



POSOL Residents Management Company Limited

Autumn Newsletter 2021

Don't they look smart!



Take a look at this set of six newly painted garages. One of the owners got fed up looking at them in all different states of decorative repair, contacted the owners of the other five and offered to paint them all. The result is as you see. Properly prepared and given two coats of the correct colour gloss paint they look terrific. He also treated the surrounding



woodwork with two coats of varnish stain and capped it off by giving the door handles a coat of black enamel. The whole block now looks better now than it did when new in 1988! How's that for a fine example of good neighbourliness?

Any more like him?

House Number Plates



House numbers which reflect both the marine emphasis of our marina village and were practical because they carried clear digits which were large enough to be easily read from passing cars. The great majority of these have stood the test of time and still look good today, even though many of them are well over 30 years old. We have occasionally been asked if replacements were available. They were not but now they are. POSOL would like to see these continue to enhance those houses to the north and west of Bryher Bridge so it has paid for the necessary artwork to be re-created. You may now order your own plate by asking our managing agent for details of how to do this. They cost £15.00 pounds plus VAT.

AFP Account Details

Shareholders are asked to check that they are using the correct bank account details for AFP when paying future Service Charge bills. A few have been using old bank accounts (even some for AFP's predecessors). The payment is then not credited to their account and chasing letters get sent. How annoying to get chased for payment when you've "sent the money"! In these cases, AFP spend a lot of time locating where the funds have gone and recovering them so the payment can be finally processed. All the information you need to make sure this does not happen is **printed on the invoice(s) you receive.**

Refurbishing our Pontoons

A financial cloud, which has hung over POSOL for many years, has been the knowledge that the pontoons would have to be replaced at some time. It is known that the pontoons in Brighton Marina were replaced after 40 years but these had been subjected to far worse wave conditions than our relatively snug Port Solent berths have to endure.

Our marina was first opened in 1988 and the last pontoons were installed in 1997. We anticipated replacing the earlier ones very soon and spread the replacement over the next 8 years.

The first action was to consult the original supplier of the pontoons and to get a quotation for replacing them. At today's prices the cost of removing and disposing of the old pontoon, buying a new pontoon and having it installed would cost about £6,000 per pontoon. A total of nearly a million pounds.

Oops !

Nobody contemplates that sort of expenditure without getting professional advice. As many of you will be aware, we did have a survey carried out.

First the good news. Ignoring the isolated exception, the metal frames of both the pontoons and the ramps were all in good condition and have plenty of life left in them. Similarly, the floatation chambers will last a lot longer. The wooden planks can be replaced on an ad-hoc basis, as and when required, as has been the practice over many years.

The major problem identified by that survey was excessive "wobble" and/or a twist to one side or the other to various degrees on some pontoons. To put this into perspective, our pontoons were naturally prone to "wobble" from the day they were built, due to the design of the bolt and rubber donut hinge system connecting the pontoon to the ramp leading ashore. This system has been in use for many years on pontoons around the world. The "wobble" issue has become worse due to the holes in the pontoon steelwork, through which the "hinge bolts" pass, having become elongated. This allows the "wobble" and tendency to twist to increase. Some years ago every one of those bolts and rubber donuts were replaced



(the bolts were found to be worn too) and this improved the situation for a while.

So, where do we go from here? The major issue was clearly the hinge system. If a better arrangement, which reduced or eliminated the tendency to flex laterally at the hinge point could be

designed, this would be a major improvement and extend the life of the existing pontoons by many years. There were a number of technical factors to consider:

1. Would a metal hinge system be made strong enough?
2. Could it be designed so that it would not squeak?
3. If the hinge pins wear, would they rattle?
4. Could a replacement hinge be fitted without the need to move any boats?

Point 1. We have a design fabricated and machined from 8.5mm stainless steel plate.

Point 2. The hinge pins are made of Naval Bronze. They will not squeak.

Point 3. The hinge pins are of a generous size and have been designed to be replaced in situ, should they ever wear enough to cause a nuisance.

