

Carrick Castle Boat Club

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Carrick Castle Boat Club (CCBC) AGM
held 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, 12th March 2005
at the Carrick Castle Church Hall.

Minutes of the meeting

Present: Members – Liz Evans, Rob White, Douglas Locke, Nigel & Jane Richardson, Forrester & Alison Cockburn, Steve Gibbs & Bill Miller.
Visitor – P.J. Korbelt, Marine Officer for The Crown Estate.

Apologies: Phil Gilmer, Mick & Angie Watts, Joan Nielson & Claire France.
Liz Evans chaired the meeting. Rob White addressed the meeting as Vice-Chair & Douglas Locke as the Moorings Officer/Treasurer.

Talk: P.J. Korbelt, Marine Officer for The Crown Estate, gave a talk to the members on the role of The Crown Estate. A short summary of the hour-long talk with question and answer session follows.

The Crown Estate operates as a self-supporting company to maintain and protect the seabed around the British Isles from the low water line to 12 miles offshore. It issues licences for the use of the seabed and not for the use of the water above that is freely available to everyone. However where individual moorings are concerned, mooring areas are restricted to the safe swinging area for a vessel on that mooring, they should be well maintained, not a danger to navigation, should be marked with the boat's name, the maximum weight the mooring is designed for being shown and a Crown Estate mooring tag should be attached. The new tags being issued in 2005 will apply for 5 years, so it is suggested that the Crown Estate mooring tag number be marked on the mooring buoy as well in case the tag is lost. If the tag is lost for any reason, the owner of the mooring must apply to the club for a replacement that will be chargeable by The Crown Estate. Should the owner of the mooring decide not to renew their mooring licence in future, the large Crown Estate mooring tag must be returned to the club for return to the Crown Estate, otherwise the mooring fees will still be chargeable to the mooring's owner. Further if a mooring is no longer required, it must be removed from the seabed by the 31st March prior to the issue of the new licence for the forthcoming year. If the removal does not take place by then, the mooring fee will become liable to the mooring's owner. With regard to the liability a mooring's owner has for their mooring, it is stated that if a vessel should break free from a mooring and damage another or a vessel should be damaged by a sunken mooring, rope, chain or buoy, especially when at high tide a mooring may just be under the water surface, this can be a serious navigation danger and the mooring's owner is at risk of being sued for compensation. It was pointed out that vessels have sunk as a result of such occurrences and the mooring's owner, without insurance, has lost everything including their house with the compensation that became payable as a result of the mooring owner's

negligence. Whilst The Crown Estate are not interested in whether the mooring's owner has insurance or not, the mooring's owner should be aware that such incidences do occur and they should be aware of the consequences of not maintaining a mooring properly and not having insurance.

The Crown Estate Regulations have been tightened up considerably and members should be aware that if there is not a valid Crown Estate mooring tag on a mooring in future, the following procedure will apply to illegal moorings and an illegal mooring is one without a valid Crown Estate mooring tag. The Marine Officer of The Crown Estate will be regularly visiting each area to check on all moorings. Each mooring is being logged with a GPS position and each mooring is added to The Crown Estate's computer records. If a mooring has no valid tag on in future, a red notice will be attached to the mooring buoy giving the owner 28 days to comply with the notice. If no action has been taken within 28 days, a further notice will be given to remove the mooring within 28 days. If the mooring has not been removed from the seabed within 14 days after that a Sheriff's Writ will be issued to the owner of the mooring. It is a criminal offence to have an illegal mooring and apart from the £1,000 fine, The Crown Estate can charge for any back rent, up to 10 years in arrears and charge for the removal of the mooring. This is very expensive as they employ a team of divers to remove the mooring and inspect the immediate seabed area around the mooring for any tackle associated with the mooring that may have to be removed. The Crown Estate does take such action and most cases are resolved out of court, as The Crown Estate will always win if the case does go to court leaving the defendant with huge legal bills and costs. Whilst this all appears negative, the actions of The Crown Estate are to maintain and protect the seabed and it is the duty of the licensee to uphold these aims too, maintaining their mooring safely.

