



Dart Harbour

HARBOUR NEWS

The latest news and updates from Dart Harbour – May 2019



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A Focus on Safety

From Mark Cooper (Harbour Master)

Dart Harbour continue to improve safety on the river and by and large the majority of initiatives appear to be working well. However, there remains a core of river users who continue to operate with unnecessarily increased risk to themselves and other river users. In some cases, risk is increased by a wilful disregard for byelaws (speeding and wake affects) and we know that sadly, changing the attitudes of the small number of people involved will not be easy. It is possible to make some simple changes to your routines and procedures that will significantly reduce your own risk, the most obvious safety tips include:

- Wearing lifejackets or buoyancy aids when afloat**
- Ensuring vessels are secure and stable before alighting**
- Attaching a hand-held VHF to your lifejacket (particularly when single handed)**
- Telling someone when you are expected back**
- Using lights in tenders at night**
- Familiarising yourself with the location of pontoon ladders, life rings and throwing lines**
- Using your kill cord if appropriate for your vessel**

As the weather improves it is good to see more people getting out on the water for the first time this year. We know from previous years that we will most likely end up towing more than 20 vessels back to their berths before the end of May! In most cases the reason for a tow is a mechanical failure so please run your engine for at least 30 minutes before leaving the berth on your first trip of the season, do check cooling water strainers, impellers and the instrument readings before departure.

Scrubbing grids and drying on the Embankment

We have refined our procedures and customer briefings for the Hoodown and Dartmouth Scrubbing Grids, expanding their use to include all vessels drying on the embankment. The briefing and precautions work well for both grids as long as the master/owner has a good knowledge of the keel design and can position their vessel correctly on the horizontal splines on the bottom of the grid. Please note the grids are unsuitable for fin keels and those vessels with short keels (from front to back). In these cases, we will direct owners to dry the vessel out on the beach north of the Dartmouth Grid.

We have learned some important lessons as grid use has increased. The most important aspect of drying out is that owners, masters and crew all remain safe throughout the evolution. Even proficient masters/owners have experienced difficulties, but so far Dart Harbour have been able to offer assistance that has prevented personal injury or damage to vessels. Being able to control the angle of boat (list and pitch) is often critical. When things do not go to plan it is crucial that you can call on Harbour Staff to provide assistance. It is therefore important that staff are on hand at the time when the vessel takes the ground. For this reason, those wishing to use the grid should plan to dry out during Dart Harbour working hours. Outside working hours an additional charge will apply to cover staff costs.

Dart Harbour have introduced an administration charge for all vessel drying out. Only those who have completed the compulsory safety briefing and are booked should plan to use the grid or the beach area (north of the grid). Anyone berthing and drying out in these areas without permission, risks being moved off the wall, will be in contravention of byelaws and will most likely find that their insurance is void. Please follow the rules and if you are in any doubt please contact the Harbour Office on 01803 832337.

Stakeholder Feedback

In 2019, we will be reviewing how we conduct our stakeholder engagement to tie in with our review of the Moorings' Policy. If you want to provide any feedback on the items included in this article or other issues, please use the contact email link on our website or contact us via our social media channels.

We are making more use of our social channels to share information about the work of Dart Harbour on Instagram along with key safety alerts such as LNTM on Facebook and Twitter. Our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram name is dartharbour. Please like/ follow us.



Finally, I hope that you have a great spring and summer and that you and yours stay safe.

Dart Harbour

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This newsletter is circulated to all customers of Dart Harbour and is sent as an operational communication, as the contents are relevant for all customers.