

# Cobb's Quay Berthholder's Association

## Improvement Ideas August 2009

### Positive Comments

As I said, I am very pleased overall with the whole Cobb's Quay experience, and have had good service from Marina staff, Berth Holders and onsite support services in my 2 years with you.

I am only 2 years with the Marina and very pleased overall.

Hope the meeting goes well and please pass on our thanks to Dave for all he has done for Cobb's this year.

I am pleased to say that I am a very contented user of the dry stack with no major issues.

As frequent users of the marina and its facilities we are always both pleased and impressed with the standard of both the facilities and the service. Improvements made last year have been reflected in the very high quality we have enjoyed this year. We say congratulate Dave Wilson on a job very well done.

I must say since the new chap has taken over it has improved at Cobb's the car parking is better and the place is a lot cleaner etc. .

Many thanks for the positive comments its always pleasing to read when we do well.

We were talking recently about the improvements that have been achieved in the time that Dave has been at Cobb's; it might be good to reflect some of these back to him at your meeting? For us these would include :-

- Ian's shop - very definite improvement: its run by nice people who understand boaty needs and is therefore stocked with the right things & open at the right times.
- Dry berth facilities - especially the team working with Toby: Mandy, Nick, Mark, Gaz & Russ: all are top-notch, on top of the job, friendly - and most importantly work really hard to clear the boats from the pontoons back into their berths - especially important on busy (hot sunny!) days.

### Fees Comments

If we were to make a suggestion for the future it would be a request to maintain the benefits which accrue from Prompt and early payment of the fees. The resulting discounts have been much appreciated.

We must accept that there is little likelihood that MDL will listen to cries for a reduction in berthing rates, but it was interesting on our two week trip to Brittany to see how much lower rates are for berthing, even taking into account the poor Euro rate. Kevin has more precise figures, but Jersey charge around 55% of Cobbs' rates, and Dielette and St Malo are about 65%. Whilst there are the sill limitations at Jersey and Dielette, is this any more of a problem than we will face at Cobbs when the new bridge is built? I think the gradual exodus from Cobbs will become a stampede once the bridge is built and people realise how inconvenient it will be. However, once the free berths at the alternative marinas are taken up then those who are left will have to face up to probable INCREASES

in Cobbs rates as they seek to replace their revenues. Therefore, any lobbying in this direction will help.

Whilst it doesn't necessarily affect me, the interest rate that they charge for monthly payment no longer reflects real rates. There are people who do their boating very much on a shoestring and to have quite high fees boosted by a) not being able to take advantage of the early payment discount and b) being loaded with usury interest rates makes their continuing participation all the more difficult. Perhaps MDL could consider monthly payment as a "standard" and then offer discounts for prompt payment.

On a positive note, the 30 nights on floating moorings (we are on the dry-stack) at Cobb's and other MDL moorings plus the fuel at cost are most gratefully received. Please suggest to DW that these are continued next year (and beyond!).

2010 berthing fees - remind MDL that there is a recession & that most of us have had to freeze wages or reduce fees in the current recession. An increase at the current time is not appropriate. Also, January is not a good time for most of us for payment as i) post - Christmas & ii) most of us have our own businesses & it is the tax payment month...so bring back March payment!

Negotiate a discount with PMS for MDL (or CQBHA?) Customers/Members.

All the comments regarding fees and benefits have been put forward to the MDL Board to consider. I will add that we as a company appreciate the feed back and we are of course very aware of the current financial situation.

## **Safety/Security Issues**

Encourage berth holders not to have anchors or dinghies projecting over the pontoons. Sooner or later somebody or a child will be hurt.

The Dockmaster's whilst on patrol regularly adjust boats lines to minimise the boats overhanging the pontoons this is an ongoing problem that gets worst when berth holders use fixed lines.

Our berth, right at the end of A, is very significantly affected by the traffic entering and leaving the marina - numerous boats enter/leave at speeds in excess of the limit, and "put the hammer down" as they round the port hand marker at the entrance to the marina. The wash that this creates is uncomfortable and in the long term damaging to our boats and moorings. On Sunday night I and another berth holder observed a small boat enter the marina at a speed of 25 - 30 knots. These sorts of small boats and the mid-large sized RIBs seem to be the worst culprits as they don't seem to be aware of the wash they create when rounding the marker at speed.

