

Weymouth Harbour Report

Harbours Advisory Committee
22nd November 2023

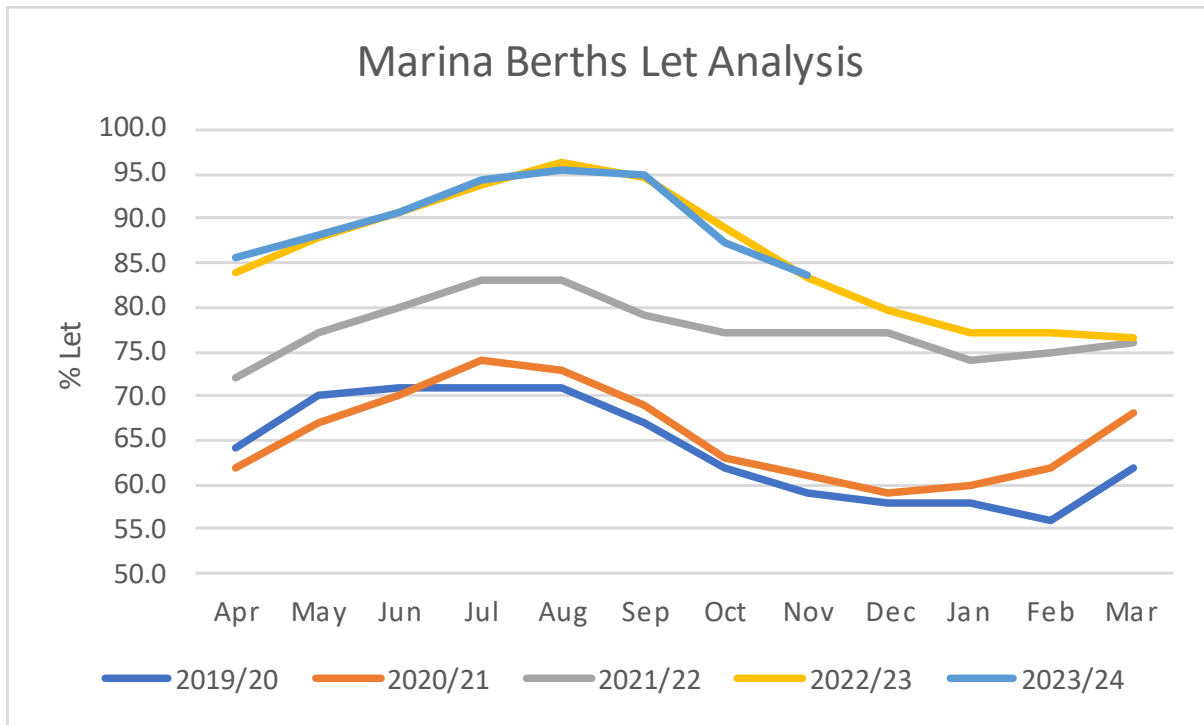


Ed Carter
Weymouth Harbour Master

Weymouth Harbour Let Analysis

Marina Berths

As we move into the winter season, the expected downturn in berth let is becoming evident. Typically, as the summer season comes to an end, people start to evaluate their berthing requirements. Interest in recreational berths remains strong, with the let of marina berths peaking slightly behind the 2022/23 season. While we are holding a significant waiting list for vessels requiring larger berths, vacancies remain in the small vessel category (predominantly 6m LOA and below), where demand is low.



Commercial Berths

Available commercial berths are at almost 100% let, with the remaining spaces being less popular due to access issues (mid-stream pontoon) or size restrictions at the berth.

Weymouth Harbour Statistics

	2020/21*	2021/22*	2022/23	2023/24 (to 01 Nov)	Against Previous Year Profile
Visiting Leisure Craft Revenue (<i>Berthing Fees</i>)	£53,485	£140,501	£152,372	£147,815	-1.18%
Slipway & PWC Permit Revenue	£22,940	£20,094	£25,351	£20,298	-17.24%
Number of Bridge Lifts	926	1,383	1,350	1,052	-4.54%
Number of Vessels Transiting Bridge	6,151	7,251	6,182	5,384	-5.59%
Number of Non-resident Fishing Vessel Visits	303	167	48	39	25.81%
Number of Acts of Pilotage	0	0	0	0	-

*Years impacted by Covid restrictions

With the continuation of good weather into early October, the harbour remained popular, with the annual promise of an Indian Summer finally being realised. Consequently, the revenue received from visiting vessels was up when compared to September and October in 2022, although unfortunately not quite enough to buck the overall trend of this generally wet and windy summer season.

