

G.B.A. Spring Newsletter 2019.

As requested by some of our members, here are the latest updates on the following outstanding leisure boat matters:

Speeding.

As a result of infringement on speeding concerns expressed at our November AGM, we raised these at a recent Safety Maritime Group meeting which was chaired by Capt. David Barker, the Harbourmaster.

Guernsey Harbours will now be doing a series of broadcasts on Safety & Speeding on Island FM Radio commencing this Spring.

They will also be including a section on this subject in their forthcoming notices on mooring fees which will be sent to all mooring holders.

Our GBA website has links with Guernsey Harbours' website so any person can view these details .

VTS. (Vessel Traffic System).

The introduction of this new system has been delayed until the summer months.

Although vessels under 30m other than commercial shipping are not required to comply, any sized vessel will show on the VTS operator's monitor. This is not designed to be a navigational aid for leisure boaters but it will provide some measure of safety and monitoring of any excessive speeding within areas of designated speed restrictions.

AtoNs.

These are basically AIS transponders which can be located on shore, such as a lighthouse, or in the water, such as platforms or buoys. They allow the transmission of aids to navigation positions to ships and to shore, as well as certain additional information such as the nature and status of the AtoN.

Guernsey Harbours is planning to position (10) of these on specified navigational aids within the Little Russel including one on the Lower heads Buoy with weather information.

These should come into force by this May/June 2019.

Traffic Lights.

Guernsey Harbours also plan to place IALA traffic lights on the entrance to St.Peter Port, similar to those in St.Helier harbour.

These will be controlled by Port Control/VTS operators.

No specific date has been announced .

Seaplanes.

No further news as to when this may commence. Originally we were informed that it would be at Easter but all the infrastructure like providing a hammerhead pontoon on No.6 berth for the aircraft to offload/load passengers is the responsibility of the operator, not the Harbour Authority.

To date, nothing has been forthcoming. So, watch this space.....

JESCC.

Apparently, a new local full-time mentor, Tom Duarte, has been appointed to carry out the very necessary training for the JESCC Coastguard radio operators as recommended by the recent MCA peer review report.

Capt. Peter Gill (RNLI) and I met with the Harbourmaster recently in January following the release of the findings/recommendations of this review to discuss our ongoing concerns relating to the standard of training and our strong views that the Coastguard service should be rehoused with the VTS/Port Control at the harbour where it belongs.

The Harbourmaster stated that he had been impressed by the JESCC operation during the recent aircraft disaster and the efficient co-ordination of all the relevant emergency services.

Therefore the current plan is to monitor the whole operation for the next 12 months and then review the situation.

Parking Zones.

As a result of our meetings with the Traffic Department at the end of 2018, the parking zones on the QE South have been revised.

Zones A & C remain at 10 hrs.and Zones B & D are back to 2 hrs. This is a compromise and should keep everyone happy.

The central zone on the Salarie side has also been changed to 2hrs. which matches other areas around the harbour.

RNLI Atlantic 85 Inshore Lifeboat.

The Guernsey Station of the RNLI is to carry out a trial of a new Inshore lifeboat over the next 2 years.

This will probably be moored on a versadock adjacent to the Inter-island Quay and manned by a separate , locally recruited crew. Training is already underway.

St.Sampsons Marina Gate.

The marina gate at St.Sampsons has finally re-opened and is now fully operational following extensive repairs during the past winter months.

Red Diesel.

We have had discussions with representatives from Rubis and our local Customs Dept. on this.

At present, there is no change to the current system of local duty-free fuel and the RYA in the UK have had similar meetings with UK Customs. It is recommended that you keep your latest receipt for local fuel on your boat if going to France.

We await the outcome of Brexit/No Brexit but there is no will to change to white diesel as this would cause huge problems of supervision and traceability.

Boat Boot Sale.

This was popular last year so we have organised a similar event at Beaucette marina for Saturday 27th. April from 10.00-1400hrs. If you want to sell some of your old or unused boating gear, simply turn up no later than 0930hrs and rent a stall for £10 which we will be donating to the RNLI and Guernsey Air Search.

