Black Rock Sands, proposed events scheduled to take place at the harbour this year were cancelled due to the continuing effects of the Coronavirus epidemic.