

H A R B O U R N E W S

ANNUAL LETTER OF THE RIVER YEALM HARBOUR AUTHORITY
JANUARY 2022



Dear Mooring Holder/Harbour User

Once lockdown was lifted in early April the harbour was very busy. With a lot of foreign destinations closed or subject to entry restrictions the Westcountry was again top of the list for many south coast-based boats, and we recorded over 5500 boat nights. We also issued 1300 Paddleboard, Kayak and Canoe season tickets for day launching. With this volume of vessel movements in the harbour the Harbour Staff have been spending more time both on the water and in the office to ensure the harbour has been running smoothly.

In April the delayed Mooring Holder elections took place. Three mooring holders were elected (Stephen Maltby, Nicky Tewson and Andrew Matthews) to join the River Yealm Harbour Authority to represent their views. They were elected to serve for a three-year term.

Jez Spring joined the team as Deputy Harbour Master for the summer season and has been a great asset, fitting in to the harbour routine immediately; and I am very happy to say that he will be joining the team again for the 2022 summer season. More recently Stephen Maltby, Andrew Hudson and Sarah Taylor also joined as Assistant Harbour Masters and have provided extra depth and breadth of knowledge and experience to the team.

Following the publication of a Marine Accident Investigation Branch report into a fatality on the River Camel last summer we have reviewed our risk assessments. As a result, we will start to have more detailed discussions with organisations who are running events on the river. If you wish to hold an event on the river, please contact the Harbour Office for advice.

The volume of waste from boats collected at the Harbour Office continues to grow. The bins at Yealm Steps are for visiting boat owners only and the disposal of rubbish is paid for by them. Every rubbish bag must be carried up the steps to the road by a member of the Harbour Staff early on a Friday morning; and at peak season there are about 90 heavy sacks each week, this is no joke. Despite a lot of effort by the RYHA to get the rubbish recycled it is sent by SHDC to the incinerator in Plymouth. Please take your rubbish home for re-cycling.

Thank you to those boat owners who have kept to the six-knot limit and especially the requirement to minimise your wash as well. I hope this continues in 2022 and the incidence of boat owners seen speeding continues to decrease.

For the 2022 season the mooring licence fee remains unchanged. Following a review of the harbour dues the RYHA has decided that all other harbour charges will remain unchanged for residents and visitors, including the Paddleboard, Kayak and Canoe (PKC) season charge. The offer of four PKC licences for the price of three will again be available.

Whilst we do not plan to undertake any major capital projects this winter, the first two sections of the pontoon at Yealm Steps will soon need attention. A project will be carried out during the coming months to determine whether they need to be replaced or taken away for refurbishment. Whatever

the outcome, it is likely that the pontoon will be closed for a considerable period over the winter of 2022/23.

Harbour Bye Laws, Policy and Regulations govern how the harbour is run and provide rules by which users of the harbour should behave to ensure the safety of all users. Each year every mooring holder signs to say they will abide by the rules. The top four that are regularly broken are:

- **Outhauls:** Boats on outhauls should not be more than 16' long, this includes the engine on the stern; one boat per outhaul. You are not allowed to put a static mooring onto the outhaul block. In some very crowded areas, the length may be reduced.
- **Mooring maintenance:** this is an essential part of harbour safety. Following a review of our risk assessments the RYHA has decided that all A mooring holders must have their mooring certified as fit for use during the coming season by a recognised mooring maintenance company. The certification regime for B, C and D mooring holders remains unchanged.
- **Raised outboard motors:** A bucket must cover the propeller. If there are two motors, there must be two buckets.
- **Mooring Sub-letting:** This is not allowed.

Persistent offenders can lose their right to have a mooring on the river.

From 1 January 2022 there will be a change to the insurance confirmation we ask mooring and outhaul licence holders to make. We ask that you provide the name of your insurer (not the broker, please), the policy number and the amount of third party cover the policy provides. It remains the case that we do not require a pulling boat, not powered by sail or motor, to be insured, although you may think it advisable to do so.

The Yealm Community Energy group have indicated to the RYHA that they wish to operate an electric ferry/water taxi which would run outside of the times of the existing ferry service. The aim would be to provide a ferry and water taxi service to visitors, mooring holders and residents. The RYHA have considered the proposal and agreed that space will be made available at the Yealm Steps pontoon for charging the ferry. To compensate for the loss of space to keep tenders an additional section of pontoon may be installed to cover this and to provide dedicated space for visitors to leave their tender when going ashore.

Thanks to everyone who let us use their mooring for visiting yachts during the summer. This increases the moorings available for visiting boats, so next year if you are planning to be away cruising or are not using your mooring for a while, please leave your tender at the Yealm Steps pontoon if you are not taking it with you and let us know.

And finally.... A reminder that if you have a tender on the river, please ensure that you bail it out after every rainfall. Dinghies tend to sink when full of rainwater; and those at the Yealm Steps pontoon can then easily slip under the pontoon which will crush them when the tide falls. Several tenders are crushed or damaged each year and it is the owner's responsibility to dispose of the debris.

We hope that 2022 will be a safe year for everyone on the water. See you afloat!

The coming season

Dates for 2022:

Harbour Clean Up: 30th April

Harbour Authority AGM: 21st April 2022

Mark Beighton – Harbour Master