I would like to see some focus being given by MDL to those who use excessive speed in the marina. Also those who use tenders at speed in and around the marina. I am not a kill joy but I am at the end of a pontoon at some times it really does become a problem. Have MDL any ability / intention to control activities in the marina.

I'd like to see a sign with VERY large lettering mounted on the hammerhead at the end of A reminding marina users of the speed limit and instructing them to mind their wash. At least it might do something as otherwise MDL seem to have "washed" their hands of the matter of the speed limit in the marina.

Staff, berth holders, and myself regularly shout at and embarrass speeding boats. I have recently written to a non berth holders boat that if he speeds in the marina again I will not issue fuel to him.

Constant battle but we are aware and are trying our best to stop this discourteous behaviour. Signs do not work as they can not be seen when boats are berthed on the Hammer Heads.

## **Security.**

I think we are all aware that some thefts took place earlier in the year and at times i think that security is almost non existent. (gates not working etc). I realise that this is a very hard area to deal with, as costs of extra personnel are high. However i would think that improved CCTV would be a good deterrent. For example at Salterns' a camera points down each pontoon and is recorded and kept i am told for one month. I think the camera takes a picture every few seconds or so. Personally i would pay extra on the annual mooring costs to have this extra peace of mind.

With theft from A pontoon there are still possibility to improve security, car pass displayed in screen would also be an advantage.

My main concern is the security of the marina during and out of working hours. Especially the number of none berth holders that visit the **BOATHOUSE**.

Security is, and will always be a high priority for me on the marina. Over the past 24 months we have installed an electric front gate, a number plate recognition camera, two new high resolution low light cameras and more recently security lighting on the Dry stack and a 6 ft fence along the boundary with Davis's all these measures are of course a deterrent but not a guarantee of no theft. The staff are more vigilant of people loitering on the marina and are being challenged, we are also making all contractors register with us before working on site.

## **Information Management**

### **Moving Weather**

Replace the Moving Weather display in the toilet block with a rotating display that shows the inshore waters forecast for Selsey Bill to Lyme Regis, the shipping forecast for Wight and Portland, the Met Office forecast for the south and south west, Met Office synoptic charts for the next five days, and actual conditions in Poole Harbour <http://www.pooleharbourweather.com/weather/> and the Channel. The cost could be offset by sponsorship by local advertising. A good example of what can be done can be seen in the marina office at Lymington Yacht Haven.

Unfortunately the Moving Weather only provides information on wind directions and speeds. It gives no information on weather or sea conditions, the moving lines are of no use as they are not isobars, and the whole display is painful to watch being in five minute increments. That it is not used very much by berthholders and is not popular is demonstrated by the very few people who bother to stand and watch the display. Even then I fear it is because they are waiting for someone.

MDL donated the screen with CQBHA selecting the program, if you want it changed ask your committee for an upgrade.

### **Marina Signage/Information**

Would it be possible to have a facility to show actual windspeed similar to that in other marinas?

Loved the sign attached to the ramp to C and D pontoons requesting dog owners to control and clear up after their dogs. A stern message was also printed in doggy language so that all concerned would

understand. Is there a possibility some such notice could be directed to parents of unruly, noisy children who roam in packs leaving scooters and bikes spread around like a scrap yard. Said notice could include advice such as " Parents, please do not ignore your children because someone else has to suffer them if you do"

Downloadable chart of the marina with pontoon & berths clearly lettered/numbered.

### **Bridge Height Indicator**

Is there any way the office could display the Air draft at the bridge. I know it's a complicated thing but may be it could be put on the internet or something.

Bridge height indicator(s). This will become increasingly important over the next few years for boats whose air-draught means that they can navigate the bridge(s) if there's certainty about the available air draught.

The promise of a repeater indicating the height of the bridge has not yet materialised. As an owner with a boat that can safely navigate under the bridge when tidal conditions permit, it would be a real bonus.

Signage is always a problem, too much and most ignore it, not enough and people claim not to have seen it. I would hope that I don't have to remind parents by means of a sign to keep the kids on a lead. Powerboat training UK has a very good wind speed indicator and if you go on to the web site [www.cobbs-quay-weather.co.uk/](http://www.cobbs-quay-weather.co.uk/) you will get all the information you need.

Bridge Height indicator boards will be available soon.

