

MEETING	Abermaw Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	22nd March 2022
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
AUTHOR	Harbourmaster Abermaw

1. Navigational Issues

- 1.1. The navigable channel on the approach to Abermaw Harbour has remained relatively constant over the winter period. In consequence it has not been necessary to move any of the navigational marks from their existing positions.
- 1.2. The Service regularly inspects the navigable channel at low tide in order to try to ensure that the navigational aids are in the most suitable location.
- 1.3. There are currently two Local Notice to Mariners in force at Barmouth Harbour.
 - 1.3.1. Local Notice to Mariners No 9/2021: The No 1 'Bar buoy' Starboard aid to navigation located at position 52°42.717N 004°04.261'W is currently off station.
 - 1.3.2. Local Notice to Mariners No 1/2022: The No 4 Port hand aid to navigation located at position 52°42.738'N - 004° 04.009'W is currently off station.
- 1.4. The Service advise that the above two navigational marks will be on station and fully functional as soon as possible subject to the commitments of the mooring contractor in association with weather and tidal implications.

2 Operational Issues

- 2.1. The Coronavirus epidemic affecting the human population remains in circulation, with the Omicron variant being the more prevalent strain of the disease. In accordance with current Welsh Government Coronavirus legislation and guidance, staff will continue to ensure the harbour environment remains a safe place for all persons to enjoy, in what is expected to be a busy forthcoming season.
- 2.2. **Port Marine Safety Code:** In accordance with the provisions of the Port Marine Safety Code and in order to ensure safe working practices, the Service continue to undertake a review of fishing and ferry operations within the harbour of Barmouth. The focus of the review covers the vessels utilised, together with the tasks and specific risks associated with those activities within the harbour environment, including the stowage of fishing gear on the harbour front.
- 2.3. **Harbour Moorings:** The Council owned line of 'trot' moorings in the harbour located adjacent to the harbour office underwent a complete renewal last year, during which the ground chain, associated anchors, riser chains and shackles were replaced. Prior to the forthcoming busy season, the Harbourmaster and her assistant will conduct an

inspection of the smaller Council owned, line of 'trot' moorings, located to the north east of the pontoon structure. The mooring contractor will also be requested to conduct an annual inspection of the visitors' moorings located in the main channel.

- 2.4 The Service emphasise that owners of all vessels occupying private moorings within the harbour are required to return the relevant mooring confirmation form together with the mooring inspection form to the Harbourmasters office at the earliest opportunity in preparation for next season. This will allow administration procedures to be progressed and for the mooring to be inspected. The Service remains committed to removing from the harbour any derelict and unused mooring that is unfit for purpose or any mooring that has not been allocated to a vessel and dues paid.
- 2.5 **Vessel Tenders:** The Service would also like to remind mooring holders of the need to register any tender vessel utilised and associated with their mooring at the harbour office. Each tender vessel should be marked and readily identifiable with the vessel it is serving as a tender.

3 Maintenance

- 3.1 During the period in question, harbour staff have undertaken maintenance of the aids to navigation. This includes refurbishment of the replacement 'Fairway Buoy' which will be ready for deployment for the start of the busy season. The two navigation marks currently off station have been refurbished and are prepared for return to the navigable channel.
- 3.2 Harbour staff have undertaken maintenance of the harbour patrol vessel and the vessel engines and steering mechanism have recently undergone a service in preparation for the forthcoming season
- 3.3 Harbour and promenade notice boards have been maintained with some requiring new timber and joinery work. Damaged fender wood has also been removed from the sides of harbour ladders with replacement timber awaiting fitment.
- 3.4 In addition to general maintenance around the harbour which includes sand and debris removal, painting, and power washing, staff have also undertaken administration processes including the updating of harbour risk assessments.

4. Other Matters

- 4.1 **Harbour Subsidence:** On the 27th January 2022, subsidence damage to the quay wall beneath the viaduct gardens and around the harbour was inspected by Gwynedd Consultancy staff accompanied by personnel from the design, architecture, planning and engineering company of ARUP. Subject to confirmation of funding for the project, it is hoped that work to replace the damaged structures will be commenced soon, under the auspices of the Gwynedd Consultancy department.
- 4.2 **Harbour Dredging:** The result of a feasibility study concerning harbour dredging options and the issues that relate to obtaining any necessary consent for dredging activity is expected shortly. Once received, the documentation will be distributed to Consultative Committee members for consideration.

