



Weymouth Harbour

All Commercial Boats' Skippers
and Owners
Weymouth Harbour

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Dear Harbour User

FISHING AND OTHER GEAR STORAGE - CARGO STAGE, FERRY PORT AND PONTOONS

Background

1. During the last year we have been clearing up the areas around the Harbour and in the Port of inappropriately stowed and/or redundant fishing gear and other items. This has gone well in some areas and unfortunately not so well in others but we now need to carry on this drive to keep our areas clear and safe. The next phase is to fully define the end state and simple rules to allow the management of stored gear around the harbour to be routine business.

2. It is worth summarising the reasons and need for this control. A health and safety fire risk assessment audit highlighted that there must be at least a 1m clear walkway along the pontoons to allow safe access for users, harbour staff and emergency services. Therefore any gear impeding access must be removed and be disposed of, or stored correctly. The lack of a 1m walkway around the ramps will be investigated by the harbour staff. The safe access for all emergency services could be critical in saving life in an incident. It should be noted that incidents do occur and such access has been required on a number of occasions in the last year. Additionally various commercial operators have complained that some pontoons are unsafe and in need of repair, which is accepted and will be actioned within the repair programme. However the amount of gear that is located on the pontoons has not helped the situation as they are not designed as storage areas. Some piles of gear are causing the pontoons to be inappropriately balanced or over-submerged, which is leading to damage. Pontoons are expensive and in the current financial climate the life of them must be preserved for the good of the harbour.

Fish Landing Quay

3. The food side of the Fish Landing Quay has been criticised by W&PBC Port Health. The main content of the complaint is as follows:

“I am concerned about the misuse of the Landing Quay by certain fishermen which is, as you know, causing continuing issues of cleanliness, smell, and safety.

This fenced, floodlit quay with potable water supply and crane was specifically provided some 22 years ago by Weymouth & Portland BC for the hygienic landing of fish and shellfish further to the EC Directive which applied at that time (Directive 91/493/EEC).

Weymouth Port Health Authority is responsible for ensuring that the owner and operator of the quay ie WPBC, meets the cleanliness requirements of current hygiene law (Annex 1 of EC Regulation 852/2004). If the quay cannot be kept clear of fishing equipment (the quay’s purpose is solely for fish landing, not storage) and clean, its use by offending fishermen should be withdrawn.

Apart from food safety law, there are also legal requirements placed on WPBC under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to not cause nuisance by way of smell to nearby premises and under the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to maintain a safe place of work which includes not allowing slip and trip hazards. Accumulated equipment, general detritus and fish and shellfish waste on the quay is causing contraventions of these Acts which WPBC, as a responsible authority, should not continue to tolerate.

I trust that you will undertake the necessary action against offending users to keep the quay in a safe and hygienic state. If this cannot be achieved you would have no alternative than to consider closure of the quay. Fish and shellfish can be landed at other locations –the quay was provided to assist the industry rather than be an exclusive landing area”.

4. This instruction is very clear and it is in everybody’s interest to maintain the quay as a useful facility. There is therefore a need to regulate procedures and behaviour for the good of all. This also applies to the bait area. If the cleanliness is not maintained it may be necessary for commercial cleaning with the charges being added to berthing fees, which is considered an unnecessary cost.

5. **Fish Landing Quay Storage Area.** The **temporary** storage compound on the Cargo Stage by the Fish Landing Quay has often been a dumping ground for redundant fishing gear, some of which is not used for considerable periods of time. This area must be kept tidy and regulated with any gear placed on manageable pallets and clearly marked with the owner’s name. The Harbour Office staff should also be aware of the intended storage time for this temporary arrangement. Any remaining unmarked gear will be managed in accordance with the operating rules at the Annex.

6. **Port Storage Area.** The Port looks cleaner and tidier, which is essential since it is a gateway to Weymouth and the Channel Islands. A designated area has been set aside for fishing gear storage but again there are certain conditions attached to avoid it reverting to a dumping ground.

7. **Communication.** It is essential that there is good communication between the Harbour Staff and the fishing community. There are no rights to stow gear on Harbour Authority land but the Harbour Office will try to oblige if they are engaged. Any unannounced depositing of gear will be treated as fly-tipping.
8. **Harbour Staff Assistance.** The Harbour Staff will help wherever possible to move and dispose gear within the constraints of available resources. It is stressed though that commercial operators should make adequate provision of resources to run their businesses, abiding by the regulations imposed by W&PBC.
9. **Harbour Investment.** During discussions there has been some feedback about the equipment provided by the harbour and the facilities including drainage, cranes, hoses etc. These points will be considered and actioned if appropriate. Constructive ideas and suggestions are always welcome. It must be appreciated though that the lead time to seeing improvements can be longer than hoped due to the contracting process and the volume of items that have to be addressed in all areas throughout the harbour. Additionally the future of Condor operations needs to be decided before improvements in the Restricted Area can be fully considered.
10. **Timetable.** The timetable for the progression to steady state is as follows:
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|------------------------------|---|
| 27th June 14 | Letters to be dispatched and any queries and issues to be directed to the Harbour Office. |
| By 1 st August 14 | Pontoons and Fish landing Quay to be cleared as required by the Annex. |
11. **Conditions of Berthing.** Harbour Users are reminded that the W&PBC Conditions of Berthing apply to all Weymouth Harbour Users irrespective of whether commercial or private. Berths remain the property of W&PBC at all times and thus cannot be sold as part of a package with any boat. Each individual agrees to abide by the Conditions of Berthing when accepting a berth. Early engagement with the Harbour Office staff regarding sales and purchases of boats will help to find a solution acceptable to all.