### **On water Facilities**

#### **Water**

Low water pressure on pontoons

The pitifully low pressure of water on the pontoons.

The second point we have already mentioned, that of the water pressure on the pontoons. Again this weekend there was no water pressure whatsoever. At our end of D pontoon, one could not even describe it as a trickle. It took about five minutes to get enough to fill the kettle. Is it not possible to install one or more pumps to boost the pressure?

I am afraid I have done all I can to help this problem by fixing a leak at the main gate. The pressure we have is the mains pressure coming on to the site. If you are at the end of the line with other users in front of you the pressure will be poor but if you try later and you are the only user it will be better.

#### **Electricity**

Lack of electric points on pontoons

Can the electricity supply be upgraded? It cannot be economic to hire in a generator every winter, and even then it frequently drops out.

Similar problem to the water the sub station at the entrance can only supply a certain amount at peak times. During the winter months the supply is not enough hence we have to hire in the Gen set. At the current time (no pun intended) it is not cost effective to replace the sub station.

## **Pontoons**

Three items spring to mind, firstly only applies to myself and probably a few others. Having been at Cobbs now for 4 years and on our second boat we have never had our boat name on the pontoon like nearly everyone else. Are we odd ones out or is it something more personal.

Would it be sensible to fender the sides of the fuel berth so that boats didn't have to mess around changing fenders from one side of their boat to another.

Out of interest, at Dielette Marina, every berthing finger was fitted with soft edging to reduce damage and with some fingers in Cobbs having sharp edges and nails, screws, and other similar damage "opportunities", it would be good if a rolling programme of upgrading could be started. Where you berthed at the top of C the wind is not too bad, but down in "owner's boat name" land life is much more difficult and we watch no end of smaller boats getting it wrong and ending up with damage to their gel coat (I do not exclude myself from this).

One other issue is the pontoons, they are starting to get rather clackety, with loose boards. This might be a low priority but in some cases I have seen them starting to rise which might cause a berth holder to trip and fall in the water. I've tried to tighten some of the screws in the immediate vicinity of my boat, in the past, but the screws appear to be stripped (maybe due to having been already re-tightened by staff previously). I know if you mention to the staff that a board is rotting they replace very quickly but the loose boards just seem to stay that way. New screws are an obvious answer but it would be very time consuming, I wonder if screws were offered for berth holders to replace by their own boats, would this be an answer?

We have a rolling program of maintenance on the pontoons, boards are replaced as and when we find they are worn or they are reported to us, we would not always pick up if planks are loose on fingers so if you do have a problem with loose or worn boards on your finger pontoon please let the office know and we will get it sorted.

All boats on annual contracts have a name plate. If you do not have one let me know and I will action it.

Fendering on the fuel berth is now completed, as is the whole of the Dry stack pontoon. Individual fingers are not being done but if you have loose screws or a problem with fendering contact me direct.

## **Equipment**

Do they have any plans to install a holding tank suck out. It would be a very useful facility especially when the weather is rubbish and the boats are not able to go out of the harbour.

Sorry NO, not at this stage.

Suggest hose pipe to be replaced by the gate end of dry stack yard near slipway,. also to find some way of borrowing gun for hosepipes, we know they are being nicked by irresponsible customers!!!

The only way I can guarantee a hose gun is for you to have your own gun and take it with you when you have finished. We put 50 guns on hoses on the main marina in 2008, all were stolen before the season ended.

## **Fuelling**

Please see suggestion to simplify Cobbs Quay re-fuelling arrangements at busy periods. Now that the fuel berth is reportedly manned (personed) I would suggest that the following procedures are adopted:-

- Prior to setting off for fuel from berth you radio and get (a) authorisation to proceed or (b) the attendant issues sequence number if busy
- When current refuelled boat is ready to leave the fuel attendant calls up the next number via radio to proceed
- This process is repeated until boats are re-fuelled in order
- Any queue jumpers would be refused until all booked boats refuelled

This system works well at Hythe and ensures that boats only leave their berths when fuel berth is clearing.

Last Friday we called Cobbs Quay on radio to confirm fuel berth availability but after 3 attempts and NO replies we went round for fuel anyway and luckily as we arrived as a boat was just leaving. I also accept that this procedure could be a step too far for Cobb Quay!

## **Fuel pontoon.**

Fuel pontoon.....there is dock safe mooring fendering on part of the pontoon.....surely it would make sense to extend this along the whole fuel pontoon.

