

MEETING	Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	24th October 2023
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
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H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 Prior to the start of the busy summer period, a newly refurbished 'Fairway' buoy was placed into its correct charted position on the approach to the navigable channel from seaward. The buoy provides an identification of safe, deep water to mariners prior to entering the navigable channel to the harbour.
- 1.2 Due to the dynamic nature of the river Mawddach and the associated shifting sandbanks in the estuary, it is necessary for harbour staff to conduct regular surveys of the navigable channel to the harbour, to ensure the aids to navigation are correctly positioned.
 - 1.2.1 In monitoring the navigable channel during the summer, harbour staff identified the need to alter the positions of the Port and Starboard hand aids to navigation, forming what is known locally as the channel gate, at the seaward entrance of the buoyed channel. A local mooring contractor was then requested to undertake the work.
- 1.3 Harbour Staff will continue to monitor the movement of the sandbanks in the navigable channel and make changes to the positions of the aids to navigation as and when required. Up to date navigational information concerning the harbour of Barmouth and the channel approaches is published in Local Notice to Mariners issued by the harbour staff.
- 1.4 There are currently three Local Notice to Mariners in Force at Barmouth harbour:
 - 1.4.1 Local Notice to Mariners 06/23. This Notice provides information to mariners of the restoration works currently being undertaken on the rail bridge across the estuary.
 - 1.4.2 Local Notice to Mariners 07/23. Position 52°42.796'N 004°04.906'W. The light on the starboard hand aid to navigation, No 1 buoy, is currently unlit.
 - 1.4.3 Local Notice to Mariners 08/23. Position 52°42.767'N 004°03.760'W. The light on the port hand aid to navigation, No 8 buoy, is currently unlit.
 - 1.4.4 The Service await the imminent return of the navigation lights referred to above, which are being repaired under the manufacturer's warranty. Once received the lights will be re-fitted at the first opportunity.

H 2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 It is pleasing to note, that the harbour received many visiting vessels throughout the summer period. The vessels were accommodated on the visitors' moorings, which are in deep water within the main channel running through the harbour.
- 2.2 The Harbour 'Powercat' patrol vessel has been well used this season having had new Honda 40 hp engines at a net cost to the Service of a net cost of £12,293. A light bar and bilge alarms have also been fitted to the vessel at a net cost to the Service of £1393.54
 - 2.2.1 In conducting a patrol around the harbour aboard the vessel, staff have been communicating with mooring holders to locate abandoned moorings within the harbour. Any abandoned moorings identified have thereafter been lifted, providing capacity for new harbour customers.
 - 2.2.2 For ease of reference, harbour staff are continuing to liaise with harbour customers to number all moorings.
- 2.3 Work has been undertaken on the maritime road vehicle to effect repairs to the rear tailgate and reversing camera. The vehicle, which is essential for beach patrol duties during the summer months, is subject to regular safety checks undertaken by the fleet department of the Council.
 - 2.3.1 All road trailers used by the harbour staff have also been subject to safety inspection to ensure a high level of maintenance.
- 2.4 After experiencing communication difficulties with the harbour office VHF radio set, it became necessary to purchase a new radio base set and associated cabling at a net cost to the service of £286.45.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 Continued maintenance and daily inspection of the Harbour is carried out by Harbour Staff. Items that need urgent attention are addressed quickly and other items are added to our winter works plan.
- 3.2 Prior to the start of the busy period, the aids to navigation were maintained in addition to the visitors' moorings located in the harbour. It was necessary to purchase a new No 2 port hand aid to navigation at a net cost to the Service of £3338.00, due to the existing buoy having been destroyed beyond repair by strong waves.
 - 3.2.1 The maintenance work required the purchase of new mooring chains and anchors at a net cost of £3999.58, with the labour work carried out by a local mooring contractor at a net cost to the service of £4870.00.
- 3.3 To assist in preventing damage to a vessel and to protect the structure of the harbour quayside, staff have installed additional large rubber tyres on the quay wall. The tyre fenders have proved popular with harbour customers during the summer,

and they afford better protection to larger vessels moored against the quay wall during the winter period.

- 3.4 New parking bollards have been fitted to the compound road parking bays, to replace those originally installed which had been worn and damaged. The parking bays allow water based commercial operators an area to park during the busy summer months when parking spaces in and around the harbour are scarce.
- 3.5 Unseasonal weather amounting to strong winds in association with high tides, caused damage to warning signs located around the harbour structure which required immediate replacement. The warning signs provide important advice to both harbour and beach users and form an integral part of the harbour risk management strategy.
- 3.6 The Service has purchased new benches for the harbour frontage to replace those that were beyond repair. The new benches which have cost in excess of £2000, are made from recycled plastic and have a longer life span with less maintenance required.

H 4 Other Matters

- 4.1 **Barmouth Rail Bridge Restoration Works:** The final phase of the Barmouth Viaduct Restoration Project began at the beginning of September. The work involves the removal and replacement of the old side spans of the rail bridge. The old side spans are being removed in sections and lowered onto a barge, they are then transported to the Bath House beach for subsequent further cutting and ultimate disposal by road.
 - 4.1.1 Due to the nature of the work processes involved and primarily for safety reasons, it has been necessary to prevent vessels from passing under the bridge from the upstream and downstream directions, until the work has been completed. In consequence, vessels moored in the old harbour had to be moved onto suitable moorings near the harbour office, to prevent any disruption to leisure activities.
- 4.2 **Harbour Compound:** Harbour staff have been working alongside compound plot holders, to tidy and clear unwanted items and rubbish from the compound. Multiple trailer loads have been taken to a local waste disposal site with unwanted trailers and other metal items scrapped.
- 4.3 **The Harbourmaster:** The harbourmaster would like to thank all persons who have helped him, and his assistant, to settle in their new roles at Barmouth harbour over the last 12 months. The harbour staff look forward to continuing to work with the harbour community to promote and develop the harbour in the future.
- 4.4 **Orielton Gardens:** Overgrown vegetation has been removed from around the harbour building located in the Orielton gardens. The building will next receive a new roof, once the existing asbestos roof has been removed by specialist contractors.

4.5 **Lifejacket Lockers.** The Service wish to thank the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), and in particular, Mr Trevor Lewis, for their work in providing lifejacket lockers on the harbour frontage.

4.5.1 Working together with the Service, the lockers have been conveniently located near the pontoon facility and are free to use. In providing a temporary place to store a lifejacket for the convenience of harbour users, they are the first to be installed on the Welsh Coastline.

H5 Events

5.1 The harbour staff have welcomed the following events which have taken place this period in and around the harbour of Barmouth.

- Coronation weekend
- Barmouth music festival
- Three Peaks yacht Race
- Road race (10 km)
- Kite festival
- Food festival
- Vintage rally
- Motorcross event

5.2 The Service wish to advise organisers of proposed events of the need to provide early notification to the harbour office. This is to ensure that all safety protocols, staffing and administration processes can be assessed before an event. Events will not be permitted to take place unless written permission has been obtained from the Service.