

# H A R B O U R N E W S

2026 ANNUAL LETTER OF THE RIVER YEALM HARBOUR AUTHORITY



Dear Mooring Holder / Harbour User

We had a steady stream of visiting boats throughout the Summer up until the August Bank Holiday Weekend. However, a significant worsening of the weather, particularly during the first weeks of September, resulted in 5 planned boat rallies all cancelling, and anticipated boat numbers being lower than expected. Overall, we managed just over 4,500 Visitor Boat Nights, approximately 10% lower than our average for the past 4 years.

**2026 Licence Discs:** These will be pink in colour. Please ensure that you register all vessels used on the river whatever their size / type and then display their discs on the vessel once we have issued them to you. For tenders kept at Yealm Steps Pontoons, please display your disc on the inside of the vessel. For all other areas of the river, please can discs be displayed on the outside of your vessel? This helps the Harbour Staff manage the river effectively and be able to contact you quickly if there are any problems with your vessel.

**Yealm Steps Pontoon:** If you keep a tender at Yealm Steps, please ensure that it is regularly bailed out to prevent it sinking and being crushed under the pontoons. You must also ensure that it is properly secured to the pontoon deck chains on a **painter of 3m length**. This enables users of other tenders to access and depart the pontoons more safely and easily. Un-bailed tenders and/or ones with short painters and complicated securing knots pose a significant risk to users of other tenders at Yealm Steps. If vessels are found un-bailed, they will be removed by Harbour Staff and a release fee of £25 will be charged.

**Vessel Maintenance and Pressure Washing:** When carrying out maintenance of your vessel including activities such as pressure washing and antifouling, you must ensure that you collect all waste products and dispose of them correctly. When removing and applying antifouling products, you **MUST** place tarpaulin sheets under your vessel to collect any waste material. Further information can be found at [www.thegreenblue.org.uk](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk)

**2026 Budget and Costs:** Following a review of the Budget, the Harbour Authority has decided that for the 2026 season, Mooring Licence Fees will not be increased. Harbour Dues will increase by 4% and Visitor Dues by 5%. A full list of the 2026 Charges (Residents and Visitors) is available at the Harbour Office and on the RYHA Website.

**Invoices for 2026 Harbour Dues and Mooring Licence Fees:** These will be sent to you at the start of January, and you will then until 31 January 2026 to pay these **and** return your completed paperwork. If your account is not settled by this date, then a 5% Late Payment Surcharge will be added to your invoice. ***Failure to return your paperwork and pay your total invoice by the end of February 2026 will result in your mooring being reallocated and you having to pay Visitor Rates for any vessels that you use on the river!***

**Accidents and Incidents:** There were 17 Accidents / Incidents formally recorded in 2025 involving both residents and visitors. These included low-speed collisions, illegal fishing activity and people falling into the water. The most serious accident was the near-drowning of a drunken visitor falling into the water at night whilst attempting to board his vessel.

**Safety:** Your safety out on, or near the water is our paramount concern whatever your experience levels. Please where appropriate, follow the following safety points:

**Vessel Speed:** Keep your speed below 6 knots and your wash to a minimum.

**Lifejackets / Buoyancy Aids:** Always wear an appropriate, well-fitting device. This is vital for children and weaker swimmers.

**Small Craft:** Take careful note of the prevailing tides and weather conditions and keep clear of the Main Channel when travelling through the Harbour. Use a Kill Cord if your boat engine is fitted for one.

**Swimmers:** Wear a bright swim cap or tow a bright coloured float behind you. Keep out of the Main Channel and be particularly careful when swimming close to any of the pontoons.

**Key Dates for 2026:**

Harbour Clean Up Weekend: Saturday 18 April 2026

Harbour Authority Annual Meeting: Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 at the Noss Village Hall

Bridgend Boat Lift-In: Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Harbour Staff Team:** Alex Robson joined the Team as the new Deputy Harbour Master, bringing with him a wealth of sailing and local knowledge. We look forward to having him back in the role in 2026. Our Office Manager (Debbie Rhead) has been extremely busy as always and for the last few months has been getting to grips with our new vessel / owner database, invoicing systems and accounting software.

**Akzo Nobel Remediation Project:** The dredging and removal of contaminated foreshore material from the former Akzo Nobel (International Paints) site began in November 2025 with Teignmouth Marine Services carrying out the work. To provide a safe navigation channel for their 60' Hopper Barges and tugs, the vessels either side of the main Fairway from Misery Point to the Main Visitor Pontoon were relocated to other upstream A-Moorings and the 2 Visitor Pontoons. The understanding and assistance of all vessel owners with these moves was greatly appreciated.

At the time of writing, 6 of the anticipated 14 barge moves to Cattewater, Plymouth have taken place, and the project is anticipated to be completed in February 2026.

**Thanks:** Once again, the Harbour Team has been impressed by the enthusiasm of our visiting sailors and the considerable support and suggestions received from our local water users. Your assistance in alerting us to issues and dealing with incidents out on the water is always appreciated. We wish you all the best for the Festive Season and look forward to seeing you all back out on the water in 2026.

Jez Spring

Harbour Master