The pontoon is sometimes very busy and boats are queuing in front of the dry stack etc. Could the pontoon be extended a little further towards the dry stack? Normally there seems to be an odd boat moored there for some reason, which can make the situation worse. A couple of weeks ago i took the jet ski round to fill up and there were nine boats waiting to fuel up. Only two at a time can really tie up. If this could be extended may be a couple more could be tied up? This situation seems slightly worse this year, which may be just that i have visited the fuel dock at the wrong time or could it be caused by the excellent offer that MDL have in place to supply fuel at cost? I suspect that most berth holders are buying fuel at the marina now as opposed to Corrals or the fuel barge? The chap who has been employed to serve fuel at weekends is excellent but seems under a lot of pressure at times.

Fuelling, I have taken all the points on board and will be looking at how it can be improved. I did man the fuel berth at weekends this year during the summer months which was a big improvement for all.

## **Showers/Washrooms**

### **Facilities**

What plans are there for the old toilet block?

There are no plans for the block and it will remain as it is because of planning issues.

F Pontoon continues to be seriously disadvantaged in terms of toilet and washing facilities near F Pontoon. The present facilities are substandard in both quality and quantity and need sorting in terms of some building investment.

I will look at sprucing them up next year, one of the reason F pontoon is 5% cheaper than the main marina is because of the distance to the main shower facilities.

The lack of hot water in the toilet block, particularly in the handbasins, it takes a very long time to come through and wastes a lot of water.

We have 3 very large gas boilers supplying hot water they are well up to the job but at times of peak use they do go cold and also in time of no use it is a long run from the hot water tank to tap, so you will have to let it run for the hot water to come out.

High (i.e. waist) level sink for washing dishes/clothes (a different and separate one to the current one that's used to clean washroom floors etc.)

This is already supplied in the Laundry room with the washing machines

### **Control**

Ensure the showers are working properly all the time. Even with the new controls and shower heads the water is sometimes non existent or not hot. See above

Nice to see the wash rooms have had a face lift but no lock so they are open to abuse from any-one.

We have deliberately kept them open this year, we have had no abuse of the front door since we left them open, incidentally the incidents in the facilities is a lot less than in previous years when locked, no idea why.

### **Inspection**

The swamping floor in the ladies shower area, it gets seriously wet and appears to not have any gradient to lead it to the drain.

New shower heads have, I believe, sorted this problem

Introduce an inspection rota for the toilet block (similar to that in McDonalds & supermarkets whereby there is a rota in the toilets to show that they have been inspected on regular basis). Hopefully this would eliminate some of the vandalism and improve the facilities.

See previous comments, staff do patrol facilities during the day.

In the peak summer weekends and at Bank holidays I think extra cleaning is needed. They seem to be cleaned first thing in the morning and the cleaners do a good job, but by Saturday evening they can be a mess if it has been busy.

We do this already with two cleans a day during peak times.

### **Waste Bins/Waste Services**

The waste bins are the 'focal point' of the Reception and Facilities Area. I feel they could be better placed (hidden/disguised) even if it meant walking a little further to dispose of your rubbish. They don't look good to visitors/guests and prospective new members. I realise they need to be accessible for emptying, and this may present a challenge.

May be a larger recycling bin would be a good idea, and perhaps a notice asking people to squash the cardboard boxes before putting them in the bin. !

The lack of recycling facilities is nearly criminal bearing in mind environmental concerns and the number of cans, bottles etc which are very familiar on boats!

Rubbish, Rubbish, Rubbish, everywhere but in the large blue bins. Two recycle bins have been provided near to the toilet/shower block. These bins were full by Saturday afternoon, not only with recycling, and the large blue rubbish bins were only half full.

Also can we have a rubbish bin at the top of the gangway to pontoons, notice all sorts of gunge gets thrown around.

Please please please persuade him to resite the bins (maybe to where the old shower-block was?) its impossible to move about the marina/facilities without encountering them (we do of course appreciate that they still need to be accessible!).

Some interesting comments, we have one bottle bank, one cardboard skip, 5 GREEN recycling bins, one scrap metal recycling. All of these skips have been contaminated with inappropriate waste i.e. food waste, plastic bags or worse and this has meant that it has had to go to land fill. I am afraid to say that some berth holders are blatantly putting their rubbish in any old skip and not separating. To re-locate the bins in the central waste area for the whole site would cause problems as I am sure some would not walk the distance, the other point to consider is the access for the bin wagon.

