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UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

CLUSTERING & THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF MARINAS

Results of a questionnaire survey into marina activities | D Robins

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Executive Summary

The following report highlights the main findings from a survey into the activities and impacts of marinas along the south coast of England that was carried out between November and December 2010.

Almost 40% of marinas completed the questionnaire and a fair representation of the population in terms of size, ownership and location was achieved. Marinas were asked for factual statistics such as berth spaces, average occupancy and business activities as well as being asked to return their views on the business and economic strengths and weaknesses of marinas and their strength of feelings towards specific marina activities.

Marinas were divided into four size types according to berth/mooring capacity: Small - <100 spaces. Medium – 101<300 spaces, large – 301<500 spaces, and extra large – 500+. The research found that all size types were apparent in the south and boat owners tended to weigh up their membership preference using a cost versus value scenario. Although many marinas are located in urban coastal areas there are a considerable amount of rural marinas of all size types. Urban marinas can be restricted in size due to planning regulations whereas rural marinas tend to have more freedom to expand yet they lack the transport and entertainment infrastructure that urban marinas enjoy. Urban marinas benefit from the added entertainment and leisure facilities of the town and see a higher percentage of visitors than rural marinas that depend on membership.

Although half of all respondents were independent marinas there was a good response from local authority, port authority and marina development companies. The difference in ownership played an important part in how the marina tended to view its economic impact and how the majority of its income was achieved. In many instances the original objectives for developing the marina became subversive to additional benefits that developed in the preceding years. Regeneration was seen as a main objective by Local Authority owned marinas although many urban marinas felt regeneration was the objective of expansion rather than original development.

Diversification was seen as additional income yet size and ownership impinge on this potential. The majority of MDMCs provide few services yet lease space for outside companies to support the marina whereas many independent marinas provide the core services as either part of the membership or at additional cost. Membership fees were the main income stream and the majority of diversification came from the medium/large marinas and mainly independent and MDMC owned marinas. Interestingly, many of the services provided through leased units had little to do with the marine industry itself and marinas find themselves in the unique position of being attractive

workplaces for non-marine businesses. Where only a few services were provided these tended to be in the core marina sectors: fuel, engineering and chandlery.

Generally, marinas appear to have a good relationship with the business residents on the site and more than half agreed that the marina was a 'hub' for business activity. Only one marina- a Local Authority owned marina - disagreed with the statement. When it came to helping the marina based business directly, no respondent disagreed although more than half expressed no opinion. Local authorities were not seen as supportive to the marinas and some felt they did not realise the true potential of the marinas on the local economy. Where local authority support is felt to be lacking the most there are very strong local marine networks that have risen up to fill the gap. This underlines previous findings from research into general marine industry perceptions and is something felt mainly in the south west.

Cluster activities were a significant theme of the research and it is here that the main weaknesses were found. Although the majority of marinas advocated networking and cluster activities as a desirable initiative, very few actually carried out anything significant. Clustering and networking are essential areas that appear to need further assistance in order to become sustainable and to flourish. All marinas belong to at least one marine association but maintaining links with each type of association/organisation can be time consuming and costly therefore marinas appear to pick and choose their affiliations based on the time and cost commitment versus the benefit received. Informal networking is apparent, and knowledge transfer evident, yet the competition for members seem to prevent marinas from instigating joint working practices or longer term sustainable business collaborations.

It is the intention of the CAMIS research to take the findings of this research and to actively facilitate the development and sustainability of the marinas through cluster activities. This report will therefore be followed up with a comprehensive account of the activities that will be carried out and an analysis of the impact these activities have on the marina and local area.

Marina Survey

This report is part of wider research on the impacts of clustering on the marine industry which is, in turn, part of the EU funded CAMIS Project (see Appendix 1).

This report looks at the marina theme of the cluster strand and outlines the results from a comprehensive marina survey carried out for the purposes of understanding the potential economic impacts of marinas and the cluster activities that are taking place. Marinas are a major economic growth area facilitating the leisure boat industry. Marinas are natural clusters due to their location but cluster activities may not always be apparent. Marinas, by their very nature, have a major impact on the environment and operation themes and can also play a role in the renewable energy sector. The marina sector has been studied on many occasions but the research tends to concentrate on the economic impacts to local areas in respect to tourism and services. This research also hopes to increase the understanding of these impacts but also looks to identify areas of potential cluster collaboration and best practice and to increase the economic impact of marinas by facilitating collaborative cluster activities in order to highlight the importance of clustering on economic growth.

In 2007 The British Marine Federation carried out a comprehensive analysis of the marina industry in Great Britain[1]. The report highlighted the management structure and growth within the industry and the impact on the local areas through case studies and industry analysis. The main aims of the BMF study were to:

1. Provide a comprehensive overview of the coastal marine sector
2. Evaluate the economic benefits of coastal marinas
3. Provide nine coastal marina case studies for comparison

It is hoped that this report will compliment these findings and offer insight into opportunities that could be developed to further strengthen the positioning and economic impact of the sector along the south coast.

