

***Pwyllgor Ymgynghorol Harbwr
Aberdyfi
Harbour Consultative Committee***

20 Hydref - October 2009

Maritime Unit Report

1- Navigation

- 1.1*** On the 11th of August 2009, all aids to navigation in Aberdyfi harbour were inspected by an officer from Trinity House. It is pleasing to report that the inspector was of the view that all aids were in an acceptable condition and this is a significant improvement compared with the negative report received in 2008.
- 1.2*** Prior to the inspection attention was drawn to the fact that the lantern of the Spit aid had not been operational for some months earlier and it was necessary to respond urgently to ensure that a lantern was purchased and relocated on the aid without delay. It is emphasised that such a situation should not occur in future and it is necessary that an appropriate Notice to Mariners is updated every fortnight and that any non-functioning lantern is repaired as soon as practically possible. The cost of the new lantern was £200.10.
- 1.3*** Buoy No. 2 – FIR5s Location 52°32.06'North - 004°04.81'West, will be returned to shore for maintenance as this navigational aid is a seasonal buoy. It will be necessary to prepare and commence a maintenance work programme for all the navigational aids during the next few weeks. It will be necessary to ensure that the Harbour Master has completed all the essential maintenance work before the commencement of next season and that all the navigational aids have been examined and comply with the requirements of Trinity House.
- 1.4*** During spring the assistance of a qualified contract was needed to station the navigational aids in their appropriate positions. The cost of the work was as follows:-
- Re-locating the Bar Aid - £350.00
 - Lifting and Re-location of Starboard Aid - £300.00
 - Lifting and Re-location of Spit Aid - £300.00
 - Examine four boat moorings - £429.00
 - Re-location of anchors - £220.00

Total cost of contractor's work = £1,599.00

2 – General Harbour Matters

- 2.1*** During the next few weeks the extension to the storage racks for tenders will be placed near the slipway. The current racks purchased in 2007 have been a great success and this has meant that land area has been released for the storage of yachts, dinghies and the Rowing Club boats.
- 2.2*** Lights have been located on the western side of the shelter. This has reduced the previous problems that occurred regularly on the site.

3 - Events

- 3.1 As the quality of the bathing water did not reach the required standard in 2008, the Maritime Unit was not permitted to submit an application for the International Blue Flag award for Aberdyfi Beach in 2009.

It is likely that bathing water quality will not reach the requirements once again in 2009, and it is quite possible that Aberdyfi beach will not be known as a Blue Flag beach in 2010. All bathing water results are being assessed by the relevant authorities and we await confirmation of the results from the relevant authority before Christmas.

Although the beach might not be known as an International Blue Flag beach in 2010, it is vitally important to stress that the quality of the beach facilities and also the other services associated with the Aberdyfi beach are of the highest standard and the quality of bathing water should not have any impact on the general standard of the beach.

It is emphasised that the Environment Agency has not thus far confirmed the results of the bathing water quality for 2009.

4 – Harbour Statistics

- 4.1 It is noted in the table in the appendix that **892** personal water craft registered with Gwynedd Council in 2009. This is slightly higher in comparison with the numbers that registered in 2008. It is noted that the vast majority of personal water craft had registered through the Maritime Office in Pwllheli – 374 (**403 in 2008**) with **28** personal water craft only registering through the harbour office (**52 in 2008**).
- 4.1 As indicated in the table, **47** powerboats were registered in Aberdyfi harbour with **81** powerboats in Barmouth harbour this year.
- 4.2 It is noted from the table in the appendix that there were **97** vessels on moorings in the harbour this year and this is in comparison with a **102 moored in the harbour in 2008**. Having so few moored boats in the harbour is a great disappointment and we will need to look at the possibilities of trying to attract new customers to the harbour in 2010. From the information presented by owners it appears that **38%** of the boat owners are resident in Gwynedd whilst **62%** reside outside of the county.

5 Budgets

- 5.1 For Members' information, attached is the Aberdyfi harbour final budget report **for the 2008/09 financial year**. Also appended are the expenditure finance and income targets for all the harbours and beaches for the **2009/10** financial year.
- 5.2 It is noted that there is substantial income i.e. **£28,599** in the final budget under the heading 'Deferred Grants' and income of **£2,870** appears under the heading 'Pensions Credits'. It has to be stressed that the income is not linked to the actual income of the harbour and the income total should be **£31,469** less than what is indicated.