## **Marina Services**

### **Lifts/Services**

As members of Poole Yacht club the difference in cost to have a simple lift out, pressure wash off and left in the cradle for a half hour in order to change my anodes is £38-00 at Poole to well over £100 at Cobbs. If the cradle isn't being used at certain times would it not be in the interest of MDL to at least have it bringing in some income in these difficult times.

MDL pricing for the services given in the yard is competitive and reflects the investment that we put in year on year. The 50% Outlook yard discount for berth holders will remain for 2010.

### **Yard Issues**

Address problem of dust & debris from removed antifouling etc. in the car park/on the hard that then gets blown onto boats - noticeably on boats in the dry-stack (iron filings are a real problem) but presumably also in the marina. We do our best to control this, it would help if boats put plastic sheets down before removing antifouling.

Remedy the splattering of grease from the fork-lifts onto lines, boats and pontoons.

I am not aware of any issues with this please come and speak to me.

### **Marina Facilities**

Play area for the little people. Ours are long since grown-up but it might help to keep some of the scooters/bikes/balls off the pontoons and the little people from getting bored while the adults are in the nice new clean, comfortable & locally renowned for good-food and local ales club-house.

Interesting idea, we would need to consider who would supervise them?

## **Trolleys**

Encourage berth holders (and marina staff) to return trolleys as soon as they have finished with them. Not easy I know but on A and D pontoons at least there are people who consider they can take possession of trolleys for the whole time they are on their boats, whether at the marina or out at sea. The new trolleys have improved the situation immensely but there are still times when they are all in use.

I have made steps to improve this by introducing £2 locks that do not take tokens. I am sure that the trolleys will be returned, the kids collect them if not. Please make sure you have £2 coin in the car so you can have a trolley. I will point out we still have ten £1 locks as well. All should now be working but please do not use the tokens as they break the locks (yes that includes the MDL tokens that we gave out, not one of the best moves by MDL marketing in my view)

## **Maintenance**

Considering the mooring fee has continued to rise there seems little additional value, the other bridge is coming so it may reduce the opportunity to get out of the mooring, who knows and in general maintenance is slowly slipping. We have reported leaking taps on the pontoon leaving it green and slippery for 3 weeks now what happens if we slip and injure our self's ? yet some staff seem like its to much effort to deal with !

We have a procedure for all maintenance issues to be reported in a book in the office and they are normally sorted the next day. If you have issues, my door is always open for any customer to pop in and have a chat. If the issue is with a staff member then let me know and I will action as I see appropriate.

## **Dock Masters**

The dock masters are more than happy to give assistance with mooring if you radio the office. It would be good to see them providing this service as a matter of course on windy days.....this happens in the West Country marinas & most of us comment this is a real value added service.

This is something we try to do but please remember the Dockmasters serve fuel and have a host of other duties.

## **Lifts**

Booking lift outs.....most of us are only at the marina at weekends & so this is when it would be most useful to be able to book.....however, we can only book during the week as only Kelly can take bookings....solution is simple.. others need to be trained to take these bookings or Kelly needs to work at weekends.

Any staff member can take a booking and pencil it in and Kelly will confirm when she is back in the office. If she is on leave then another staff member will take control of the diary.

## **Invoices**

Sundry invoices ( e.g. electric).....there is nothing more annoying than getting a bill one day & then a statement 2-3 days later chasing the payment.....if I am anything to go by, most pay the next time we are down at the marina (within 1-2 weeks). So save the marina money & stop annoying customers who pay on time by waiting 3-4 weeks before sending statements

Statements normally go out 7-14 days after the invoice.

## **Car Parking**

### **Space**

Possibly repainting the parking bay lines might improve the standard of parking by berth holders, some of whom I have to admit demonstrate a cavalier approach to vehicle positioning!

Also, car parking is becoming an increasing problem, and on Sunday, there was no free space available at all. As we left to go back to South Wales, there were three cars fighting for our space.

Main issue for me is still parking. Obviously a new club house but the parking still has problems, some of the original car parking has now been absorbed by commercial ventures and the dry stack expansion. I know Cobb's has to make money and I understand that keeping a balance has always been Dave's juggling act but it may appear that it is at the expense of the berth holders.

