

REAR COMMODORE REPORT for 2024

9th February 2024

My role over the past 12-months has been to work with the CoM, Mark Cheeseman and the yard staff to improve the marina and yard operations. My over-riding goal was to bring fairness and transparency to all members who use the services of the yard and marina operations.

Membership Survey

Following the Membership survey last year, it was pleasing to see improvements of the marina were noted with an overall score of **78.7%** satisfaction from all services provided and marina perceptions.

The pontoons management improved by 1% to 88%, and service provision increased by 2% to 83%, measured as (Good to Excellent).

The membership survey also saw SERVICE provided by the staff to the membership improve as noted in the table below.

Marina Membership Survey (%)	Rated Excellent - Good)		
Service Provision Questions	2022	2023	Change 2022 to 2023
Booking Process	60	68	8
Operational Hours	78	76	-2
Response to enquiries	61	69	8
Complaints handling	51	60	9

Issues tackled 2023

	Issue	Action	Result
Staffing	Ensure marina staff structures support membership needs	Teams structure of x3 full time staff including Marina Manager. Reduction from 3.5 as Howard left weekend rota	Complete Simon Thomas promoted to Marina Manager. Wasiu recruited
Yard waiting list	Backlog of 80 boats awaiting lift-out as of March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement on-line booking system.• Pricing to encourage fast yard turnaround times.• Implemented a free lunchtime lift out to reduce burden on yard	Backlog cleared June 2023; on-line booking implemented with automated payment – eliminating office invoice raising and debtor mgmt. Implemented and working well, 80 boats used scheme as of 9 th Feb – saving members c.£160 each

Berthing waiting list	42 boats on berth waiting list March 2023	Process introduced	Waiting list for new berths cleared. Transparency of waiting list for berth movements implemented and managed through office staff.
Maintenance	Improvements needed for :- Weed cutting; yard housekeeping, pontoon jet washing, lighting beyond Gold berths and trolley shortages	Actions implemented – weed cut scheduled, yard cleared of junk, pontoon system fully jet washed, solar lights fitted to pilings on the main walkway, 10 trolleys purchased	Complaints reduced
Increase berthing capacity	Harbour Authority licence restricted CBYC to 500 berths	Planning permission granted to increase berthing license by 68. Swing moorings improved with 500kg rail car wheels.	24x Swing moorings renewed. Plans to utilise inside walkway from Diesel pump to White water
LOA accuracy	Inaccurate LOA	All boats audited in August. Recovered £3k from boats under-declaration of >100cm. 40 boats had under declared by between 50cm – 100cm. Expect to tighten up on LOA declarations in 2024 for fairness to all members.	LOA instructions clarified for 2024 berthing license issuance
Abandoned boats	Disposal of abandoned boats at CBYC costs	Disposed of 4 boats in 2024. Fletcher Speed boat still to resolve	Saved club £3k utilising members to cut and salvage Manahera. Need to focus on action on un-sea worthy boats as per Bye Laws to reduce risk of club funds being used to sort out abandoned member boats
Live aboard Bye Law	CBYC non-compliant with Harbour Authority Liveaboard BYE LAWs	Confirm Bye Law - stays on boats to be aligned with HA Bye Law of no more than 31 days pa and no more than 7 consecutive nights permitted	Confirmation on going that CBYC members are in compliance. Berthing licenses will be dependent on compliance with HA Bye Law
Budget performance	Ensure budget is delivered to off-set inflationary costs		£380k surplus delivered v Budget £384k

Staffing structure – Marina & Yard

Simon Thomas was promoted to Marina Manager position during the year as improvements were delivered with his team in terms of the membership survey results.

During the year Howard left the employ of CBYC, as weekend cover and we took the opportunity to employ Wasiu as an agency employee. Wasiu proved his worth very quickly, as a very willing and happy employee and we decided to employee bring him from contract agency to employee of CBYC.

