



LATEST NEWS ON RYDE MARINA:

PLANS FOR THE MARINA AND THE BEACHFRONT BUSINESS



OLD MARINA OFFICE



NEW MARINA OFFICE AND STORE

Report Author:

Chris Turvey

Place and Neighbourhood officer

Following the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations with the Isle of Wight Council, Ryde Town Council has taken ownership of Ryde Marina and an area of land to the West of the Marina currently used as car park and public space.

Ryde Town Council took over management from 1st April 2022 and, as part of the process, have produced a business plan outlining our plans for the next five years.

These plans include the following improvements with the existing Marina facilities and management, better marketing and promotion and additional business opportunities available to us through a lease of the surrounding beach area.

The planned works and improvements required to bring the Marina up to minimum standard and essential emergency works are outlined below:

1. Initial emergency essential works

On handover of the marina, it became clear that there were a number of items that could not wait and had to be addressed immediately, either on a temporary basis or permanently. See items listed below:

Marina Office

The first of many things was that the existing Marina office was condemned on health and safety grounds as the floor had collapsed and was unusable. By the 4th April Ryde Town Council had installed a new, temporary, fit for purpose, office and applied for planning permission to deal with the positioning of this and the adjacent beachfront storage unit.

Office Electrics

Another item that came to our attention was that the electrical supply to the office was also condemned as the distribution box on Eastern Gardens was damaged beyond repair and leaked whenever it rained. Ryde Town Council managed to negotiate with IWC to get this item paid for out of their budget. This supply was replaced by a local contractor and we are now back up and running, with the added benefit of being connected to the internet.

Berth Holder Records and Financial Information

Owing to GDPR, Ryde Town Council were handed the Marina with details of just over a third of berth holders missing. This led to a lot of time spent by RTC's finance staff and the Marina manager chasing after the missing information. At the same time a new system was put in place whereby every berth holder signed an agreement with RTC over their berthing conditions and gave RTC proof of insurance.

The IW Council kept paper berth holder records and issued handwritten receipts. Ryde Town Council have modernised the process with a new point of sale system which is linked directly to the finance department in Lind Street.

Flag Poles

The flag poles that line the Esplanade are outside of Ryde Town Councils area and are owned and maintained by IWC. They informed us that they were in a dangerous

state and had been condemned. This meant that they would be removing them in due course. RTC decided that they were essential to maintain the look and feel of the Esplanade, so through the RTC public realm budget new flag poles have been sourced and installed. Planning consent was required to install anything other than country flags so this has been obtained as well.

Emergency Dredging at the entrance

Sediment transfer along this area of the coast is from East to West and for the last couple of years the amount of sand on the beach to the east of the Marina arm has become a serious problem. Since its installation the Marina arm, which acts just like a giant breakwater, has been collecting sand and the highwater mark in this area has been advancing slowly Northwards. This sand has now reached the end of the Marina arm and, as it now has nowhere to build against, washes around the corner and into the Marina Entrance. This has recently been a serious hazard to navigation. Ryde Town Council reached an agreement with IWC that they would find the money to leave the channel clear when RTC took over the Marina. To this end they carried out some limited dredging just before handover.

The big challenge for Ryde Town Council is to stop this from reoccurring. To this end we have instructed contractors to remove 45,000 tons of sand from around the Marina entrance and from the beach to the East of the Marina so that the highwater mark will be moved back further inshore in that area. This sand will be deposited in the area around and to the east of Appley Tower where the beach levels have gone down dramatically in recent years.

In addition to these works the IW Council are securing an agreement with the Environment Agency which will allow them to remove sand from the beach to maintain what RTC have initially achieved. This will be done using aggregate contractors who will, at no charge, take sand away to be used in the construction industry and, at the same time replenish the beach past Appley Tower.

Security

In the past a big worry for berth holders was the lack of security at the Marina. Initially, Ryde Town council have put various measures in place to increase security on the pontoons. These include nightly sweeps by a security firm, a webcam which is accessible to berth holders via the RTC website, CCTV which records everything that happens on the pontoons and, most importantly, we maintain a much longer high-profile presence with our marina staff than was the normal practice in the past. This has the added effect of being able to collect all the berthing fees and not just those when the office is manned during the tide. We have also introduced a no lone working policy which gives extra security to our staff. All these new practices will be reviewed regularly to assess their effectiveness

Statutory documents

During the handover it was noted that various essential documents which are key to the proper running of a harbour were either out of date or not of sufficient detail to meet the requirements for the safe and legal running of the harbour.

The Health and Safety Management System had not been reviewed for some time and included some generic, non-specific practices and lacked detail. Ryde Town Council have produced a new Health and Safety Management System which now includes a rigorous daily inspection and reporting regime and specific policies pertinent to this specific harbour.

The Port Waste Management Plan which is a statutory plan for every port or harbour was out of date as they must be renewed every 3 years. A new application has been submitted and is being audited by the proper authority at present. We will let you know when we have confirmation that the plan is compliant.

Dinghy Park Area

The area which runs parallel to the fisherman's pontoon was left littered with various boat and trailer parts on hand over. The area has now been cleaned up and bays clearly marked the remaining boats and trailers are now paying for their space.

2. Planned Maintenance and Capital Dredging

The Marina was constructed with a chalk bottom and this is the maximum depth to which the Marina can be dredged. The post-dredge survey of 2002 gives this depth and forms a baseline for future dredging.

Dredging requirements are not entirely dependent on the survey as access to the Marina is restricted by Ryde Sands, which is not dredged and has a direct impact on accessibility.

