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NEWS RELEASE

Survey report will inform development plan

A survey of leisure boat owners in Guernsey will be used to inform development plans, according to Guernsey Harbourmaster Captain Chad Murray.

Devised by Guernsey Harbours, the Guernsey Marine Traders Association (GMTA) and the Guernsey Boatowners Association (GBA), the survey was completed by more than 600 people.

Nick Guillemette, president of the GBA said: “We’re very grateful to our members for taking the time to give their feedback and views on facilities in the harbour for boat owners. By working with Guernsey Harbours we have been able to get some very good evidence together about priorities for our members and other boat owners, and this will help us work together on what the most important action points are for future improvements.”

Captain Murray said: “The survey has provided us with good information on the demographic make-up of the boating community, what facilities they use and what is most important to them. We’ve received some clear guidance that cost, particularly mooring fees, is a pressing issue for some of the boat-owning community, so clearly any improvements we make must be balanced against the need to keep costs for our customers low.

“In some instances we’ve been given a clear steer on specific issues, for example that the removal of hosepipes for health and safety reasons has been an inconvenience to boat owners, so we are already looking into ways we can re-instate them safely and cost-effectively.

However on other issues the community is more divided, for example on the installation of security gates where only 62% were in favour and only half of respondents thought there were any problems with security in the marinas. In cases like that clearly we will need to do more to develop a strong business case before any activity is decided upon.”



The survey also allowed boat owners to rate Guernsey Harbours, and Guernsey's marine traders, on customer service, cost and response time.

Matt Le Page from the GMTA said: "Getting feedback from customers is valuable information for businesses. The ratings provided also set us a good benchmark to work from. We plan to repeat this survey regularly with Guernsey Harbours so we can measure our progress. We're very pleased that 78% of our customers felt they were well served but of course we plan to act on the feedback we've been given and increase our approval ratings from customers by this time next year."

The survey has also given an insight into the value of the leisure marine sector to the Guernsey economy.

"Boating is not an activity that happens in isolation," said Captain Murray. "Our survey shows that boat owners spend more than £3000 a year on maintenance and equipment alone, with 96% of this money – more than £13m – being spent with Guernsey businesses. There is also a knock-on effect for other types of businesses such as restaurants and supermarkets, and of course the benefits brought to other islands in the Bailiwick, with Herm and Sark the most popular destination for leisure boaters and Alderney not far behind. This is before the spend on fuel, insurance, laying up fees and mooring fees is considered.

"Clearly boat owners make a considerable contribution to Guernsey's economy, as well as being an important part of our island's cultural identity."

ENDS

Notes to editors: While the survey is now closed, general feedback is still welcomed by Guernsey Harbours on the leisure marine sector and can be sent to chad.murray@gov.gg.

For further information, contact:-

Guernsey Harbours: Chad Murray

T: 01481 720229 / e-mail: chad.murray@gov.gg



Key facts and figures:

- 52% of boat owners are between 41-60 years old.
- 83% of boat owners are men.
- 77% of boat owners have been involved in boating for more than 10 years.
- 22% of boat owners have taken up boating in the last 10 years.
- 65% of boats in Guernsey are less than 30ft in length and 56% cost less than £30,000.
- 83% of boat owners have no intention of giving boating up as a pastime.
- The average boat owner spends £2,389 on servicing and maintenance and £822 on equipment per year.
- 90% of boat owners keep their boats on a berth or mooring within Guernsey Harbours.
- 49% of boat owners felt that refuelling in Guernsey was convenient.
- 62% of boat owners would like security gates installed at the marinas.
- 85% of boat owners feel they have been inconvenienced by the removal of hosepipes for health and safety reasons.
- 78% of boat owners felt they were well served by the local marine trade industry.
- Boat owners rated Guernsey Harbours as more than 3 out of 5 for customer service, cost and response time.