Some of the other points raised at the meeting included why the club was limited to 30 mooring positions. The reason was simply that back in 1989 when the club was formed, the club was asked how many moorings it was likely to need in the future and 'someone' said thirty. It therefore does not mean that we are tied to 30 mooring positions, however we would be limited to an appropriate number of moorings that could be safely placed with adequate swinging areas and laid in safe water. At present we still have spare capacity within the club's licence for 30 moorings as 25 were paid for in 2004/5 and as far as we are aware 24 are required in 2005/6. Another item raised was the anchorage at Swine's Hole and could it be guaranteed as an anchorage for the future. The answer to this was that it has already be designated as an approved anchorage by the Clyde Port Harbour Authority under whose jurisdiction Loch Goil falls and it will be shown as a designated anchorage on the new charts. The Clyde Cruising Club will however need to amend their pilot guide to show Swine's Hole in the correct position in relation to the Admiralty chart. The question of visitor's moorings was also brought up, however, legally, if the club offered one for visitors, the club could be held responsible for any incident involving the mooring so it was considered inappropriate to offer this in Carrick Castle. Another question was brought up about running moorings. Currently a running mooring can be unlicensed only if the vessel to which the running mooring is attached can be stepped into at the low water mark.

P J Korbel said that The Crown Estate had a Marine Stewardship Fund available for offering money for local marine projects, towards piers, slipways, sailing

clubs' projects, etc., so if we had a project in the future we should apply to the fund.

A great round of thanks was given to PJ Korbelt for his enlightening talk and for answering all the questions. His visit was very appreciated by the members.

Current club benefits

The purpose of the CCBC to date had been to enable members to obtain a discounted mooring fee. The Crown Estate mooring fee to members is £35.00 p.a., the non-members mooring fee is £70.00 p.a., however no new moorings can be placed in the Carrick Castle Boat Club's designated area, west of a line between Jenny's Bay and Ardnahean, without the approval of the CCBC. (Only one non-member has three officially licensed moorings south of the castle, although one is actually north of the castle). The Club currently has 19 members with 25 paid up moorings in the 2004/5 season ending 31st March 2005.

Web Site and E-mails

Claire France and Douglas Locke were thanked for providing the club with an excellent web site without charge. The only cost to the club being the domain name cost at £11.75 p.a. Members were advised to look at the web site regularly as there were frequent News Updates being added and the Gallery of Photographs was expanding too. If members have any interesting photographs to add please let Claire France (703181) have a copy to reproduce. We are particularly looking for historical photographs if anyone has any?

Rob White explained the use of the club's e-mail system. Anyone wishing to contact 'all' members should use - boat.club@carrick-castle.co.uk - having initially given the club permission to use their e-mail address. Members can opt in or out at any time. The system saves administration costs as there is no postage or stationery costs involved and information sent is 'immediate' whereas information sent by mail takes time or has to be delivered by hand also taking time and fuel for a car. So it really helps if members allow the club use of the e-mail system. For members who wish to reply to an e-mail direct to a committee member without 'all' seeing, please use the direct e-mail address such as Moorings@carrick-castle-boat-club.co.uk. In the last year the Mooring Officer received 131 incoming e-mails from members and sent out 141 e-mails to members and The Crown Estate. Imagine the cost of postage if e-mails were not available!

West Highlands Anchorage & Moorings Association (WHAM)

Following information supplied by P J Korbelt, The Crown Estate Marine Officer, it was understood that WHAM did not operate in the Clyde area but just the west coast of Scotland. The committee did feel however that £2.00 per mooring to join was too much for the club in any case without increasing the membership fee further, so it was decided at the meeting not to proceed further in this direction.

Group mooring inspections

Significant cost savings on the maintenance of the club members' moorings was achieved last year with group inspections. Neil Cunningham's charge of £40.00 per mooring inspection, plus the cost any replacement tackle supplied, was very satisfactory. Regular annual maintenance protects the safety of owners' moorings and vessels and ensures that negligence to maintain a mooring does

not arise in the event of an incident. Many of the members took part in the group inspections last year and many are again doing the same at the start of this season. The following moorings were checked last year – McQueen, Richardson, Oliver, Johnston, Miller, Evans/Locke, France/White, Cockburn, McKenna, Davies & Watts. The following members are having their moorings checked week commencing 20th March 2005 – Richardson, Miller, Evans/Locke, France/White, Cockburn, Watts and one mooring removal – Neilson. If any other members require their moorings to be checked, please contact the Mooring Officer before 20th March.

