



NEWS RELEASE

New protocol for small craft in Poole Harbour

Following months of consultation with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, The Royal Yachting Association and local yacht clubs, Poole Harbour Commissioners (PHC) has produced a new protocol to address the safety of small craft in Poole Harbour.

Although the new protocol is voluntary it is hoped it will improve the initial response to recreational emergency situations within Poole Harbour, in particular organised events where safety boats are being used.

Poole Harbour Commissioners' harbour master, Brian Murphy, said: "In recent years there have been a small number of Incidents within Poole Harbour, involving small craft, where the collective communication during the incident could have been improved. As a consequence, parties involved have had to work harder to bring the Incident to a successful conclusion."

Although HM Coastguard has priority in co-ordinating the response to such incidents, PHC work very closely to ensure that any possible assistance can be provided. The new protocol is for the crew of the safety boat to refer to if any participant is involved in an incident. It addresses the communication shortfall by ensuring all parties involved are monitoring the same channel which warrants that all are updated in real time.

As guardians of Poole Harbour, PHC's overall objective is to promote the safe and sustainable use of the harbour, they are responsible for maintaining safe navigation for commercial and recreational users and work with other marine agencies to police the harbour to ensure speed limits and other local byelaws are adhered to.

All organisers wishing to hold an event within Poole Harbour should contact the harbour master to discuss the event, risk assessment and the voluntary protocol.

Risk assessments for consultation should be submitted to pooleharbourcommissioners@phc.co.uk

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