The parking on Sunday (mail received 10<sup>th</sup> August) was, as you will have heard, if you did not witness it yourself, absolutely beyond a joke. We arrived shortly after 11am to find no spaces, vehicles parked outside the areas into the "main channel" road, and people driving around hunting for space. We finally had to leave our car behind the shed near F pontoon.

Further to your request for input to your upcoming meeting with Dave Wilson, I would suggest MDL be asked if carparking arrangements could be looked at further. We are fortunate in being able to boat mid-week but occasionally we do go to Cobb's at a weekend. On those occasions we, along with others, are frustrated by a lack of spaces.

I am aware that space is at a premium and that it is required for hardstanding and on-site businesses.

### **Management**

At a day to day management level, parking in the F Pontoon area is still more difficult than it should be because junk, empty boat trailers, and long term parked vehicle, (not all of which belong to berth holders), seem to gravitate to the area around F Pontoon, probably because they are "out of sight out of mind" to MDL Management; but the one thing that you might like to address with Mr Wilson is the subject of parking.

The problem has not been too bad this year mainly due to the poor weather and fewer people being around but on a sunny day it can get a bit chaotic. I know that other marinas and clubs around the harbour issue passes to their members to stick on windscreens to ensure that only members vehicles use the carpark. This maybe something Cobbs might like to consider.

What we did notice were several spaces being taken up by cars with trailers still attached, some motorhomes taking up more than one space, and the two "Snap-on" vans taking up valuable spaces. The newly arranged trolley park also seems to have a fair bit of wasted space. Albeit it was only one small space but one of the boat dealers was displaying a car for sale, which does not seem to be right.

Whilst this was the most extreme we have seen, at weekends there are often cars parked in the main roadway because of lack of space. Maybe even more of the cradles and blocks could be cleared for the summer season when they are not going to be required in the yard, or perhaps there is an alternative solution.

The management of the car park on busy weekends is sadly lacking. During the last weekend (one of the first since June), there were cars straddling lines in the marked areas but the biggest gripe is the number of 4x4 and other large car owners who think that the main roadway does not need to be very wide and park on the yellow lines with impunity. I counted eight vehicles on Sunday (3 4x4s, 4 Mercs/BMWs and a lowly Peugeot). There is space but it does mean that people have to walk a bit further!

I can understand that on a busy weekend boat owners pile down to the marina with guests, adding more and more cars to the car park. What I fail to understand is the selfish way in which these cars appear to park themselves anywhere they like as long as its as near to the pontoons as possible. Last weekend a gold BMW managed to squeeze itself next to the ramp to C and D pontoons. If the down ramp had been any wider I am sure it would be on berth C2

I am not really a grumpy old fart! Steam flow from ears has now decreased, nerves settled after a stiff drink. Ready to do battle next weekend.

However, I believe at times it is all about managing / marking out the existing space more effectively, particularly in the region of the so-called trailer park by that space taken by Ancasta stock. Last weekend, for example, there were 8-10 car parking spaces which were inaccessible due to them being blocked off by the trailers in the park - no access being provided by an entry row. Entry would have had to be through the trailers and a rope 'fence'.

Also, there were a number of cars (and the tractor!), with trailers attached, parked in the main carpark which were either taking up a space for an additional car or, again, blocking entry to a space. Don't mean to whinge - only be constructive!

Car park....we have more berth holders (due to the dry stack extension) & hence more cars but the car parking seems to be shrinking with more boats ashore, the summer boat park & more small boat traders taking space to display ribs etc. This causes a particular problem on warm sum weekends (hopefully there will be more good days!). There must be some options to make life easier on these days....for example car park attendant on hot days, in the Hamble they are strict on having their berth holder stickers displayed & limit to 2 cars per boat

Parking was looked at last year in conjunction with CQBHA with some improvements having been made. We have a total of 442 spaces which we have tried very hard to keep clear during peak periods. One thing that has become a problem is multiple cars parking for one boat and this is something that I will be looking at next year to try and resolve.

## **Club House/Boat House**

### **Service Level**

Please, do something to improve the Clubhouse/Boathouse. I know you had a poor response to your previous request for comments but just by looking through the windows on a Saturday evening to see how few people are inside is proof that something needs to be done to improve it. Previous attempts have not worked and radical change is needed. A look at the bistro at Queen Anne's Battery Marina in Plymouth shows what could be done. A warm friendly atmosphere and consistently good but not expensive food will always be a success. Unfortunately the Boathouse has such a poor reputation that people now go elsewhere or stay on their boats to eat.