The next objective of the research will be to carry out the same research on the French side of the Channel with the aim of comparing and contrasting the results to gain an understanding of the best practice that is occurring across the sector. This will then lead into activities designed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practice with the aim of encouraging economic growth. The following report highlights the main findings from the survey that was carried out between

[1] BMF (2007) Economic Impacts of Coastal Marinas: UK & Channel Islands.

November and December 2010. Quotes from the survey will remain anonymous and unless permission has been granted specific references will not be made about the individual marinas.

Introduction

The questionnaire was sent out to 100 marina/harbours/boat storage companies along the south coast of England. Of the 100 surveys sent out 12 replied that they were unable to complete the survey as their premises' was not providing commercial boat storage facilities at the present time. Three marina owners also owned other marinas/storage facilities and replied to the questionnaire on behalf of both premises', thereby reducing the total amount of replies by another 3.The final total of respondents stands at 32 of which 2 are incomplete. The final sample is therefore 38% of the total marina population along the South coast of England. Figure 1 highlights the location of the respondents.

There is a reasonable mix of ownership and location with the exception of West Sussex where no replies were forthcoming. Nine respondents agreed to be used as case studies with a further 15 requiring further information before committing.

Figure 1 Marina Respondent Location

The following sections look at the responses to various statements and requests for information and compare them to either the size of the marinas, the ownership status, or location. The first section explains how these categories have been designed and the differences that are apparent between each one.

Size, Location and Ownership

The size of marinas is taken from the number of 'boat spaces' that they have. These include berths, moorings, swing moorings, mud, dry dock and 'other' storage. The size is divided into: Small - <100 spaces. Medium – 101<300 spaces, large – 301<500 spaces, and extra large – 500+. The following table (table 1) outlines the main differences between the berth type and number and marina size.

Table 1 Size and Type of Berth Available

	Total Spaces	Main Type	Comments
Small (4 cases)	165	Mud	Only one respondent claimed to have berths. Storage was the main feature and low cost took precedence over convenience and service provision
Medium (10 cases)	2082	Berths 151 average	Over ¾ of the spaces were berths. Some storage facilities with dry dock proving the most prevalent.
Large (9 cases)	3457	Berths 333 average	Convenience over cost for large marinas. Dry dock popular as a winter option
Extra Large (9 cases)	6137	Berths 428 average	Swing moorings feature highly (120 average). Dry dock a popular winter option. Appears to be that a balance between cost and service and convenience is sought in this size type
Totals (32 cases)	11841	Berths 264 average	Although berths far outweigh other storage types it seems dry dock is popular (especially for winter storage) and the cheaper swing moorings popular in the larger marinas.

Although the BMF study highlighted a trend towards berthing rather than the cheaper moorings it appears the market for moorings remains buoyant, especially in the larger marinas where berths are more expensive yet additional non-marine facilities such as entertainment are increasingly popular.

The location of the marinas will have some bearing on the size of the marina. The size of the river/estuary and geology of the coastline will determine how many boat spaces are available. The following table (table 2) outlines the type of marina within each location type.

Table 2 Location and Characteristics of Marinas

	Total number of respondents	Comments
Urban Upstream	3	All medium sized marinas – limited by width of river and accessible river bank frontage. Usually main towns and cities with historic maritime history and a desire to promote the leisure boat industry.
Urban Estuary	4	All size of marina featured here. Many of the estuary's have more

		than one marina and each marina will offer different specifications to appeal to the wider spectrum of leisure boat user. Further investigation suggests that some of the Urban Coastal Marinas could be included in this category.
Urban Coastal	13	A third of all marinas are located here. The size of marina is spread equally across the spectrum. The main reason for this is differing capacity due to geology coupled with the desire to provide the utility in the Urban area to encourage economic growth. Many coastal marinas are located in areas where river access is not possible and a coastal marina is seen as an economic advantage
Rural Upstream	3	Only large & extra large marinas are featured in this location. Space limitations and planning restrictions are not so limiting when compared to a built up area.
Rural Estuary	8	Size is equally distributed in this location although access to surrounding towns is important
Rural Coastal	1	This marina is large and although rural, it is also close to a main town and road links
Total	32	All locations and sizes of marinas are represented giving the research a balanced sample of the population

