

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	04th March 2025
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
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H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 Harbour staff have continued to monitor the course of the navigable channel over the winter period. Despite the winter storms and the consequential increase in the volume of water flowing out from the rivers Glaslyn and Dwyrdd, the course of the navigable channel has remained relatively unchanged.
- 1.2 Harbour Staff are currently monitoring a secondary channel, which appears to be opening towards Harlech, approaching Porthmadog from Cardigan Bay. Further channel surveys will be undertaken as the season of spring approaches. If required, the navigational marks will be moved by harbour staff, to assist mariners in negotiating the safest route to and from the harbour.
- 1.3 At the time of writing -There are currently two Local Notice to Mariners in force:
 - 1.3.1 Local Notice to Mariners No 10/24. The safe water mark aid to Navigation "Fairway Buoy", location 52°52.970'N 004°11.200'W is currently "Off Station" due to maintenance.
 - 1.3.2 Local Notice to Mariners No 1/25. The Starboard hand Aid to Navigation No11 buoy at location 52°54.499'N 004°08.965'W° is currently "Off Station", having washed ashore during inclement weather.
 - 1.3.3 The service advise both aids to navigation will be returned to the navigable channel as soon as practicable following maintenance and refurbishment.
- 1.4 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. This is due to the available depth of water over the sand bar at the seaward entrance to the navigable channel.
- 1.5.1 Mariners are also reminded that contact should be made with the harbour office prior to any approach to obtain the latest navigational information. the "service" operates on VHF Ch 12. 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 powered craft and sailing vessel movements in the harbour and channel approaches have been extremely limited, due to the

unfavourable weather experienced. During the storms, harbour staff remained on “standby”, in readiness to respond to any incident occurring. It is pleasing to report that no damage was sustained to any vessels or the harbour structure.

- 2.2 It is anticipated that vessels currently ashore in the boatyards will gradually be returned to the water as the Easter period approaches. The service is hopeful of attracting new customers for the forthcoming season, based upon the number of new enquiries made at the harbour office over the winter period, for the availability of moorings.
- 2.3 The Service wish to advise all harbour customers requesting a harbour mooring, that mooring forms are to be completed as soon as possible, utilising the online mooring registration system. The system will be accessible from the 1st of April this year. Paper mooring forms are no longer accepted. In the event of any difficulty in completing the online process, the harbour office should be contacted for assistance.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 On the 3rd December 2024, an underwater inspection of the harbour moorings was carried out by a local contractor. Following the inspection, a recommendation was received that thirteen (13) moorings would require a new riser chain.
 - 3.1.1 During the inspection, it was also noted that the large harbour ground chain, which had been changed last season at a cost of £30000 to the Service, had become slack between the moorings numbered 24 to 29. Further work is consequently required to be undertaken to resolve the issue.
 - 3.1.2 The Service advise that all necessary mooring works will be completed before the busy summer season commences.
- 3.2 The annual service of the engines on the harbour ‘Powercat’ patrol vessel has been completed with no major expenditure required. The vessel has also undergone an annual inspection from an approved marine surveyor, in accordance Maritime and Coastguard Agency work boat requirements.
- 3.3 Harbour staff have recently carried out maintenance works on the harbour tender vessel named ‘Dwryd’. After an inspection it was found that the vessel was suffering from water ingress at the stern. The issue has now been resolved and the boat returned back on the water.

H 4 Other Matters

- 4.1 **Harbour Compound:** Work is progressing around the Harbour Compound. Forty (40) Griselinia plants have been planted in front of the wooden harbour fencing facing the harbour slipway, to make the area more visually appealing. As time progresses, the plants will grow to form a hedge concealing the wooden fence of the compound beyond.
 - 4.1.1 Preparation work has begun on the ground of the harbour compound, which is to receive a partial concrete surface. The new surface will replace the existing slate chippings to provide a more workable environment within the compound.

- 4.2 **Harbour Sculptures:** Following the kind donation of a metal dragon sculpture to the harbour from a family of Blacksmiths in the Wrexham area, liaison was made with the consultancy department of Cyngor Gwynedd to determine the safest location to site the sculpture. After advice received, the dragon, named “Dixie”, has been sited on a bed of slate, behind the harbour office in a safe and secure environment.
- 4.2.1 The sculpture has proved to be very popular with visitors to the harbour, as has a large disused starboard hand buoy, sited on the harbour front near to the road bridge, on the approach to the harbour walkway.
- 4.2.2 A further attraction currently being installed in the harbour environment, is a sculpture produced by Howard Bowcott, an Eryri. based sculptor specialising in public art projects and private commissions. The sculpture, sited at the side of the walkway to the rear of the harbour office, is made from wood and slate and depicts the history and tradition of the harbour.
- 4.3 **Car Park Machine:** The Service is looking at installing a new ‘Pay and Display’ machine in the car park at the rear of the Harbour Office. The intention is to provide a machine able to receive card payments.
- 4.4 **Borth-Y-Gest.** The Service would like to remind harbour users of the need to close the gates on the approach to the slipway at Borth-Y-Gest during the winter period. This is particularly important in stormy conditions where flooding is liable to occur into the car park area.

H5 Events

- 5.1 Although anticipated, the Service are yet to be notified of any forthcoming events proposed to take place at Porthmadog Harbour, particularly as the harbour celebrates its Bicentennial birthday this year. The Service would like to remind event organisers of the need to provide early notification of any proposed event, which should be submitted for approval.
- 5.1.1 In considering whether to approve an event, the Service will give due regard to the information provided detailing the circumstances. The Service reserve the right to apply any restrictions, impositions or limitations necessary to ensure public and staff safety.