From visual inspection the new Monktonmead Outfall has had a beneficial effect on part of the Marina and has maintained an area of approximately 1500m² down to 2002 levels. This leaves an area of approximately 10,000m² which has been affected by silting up over the past 20 years.

The 2018 LIDAR data indicates that there is a silt build-up of around 0.75m and this means that there is approximately 8,000m³ to 10,000m³ of sediment in the Marina basin. It is not desirable to remove all the sediment when the bottom is hard as boats prefer to sit in an amount of silt as it keeps them upright and level at low water. This means that an initial capital dredge of less around 5,000m³ would bring the levels to an acceptable depth.

The current dredging licence for Ryde Marina has been transferred from IWC to RTC and it runs until September 2028. This licence only allows for dredging to be carried out in vary specific areas within the Marina basin and is no use for what is currently required in terms of dredging. RTC have instructed a dredging specialist to look at the current licence and seek changes, where necessary, to make the licence reflect accurately the dredging need.

3. New Pontoon Decking

Pontoon decking has a life expectancy of around 15yrs and the decking at present on the pontoons has reached the end of its life. Each Marina arm requires approx. 1500m of 145mm x 21mm hardwood decking. The cost of hardwood decking has tripled over

the last 3 years and it is no longer the best solution for pontoon decking. Fibreglass grating was specifically designed to replace hardwood decking on pontoons and until recently was not the first choice because the price was prohibitive. As a result of the price increase in hardwood decking, fibreglass grating has become cheaper than wood and is the obvious choice.

The Fibreglass grating sheets come in exactly the widths of the pontoons which mean little or no waste, their slip coefficient is much lower than timber (especially during winter when moss / mildew grow on hardwood) and the grating is almost indestructible.

RTC are at present in the tendering process to acquire enough fibreglass grating to replace the timber on all the main walkway pontoons and, as soon as a supplier is chosen, the order will be placed for the new decking. Our marina team along with some local contractors will start fixing that as soon as it arrives.

4. New Pontoon Fingers

To increase income to a sustainable level approximately 20 new 6m fingers will be installed. At the same time the existing pontoon layout will be altered to accommodate the extra pontoons. These changes will increase the number of permanent berths

5. Electricity Supply on Pontoons

Visitor income is directly affected by the provision of power to visiting boats. Electricity is essential to make a visitor's stay enjoyable. Visitors need electricity to ensure that their boat engine is going to start after a weekend of living on board. The use of generators is frowned upon in the visitor area as there are neighbours who will be disturbed by the noise.

The provision of electricity has little benefit in terms of direct revenue generation but it is important that the cost of installation and servicing of electricity is self-funding through the electricity service and usage charge. The rules governing what Marinas can charge for electricity allow for the cost of the electricity used plus a reasonable service charge which can be set at a price point to cover the cost of installation over time. However, it will encourage greater numbers of visitors to stay thus increasing visitor income. There may also be an increase in demand for permanent berths due to electricity being available. A further benefit from providing electricity on the pontoons is the lighting on each bollard which will greatly increase the level of Health and Safety.

To this end Ryde Town Council are in conversation with electricity providers to bring a new 3 phase supply down to the marina so that electrical outlets can be installed on the pontoons. We are striving to have this work completed during the winter period ready for next season's use.

6. Car Parking

The provision of dedicated short-term marina parking for berth holders complements the berthing offer. Berth holders have been issued with passes for their cars to allow them to park, short term, in the area of parking adjacent to the skate park.

7. New Marina Office, Showers and Toilet Complex.

A new prefabricated building in an area in front of the skate park will be constructed with the approval of the IWC regen and planning teams which gives the Marina sufficient modern up to date facilities to service the growing Marina business.

Showers and toilets

The shower and toilet facility will be increased to accommodate the numbers of visitors and berth holders in the marina during the summer. There will be a minimum of 2 showers, 3 WCs and 2 wash basins in the lady's toilets and 2 showers, 2 WCs, 2 urinals and 2 wash hand basins in the gent's toilets. Disabled access will be maintained in both toilets. This will give the Marina proper facilities much more in line with The Yacht Marina Associations code of practice.

Marina Office

The new Marina Office will be sited over the proposed showers and toilets to give the Marina Staff an improved view over the Marina and the Marina entrance.

8. Website and Webcams

A new web facility giving weather information, tide heights, webcam access and a downloadable berthing contract is now available on the Ryde Town Council website under the "Ryde Marina" tab. Local Notices to Mariners giving latest safety information are also readily available on these pages and I would suggest this is essential reading should you wish to visit the Marina.

9. Beach Hire

Deckchairs and Sunloungers

A new container has been installed next to the current Marina Office for use as the storage for the deckchair portion of the business. The deckchair business and staff will be based at the new marina office and payment can be taken and processed there as well as on the actual beach. In the first instance 200 deckchairs have been purchased and hired out on the beach and Eastern Gardens with various hiring options. In addition to the 200 deckchairs, 75 sunloungers, 25 windbreaks and 50 parasols have been purchased to supplement the hire offerings.

Paddleboards and Kayaks

To further compliment the activities around the marina and on the beach, Ryde Town Council has acquired 8 paddleboards and 8 kayaks for short term hire. To facilitate this Ryde Town Council has also acquired a van which can accommodate the moving of this equipment. To help with this enterprise, additional storage options are being considered in Appley Park and planning permission has been gained to extend the toilet block to allow for this.