

# H A R B O U R N E W S

ANNUAL LETTER OF THE RIVER YEALM HARBOUR AUTHORITY  
JANUARY 2025



## Dear Mooring Holder / Harbour user

Extremely variable weather conditions this Summer, directly impacted upon how busy the Harbour was in terms of both resident use and visiting boats. Overall, we managed just over 4,800 Visitor Boat Nights, approximately 10% lower than our average for the past 3 years. The number of Kayak / Paddleboard / Canoe (KPC) licences issued was on a par with last year with us issuing over 750 Season Licences and 150 Day Licences this Summer.

**2025 Licence Discs:** These will be turquoise in colour. Please ensure that you register all vessels used on the river whatever their size and type, and then display their discs on the vessel once we have issued them to you. This helps the Harbour Staff manage the river effectively and be able to contact you quickly if there are any problems with your vessel.

**Yealm Steps Pontoon:** If you keep a tender at Yealm Steps, please ensure that it is regularly bailed out to prevent it sinking and being crushed under the pontoons. Could you also ensure that it is properly secured to the pontoon deck chains **using just a bowline** on a painter of between 1.5 and 2m length? This enables users of other tenders to access and depart the pontoons more safely and easily. Un-bailed tenders and/or ones with short painters and complicated securing knots pose a significant risk to users of other tenders at Yealm Steps and this Summer we had 4 incidents of personnel falling into the water whilst using their tenders!

**2025 Budget and Costs:** Following a review of the budget, the Harbour Authority has decided that for the 2025 season, the Mooring Licence Fee will revert to the same level as in 2022. Harbour Dues will increase by 5% and Visitor Dues by 10%. A full list of the 2025 Charges (Residents and Visitors) is available at the Harbour Office and on the RYHA Website.

**Accidents and Incidents:** There were 26 Accidents / Incidents formally recorded in 2024 and involved both residents and visitors. Once again these included several low-speed collisions, illegal fishing activity and several boats running aground on the inner spit! The most serious accidents resulted in serious injury to a resident whilst using his outhaul and a near-drowning of a visitor falling into the water at the Yealm Steps pontoon at night!

**Safety:** Your safety out on, or near the water is our paramount concern whatever your experience levels. Please where appropriate, follow the following safety points:

**Lifejackets / Buoyancy Aids:** Always wear an appropriate, well-fitting device. This is vital for children and weaker swimmers.

**Tenders:** Keep them bailed out and take care when climbing in and out of what is often a very unstable platform.

**Vessel Speed:** Keep your speed below 6 knots and your wash to a minimum.

**Small Craft:** Take careful note of the prevailing tides and weather conditions and keep clear of the Main Channel when travelling through the Harbour. Use a Kill Cord if your boat engine is fitted for one.

**Swimmers:** Wear a bright swim cap or tow a bright coloured float behind you. Keep out of the Main Channel and be particularly careful when swimming close to any of the pontoons.

**Harbour Byelaws, Policies and Regulations:** These exist to help govern and run the Harbour in a safe and effective manner. A reminder of some of these that you, as Mooring Holders, should abide with:

**Mooring Licence Renewal Forms:** This year there will be the **option** for you to complete your Mooring Form online, rather than use a paper format. This will be sent out with your Annual Invoice.

**Mooring Maintenance:** You must inspect your mooring annually and sign to certify that it is in a fit condition for the boat that you intend to keep on it. **For A-Moorings**, this inspection / certification has to be carried out by an RYHA Approved Contractor. Your Mooring Buoy should be clearly marked with its number,

**Outhauls:** No more than one boat per outhaul. Boat length is not to exceed 16' (including any engine on the stern). You are not allowed to put a static mooring onto an outhaul block.

**Raised Outboard Motors:** A bucket must be placed over each propeller to prevent injury to personnel and / or damage to other boats.

**Key Dates for 2025:**

Harbour Clean Up Weekend: Saturday 29 / Sunday 30 March 2025

Harbour Authority Annual Meeting: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Bridgend Boat Lift-In: Wednesday 9 April 2025

**Thanks:** As always, the Harbour Team have all appreciated the enthusiasm of our visiting sailors and the considerable support received from our local water users. Your assistance in alerting us to issues and dealing with incidents out on the water is greatly appreciated. We look forward to seeing you all out on the water in 2025.