

Tips for new members by past commodore Tony Head.

Generally new members tend to be allocated moorings at the extremity of our mooring patch, and then they migrate nearer to the causeway as vacancies arise. There are only a limited number of moorings that can take a vessel with a two meter draught at Chart Datum.

The river is generally very sheltered at Cargreen and the moorings are extremely strong and very well maintained by our Moorings Officer and Bargemaster. A few boats over the years have “gone walkabout” but invariably the reason has been failure of the strop from the boat to the mooring which is the member’s responsibility. I can’t emphasize how important it will be to have adequate strops and fairleads for the job, do follow advice on this topic to be found on our website.

The tidal streams run quite strongly and in very strong northerly or sou-easterly blows, this can create a chop against the tide making dinghy work wet and uncomfortable. In these circumstances it is better to wait to near high or low water for dinghy work.

It is recommended that you arrange a suitable tender with good freeboard that can ferry out passengers and stores etc comfortably in a chop. A reliable small outboard is almost essential, 2.5 HP is sufficient for a small tender. A big heavy dinghy can be hard going when hauling it along the causeway. The causeway itself has a good hard surface, a good trolley or good wheels on the dinghy are recommended, wheels on the dinghy avoid having to collect and return a trolley from the end of the causeway – it is a long 170m walk when tired after a hard sail! A spray cover for the bow can be useful, as are plastic storage boxes with lids for keeping gear dry. Most of us use an old dinghy for getting out to the mooring then leave it on the mooring when away sailing. There is no objection to this but seagulls/terns can be a nuisance from the end of August as they consider tenders as good roosting spots! A tender left for a week or two ends up in rather a guano/feathery mess.

In this regard an inflatable tender has an advantage; it can be readily capsized to wash it off before being used to go ashore! The tender should have sufficient built-in buoyancy and outside hand holds in case it should capsize. Lifejackets should be worn at all times when using a dinghy.

Do not drive a vehicle on the causeway; it is against Club Rules and against our lease agreement with the Duchy of Cornwall. Anyway you are liable to get stuck and swamp the vehicle when the tide comes in, as a number of people have found out to their (uninsured) cost over the years!

As always, the best time to launch the tender or come ashore is HW when you can land most conveniently directly onto the club site slope. But it is possible to use the causeway at just about any state of the tide. There is a short period of limbo (about ½ hour) around 2 hours before/after HW when the causeway is just covering with water. Then it can be too shallow for the dinghy to float either on or alongside the causeway. Robust welly-boots are advised too – most of us use green gardening wellies and reserve our best boots for sailing.

Tenders (hard and inflatable) can be kept on the foreshore at the Club site free of charge. Select your position on a free-for-all basis. Mark the tender clearly with your name or name of boat; a telephone contact number is a good idea too. The path between the ‘Toastracks’ and the foreshore must be kept clear. Old mooring chain has been lain along the beach so that tenders can be secured against theft or floating away. Inflatable dinghies can be kept in the “toast-racks” subject to availability and for a small annual charge; please apply to the Moorings Officer to see if a “slot” is available. There is also a secure outboard motor storage shed; again please apply to the Moorings Officer if you want to stow your OBM here. However space in the shed is very restricted and it will be wise to plan on taking the motor home with you to start with. A plastic liner tray or sheet is advisable in the car boot.

Cars can be parked at the site when sailing, but if you are away for any length of time please use the “overflow” field across the road from the club house to avoid cluttering up the main site. Do not block the tractor access gates leading to the field beyond the overflow field. Please do not park your vehicle in the village.

Security is excellent in the Cargreen area. Break-ins are extremely rare, nevertheless I would advise against leaving an outboard motor visible if it can be avoided. Otherwise securely lock it. We run a “boat watch” system where each mooring holder is asked to carry out surveillance of the mooring patch on two nights each year according to a programme published by our Boat Watch Manager.

Incidentally the rate of fouling is quite high at Cargreen probably associated with slightly warmer water and a concentration of nutrients and metal salts in the water. I suggest using a premium anti-foul paint rather than an economy brew.

Fair winds!