



MDL MARINAS

News Release
For Immediate Release
31 March 2023

MDL Marinas celebrates its 50th Anniversary

The UK's leading marina operator and one of Europe's largest marina groups, MDL Marinas is celebrating its 50th Anniversary.

To kick off the celebrations, MDL is launching a new website (<https://www.mdlmarinas.co.uk/mdl50th/>) showcasing the company's vibrant history and telling the stories of those who've been a part of MDL's 50-year journey.

"MDL has seen many positive changes, acquisitions, and developments since we started in the early 1970s, as well as bearing witness to the evolution of boating itself in the UK," says Managing Director, Michael Glanville, who joined MDL in 2006 before taking the helm in 2018.

"We've been at the forefront of the changes in the boating landscape since we formed in 1973, developing our network of marinas over the years in some of the most stunning waterfront locations.

"We're now one of the biggest operators of coastal marinas in the UK, which you might find surprising when you consider our first venture was Penton Hook Marina, miles from the sea, amid the water meadows of the Thames Valley."

Fifty years later, MDL offers state-of-the-art berthing, dry stack facilities and moorings at 18 coastal and inland marinas in the UK and one in Spain, creating unique waterside destinations for people to enjoy their leisure time.

Most MDL marinas are now found in prime locations along the coast, but it wasn't until 1982, almost 10 years after it formed, that MDL purchased its first saltwater marina – Cobb's Quay in Poole.

"Torquay came next in 1984, followed by Port Hamble, Mercury Yacht Harbour, Northney Marina, and Woolverstone Marina in 1987," says Michael. "We added Hamble Point Marina



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to our portfolio in 1988, which is in such a perfect position at the entrance to the river Hamble, offering such easy access to the cruising waters of the Solent.”

With momentum gaining, MDL expanded its network further in 1989 when civil engineering firm Dean & Dyball accepted a takeover offer, adding Hythe Marina Village, Ocean Village and Shamrock Quay to MDL’s line-up.

“Brixham Marina followed in 1990, and by the mid 90s, in terms of marina locations, we had become very much the marina group you see today, with some of our marinas playing a part in events that have gone down in sailing history and hosting some truly iconic yachts.

“In 1990, Tracy Edwards triumphantly brought home the first all-female Whitbread Round the World Race on yacht Maiden to our Ocean Village Marina. At the time, it was estimated that almost 50,000 people came to Ocean Village to witness this momentous event, which helped to turn the tide on women’s participation in sailing.”

In 1988 MDL created its Sail Training Awards which are designed to reward inspirational young people between the ages of 12 and 18, who have overcome adverse personal circumstances.

Run in conjunction with Ocean Youth Trust (South), the awards provide 12 spaces on board the sail training vessel *Prolific* and since their inception over 30 years ago, 140 young people have experienced a life changing voyage onboard *Prolific*.

Michael says: “The Ocean Youth Trust (South) is one of our chosen charities, and we fully support the work they do in offering exceptional experiences to young people who might not otherwise get the opportunity to be involved in sailing.

“Since the pandemic, the popularity of boating and watersports has grown exponentially and we’re seeing an ever-increasing number of people coming to our marinas for the first time, whether it’s to go sailing, enjoy being by the water or stay at one of our waterside lodge parks.”

Sustainability and care for the environment are now central to MDL’s future plans as it aims to become the UK’s most sustainable marina operator.



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Supporting its ongoing #greenermarinas campaign and to further celebrate being 50, MDL is going to plant 50 trees in 2023. This initiative, in conjunction with its photocopier supplier Nustream, will help the planet by offsetting MDL's paper consumption.

MDL's commitment to the environment over the years hasn't been restricted to its marinas, with the company actively driving positive change across the boating and leisure industries, launching its MDL Fitness 'eco gym' brand in 2020 and the Green Tech Boat Show in 2021.

"We've seen lots of positive change over the last 50 years, initially with the acquisition and development of our marinas to the expansion of our shore-based leisure offering," concludes Michael.

"We're delighted to welcome people to our prime waterside locations, and we hope that people will continue to enjoy their leisure time with MDL over the next 50 years and beyond."

It's the people and their stories, that have made MDL's journey over the last 50 years so memorable and shaped the development of MDL and its marinas. MDL is keen to hear these stories, so if you have one to share, please contact Senior Marketing Manager Maxine Lane via m.lane@mdlmarinas.co.uk

For more information on MDL and its marinas visit www.mdlmarinas.co.uk

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Notes for editors:

MDL Marinas Group Ltd

- MDL Marinas Group is the UK's leading marina and water-based leisure provider and one of Europe's largest marina groups, offering members over 160 destinations to cruise to in the UK, France and Spain. Currently MDL Marinas manages 18 UK marinas and one in Spain.
- MDL Holidays is part of the MDL Marinas Group, offering waterside holidays in luxury lodge and holiday park accommodation.
- New to the MDL Marinas Group, MDL Fitness is a range of green gyms where the fitness equipment converts human kinetic energy into electricity.
- MDL Marinas Group is proud to be landlords to over 500 marine businesses, with over 260 staff delivering the unique MDL experience to all berth holders, visitors and commercial partners.
- The company also advises on worldwide marina developments.
- For more information visit www.mdlmarinas.co.uk

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