

Dear Members,

Our newsletters have been few and far between recently, reflecting the fact that there is not a great deal going on in the leisure boating world at present. It does seem clear, however, that our inability to travel has accelerated interest in boating in Jersey as it is one way we can still get away from it all without getting on a plane or a ferry. Boat dealers are telling us that demand for boats, both new and used, is high and that their challenge is insufficient or delayed supply. Meanwhile the servicing sector is evidently extremely busy with work on our existing boats, many of which have been used rather more than usual in the last year.

There are, moreover, some signs of an upturn in the future prospects for boating with the approaching Spring and Summer, and the light at the end of the tunnel offered by the Covid vaccination program.

MEMBERSHIP SYSTEMS & WEBSITE

Our new treasurer, David Wood, has been putting in some very constructive work in modernising our membership records. In the near future we plan to release a new system which will allow you, the Boat Owner, to go online and manage your own membership information & your subscription payments. New members will be able to join the Association immediately with one visit to the website, and the system will generate automatic emails to confirm your current status. We are using a recognised proprietary software suite designed for clubs and associations, and this has been designed with appropriate security and privacy standards to meet current requirements, so we are not having to 'reinvent the wheel' as far as these issues are concerned. Some members have already received membership notices from the new system and the remaining members will be notified in the next couple of weeks. If you have any questions please email membership@sthboa.co.uk and we will do our best to help. Shortly thereafter we expect to be ready for the system to go 'live'.

At the same time, Nick Wood has taken over the day-to-day management of our website with a view to freshening up some of the pages, and will be providing appropriate integration with the new membership systems.

VISITS TO FRANCE POST BREXIT

As and when Covid restrictions are lifted to the point where we can think about taking our boats to France, there are some very significant new challenges that we face and very few clear guidelines on how to meet them. Brexit has finally happened and it seems that no one is completely clear about what this means for the boat owner who sails over to one of the local French ports. Officially one can only enter

France through one of the designated ports of entry (Brest, Carteret, Cherbourg, Granville, Roscoff, St Briec and St Malo) but there is nothing new in this and as we all know, the rule has not been enforced in practice hitherto. Is this about to change? We don't know – and that includes the relevant authorities here in Jersey! What does seem very possible is that going forward we may need to get our passports stamped on arrival in France and also on departure. Apparently, this is already happening for commercial traffic, and it remains to be seen if it will be applied to leisure boats arriving from Jersey for short stays in French ports. At the same time, no new guidelines have yet been published by Jersey on how leisure boats visiting from France will be processed, although we are told that this is very active work in progress.

Obviously, we will make it our business to update you when we learn something more definite. In the meantime, our advice if you are planning to sail over to France, is to go equipped with passports for all and a full set of ships documents. You will be acting as pathfinders for all of us, so be prepared for an immigration adventure, and when you return please tell us about your experiences.

ALBERT PIER PONTOONS

Many of you will have seen articles in the local press about the plans to expand the pontoons on the Albert pier to accommodate larger private boats, which will in turn relieve pressure on the marinas. The pictures published so far are not an accurate representation of what is happening but we anticipate getting a better view when the planning application is more advanced.

ELIZABETH MARINA

We learn from the Harbourmaster that the project to reinstate the storm gates at Elizabeth Marina will be commencing in April. It is going to be a serious engineering exercise involving a large barge to lift the gates out, and the marina will inevitably be closed for a few days. For a further temporary period, there are likely to be some restrictions on movements as the entrance will be narrower than usual. We are not sure when the gates will be put back in position, possibly not till later in the summer, & we will provide more details when we have them.

DINGHY PONTOON AT LA FOLIE

Some members noticed the dinghy pontoon from La Folie sitting in the boatyard for maintenance during the winter, and it was hoped that it would be reconfigured to avoid the problem when the tide falls and the pontoon sometimes ends up sitting on top of dinghies. However, since it has been back in commission, it has become apparent that the problem is not resolved. PoJ are aware and are taking steps to correct the problem. Thanks to members who kept us informed on this.

AGM

Obviously, it has not been possible to reconvene our AGM in recent weeks. We hope we will be able to do so as & when restrictions ease.

Best wishes and Bon Vent

Will Simpson

Chairman

St Helier Boat Owners Association