Marina staff work wear was changed this year with CBYC branding, quality of workwear improved and good feedback from staff as being better fit for purpose

Yard Waiting List

In March we were faced with waiting list of 82 boats requesting a lift out for maintenance in the yard. There was a lot of 'bed-blocking', with boats in the yard for months with little work being completed. This 'bed-blocking' was due to difficulties members were having in sourcing parts post Covid and poor weather, plus lack of planning to get a speedy turnaround of the boat back into the water. As a club we need to be aware of others needs and a be aware our resources are finite. With only 28-yard spaces for boats we should be aware of the impact on fellow members of prolonged maintenance in the yard. If all boats wanted time in the yard on an annualised basis, we would have to cap time in the yard to 20 days per boat.

As we entered 2023 the club had a backlog of 80 boats waiting lift-out and maintenance, it was impossible to provide an accurate time to clear the backlog and the yard was in a state of chaos, which was impossible to plan. Lots of members complaining about the transparency of queues for space in the 28 allocated yard spaces.

To tackle the issue, we implemented on Harbour Assist a booking process, whereby members could book their boat out on the next available date for a period of 30 days. The pricing was simplified to reward those members who pre-planned the parts / services and time to get their boat sorted and back in the water within 30 days, an escalating charge for stays in the yard over 30 days becoming punitive. Non-berth holder charges set at £2 per metre per day (on par with Commercial marinas) to deter non-berth holders' access to the club facilities. The queue was cleared within 90 days and a steady stream of boats requiring yard access managed for the remainder of the year.

On-line upfront payments were simplified and implemented via Harbour Assist – the benefit to the club has been a reduction in the burden of office hours required to invoices and chasing payment.

2023 saw more invoiceable lift movements increase by 50 over 2022 (post Covid free lift policy). Deriving additional income of £7.6k.

We also added to Harbour Assist a lunchtime free lift out for small maintenance / check issues. This has had a great response with **80** boats taking advantage of this service.

Maintenance

Weed cutting – following lots of issues in the summer of 2022 we stepped up the weed cutting frequency around the pontoons and fingers which fall under CBYC's jurisdiction. The main traffic channel in the River Ely being the responsibility of the Harbour Authority maintenance team. We were able to timetable a weekly cut, through June and July. Complaints reduced to a minimum. A dramatic improvement from Prior Year.

Jet Washing – all pontoons and fingers were jet washed during the summer/autumn and much improved. We have a large body of work to do over the next 3 years to replace many of the pontoon deck boards – this is being planned and will be expensive as each 10m section will cost over £1000 in material. **The length of our marina is 4,000m between pontoon and fingers with a potential cost of over £300k over the coming years.**

Trolleys – a fleet of 10 new trolleys were purchased in the summer, to replace lost? And broken trolleys.

Housekeeping - the area next to the perimeter fence behind the porta cabins in the yard had become a dumping ground for bulky items including fridges, old masts, bicycles and general rubbish from boat maintenance. During the summer this was cleaned up and the boat stands and cradles were stored appropriately.

Solar lighting – following testing we have erected on pilings rechargeable flood lights to aid visibility for members at night. We plan to extend to the bronze section over the coming months

Berthing – new members and existing members wanting to migrate to GOLD

A waiting list existed in March 2023 for berthing demands which covered new members wishing to bring boats to CBYC and also existing members wishing to move their boats to a different berth. The office introduced a waiting list with clear rules of acceptance required within 48 hours to speed up the process.

Swing Moorings x24

We also sought from the Harbour Authority permission to be included in our berthing license as an increase of 68 berths to ease the access to the club new members with their boats. We were granted permission to renew 24 swing moorings in front of the club with the help of the harbour Authority barge. 24 new swing moorings were dropped with 500kg railway carriage wheels.

Inside walkway Moorings x 44

We also have approval and have surveyed the depth of the walkway from the diesel pump to the white-water centre for smaller boats. The plan is to remove 22 depth obstructions with a team of divers in 2024 and channel mark the access to create 44 new berths at a reduced fee.

