

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	1st October 2024
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
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H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 The navigable channel to the harbour of Porthmadog has been monitored by harbour staff over the summer period. The channel approach from seaward has remained relatively stable, with little re-positioning of the navigational aids required.
- 1.2 Harbour staff will continue to monitor the course of the channel and move the navigational aids as and when necessary, to ensure the aids to navigation provide the safest route in and out of the harbour.
- 1.3 The Service advises that all necessary navigational marks are currently on station and there are currently no Notice to Mariners in being.
- 1.4 The Service would like to remind mariners 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.
- 1.5 Mariners are also reminded that contact should be made with the harbour office prior to any approach or departure from the harbour, to obtain the latest navigational and weather information. Any changes to the navigational aids will be circulated via Local Notice to Mariners.

H 2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 Vessel movements have continued throughout the summer period, with visiting vessels accommodated on the 'trot moorings' within the inner harbour and on the pontoon structure belonging to the Madog yacht Club.
- 2.2 Unseasonal weather has been a continuing trend this summer with rain accompanied by south-westerly winds a predominant feature. This has affected the number of visitors seen in the harbour this year.
- 2.3. On Friday 21st June, harbour staff were called to assist a local sailing vessel near Morannedd beach, Criccieth, as the skipper had fallen unwell whilst sailing the vessel. With the assistance of Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) vessels, the yacht was anchored a distance from the beach and the skipper safely recovered from the vessel.
- 2.3.1 Unfortunately later that day, during efforts by the owner to recover the vessel, the propeller became fouled, and the vessel became overrun by the tidal waves. It then washed ashore onto the beach.

- 2.3.2 The vessel was subsequently recovered from Morannedd beach on the 9th July by a local vehicle recovery firm utilising heavy lifting equipment, in consultation with the owners insurance company.
- 2.4 On Monday 24th June, a local sailing vessel got into difficulties in the Porthmadog channel whilst heading out to sea. The vessel became stranded on a sandbank causing damage to the hull below the waterline and it thereupon took on water.
- 2.4.1 With the assistance of Criccieth lifeboat, the occupants of the vessel were safely removed ashore, before the vessel became submerged.
- 2.4.2 In association with Holyhead Coastguard, harbour staff followed all necessary procedures in dealing with the incident, and later towed the stricken vessel closer inshore towards Borth-Y-Gest, where the damage to the hull could be better examined.
- 2.4.3 Upon observation of the hull damage, the owner decided that the vessel was beyond economic repair and with the help of harbour staff and local contractors, the vessel was towed further inshore and thereafter removed from the water at the owner's expense.
- 2.5 The Service wish to thank the firm of Robert Owen Marine Porthmadog, for the continued provision of a personal watercraft. The craft has greatly assisted the maritime staff in overseeing safe operations at the vessel launch site on the beach at Morfa Bychan, and with personal watercraft movements in the Porthmadog Channel.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 Before the start of the busy season, maintenance work on the large, heavy ground chain on the bed of the harbour and the associated harbour moorings, was completed by local mooring contractor.
- 3.2 A programme of inspection of the navigation marks in the channel is to be undertaken by the harbour staff during the winter period. Navigation marks will be lifted and where required, brought ashore for refurbishment.
- 3.2.1 The much larger 'safe water' navigation mark, known as the 'Fairway buoy', located at the seaward side of the channel, is to be lifted by a local contractor for maintenance. A new lantern for the buoy is now required at what will be a net cost to the Service of £800.
- 3.2.2 The Maritime Service currently awaits an annual audit of the navigational marks and associated maintenance records by officers from the Lighthouse Authority, Trinity House. The audit is scheduled for late autumn. The Committee will be advised of the result of the audit, once the inspection has taken place and a report on their findings received.
- 3.3 Before the start of the busy summer period, work was undertaken to repair the broken and lifted paving slabs located around the harbour environment. The extensive work was undertaken by a local company at a net cost to the Service of £3349.

- 3.4 Benches around the harbour environment continue to be refurbished as and when required. 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 **Donation:** A family of blacksmiths from the Wrexham area of North Wales, have made and donated a metal structure in the form of a Dragon named 'Dixie' to the Maritime Service. The donation has been made with the strict intention that the structure be situated on the harbour area at Porthmadog, in recognition of family memories at the harbour.

- 4.1.1 The structure is to be mounted on a slate plinth and located in a secure and safe position on the harbour, where all harbour users will be able to see it.

- 4.2 **Harbour Security:** The Service has received an upgrade in the CCTV system installed around the harbour area at a cost of £2290. New hardware and cameras have been installed and a further camera has been relocated to provide a better view of the harbour area.

- 4.3 **Harbour Compound:** Work has begun to tidy the harbour compound situated to the rear of the harbour office. A new set of gates is to be installed at the entrance to the compound during the winter period, and a concrete surface put in place within the existing fenced area.

- 4.3.1 Griselinia hedging is to be placed adjacent to the side of the compound facing the slipway, to conceal the fencing when viewed from outside of the compound. In so doing, it is hoped to make the area more visually appealing.

- 4.4 **Car Park:** The Service is hoping to upgrade the 'pay and display' machine, situated in the car park at the rear of the harbour office. The machine, which currently accepts coinage, is to be adapted to receive a 'chip and pin' facility during the winter period. The net cost of the work in providing the facility is estimated to be in the region of £4000.

- 4.5 **Borth-Y-Gest.** The Service would like to remind harbour users of the need for the gates to remain in the closed position during the winter period.

H5 Events

- 5.1 The following events were among those held at the harbour during the summer period;

- RNLI Lifeboat Day
- Celtic Longboat events held by the Madog Yacht Club
- Vintage Motorcycle event

- 5.2 The Service wish to advise organisers of proposed future events on harbour premises of the need to provide the relevant information about the event at the earliest

opportunity. This will assist the Service in determining authorisation, staffing and administration processes.