Constitution

The club has been in existence since 1989 however the club has never had a constitution and it was felt that this should be corrected. A draft constitution will therefore be sent to members to comment on and once agreed will be put to the members for approval at the next General Meeting of the club.

Carrick Castle Pier

Steve Gibbs, Chairman of the Carrick Castle Amenities Association (CCAA), spoke on the latest situation regarding the use of the pier. The MOD will not allow use of the pier due to their liability risks and offered to either fence off the pier or to drop the bridge into the water leaving the dolphin available for their use only by sea. The CCAA felt that fencing off the pier was not an option as it would be an 'eye saw' to the village and the castle, so the bridge is to be removed. The current situation has been reported in the news section on the CCBC web site and any further updates will also be posted there.

Light Dues and Red Diesel Proposals

The light dues update is as follows. The RYA's Legal and Cruising departments have ensured that current legislation for leisure craft is that vessels below 20 gross tonnes will not be liable for light dues. Commercial ships pay significant amounts for the upkeep of lighthouses and buoyage around the UK coast. A large container vessel can be charged up to £16,000 in light dues for a single visit to the UK.

The RYA is maintaining its campaign for the extension of the derogation on marine diesel. If the extension is not achieved, the price could rise from 35p to 95p per litre on 1st January 2007. See news item on the club's web site.

Muster & Social Events for 2005

It was agreed by all that following the success of the Muster in 2004, that another Muster be held in Swine's Hole in 2005 at a date to be set. Further, a Barbeque for members could be arranged locally as well. More information on this will be sent to members once established.

Accounts

The CCBC accounts up to 31st March 2005 (prepared to 12th March 2005, but not expected to change) were presented to the members and accepted. Copies were handed to members at the meeting and those who did not attend will be sent a copy by e-mail or post.

Membership fees

Currently £5.00 p.a. per person/family. It was agreed that it would not be

necessary to increase the membership fee for the year 2005/2006 and that it would remain as £5.00 p.a. per person/family.

Whilst all the members who attended the A.G.M. had paid their subscriptions for membership and their Crown Estate mooring fees, there were still six of the nineteen members who haven't yet paid. The deadline for paying is 15th March annually. The club has to pay The Crown Estate mooring fees en block before the end of March to receive the preferential rates it gets. So would those members who have not paid, please pay their fees immediately. Sending reminders through the post costs money and creates extra work and the time involved that should be unnecessary when the benefits to members are so great.

Election of 3 officers –

Chairperson,
Vice-Chairperson,
Mooring Officer/Treasurer

Current the elected, volunteer officers are:

Chairperson – Liz Evans
Vice-Chairperson – Robert White
Mooring Officer/Treasurer – Douglas Locke.

The current office holders were re-elected un-opposed and Douglas Locke was thanked for all his work in running the club for the members.

Any other business

New sandbank north of the Perch

Neil Cunningham has offered to take Douglas Locke to this sandbank and sound its depth and position when he comes to service the members' moorings around 20th March 2005. Should there be a significant reduction in depth, this will be reported to the Hydrographic Office. Members will be advised of the findings via the news items on the club's web site.

Club Burgee

The members present agreed to purchase a club burgee when available. Any member who did not attend the AGM and who would be interested in purchasing one as well should advise the club.

News Updates

Members were advised to look at the web site regularly for news updates as there are news items being posted a few times each month with information provided for members' interest. On the Links page, members will find useful links to weather information, tide tables, etc., etc.

Future A.G.M. Meetings

At the last AGM, several members asked if the next meeting could be held at a weekend, so the committee complied by having the meeting on a Saturday instead of the last one held on a Thursday. 16 attended on the Thursday whereas only 9 attended on the Saturday with none of those who asked for the weekend attending. Perhaps next year we should have a compromise and hold it on a Friday evening and more would attend?