Now's your chance to clear out your sheds, lofts and garages of all that clutter that your wife complains about!

Seafront Working Group.

Chris Workman and I were invited to attend this meeting to outline our views on their proposals to enhance the St.Peter Port Seafront and where we see the local leisure boating industry going.

We were allocated 45 minutes to express our thoughts on this very emotive subject which were recorded.

These were split into (4) main priorities for local boat owners:

1. Maintaining our vehicle access/parking at all times for our moorings whether in a marina or in the Pool.
2. Access for loading or unloading goods or passengers from our boats within the harbour, again with vehicle access. Cambridge Steps, Careening Hard, Round Top, Crown and Albert Quays, Connaught slip, limited availability of the swan pontoons and the Albert pontoon, Old lifeboat slip, and the 'crumbling' Havelet slipway.
3. Improvements to the facilities for visiting yachts around the Victoria marina, and the value of this income to the Island/Harbours/St.Peter Port Traders.
4. Support for Deputy Barry Paint's plans for extending the harbour in an easterly direction which would tick lots of boxes-protection of the current harbour, provision for larger ferries with new ro-ro ramps, possible small liner berthing, vast new marshalling area, using the current marshalling area for additional public parking, and possibly provision for a new deep-water non-tidal marina inlet on the North side of the proposed reclamation site for larger private vessels. The total area to be phased in (3) phases over 3-4 years using disposal of 230,000+ tonnes of inert waste.

5. This whole site equates to the total existing area of the QE2 marina.

We also discussed the growing demand for fuelling superyachts and some boat owners upsizing to larger vessels.

They asked our views on their idea of building a sill at St.Sampsons between the pierheads and turning the whole of the harbour into one big marina. With all the commercial vessels being accommodated elsewhere?

We responded by stating that whilst there may be an increase in larger mooring demand, they should not forget that over 35% of boats in the existing marinas were 10m or less and represented more income for the marine traders than one 20m vessel. The average local was not necessarily wealthy, he or she spent their spare cash on their boats as a main hobby.

Sailing yachts with a max. engine speed of 6kn would not wish to moor at St.Sampsons with a 4kn current just outside the harbour breakwater!

Plus there is the problem of sulphur deposits being emitted from the Power Station chimney when they are generating and the ensuing damage to fibreglass vessels.

There would be more interest in expanding the Town marina berthing areas if possible.

So that's where we are on this. The Steering Group will be coming back to us when they have completed their interviews with other interested parties and promised to 'keep us in the loop'.

Brexit or No- Brexit.

No doubt most of you will be aware that the French Authorities recently issued the possible introduction of new regulations regarding visiting vessels to France from outside the EU.

This originally stated that in the event of a "No Deal" Brexit we would have to initially report to a Frontieres Maritime Port to achieve Customs/Immigration Clearance. After this vessels could move freely between other ports on the French Coast, including marinas that are not designated Fronieres Maritimes.

The Frontieres Maritimes in Normandy are:

Cherbourg

Granville

Carteret

The Frontieres Maritimes in Brittany are:

St.Malo

Roscoff

Brest

Since then we have now received a Communication from the General Secretariat for Maritime Affairs in Brittany and the Cotes d'Amour Departmental Coastal & Maritime Directorate which states that those vessels that are planning to call in any marina not designated as a PPF port (Maritime Border Entry Port) have no cause for concern as the following procedure will be adopted:

A vessel should inform the Harbour master's office by VHF of its arrival. The Harbour Master will then advise the Border Police (PAF) or the Customs authorities as the case may be. These authorities may then decide either to visit the arriving vessel or request those on board to attend the nearest PAF or Custom's office to have their passports stamped.

However, a further relaxing of these measures is expected, and it is possible that passports will not be required to be stamped, in which case the information relayed to the Border Police or Custom's authorities will be sufficient, and those on board will not need to do anything further.

It is absolutely necessary to ensure that the existing border posts are not overwhelmed by the demand.

Finally, let's hope that our summer brings good weather and provides us all with excellent boating opportunities.