

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>07 March 2023</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Harbourmasters Report</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>M.Humphreys Porthmadog Harbourmaster</b>

## **H 1 Navigational Issues**

- 1.1 Harbour staff have continued to monitor the course of the navigable channel over the winter period. Fundamentally, the course of the channel has remained unchanged. However, of late, the dynamics of the river in association with tidal flow, has seen the seaward entrance to the channel beginning to move in the direction of Criccieth at the mouth of the river.
- 1.2 In consequence, should this trend continue, the existing position of the number two (2) Port Hand aid to navigation will require review. Additionally, it may be necessary to deploy the number three (3) Starboard Hand aid to navigation which is currently classified as an occasional buoy, to assist mariners in the area of the channel entrance.
- 1.3 There is currently one Local Notice to Mariners in force:
- 1.3.1 Local Notice to Mariners No 11/22. The No 2 Port Hand aid to navigation located at position 52° 53.132'N - 004° 09. 742'W is currently off station.
- 1.3.2 Following recovery from Harlech sands, the number two (2) Port Hand aid has been refurbished and is ready for deployment. Dependent upon available staffing and with favourable weather and tidal conditions the aid to navigation will be returned to the channel as soon as possible in a suitable location.
- 1.4 Harbour staff will continue to monitor the course of the channel and move the navigational aids as and when necessary, to provide the safest route in and out of harbour. As the Spring season approaches, it is hoped the course of the navigable channel will settle down.
- 1.5 An inspector from Trinity House attended the harbour on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to conduct an audit of the records of the availability of the local aids to navigation under the management of Gwynedd Council. Following the inspection, a report was received to state that everything was found in good order and there were no matters arising which require further comment.
- 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 exceeding 1.5 metres. Mariners are also reminded that contact should be made with the harbour office prior to any approach, to obtain the latest navigational information. Changes to any of the navigational aids will be circulated via Local Notice to Mariners.

## **H 2 Operational Issues**

- 2.1 Throughout the winter period vessel movements in the harbour and channel approaches have been extremely limited.
- 2.2 Over the winter period and during the winter storms two craft moored on South Snowdon Wharf (Cei Newydd) and one small powerboat moored in the inner harbour took on seawater and became swamped. All three craft were subsequently recovered and re-floated without any pollution to the harbour waters.
- 2.3 It is anticipated that those vessels currently ashore in the boatyards will gradually be returned to the water as the Easter period arrives. From the number of enquiries made at the harbour office over the winter period for the availability of moorings, the service is hopeful of a busy forthcoming season, despite the continuing effects of the coronavirus.
- 2.4 In accordance with Maritime and Coastguard Agency requirements, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023, staff from an approved and appointed secondary oil spill response provider, placed a containment boom across the inner harbour entrance in collaboration with harbour staff.
  - 2.4.1 The purpose of the exercise was to review and update the 'booming plan' for the harbour, in the event of a large scale oil pollution incident, as part of the oil pollution emergency response plan for the harbour.

## **H 3 Maintenance**

- 3.1 Maintenance of the harbour moorings is expected to be conducted before the busy season commences, following an underwater inspection of the condition of the moorings present in the harbour.
- 3.2 Two new quayside ladders are to be installed to replace those that are now beyond maintenance along the harbour quay wall. Construction of the ladders is being undertaken by a local metalworker with delivery currently awaited.
- 3.3 The vessel Mv Dwyfor is currently undergoing maintenance by harbour staff. The vessel is to be fitted with a new propeller before the busy season, and enquiries are currently on-going in relation to this matter with a marine company at Caernarfon.
- 3.4 The harbour 'Powercat' patrol vessel, which is coded for operations at sea, is in the process of receiving two new outboard engines. The work is being carried out by a local company in Porthmadog.
  - 3.4.1 Due to a change in vessel coding Regulations, it is now necessary for the 'Powercat' vessel to undergo an assessment of its construction before vessel coding arrangements can be completed. The assessment is to be made by an approved certifying body, on behalf of the UK Government, to check compliance with regulatory standards.

- 3.4.2 Following assessment, it is anticipated that the 'Powercat' vessel will be fully coded for operations at sea again in time for the Easter period.
- 3.5 The small tender vessel utilised by harbour staff has been removed from the water for annual maintenance. The vessel will be ready in time for the Easter period.
- 3.6 Benches around the harbour environment continue to be refurbished with further work still to be completed. 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 **Traeth Morfa Bychan.** The Service has received notification of a shipment of a large transformer for delivery to Trawsfynydd power station. In a similar manner to the shipment that occurred on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the vessel undertaking the shipment is expected to undertake a beach landing at Morfa Bychan in late June / early July 2023, when tidal conditions are optimal. The transformer will then be taken by road to the power station.
- 4.2 It has once again been necessary for harbour staff to attend the main entrance to the beach on numerous occasions over the winter period to gather and clear away rubbish and general household waste that has been indiscriminately dumped and deposited in and around the base of the waste collection receptacles located by the toilet facilities.

#### **H5 Events**

- 5.1 Although anticipated, the Service are yet to be notified of any forthcoming events proposed to take place at Porthmadog Harbour this year. The Service would like to remind event organisers of the need to provide early notification of any proposed event and submission for approval.
- 5.2 In considering the approval of any event, the Service will give due regard to the prevailing circumstances and apply any restrictions, impositions or limitations thereby necessary to ensure public and staff safety.