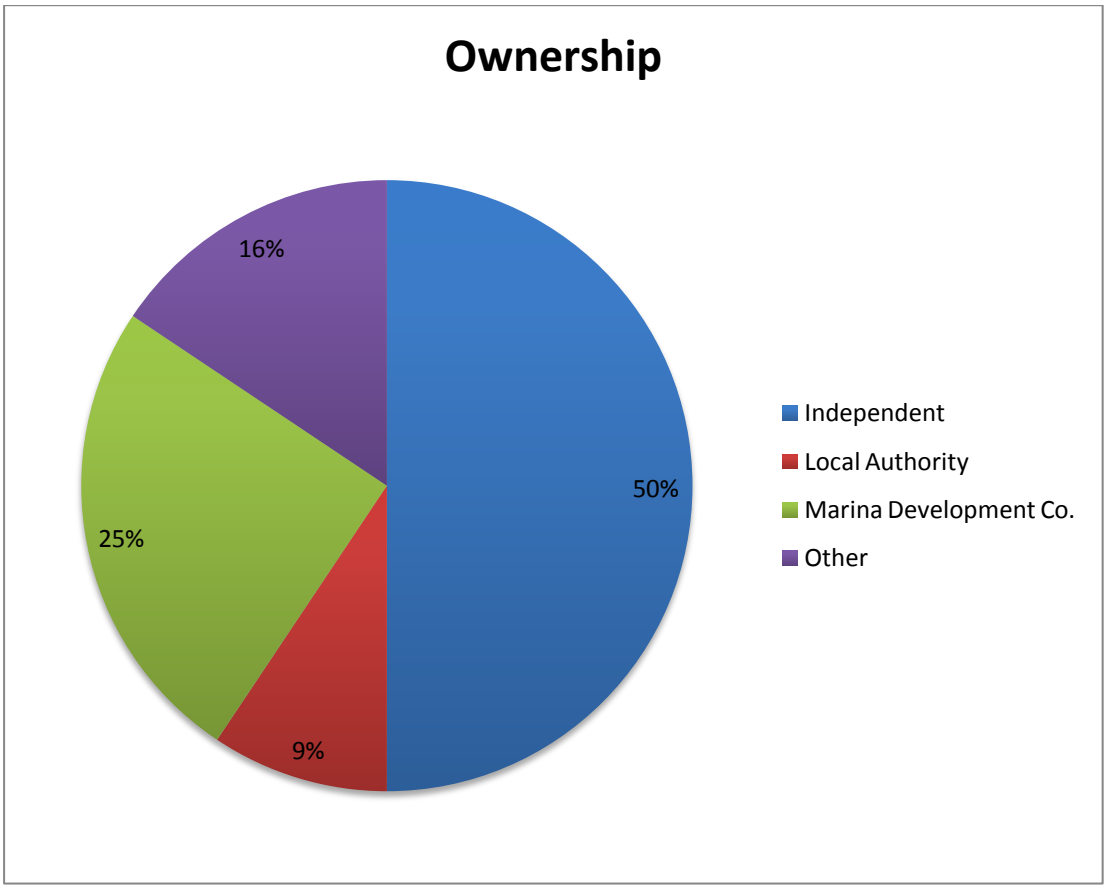
It is also important for the research to show a balanced sample of the type of location across the south coast. The respondents to the questionnaire should therefore cover all sizes, demographic and geographic locations. The following map (figure 2) highlights the size and location of the marinas.

Figure 2 Size and Location of the Marinas

Ownership is also an important aspect of marinas and it is important that the research analysis contains an even breadth of ownership type. Many marinas are independently owned either through family or partnerships. There are a few Local Authority owned marinas along the south coast and a few that are either Port Authority or Trust owned. The trend in the last 20yrs has been for commercial marina development companies to develop 'chains' of marinas either through the purchase of independent marinas or development of new marina complexes. The main Marina Development Management Companies (MDMCs) along the South coast are – MDL, Premier, Dean &

Reddyhoff and Yacht Havens. Figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents between the four ownership types. The sample is representative of the total population.

Figure 3 Percentage of Respondents by Ownership Type



The majority of commercial marina developments are in the large and extra large sector and the main income – apart from membership fees – seems to come from business unit rental rather than the provision of services. Figure 4 shows the location and ownership of the marinas in the South of England.

Figure 4 Marina Ownership

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It is apparent that the different size, location and ownership status of marinas is covered by the sample of respondents and the analysis can be assumed to be representative of the population.

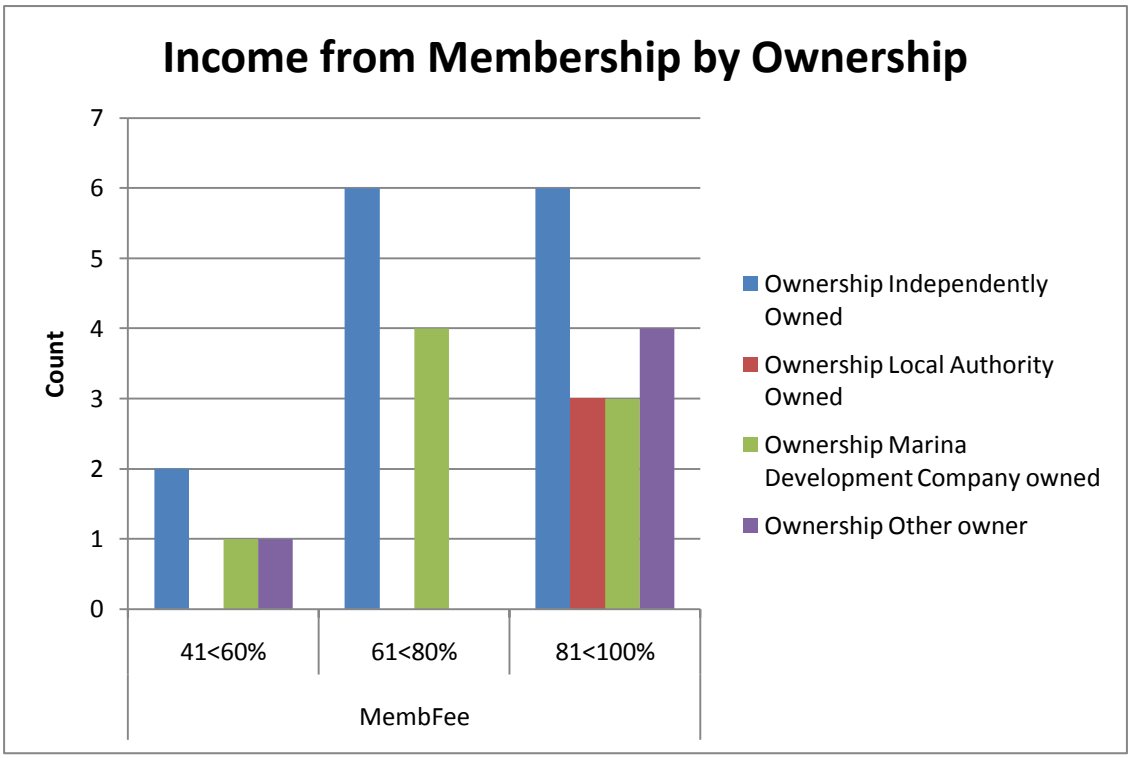
Change in ownership and reason for the original marina development will also play an important role in the direction the marina has taken since its opening. 50% of marinas are still operated by the original owner and of the 50% that have changed ownership; only 14% have changed to a different management structure. The reasons for development vary and the following table (table 3) highlights the main objectives and how important these objectives are still, or what changes have taken place.

