

H A R B O U R N E W S

ANNUAL LETTER OF THE RIVER YEALM HARBOUR AUTHORITY
JANUARY 2023



Dear Mooring Holder/Harbour User

Thank you 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 your boat is not going to be on your mooring, please leave your tender at the Yealm Steps pontoon, if you are not taking it with you, and let us know. It has been a very busy summer with 5,669 boat nights, which is more than last year and another record. Over 1,000 Kayak, Paddleboard and Canoe licences have also been issued. This is slightly down on last year. 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.

If you would like to use one of the spaces in the Parish canoe and kayak racks, please make sure you have your licence from us. The licence should be displayed on the craft, before applying to the Parish Council for a space.

Thank you also to those boat owners who have kept to the six-knot limit. I haven't used the air horn once this year, although I have spoken to a few! However please keep your wash to a minimum and look behind you as you go through the harbour to make sure your wash is not causing a problem. I hope this trend continues in 2023 and the incidence of boat owners seen speeding decreases again.

This year there have been over 40 recorded incidents. Most of them have been visitors misjudging the tidal flow resulting in a minor collision. One such incident resulted in a visiting yachtsman being caught on the hook of a fishing rod that had been stowed vertically on the stern rail of another visiting yacht. The wound was immediately cleaned and dressed and with no immediate adverse symptoms the crew member carried on, however he became ill a few days later and spent four days in hospital with Sepsis. I believe that he is still receiving treatment and may not regain full functionality of his hand. Therefore, please ensure that all fishing tackle kept on deck is safe and secure with hooks protected to prevent accidental snagging. The Harbour Staff have been briefed to look out for badly stowed fishing equipment and will ask that it is stowed safely.

A reminder that 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 and at peak season there are at least 50 heavy sacks each week. Despite a lot of effort by the RYHA to find an operator who will recycle the rubbish none are prepared to provide this service, so we continue to use SHDC who send it to the incinerator in Plymouth. Please take your rubbish home for re-cycling.

Following a review of the budget and considering the general increase in costs we are facing the RYHA has decided that for the 2023 season the mooring licence fee will increase by 7.5% and the Harbour Dues and Visitor Dues by 10%. Most other charges will increase by 10% but some 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.

Two major projects are underway this winter. The first is the removal for repair of the first two sections of the Yealm Steps pontoons, which have been leaking all summer. Hopefully they will be back in position early in the New Year if they aren't already. The second project is the purchase and

installation of another pontoon section which will be based at Yealm Steps. Some of the extra space will be for visiting yachts to put their tenders along with extra space for residents to use.

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 must not be more than 16' long, this includes the engine on the stern; Also, only one boat per outhaul is permitted. 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 in 2021 the RYHA decided that all A mooring holders must have their mooring certified annually as fit for use during the coming season by a recognised mooring maintenance company. The certification 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 or Outhaul Sub-letting:** This is not allowed.

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

Please remember to include the name of your insurer (not the broker), the policy number and the amount of third party cover the policy provides on your licence renewal form. 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.

Most of you will know by now that in April of 2023, and after 17 years in the Harbour Office, Helen Phillips, Office Manager, has decided that she would like to spend more time exploring in her boat. During her time in the office Helen has dedicated herself to remembering all the unusual facts about each mooring in the harbour. Her shoes are going to be very ably filled by Debbie Rhead who has already started downloading those unusual facts. Our thanks and best wishes go to Helen for the time she has dedicated to keeping the office going and we hope she and her husband, Mark enjoy exploring the coastline in their boat.

Also:

After four years as Harbour Master, I have decided to step down. I will continue to be involved with the harbour as an Assistant HM so you may well see me out on the water. Jez Spring will be taking over as HM having spent two years as Deputy HM. Therefore, the post of Deputy Harbour Master, which is a seasonal post, is vacant and we will be recruiting early in January. If you would like more information, please contact the Harbour Office.

And finally.... A reminder that if you have a tender on the river this winter, 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. Several tenders are lost each year and it is the owner's responsibility to dispose of the debris.

We hope that 2023 will be a safe year for everyone on the water. See you afloat!

The coming season

Dates for 2023:

Harbour Clean Up: 22nd April 2023. LW 1414 0.7m

Harbour Authority AGM: 20th April 2023

Mark Beighton – Harbour Master