Point 4. Those of you who remember the logistics problems experienced when the hinge bolts and donuts were replaced last time, which required both boats to be moved away to pontoons elsewhere in the Marina, will know how difficult this was to achieve. Hence the desire to avoid this, if at all possible.

Fortunately, an ex-director of POSOL is a precision engineer and has access to both designers and machine tools.

After much discussion it was decided to place an order for the design and installation of two prototype hinges, plus the necessary jigs and tools needed to fit them.

There has been some delay while the jigs to hold the pontoons safely while the work was carried out were trialled. It took 3 revisions of the jig design before we finally had a safe and reliable system. Apologies for the delay but, better be safe than sorry and the cost of around £600 per pontoon (2 berths) to give an anticipated minimum of 10 years extra life to our old pontoons is a huge benefit. Of course, nothing lasts for ever and inevitably whole pontoons will need to be replaced but this new hinge design will enable POSOL to defer the expense as long as possible while further building the reserve fund and then phase the work in manageable increments.

We are expecting to install the second trial installation, even as this newsletter goes to press. The first installation (seen here) has been in place for over 5 months and is performing beautifully. As soon as the second one has been fitted satisfactorily, we will place an order for the first batch of production hinges. These will be fitted to the worst-case pontoons and, as these installations proceed, we will be placing an order for hinges for every pontoon. Our aim is to complete the upgrade on all finger pontoons over the course of the next few months.



Please note that we will fit hinges to the pontoons most in need first. The Berthing Working Group recently carried out a survey to establish the priority order, taking into account input from shareholders as appropriate, and this priority list will be used at every stage until all pontoons have had their hinges replaced.

An interesting fact which emerged from the survey is that the older pontoons are not necessarily worse than the newer ones. The difference is quite striking. The pontoons at the southern end of Newlyn Way, on the southern side of Bryher Island, and the southern end of Coverack Way are generally the worst but there are exceptions. The work will therefore seem to be somewhat randomly carried out but, be assured, it will be to a master plan!

Finally, some more good news. We are not looking at a cost of a million pounds here. The exact cost has not yet been finalised (material prices are going through the roof at this time) but it will most likely be in the region of one hundred thousand pounds, which means that our reserves will cover us for doing all the berths over a period of a few months, starting shortly.

Gardening



With the ongoing commitment and support of the Gardening Working Group, we are continuing to renovate and improve the landscaping around Port Solent. We show here two of the planters after stripping out and replanting with new stock. Our landscapers have dug out the old soil, replaced with new and sympathetically planted with consideration to wildlife and aesthetics for our environment.

Unfortunately, we do have a problem which is affecting our landscape: "Ash Die Back". Significant areas of woodland across the UK and Europe have been attacked by this unseen

disease and we are no exception. POSOL has commissioned a survey of our trees, which has identified a significant number of affected trees. Tenders have been sent out to professional tree surgeons and work will commence as soon as possible.

As part of POSOL's commitment to maintaining the landscaping, we will be back planting the affected areas with suitable replacement trees.

Now for some really excellent news. We can report that we now have a 3-year contract with our current gardeners. Many of you have expressed your appreciation of the work that they do and POSOL was delighted to switch from successive 1-year contacts to a 3-year fixed price one.

As requested in previous newsletters, please report irresponsible pet owners to Portsmouth City Council. It is totally unacceptable for the landscapers, working on our behalf, to have to deal with pet mess, especially on the grassed areas.



Rodents at Large!

We have been advised that there has been an influx of rodents on the estate and that several dogs have become critically ill with symptoms consistent with the ingestion of rat poison. Would house owners please avoid putting poison on communal land. Dog owners are advised to keep their pets away from dead rodents. Yes. Dead rodents have been seen (and removed, of course). Owners affected by the infestation should seek help from Portsmouth City Council.

And Finally

if you are still keeping yours going, it's time to climb into the loft again to tend to the Flebu ventilation system. Clean filters, fit heat exchanger unit etc. You know the drill!

For those with boats, good luck with the winter overhaul and, for everybody, we hope you are enjoying life here in our marina village.