Table 3 Ownership and Marina Objectives

Type of objective	Comments
Economic Growth	30% saw this as an original objective. Where this was not the case, one marina (Trust Marina) took advantage of the potential
Lack of Provision	33% saw this as an original objective. Expansion seen as providing more facilities although not an original objective
Regeneration of Site	A main objective for marinas, specifically MDMC owners. In 20% of marinas expansion is seen as regeneration rather than an original objective
Regeneration of wider area	Mainly local Authority objectives Independent marinas have taken advantage of this through expansion
Expansion	Few saw this as an objective although one marina felt this was an unplanned occurrence
Commercial Venture	40% saw this as an original objective
Increasing Visitors	Majority of Local Authority marinas believed this was an original objective
Providing an amenity	Only 23% felt this was an original objective yet another 14% saw that this as an additional benefit and something to be taken advantage of.
Increase job opportunities	Few saw this as an objective - further underpinning the underestimation of the economic impact of marinas
Infill of marine businesses	Hugely underestimated outcome of marina development as only 10% saw this as an objective but 40% agreed the observed benefit meant a change of direction was taken
Centre for Leisure	Only 13% saw this as an objective although more than 60% did not know if this was an original objective
Education/Training	Where this was an objective there were local opportunities driving it forward.
Sailing Club	Mainly MDMC owners saw this as an income generator with 50% expressing this as an original objective

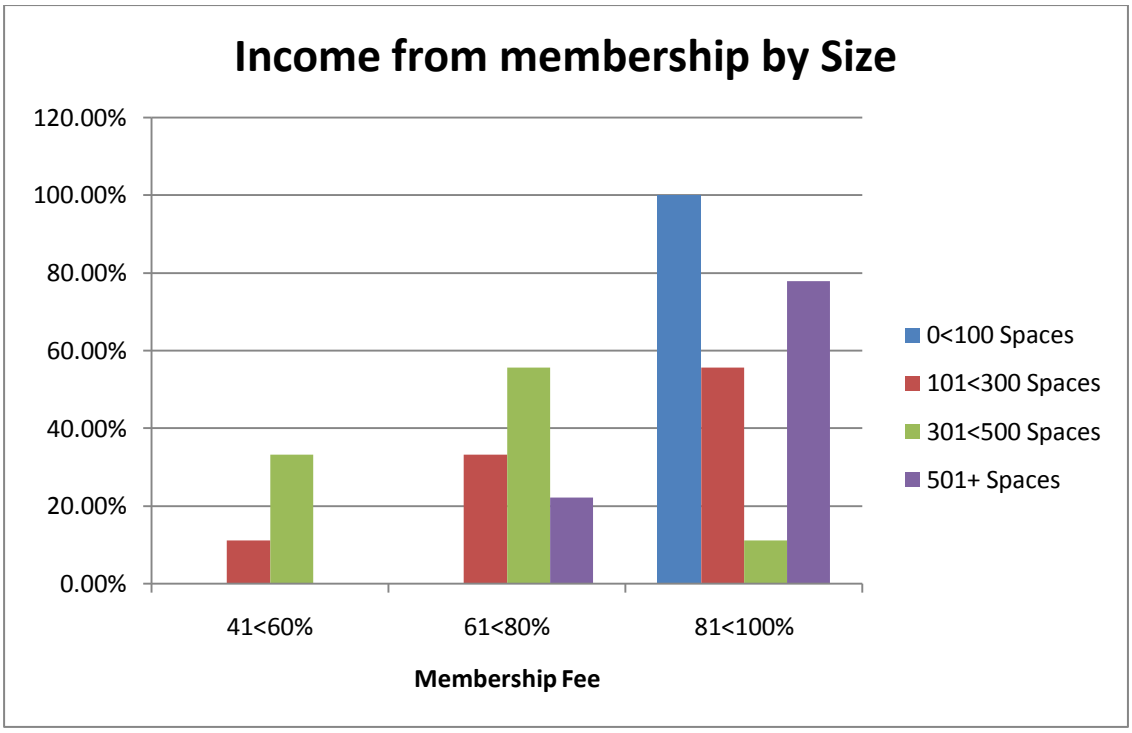
The income stream for a marina varies slightly depending on ownership. No marina receives public funds and only 2 marinas have any private funding sources. Figure 5 shows the level of income from membership fees according to ownership type and highlights the dependency of fees to Local Authority owned marinas and the diversification of income by Independent owners and MDMCs.