Without question the club house rude poor service and no continuity regarding food ! as and when is the attitude. Also as we travel down with our dog as many do, where there was a facility to use the

rear bar there now is not and nowhere to sit outside in the dry without getting smoked to death. Kids still playing football and generally running a muck so not very relaxing.

## **Facilities**

The paved and grass area outside the Boathouse: This could do with better outdoor seating and the paved area levelling/improving.

Secondly, having been to a few other MDL marinas now the boathouse really is a poor relation to other watering and food venues we have seen. Having had it redecorated, new furniture and toilets, now a new roof, its still looking like a shack with a very simple menu to some of the other menus we have tried. The Hamble as one example. We were told at a recent Southampton Boat Show that when the lease was up for renewal that the intention was to replace it with something much smarter and better. Clearly this wasn't the case.

The "BoatHouse" restaurant is still a nightmare and surely it is time that MDL were persuaded to invest in something much better. I understand that it is chicken and egg regarding the "poor usage not justifying expenditure" but a two storey Yacht Club (not just for yachties) would give us a facility to be proud of. I understand that the current occupier has a lease but I presume that this has a defined end date and MDL should be able to push ahead with a proper development, with planning and discussion groups, and professional design that would reflect Cobbs' status as the largest Marina on the south coast. Currently I would not go into the BoatHouse for any reason other than the AGM and that is a sad indictment of the facility.

## **General**

Main issue for me is still parking. Obviously a new club house but the parking still has problems ..

Perhaps you could mention the fact that the general talk about the Cobb's Bar and Restaurant is that the food is terrible with very little selection,

We are all still hoping that a new competent person would be taking it over and restoring it to its former glory.

When we first joined Cobbs about 4 yrs ago the food was great you could get Lasagne, cottage pie, chilli con carne, etc all tasted great, and we would eat in there at least once a week.

Unfortunately the IKEA makeover doesn't make up for the crap food. How can the chap make it pay with so few customers ?

I feel the Boathouse should be discussed as the present tenant appears to have little knowledge of running a club for marina members i.e. food preparation, atmosphere. If this problem could be addressed I feel the club would become far more involved with the marina. Far more members would use this facility as a meeting place, instead of having to "go to town". There was once a time when you could arrive on Friday for the weekend and the first port of call would be the Clubhouse. I have tried addressing this problem with the tenant but to no avail as he obviously believes he is beyond approach of a customer.

Whilst the clubhouse has had a 'wash & brush up' we could do with a decent clubhouse/restaurant....this was originally on the list but appears to have gone away....can we have an update on any plans/timescales?

Top of our list of things for improvement is the 'club-house'. It really does need attention. Demolition preferably. The recent 'face-lift' hasn't helped to conceal the fact that it remains a portacabin. The 'refurbishment' of the ladies toilets was a waste of money (assuming some was spent) & time. The food is (on the last few occasions we've eaten there) bordering on inedible. We may have been unlucky. [NB: Breakfasts remain OK.] Whatever the obstacles are to improving the club-house facility (leases/landlords etc.) we suggest that Dave and MDL should give the club-house top priority over the next few years. It will be important that Cobb's (post-bridge number 2) is an attractive and viable marina – they usually have good club-houses. Torch it if necessary.

### **The Boat House.**

Quite simply for god's sake do something about it! I went to the Hamble last weekend end it stuck in my mind that the restaurant/wine bar that is on site at Port Hamble was packed. We tried to book a table to eat but it was full. Why can this type of establishment and quality not be replicated at Cobbs? I suspect that lease's are in place for a fixed period, so this may be hard to deal with next year.

Since my arrival at Cobb's I have worked closely with the tenant to improve things and in the main we have improved the way it looks, after all it is only a prefabricated building.

Earlier this year the CQBHA asked for comments in writing and we received 3 negative and one positive comment. With over 1000 berth holders and only 3 negative comments in writing there is not a lot I can do. I will add that the tenant does try to resolve any issues if he is approached.

Going forward, when we have an idea of what the business will look like after the bridge has been built, we will start to look at the plans for the site, which may well include a new building.