- 4.3 **Seasonal Storms:** The effects of the named Storm 'Eunice' were felt in the harbour on the 18 February 2022. The storm which caused widespread travel disruption, school closures and left thousands of homes without power around the country, caused flooding around the harbour area at high tide. However, no significant damage occurred to the harbour infrastructure or to any vessel.
- 4.4 **Fisherman's Compound:** The Service will continue to review the allocated spaces within the Fisherman's Compound to ensure that all unwanted materials are removed from the site. For health and safety reasons, the Service would like to remind all Compound plot holders of the need keep individual plots clean and tidy in appearance.
- 4.5 **Harbour Parking:** Parking bays on Compound Road have been marked to facilitate ease of parking for water based Commercial Operators, in order to allow them to continue their activities in a busy harbour environment, particularly during the summer period. The Service is currently reviewing the possibility of charging a fee for parking in the area and renewing the lifting arm barrier at the bottom of the road, to replace the existing worn structure.
- 4.5.1 The Service advise that assistance will continue to be sought from Gwynedd Council enforcement officers as and when required, to facilitate free and unobstructed access to the slipway for harbour users in respect of the road markings located by the 'SS Dora' building.
- 4.6 **Harbour Pontoon.** Following closure of the Barmouth Community Trust Group, the Harbour Authority assumed temporary custodianship of the pontoon structure in the harbour. The Service wish to thank the Trust members for their tireless work in promoting the harbour for the benefit of all harbour users.
- 4.6.1 Following an inspection of the pontoon structure by Service personnel, it was deemed necessary to temporarily close the facility on safety grounds until a more thorough inspection of the structure could be conducted by an approved pontoon manufacturer, and a decision made on its future.
- 4.6.2 In consultation with the Town Council, the firm of 'Intermarine' were requested to conduct a safety inspection of the pontoon and thereafter provide a structural report on their findings. The report from the company of 'Intermarine' is currently awaited.
- 4.7 **New Slipway:** The Service wish to bring to the attention of the committee members a proposal received from Meirionnydd Yacht Club, to construct a new slipway that would provide an access point onto the 'Bath House' beach, from a point on the promenade directly opposite to the entrance gates of Yacht Club storage compound. The Service understands that the Yacht Club intend to seek funding for the project through the 'Small Scale Coastal Infrastructure Scheme' (SSCIS).
- 4.8 **Barmouth Rail Bridge:** Repair work to the structure of the historic rail bridge crossing the Mawddach estuary within harbour limits will continue throughout the year. The Service have been advised that movement of materials to and from the bridge within the harbour will be taking place throughout the spring/summer season of 2022.

- 4.8.1 During September 2022, 4m x 12m steel pontoons will be used to renew metal and timber sections for the bridge. The structures will be built in an allocated compound on the promenade and moved by lorry to Aberamffra harbour where they will be placed onto pontoons and transported to the bridge. Public access to Aberamffra harbour will be managed by the contractor.
- 4.8.2 The Service will continue to liaise with the construction team management involved in the project and advise harbour users accordingly of any potential disruption to normal harbour operations.

5. **Events**

- 5.1 To date, the Service have received advanced notification of a dinghy sailing event on the 3rd June 2022, a Kite festival proposed to be held on the beach on the 2nd and 3rd of July 2022, and a Motorcross event proposed to be held on the weekend of the 15/16th November 2022. It is anticipated that the annual Three Peaks Yacht Race will also take place in the harbour this year on the 9th July 2022. The service currently await confirmation from the organisers.
- 5.2 The Service would like to remind event organisers of the need to provide early notification of any proposed event and submission for approval. In considering the approval of any event, the Service will give due regard to the prevailing Coronavirus situation and any restrictions, impositions or limitations thereby necessary to ensure public and staff safety.