- 5.3 The income target for Aberdyfi harbour for the current financial year is **£41,630**. Up to the end of August the total income for Aberdyfi harbour has reached £28,131 (**£27,848 for the same period last year**) namely £13,499 short of the target (**£12,692 short in the same period in 2008**). Except for the income from the Wintering of Boats on the quay over the winter months, it is unlikely that significant income will be added to the target before the end of March 2010.
- 5.4 We will have to be very cautious in order to ensure that the Maritime and Country Parks Unit does not commit funding beyond its budget during the current financial year. It will be necessary for the Harbour Master and the Harbours' Maritime Officer to prepare a detailed work programme for autumn and winter in order to identify expenditure priorities and staff resource priorities and to report on the results of the work at the next meeting of the Consultative Committee. The current work programme will be circulated by the Harbour Master at the meeting.

6 Maritime Staffing Structure

- 6.1 On the 1st of May 2007 there were amendments to temporary staff in Porthmadog, Pwllheli and Aberdyfi harbours. . During the (temporary) re-organisation the Porthmadog Harbour Master was seconded to the post of Harbour Master in Pwllheli; the Pwllheli Beaches Officer was seconded to the post of Porthmadog Harbour Master and the Aberdyfi Harbour Assistant was seconded to the post of Beach Assistant in Pwllheli.
- 6.2 The period for the post of Aberdyfi Harbour Assistant will end on 30 October 2009 and the permanent postholder will continue on secondment in the Dwyfor area and it is envisaged that he will continue on secondment until March 31st 2010. The Maritime Unit will review the situation regarding seasonal staff requirements in detail over the winter months. In order to ensure sufficient assistance in the harbour over the winter months, Barmouth Harbour staff will assist Aberdyfi Harbour Master during the period 1st November to the end of March 2010 and because of a resignation in Barmouth it will be necessary that staff from Porthmadog assist Barmouth Harbour Master with heavy duties.
- 6.3 During 2009 three seasonal members of staff were appointed in order to ensure control and supervision of harbour waters, on Aberdyfi and Tywyn beaches. As a consequence of the substantial engineering works which is about to commence in Tywyn, the Maritime Unit will have to review the situation for the supervision of Tywyn beach in 2010. It is anticipated that it would be inappropriate to submit an application for a beach award whilst the engineering work is proceeding and it is likely that only one seasonal member of staff will be appointed to supervise the beach.

7 - Ferry Service

- 7.1 During 2009 the Maritime Unit issued three 'Owner's Licences and eight Boatman's Licences for a ferry service between Barmouth and Penrhyn Point. Three 'Owner's Licences' and eight 'Boatmen's Licences' were issued for ferry services in Barmouth harbour. Although only one boat operates in Aberdyfi it is necessary for us to ensure that the licence requirements are consistent throughout the County.
- 7.2 We need to ensure that the basis for issuing an Owner's Licence is clear and that there can be no doubt of the number granted by the surveyor to travel on board the boat. We also need to ensure that there is consistency with the safety equipment required on board the ferry and that the safety equipment is inspected by the maritime surveyor and available on board the ferry at all times.

7.3 We need to be totally clear on the definition of 'Favourable Weather' and any licence issued will be based on the following paragraph that has been included in the MCA Code of Practice for commercial boats:-

'Favourable Weather' means wind, sea and visibility conditions which are deemed by the skipper to be safe for a small vessel to operate within the limits applied to it; or, in any other case means conditions throughout a voyage or excursion in which the effects either individually or in combination of swell, height of waves, strength of wind and visibility cause no hazard to the safety of the vessel, including handling ability.

In making a judgement on favourable weather, the skipper should have due regard to official weather forecasts for the service area of the vessel or to weather information for the area which may be available from the MCA or other coastal safety organisations or Harbour Authority.

7.4 The time when the ferry service can be undertaken is restricted to daylight hours only. Namely, one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset. Running a ferry service outside these hours will not be permitted.

7.5 A copy of the Owner's Licence and the current Safety Equipment list have been appended to this report and the views of Members regarding the wording of the licence and equipment list, are requested. These documents will have to be exhibited on board the ferry.