Harbour Operations & Port Marine Safety – Quarterly Update

1.0 Harbour Use

1.1 With good weather continuing right through September into early October, the harbour remained busy with lots of visitors, and plenty of marina and commercial activity. As the weather shifted in October, the activity in the harbour has taken its usual seasonal downturn.

The end of October into November saw a return to autumnal conditions, with the 2nd of the 2023 named storms, Babet, hitting the UK on the 19th of October, which nationally caused widespread flooding and destruction. Weymouth Harbour enjoys a sheltered position and is well protected from the prevailing south westerly winds. Accordingly, through the worst of Storm Babet, and then in November Storm Ciaran, the harbour has fared well and damage to infrastructure and vessels has been minimal.

Regular checks of all harbour areas, proactive maintenance, and adverse weather preparations all contribute to minimising the effects of these storm events.

2.0 Incidents

2.1 The Harbour team have recorded 20 incidents since the last meeting, including:

- Damage to railings from a vehicle
- Damage to a gangway from a vessel bowsprit
- 2 separate incidents of Helicopter evacuations for casualties that suffered medical episodes on vessels outside of Harbour waters
- Vandalism of vessel covers at Weymouth Rowing Club
- A tent used by contractors involved in the Town Bridge works blew off the bridge into the harbour during high winds
- Partially sunken vessel in the Inner Harbour marina

3.0 Operations

3.1 Powers of General Direction

Continuing the process of consultation on the Weymouth Harbour General Directions, discussions with the RYA, a Statutory Consultee, were further delayed by a key member of the RYA leaving the organisation. Conversations are now reaching their conclusion, with all points of concern raised by the RYA being addressed and some minor amendments to the Directions are being made. In liaison with marine law firm Ashfords LLP, we are awaiting final confirmation from the RYA that they are happy with the changes.

It was hoped that the final amended General Directions would be brought to this meeting to be adopted. However, the decision has been made that as the Directions come immediately into force at the time of adoption, due to the late amendments at this stage it is prudent that the full and final report be made to this committee at the March 2024 meeting. This will allow the Harbour team to fully assess the implications of any amendments and ensure that no unintended complications or effects arise from this complex process when the Directions come into force.

3.2 Oil Spills & Response

No oil spill or pollution events have been attended by harbour staff during this reporting period.

5.0 Harbour Works

5.1 Dorset Harbours Strategy

Strategic Goal 1 of the Dorset Harbour Strategy is to maintain safe working harbours and provide high quality infrastructure and facilities. The following harbour works are all being carried out in pursuit of this goal.

5.2 Visitor Pontoons

Following the reports of the black D-Fendering marking vessel hulls and fenders, the decision has been taken to replace the fendering with a grey EPDM (type of PVC) instead. Replacement of the fendering is nearly complete and will be finished well ahead of the 2024 season.

Temporary winter berthing is proving popular, with 8 vessels already arrived and more making enquiries.

During the demolition of the old Council Office building, and the upcoming repairs to Wall 4, while all efforts will be made by contractors to minimise disturbance, we have put space aside in the outer harbour for vessels that berth close to the works to move temporarily if they have any concerns.

5.3 Weymouth Quay Regeneration Project

Contractors arrived on site to begin work on 16th October. Regular site meetings are being held to ensure the timely delivery of the project and its core objectives. A Communications Plan has been developed, and regular updates are being issued.

A Steering Group, initially intended to work on further beautification of the Pleasure Pier, is expanding in scope to encompass the public realm developments of this project, and to align the proposed public realm aspects of the future repair works to Walls F & G around the wider Peninsula site. The first meeting of this group has taken place, and discussions are continuing to develop the plan by involving the wider community through public engagement.

5.4 Pleasure Pier

Work to replace the railings has been completed, and new H&S compliant signage fitted. The new railings have made a big improvement to the look of the area.

5.5 Town Bridge Maintenance Works

Maintenance works to the Town Bridge are continuing and believed to be on schedule to complete at the end of November.

Weekday lifts of the Town Bridge remain limited to three per day, with only one leaf of the bridge being raised at midday. LNTM 16 of 2023 refers.

6.0 Commercial Port Berths & Notable Traffic

6.1 Commercial Port Berths

Our commercial berths continue to be well used by current berth holders. There has been no additional notable commercial traffic during this reporting period.

7.0 Pilotage

7.1 No acts of pilotage have taken place during this reporting period.

8.0 Events Relevant to Harbour Operations

8.1 Racing & Regattas

- Weymouth Rowing Regatta – rescheduled to 14th October, but in the end got cancelled.
- Both the Seafood Festival and Ironman reported successful and well attended events, with no problems except for the Ironman swim being cancelled due to weather conditions.