Figure 5 Percentage of Income from membership Fees by Marina Ownership



It is interesting to note that when you compare the size of marina against income from membership fees it is the middle sized marinas that diversify more than either small or extra large (figure 6)

Figure 6 Amount of Income from Membership Fees by Size of Marinas



Income from Business Units is mainly by Independent owners and MDMCs although what is interesting is the size of marinas that benefit from this income stream the most; medium to large marinas, not the extra large. This gives a good indication of the scope that a marina can take with its income stream and highlights that regardless of the ownership type; it is size and location that matter when diversification is apparent.

Service Provision

Service provision is a fundamental part of marina operations. Members and visitors may base their choice of marina on the services that are available either in the marina itself or the local area. It has been found that when a marina development occurs, companies that provide a service to boat owners will locate in the immediate vicinity to attract a new customer base. Depending on the size and location of the marina, services may be primarily essential – fuel and boat servicing – or include additional non-marine services such as entertainment and leisure facilities.

Marina services play an important role not just for the attractiveness of the marina and use of the membership, but also for the economic health of the locality. Services provided for the marina industry tend to be micro businesses and their importance to the local economy can be underestimated. Where services are available for the marina member/visitor there is a distinct correlation between the ownership of the marina and the ownership of the services. The following table highlights the services that are provided, the location and type of ownership.

Table 4 Services provided by marinas or within the locality

Service	Main Ownership	Location	Comments
Chandlery	Non-marina owned	58% on-site, only 10% have no provision in local area	The only marina owned chandlers are by independent marina owners
Marina Services (Insurance, Upholstery)	Non-marina owned	Mainly off-site, only 27% are within the marina	The only marina owned marine services are by independent marina owners
Marine Engineers	Non-marina owned	70% on-site	Again, only marina owned marine engineering services are by independent marina owners
Fuel	53% of fuel services are marina owned	Mainly within the marina	Only 7% are non-marina owned yet located within the marina. Only 10% have no fuel supplies in the local area
Boat Sales	Non-marina owned	60% located within a marina	The only marina owned boat sale services are by independent marina owners
Coastguard	Non-marina owned	93% off-site or not in local area	
Boat building	Mainly non-marina owned	20% of marinas have this facility within the marina	The majority of services are located within the local area
Off-Shore services	Mainly non-marina owned	Mainly off-site (53%) but becoming a	Three marinas expressed activity and ownership of this service as a sideline investment activity

		popular marina service	
Transport & Logistics	53% non-marina owned	Mainly off-site	Only marina owned transport facilities are by independently owned marinas
Research & Development	Non-marina owned	Not available in many areas (57% have no provision)	2 marinas are actively involved with this sector due to specific research needs in their area
Education training	Non-marina owned	27% is on-site but the majority is located off-site	An area that has a clear interest from marinas for both H&S and apprenticeship training
Conservation	Non-marina owned	Off-site mainly and 40% outside the local area	Marinas with an activity in this theme tend to be located within a marine conservation area
Entertainment	100% non-marina owned	100% off-site (although some marinas within the population do have such facilities within the marina	Not one of the marinas that responded to the research had any entertainment facilities within the marina itself although it is known that at least two marinas along the south coast do have cinemas and other entertainment facilities
Non-marine retail	100% non-marina owned	Mainly off-site (76%)	It is a feature of some marinas that they have discount and outlet stores. Other non-marine retail includes convenience stores.
Cafe	90% non-marina owned	44% on-site with 52% in the locality	Although mainly non-marina owned this service is a predominant feature of marina services
Accommodation	93% non-marina owned	93% off-site	2 independently owned marinas provide accommodation within the marina

Other services that featured within marinas tended to be a mix of extra service provision for members and businesses with no connection to the marine industry. These included: Health Spa facilities, fishing charter, swimming pool, sail makers and electricians as well as marketing, artist studios, Naval Association, publishers, computer programmers and 'other non-marine related companies that enjoy being based by the water'[2]. This is one aspect where marinas have the advantage over other industrial sites – the beauty and tranquillity of the surrounding area. Business units are becoming a main feature, and in some instance a main source of income, for many marinas; in particular MDMC owned marinas. It is important that these 'clusters' are recognised and encouraged to flourish, something that does not appear to be occurring in any formal or informal manner. The following section looks at the provision of business units within the marina boundaries and the perceptions of the marinas to their importance and contribution to economic growth.