Summary

12. The protocol within this letter is designed to benefit all, making areas cleaner and safer for all harbour users. It will obviously assist in pontoon maintenance and access. Additionally it will hopefully reduce the amount of unused and defective gear that seems to accumulate in certain areas.
13. The harbour should be self-policing by all its users so please do your part in ensuring that the area and facilities are respected. Please do not hesitate to draw to my attention any individuals whose actions are causing an inconvenience. The damage to facilities and theft of items has to stop.
14. The forthcoming years will be a tremendously busy and testing time for Weymouth Harbour with many restrictions and changes being imposed as a

consequence of the financial constraint on local government. It is hoped that we can count on your cooperation in these matters and we will do our utmost to minimise inconvenience and maximise benefits in improved facilities for our permanent berth holders and visitors alike.

Yours Sincerely

Keith Howorth
Harbour Master

OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR STORAGE OF FISHING AND SPARE GEAR IN WEYMOUTH HARBOUR

(The procedures highlighted in bold are displayed on notices at the location)

PONTOONS

- Clear 1m walkways to be maintained along the whole length of pontoons including the ends.
- Each boat may store up to 2 fish net boxes with a maximum size of 110 x 55 x 55 cms adjacent to their boat. These boxes are to be clearly marked with the boat's name and fishing vessel number. There are no alternatives to such boxes. These boxes are for light gear that is required for daily use.
- Any additional light gear hoping to be kept on the pontoons will be approved by exception by the Harbour Master. Such gear will need to be marked accordingly.
- No items are to be permanently fixed to pontoons or pontoon furniture without the Harbour Master's permission.
- Any gear that does not meet the requirement of these procedures, unmarked gear or gear that is impeding walk ways may be removed by the Harbour Staff. If so it will be recorded and stored in a disposal zone in the Port Restricted Area. The gear may be collected from this zone on the understanding that it will be stored correctly. Any unclaimed gear in the disposal zone will be considered for disposal after 4 weeks from the first day of storage. Repeat offenders may be charged a release fee.

FISH LANDING QUAY STORAGE AREA

- This area is for temporary storage of fishing gear. The maximum time between use of items in this area is 2 weeks.
- Only Weymouth Harbour berth holders may use this area.
- Gear must be stored at least 50cm from the edge of the harbour wall and there must be clear access walkways within the area. Markings will be applied to the designated areas.
- Any loose items will be deemed as rubbish and skipped.
- Any gear that is in the Fish Landing Quay Storage Area for storage must be sensibly stacked and secured on pallets and clearly marked with the owner or vessel's name.
- The height of stored gear must not exceed that of the surrounding fence.
- The Harbour Office are to be informed when gear is added or removed from this area.
- A limited amount of forklift time will be available to transport palleted gear. Additional forklift time will be available at a charge in accordance with the scale of charges.

- Any gear that does not meet the requirement of these procedures, unmarked gear or gear that is impeding walk ways may be removed by the Harbour Staff. If so, it will be recorded and stored in a disposal zone in the Port Restricted Area. The gear may be collected from this zone on the understanding that it will be stored correctly. Any unclaimed gear in the disposal zone will be considered for disposal after 4 weeks from the first day of storage. Repeat offenders may be charged a release fee.

FISH LANDING QUAY BAIT AREA

- Only Weymouth Harbour berth holders may use this area.
- Only bait is to be placed within the allocated bunded area on the Fish Landing Quay. It must be in covered boxes, marked with the vessel's name.
- All bait must be removed by 0900 daily.
- The Bait is to be managed such that the juices remain over the grating provided.
- The Fish Landing Quay Bait Area is to be washed and scrubbed down after use to maintain it in a hygienic condition.
- Bait boxes are to be cleaned regularly.

FISH LANDING QUAY FOOD AREA

- **The Fish Landing Quay Food Area is provided only for the landing/loading of fish and shellfish.**
- **Fish and shellfish for human consumption may be left for a short period only pending collection.**
- **The Fish Landing Quay is an area under the control of hygiene regulations and must be kept clean.**
- **Bait is not to be stored in the Fish Landing Quay Food Area.**
- All rubbish to be removed from the Fish Landing Quay.
- The fish landing area to be cleaned by washing and scrubbing by each user so that it is left in a condition that they would expect to find it in.
- **Anything left on the quay other than fish and shellfish for human consumption will be removed and disposed of without warning. Offenders may be liable for a Fixed Penalty or Prosecution.**

PORT RESTRICTED AREA

- Only Weymouth Harbour berth holders may use this area.
- Any gear that is in the Port for storage must be sensibly stacked and secured on pallets and clearly marked with the owner or vessel's name.
- Any loose items will be deemed as rubbish and skipped.
- The maximum number of pallets belonging to one operator is 25 or as determined by the Harbour Master if the available space is full.
- The price for storage will be £1/month/pallet (footprint) in a secure area with 24hr accessibility and CCTV.
- The area cannot be accessed during ferry operations, normally in the period 2 hours before a Condor ferry sailing and 1 hour after a Condor ferry arrival.

- Prior warning should be given before accessing the port, which is a government-regulated Restricted Area.
- With prior agreement, vessels may berth alongside the port to transfer fishing gear. This is not allowed during the closed period for ferry operations.
- A limited amount of forklift time will be available to transport palleted gear. Additional forklift time will be available at a charge in accordance with the scale of charges.
- Any gear that does not meet the requirement of these procedures, unmarked gear or gear that is impeding walk ways may be removed by the Harbour Staff. It will be recorded and stored in a disposal zone in the Port Restricted Area. The gear may be collected from this zone on the understanding that it will be stored correctly. Any unclaimed gear in the disposal zone will be considered for disposal after 4 weeks from the first day of storage. Repeat offenders may be charged a release fee.