



Conwy Marina Berth Holders Association

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30th March 2021

Jon Roberts
Manager
Conwy Marina

Dear Jon,

CMBHA held its Annual General Meeting on Zoom last weekend, followed by an informal discussion forum. This session was dominated by two issues, with strong feelings expressed. The committee was asked to write to you, raising these issues. This letter has been prepared by the CMBHA committee.

- **Above-inflationary increase in the 2021-22 berthing fees**

- There has been a 4.74% increase in this year's berthing fees (raising to 5.7% for boats less than 6M). Previously, Quay Marinas allowed a very clear "early payment discount" for all berth holders renewing before March 31st. For 2020-21 fees, this was diluted to a 1% discount for berth holders renewing before January 21st. For 2021-22 fees, this discount was replaced with an offer last September.
- Members believe the 4.7% increase to be unjustified for the following reasons:
 - The rate of inflation has been steadily falling since 2017. In 2020, RPI was 1.6% and CPI was 1.0% (based on ONS figures) and both measures of inflation are predicted to be lower for 2021.
 - In response to the pandemic, the Bank of England cut interest whilst local and national governments introduced further support mechanisms such as furloughs, grants, rates-relief and loans that could have benefitted *Boatfolk*.
 - Members appreciate it has been a difficult period. However as berthing fees are paid "up front", *Boatfolk's* loss of revenue should have been much less than many other businesses.
 - Members appreciate the improvements to the marina (including walkways and decoration of amenity buildings), although these were perceived to be more as maintenance combined with an investment to provide extra berths, that should lead to additional revenue.

- **Improvements needed in communicating berthing fees and benefits for members**

- Members welcomed a return to more regular, local content in newsletters from *Boatfolk*. However, there was concern about *Boatfolk* communications relating to annual berthing fees, yard service charges, and benefits available to berth holders. For example, members were unsure whether some benefits are available to annual berth holders (such as discount on yard services charges and/or inclusion of free sling washes) or whether these are restricted to new berth holders.
- Members would welcome greater clarity, consistency and transparency in these communications, and particularly would ask for publication of yard services charges on the *Boatfolk* website.
- Further, with the recent announcement of the *Boatcare* service, members are increasingly concerned that this signifies a direction of travel that they will only be able to engage *Boatcare* contractors to undertake work on their vessels.

We would welcome your feedback and in particular the rationale for this year's price increase and the policy for future pricing. We look forward to hearing from you and eagerly await the further easing of government restrictions.

Kind regards,
Roger Millward, Chairman
on behalf of the CMBHA committee and members