Business Units

Of the marinas that responded a total of 338 business units were available on the marina premises. 88 of these were used for administration purposes, 152 for commercial leasing and currently only 29

[2] Quote from one respondent

were standing empty. The following table summarises the use and availability of business units within the respondent marinas.

Table 5 Business Unit Availability

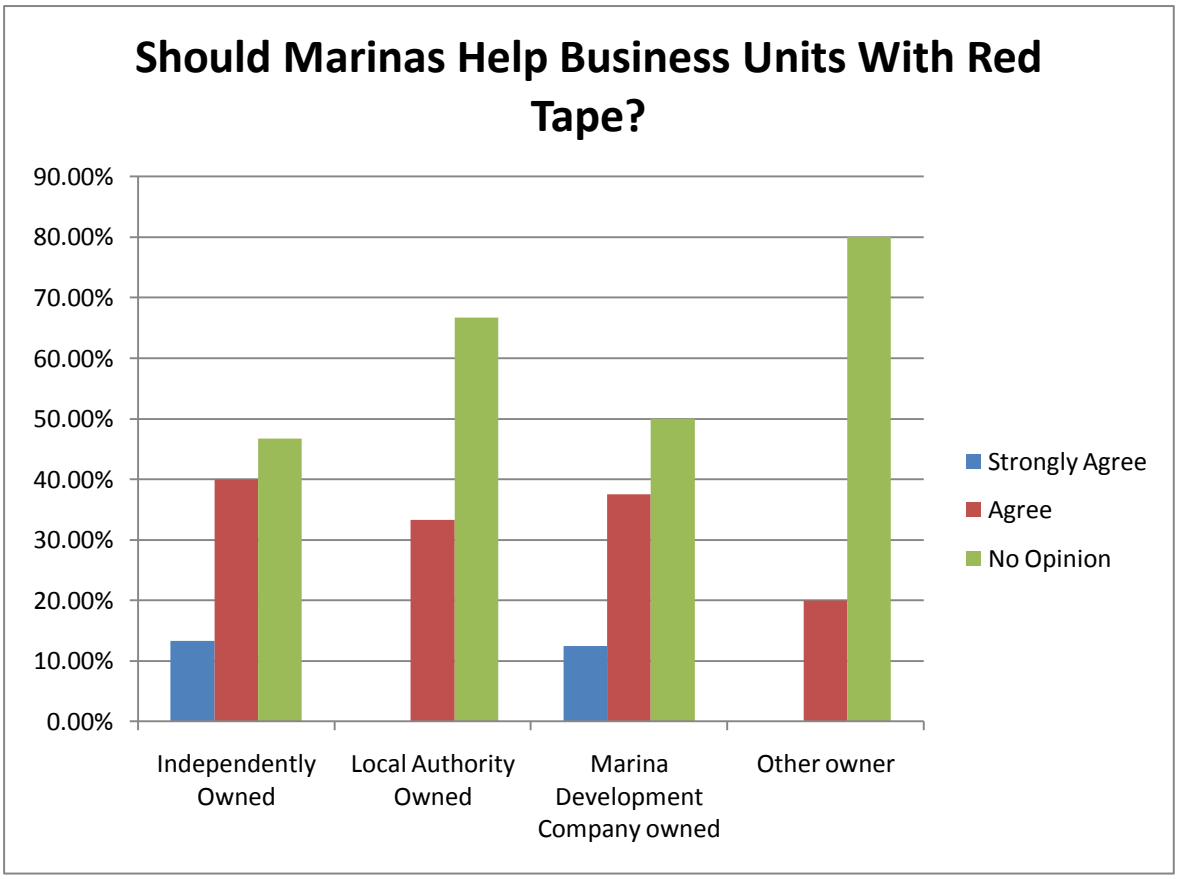
	Total	Administration	Commercial	Empty
Marina Use Only	55	22	18	0
Commercial Use Only	227	13	91	5
Total Available Units	338	88	152	29

There are 12 marinas that have no commercial units to rent and 1 marina that has a total of 50 units. Such a large range makes it impracticable to average the number of units per marina. All marina development management company (MDMC) owned marinas had units for lease and 68% of those respondents who had no units within the marina were independently owned marinas. 63% of MDMC owned marinas had at least 20 units on site compared to only 18% of independently owned marinas. 25% of MDMC owned marinas had more than 2 units empty compared to only 1 independently owned marina who had any empty units at all. The BMF study (2007) concluded that the business units located within marinas had a significant impact on the local economy. They calculated a total of 11,800 jobs generating £260million of value added across the whole of the coastline based on their case study findings. When supply chain value is included in the total impacts the sum increases by 4,300 jobs and another £102million of value added.

As previously seen, the type of industry varies considerably and is not necessarily related to the marina activities or even the marine industry itself. 16% of respondents commented that many business owners like working in a marina environment or have a sailing interest that means they can mix business with pleasure. The only disadvantages of locating within a marina that were commented on tend to be on the transport and logistics side. Marinas will be located at the waters edge and distribution of goods and travel to work may involve either crossing the water or using minor road links to get to main thoroughfares.

Generally, marinas appear to have a good relationship with the business residents on the site. 48% agreed strongly that the marina was a 'hub' for business activity with a further 10% agreeing with the statement. Only one marina- a Local Authority owned marina - disagreed with the statement. When it came to helping the marina based business directly, no respondent disagreed although more than half expressed no opinion (see figure 7).

