

Managing the Removal of Wrecked and Abandoned Vessels and Illegal Liveaboard Yachts in Southampton

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Introduction

ABP Southampton is responsible for maintaining safe navigation and ensuring compliance under the Port Marine Safety Code. Abandoned and illegal liveaboard yachts are a growing concern in our waters, causing environmental and safety issues. This presentation highlights the key challenges, legal frameworks, and ABP's approach to tackling these problems.



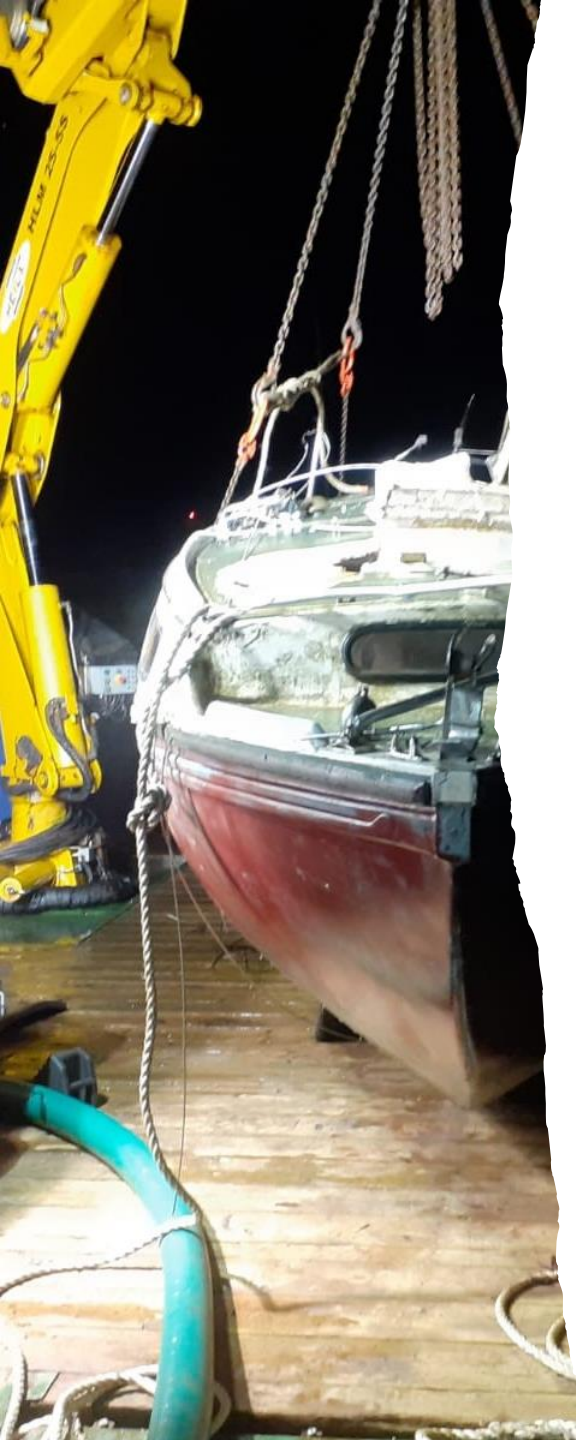
The problems faced by Harbour Authorities

- No vessel register for owners of yachts
- No funds to assist with end of life vessels
- Many different legal powers to work under
- Cost of living increasing and people's awareness of how much yachts cost to keep
- People wanting to live "off radar"
- Some ports do not have the capabilities of ABP to champion this level of project.



The Impact of Wrecked and Abandoned Vessels

- Wrecked vessels and illegal liveaboards contribute to:
 - - Environmental damage: Oil spills, sewage, and waste dumping which harm marine ecosystems.
 - - Safety risks: Unregulated vessels pose hazards to navigation and all users of the waterways.
 - - Strain on resources: Managing these vessels takes up valuable resources both internally and externally (Legal, police)



Legal Requirements for Vessel Removal

The legal framework for removing illegal vessels includes:

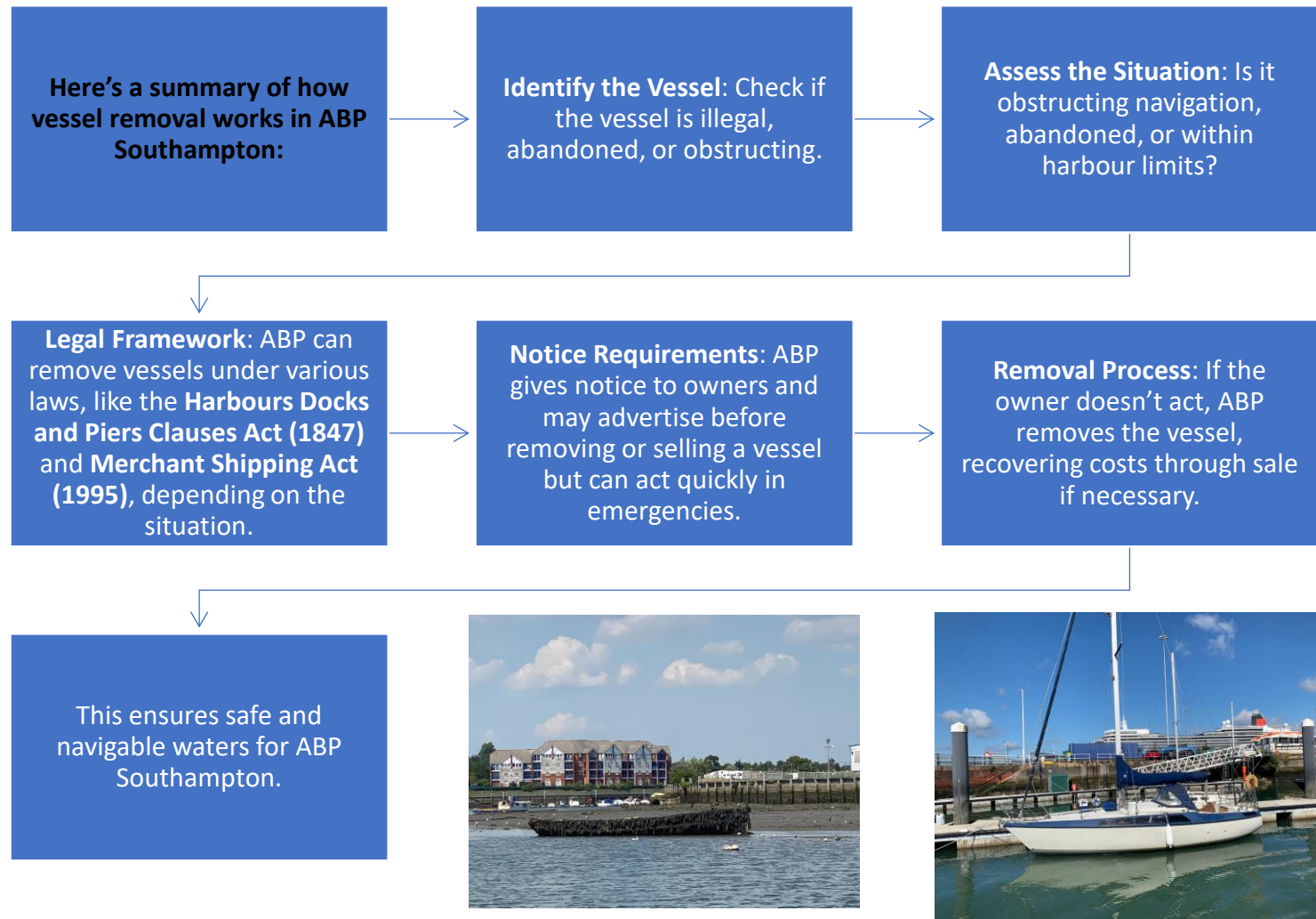
- Harbours Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847

- Southampton Harbour Act 1863 & 1871 & 1939

- Merchant Shipping Act 1995

ABP has the authority to remove vessels obstructing navigation or posing environmental hazards. The flowchart illustrates the decision-making process.

ABP Removal Process



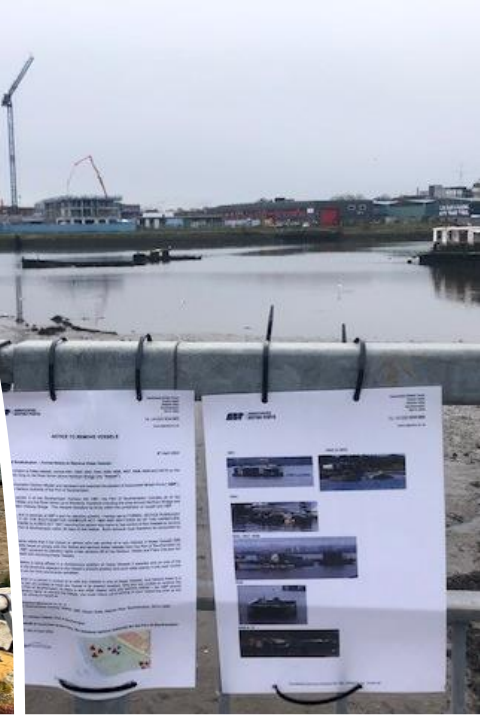
ABP's Vessel Removal Process

- ABP utilise the experience and expertise of lawyers from Ashford's to assist with the strategy.
- ABP follows a structured process for vessel removal:
 1. Identify the vessel and assess the risk it poses to navigation or the environment.
 2. Issue legal notices to the vessel owner, where applicable.
 3. If no action is taken by the owner, ABP initiates removal procedures, including towing and disposal.



Differences in Powers Between UK Ports

- Not all UK ports have the same legal authority to remove vessels. For example, the Port of London Authority has different powers under its local legislation. It's important to understand the specific legal framework in each port jurisdiction when addressing illegal vessels.



Enforcement and Public Engagement

- ABP works closely with the Marine Police Unit to enforce regulations. Public engagement efforts include:
- Assisting in issuing notices to vessel owners.
- Providing information on legal compliance.
- Working with local authorities
- Collaborating with local communities to ensure responsible boating.
- Ensuring the safety of ABP staff members





Costs, Resources, and Public Interest

- The financial and operational costs of removing illegal vessels and wrecks are significant:
 - - Use of specialized equipment and teams.
 - - Legal costs associated with issuing notices and taking action against non-compliant vessel owners.
- Public interest remains high, as abandoned vessels often contribute to anti-social behaviour and harm the local environment.
- ABP have removed in the circa of 150 vessels costing in the region of £1.2 million (Not including legal or staff costs).

Conclusion

ABP Southampton is committed to maintaining safe and clean waters. Through close collaboration with Lawyers, the Marine Police Unit and other agencies we enforce our legal frameworks and ensure that these vessels are removed efficiently. Our ongoing efforts aim to protect the environment and safeguard public and commercial interests in Southampton's waters.

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