

ST HBOA NEWSLETTER OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2021

Dear Members,

Here is a summary of current events in the Association and around the harbour.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We plan to hold the Association AGM on Thursday 25 November 2021 at St Helier Yacht Club at 7pm and you should have received the formal Notice. This will be a normal meeting in the traditional way, and we hope that as many members as possible will attend. It will also be the first meeting since 2019, because the attempt at a 2020 AGM had to be cancelled. We plan to offer something to eat and drink after the meeting, although exactly what form this will take will be dependent on what the yacht club catering team can provide in the somewhat tricky circumstances currently affecting all the hospitality sector. The proposed agenda will be circulated a little nearer the time.

ST HELIER MARINA

You may have noticed that the marina is now completely deserted apart from contractors who are removing old piles and pontoons in preparation for the refurbishment. The resident boats are dispersed to all corners of the harbour (including the new berths at Albert Pier), while others are out of the water in the boat park. Unsurprisingly there is very little spare space left for holding and for the usual harbour manoeuvrings that always go on, so we are reliant on harbour staff to do their best to ensure that these areas are properly & efficiently managed to the maximum extent possible in the circumstances.

A few members have expressed concerns that the project needs to keep to schedule in order to be ready for the new season, not to mention the proposed Jersey Boat Show which PoJ are hoping to host in June. In a world in which supply chain issues seem to be the order of the day, one can only wish the project team a fair wind in circumstances that are not the easiest.

The precise specification for fitting out the new pontoons has not yet been published but we understand that there is a presentation to berth-holders planned in December when we hope that all will become clear.

ELIZABETH MARINA

Major works have recently commenced, and will continue until circa mid-November, to reinstate the storm gates at the marina entrance. As was the case when the gate was removed in the Spring, this will be a major engineering exercise involving a very large crane on a barge, and limited or no access for berth-holders in and out of the marina for a few days. Full details are outlined on Notams No 28 to 34 which are available on the PoJ website. Hopefully the disruption will not be too significant as we are now at the end of the season with fewer boats on the move.

The installation of further traffic lights to enable berth-holders at the far end of the marina to see the red & green lights from their berths, is a project which PoJ tell us that they are progressing. The Association has received an increasing number of comments recently about poor conduct by some boats who are clustering right in the marina entrance/exit, while the lights are against them, and so impeding the passage of boats with a green light coming in the opposite direction. The explanation may be that the numbers of inexperienced boat operators has risen during Covid, and that the usual courtesies and good practices are not always being exercised, probably through ignorance rather than design.

A worrying development in recent months has been the rising incidence of damage to vessels caused by the building works adjacent to the marina, especially rust stains caused by metal particles carried on the wind. These are always very difficult to eradicate. We are receiving reports that the developer responsible may not be responding constructively to approaches from boat owners, and when they do respond, they argue that all metal work is contained within shielding in accordance with their specified operating methods statement so this cannot be the cause of the problem. The association would not wish for a moment to imply that what actually happens on site might not always comply to the letter with the what is specified in the methods statement, but we would encourage berth-holders in the relevant area of Elizabeth Marina to monitor the building activity. If

they then happen to witness any metal work occurring in an apparently unshielded manner, we suggest that they take some photos and share them with the Association since this is an excellent way of providing firm evidence and a basis for further discussion.

SAILING TO FRANCE

Most of us are now familiar with the rather cumbersome procedures that accompany any plans to sail to France from the Channel Island or indeed from the mainland UK. However, it has become apparent that Channel Islanders are in a uniquely inconvenienced position, as we are probably the only British sailors who routinely like to visit France for a day or two, or even possibly just for a nice lunch! Of course, visitors to France from the UK mainland have to endure the same procedures, but as their trips tend to be for a week or more, the ratio of pain to gain is much more acceptable. By contrast, here in the Channel Islands we have lost our previously easy access to our most attractive sailing areas, and the spontaneous, spur-of-the-moment expedition to Brittany or Normandy is largely a thing of the past. Ironically, the same does not necessarily apply in the opposite direction. The Jersey speciality that the French most appreciate – cheap fuel – is still available to casual French visitors without the need for any entry/exit requirements always provided that they do not land on the island.

We recognise that the current somewhat fraught political environment between Jersey & France does not lend itself to any early resolution of these problems, but we believe that in the medium to longer term the implications could be quite adverse. Jersey has lost its easy access to the delights of the French coast, and consequently some of its own attractiveness. We are already hearing from local boat owners who were keen & regular visitors to France and who are now considering giving up boating. The number of summer visitors to our harbour will also decline. None of this would be good news for PoJ, for local Marine traders, for local boaters, and indeed for the Jersey economy at large. We would urge business and political leadership (both here and in adjacent France) to consider how to work around the impediments created by Brexit.

With best wishes

Will
Will Simpson
Chairman