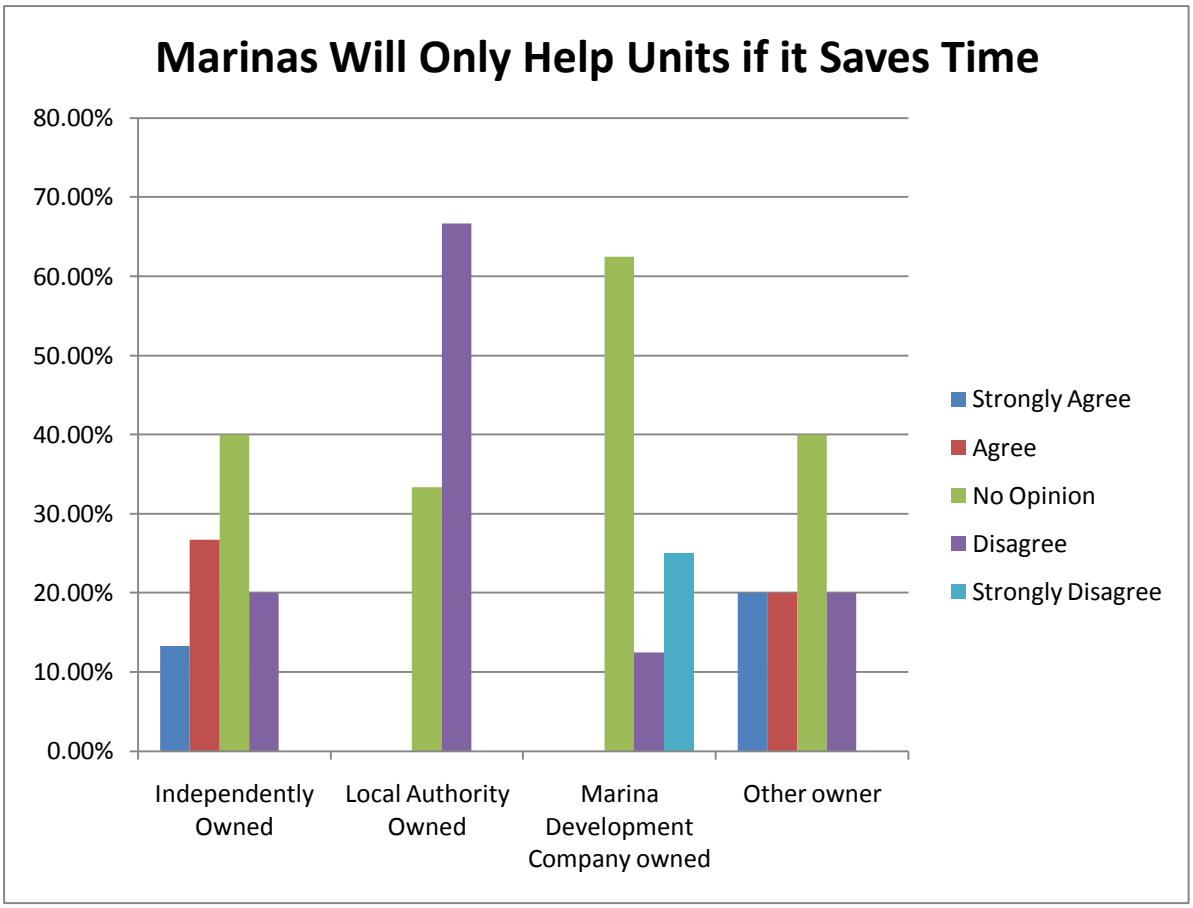
Figure 7 Marinas should help businesses cut through 'red tape'



Nearly 50% of respondents felt that Local Authorities could do more to help support the business units within the marina and related to this is the health and safety aspects of running a business. 55% of marinas felt they provided leadership and support but 7% felt this was lacking. Collaborating with the local businesses was seen as important by 39% of respondents with 66% of Local Authority owned marinas agreeing the most strongly. There was a mixed response to the statement 'marinas will only collaborate if it saves time and/or money'. Figure 8 highlights the differing opinions by type of owner.

Over 90% of marinas expressed an interest in the activities of the business units and 63% felt the units enhanced the services provided by the marina. 42% of respondents felt they should take responsibility for supporting the units within the marina and 55% felt the support was mutual and there was an essence of working towards a common good. When asked about diversity within the businesses the feeling was surprisingly neutral with 55% of respondents unconcerned about the type of industry that located within the marina.

Figure 8 Marinas will only collaborate if it saves time and/or money?



Although there are apparent mixed responses to many issues around business unit provision they are essentially an important economic sector to the marina itself and local area in general. Facilitating activities designed to strengthen the knowledge and working practices will lead to a stronger economic community as well as an enhanced provision of services for the visitors to the marina. The overall assessment appears to be that there is potential for increasing the value added found by the BMF study and that cluster facilitation could increase the economic impact through increasing cost efficiency and knowledge transfer activities.