Length Over All (LOA) - audit

Concerns had been raised as to the accuracy of LOA declaration on the berthing license for 2023. To ensure that fairness an audit was conducted of all boats on the pontoon system and several discrepancies were found between stated length on the berthing form and actual LOA as audited. 40 boats 8% of the boats moored had underdeclared their LOA by over 50cm and 13 boats by over 100cm. We recovered the discrepancy for 2023 from these 13 boats.

An LOA how to measure document will be issued with the license renewal forms and the marina staff are more than happy to assist in helping to measuring if required.

Abandoned boat – management

Disposal of abandoned boats at CBYC is an expensive cost to burden our membership, we are receiving quotes of c£5k to dispose of boats if we are unable to sell and recover costs incurred.

During the 12-months we had to deal with 3 abandoned boats – 2 of which were disposed of through sales via Ebay and one was removed thanks to our club member ‘Swimming Pool’ Paul offering to cut up in return for salvage of marine parts – saving £3.5k on the cost of disposing through a sub-contractor. Increasing focus on non-seaworthy / neglected boats will be undertaken in the coming year.

Live-aboard compliance with Harbour Authority Byelaw

In April at a review with the Harbour Authority and it was raised at that meeting CBYC’s compliance with the Harbour Authority Byelaw for live aboard. The rules on the water owned by the Harbour Authority is that people can only stay on their boats for a period of **7 consecutive days not to exceed 31 days p.a.** CBYC’s Bye Laws were in contravention to the Bye Laws and our berthing license and need to be aligned. A review has been undertaken in terms of our compliance and we will not issue a berthing license going forward to berth holders who contravene these Bye Laws.

Value for money berthing

Marina comparison of berthing charges was conducted on charges on a like for like basis assuming our berthing rates increase by 8% in 2024. CBYC is clearly a very cost-effective solution for berthing your boat compared to the commercial marinas in the areas. CYC is marginally cheaper on a ‘like for like’ basis.

Comparison berth fees		based on a 28ft boat					
	CBYC	Cardiff Marine	CYC	Penarth	Swansea	Portishead	Milford Haven
Berthing (annual cost)	1,437	3,645	1,210	3,612	2,637	3,747	2,975

P&L Marina

Tight controls were exerted over the marina budget, we deferred a fuel pump up-grade with costs ranging between £30-£50k, if we had proceeded. Reduced staffing levels to 3 Full time to look after the yard activity. Managed boat disposals at the expense of external contractors saved £3.5k, Marina repairs came in under budget as we took on the weed-cutting using CBYC resources. We were able through higher utilisation of berthing to the 500 capacity and implementation of swing berths to drive additional revenues of £34k over PY22. Yard income also increased by £9k, of which £7.5k was from more frequent use of the Wyse hoist.

We see costs continuing to increase throughout 2023/4 - and expect further inflation to feed through in terms of Harbour Dues which increased 11.1% over PY22, wages, insurance and maintenance materials in 2024.

In 2023 the Marina operated with an adverse variance of only £4k to budget.

Going forward plans

- Waste streaming – we must from the 1st April 2024, sort our waste in the BIFFA bins, otherwise excessive costs will be incurred from our waste carriers in the order of £'000 per annum
- Visitor charging on the wave break – QR scan code to be implemented to take payment
- Complete 44 berths on the walkway - divers to remove depth obstructions
- Review of increasing dinghy storage options/racking
- Pontoon board replacement planning

Finally

A **big thank you** for delivering the above changes has to go to Simon Thomas and his team of Paul and Wasiu, under the leadership of Mark Cheeseman and the back-office staff. It is often a thankless task and at times handling a myriad of demands from members with our finite resources. We had many external visitors comment on how well the marina staff helped at the Open Cod Competition and the team were a credit to our Club. Simon Thomas and the team are here to help us develop the club and ensure we have fairness and transparency in the decisions taken. Please respect the staff for all the hard-work they put into making the club work and thank them next time for going over and above to assist you getting onto the water and enjoying the clubs offering.

Harvey Preston

Rear Commodore