

MEETING	Porthmadog Harbour Consultative Committee
DATE	10th March 2021
TITLE	Harbourmasters Report
AUTHOR	Porthmadog Harbourmaster

H 1 Navigational Issues

- 1.1 Vessel movements in the harbour and channel approaches during the winter period have been very limited exacerbated by the on-going Coronavirus pandemic. In general, winter weather and associated movements of the sandbanks in the course of the navigable channel have caused a number of buoys to become off station or out of position, requiring work to be conducted in the channel.
- 1.2 As was the case last year, following approval from Trinity House, the Porthmadog Fairway buoy is currently out of the water and undergoing refurbishment at Pwllheli harbour by the Harbourmaster. Once the refurbishment has been completed, the buoy will be returned to the water as soon as possible. The refurbishment includes a new riser chain and associated shackles at a cost of £1412.89 to the Service.
- 1.3 Each year Trinity House, the General Lighthouse Authority, conduct an independent audit of the physical presence and functionality of the aids to navigation recorded at Porthmadog Harbour. Additionally, every two years a further inspection is undertaken by Trinity House of the buoyage maintenance records and risk assessments associated with the safety of Navigation in the harbour. Both examinations were completed during the autumn of 2020.
- 1.4 There are currently three 'Local Notice to Mariners' in operation at Porthmadog Harbour.
- 1.4.1 Notice to Mariners number 9/20 – The No 14 buoy Port aid to navigation is currently not on station. Due to movements in the navigable channel where the buoy had been positioned, the need for the buoy has become obviated. Confirmation is to be sought from Trinity House to discontinue the presence of the buoy in the channel.
- 1.4.2 Notice to Mariners number 13/20 the Fairway buoy aid to navigation is not on station.
- 1.4.3 Notice to Mariners number 01/2021 the Starboard aid to navigation Buoy No 3 is not on station.
- 1.4.4 The Service advises that the navigable channel will continue to be surveyed and all relevant navigational marks will be on station and fully operational as soon as practically possible.
- 1.5 The service would like to remind Harbour users of the need to contact the Harbour office for the latest navigable information. It is advised that navigation within the

channel be limited to 1.5 hours either side of high water especially when navigating a vessel with a draft in excess of 1.5 metres.

H 2 Operational Issues

- 2.1 The Shipment of a large transformer for Trawsfynydd Power Station was successfully completed on the 16th September 2020, with the vessel 'Terra Marique' landing on the sands at Morfa Bychan to discharge the cargo. Staff have received positive feedback and appreciation for assisting from National Grid and the contractor Robert Wynn and Sons following extensive work and preparation conducted to complete the procedure.
- 2.2 In utilising the sands of Morfa Bychan to receive the shipment, no disruption was caused to the operation of Porthmadog harbour or to any vessel able to use the harbour facilities.
- 2.3 To a large extent in 2020 harbour operations were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and the associated restrictions put in place by the Welsh Government. This resulted in a reduction in the number of vessels occupying moorings in the harbour and the number of vessels visiting the harbour from neighbouring harbours and elsewhere.
- 2.4 As previously reported, plans to undertake the removal of electrical pylons in the Dwyryd estuary remain in being as part of the Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Snowdonia project. It is expected that the work to remove the pylons and install underground cables will be on-going until 2026.

H 3 Maintenance

- 3.1 The Service have contacted a local mooring contractor to undertake underwater inspection of the harbour moorings. It is anticipated that the inspection will be undertaken shortly. Any work identified as a consequence of the inspection such as worn or damaged chain will then be carried out in preparation for the forthcoming season.
- 3.2 Harbour staff have been working on the refurbishment of a number of navigational marks throughout the winter period. These marks will be deployed as and when required.
- 3.3 The motor vessel 'Dwyfor' has been removed from the water at Pwllheli harbour for annual maintenance and a five yearly survey conducted by an approved Maritime and Coastguard Agency Surveyor. Upon return to Porthmadog harbour the vessel will then undergo testing on its lifting apparatus before return to operational duties in preparation for the forthcoming busy season.
- 3.4 Work is also currently on-going to maintain the Powercat patrol vessel including service of the engines undertaken by a local marine engineer.
- 3.5 The small tender vessel 'Porthmadog' utilised by harbour staff has undergone maintenance work including painting. It has now been returned to operational duties
- 3.6 Around the harbour environment, work has continued to paint the harbour railings running along the quay wall by extending beyond the harbour slipway to a point near

the premises of the Madog yacht Club. The harbour slipway has also been cleared of soft mud at its extremity and power cleaned.

- 3.7 During the winter period, staff have maintained a number of benches and seating around the harbour environment with further work still to be completed. The service continues to receive requests for the placement of benches around the harbour with only limited space available.
- 3.8 During inclement weather, the harbourmaster has been able to undertake administration procedures including risk assessment processes of identified hazards around the harbour environment.

H 4 Other Matters

- 4.1 Borth-Y-Gest. The Service would like to remind harbour users of the need to have the metal gates at the top of the slipway in the closed position during the winter period to prevent unnecessary water ingress to the car park area. On a number of occasions staff have attended the location to find the gates open.
- 4.2 It remains the intention of the Service to tidy the grassed area where numerous vessels are currently stored some of which are no longer seaworthy. The Service remain mindful that such a measure will be unpopular with a number of residents

H5 Events

- 5.1 It is regrettable that a number of planned events which were due to be held at Porthmadog harbour during 2020 had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus epidemic.
- 5.2 It is uncertain if proposed events will need to be cancelled again this year. In consequence the Service would like to remind members that it is essential to comply with the prevailing Coronavirus Regulations and advice produced by the Welsh Government and to liaise with the Harbour Authority at the earliest opportunity to gain permission to stage the event.