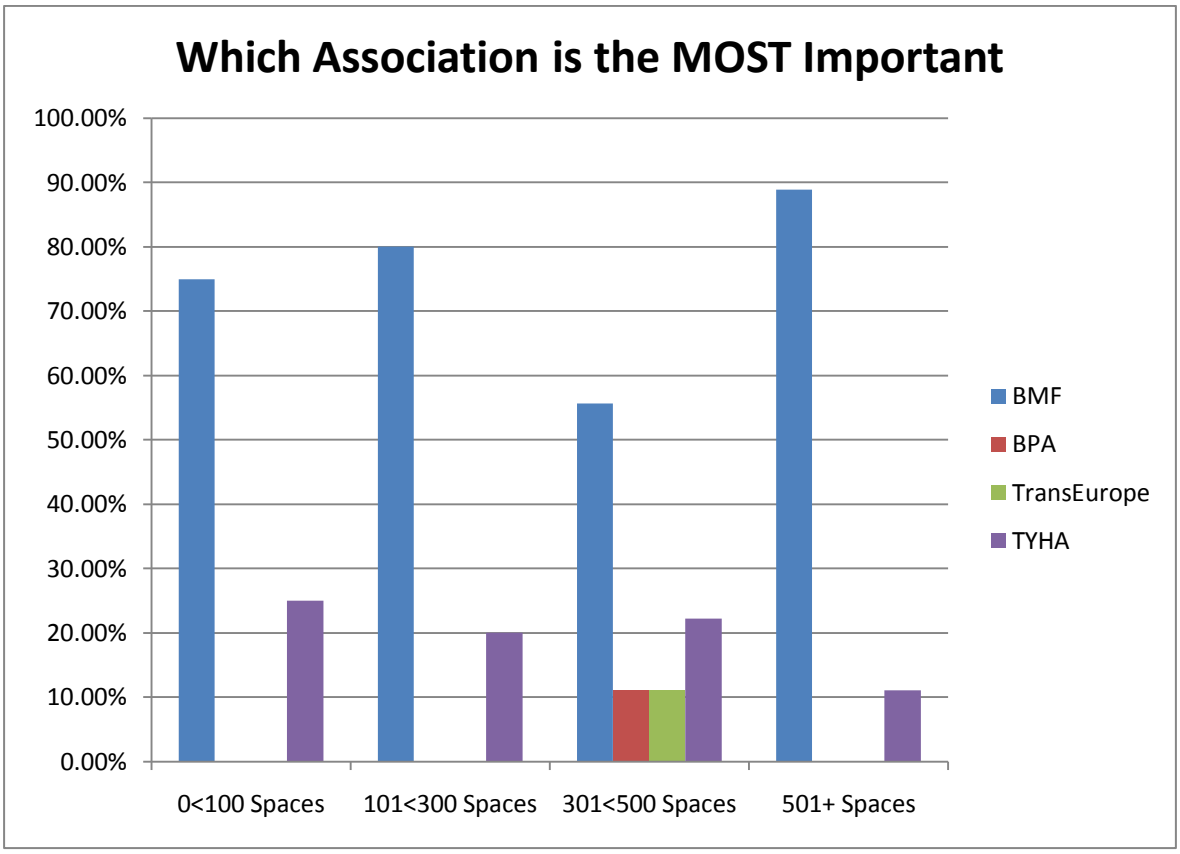
The next section looks at the cluster and network activities that are currently taking place and analyses the perceptions to the economic benefits of these activities.

Networking and Cluster Activities

Marinas are ideally situated to provide a central point for cluster activities. Networking does not currently appear to be a main priority for marinas and only one marina hosted networking events on a regular basis with 60% of marinas never holding events. 42% of marinas supported networking events on an occasional basis with just over half of marinas attending events at least four times a year. Contradicting these statements slightly is the assertion by 58% of respondents that the marina is a central hub for the business community, with 90% of these strongly agreeing with this statement. The research has shown that marinas generally feel they would like to work with business units but time and resources prevent this.

Marinas are also in a position to act as an umbrella for disseminating information to the local businesses by networking themselves through larger associations and cluster networks. More than half of the marinas that responded belong to a network or cluster organisation with half of these belonging to more than one. Associations are also a popular option with 95% of marinas saying they belong to the British Marine Federation (BMF) and the Yacht Harbour Association (TYHA) (figure 9).

Figure 9 Most Important Association for Marinas



Local networks are less popular and membership appears to depend on the location of the marina and the size and ownership – independent marinas will join rather than other ownership types

possibly due to the readymade support service that comes with belonging to a larger group such as an MDMC. The main reasons for joining the networks differ according to the size and scope of the association. The BMF and TYHA provide the specific legal, technical and advisory service including best practice for the leisure boat industry and the TYHA award system is recognised internationally. Local networks provide support and local information and the ability to build business relationships within the local area. Larger, more generalised organisations such as Marine South East (MSE) provide the knowledge and advice for funding opportunities and diversification in the wider marine field; and clusters and networks – Cornwall Marine Network and Cowes Cluster being two of these – provide training opportunities and a wider group of contacts within the marine sector.

Maintaining links with each type of association/organisation can be time consuming and costly therefore marinas appear to pick and choose their affiliations based on the time and cost commitment versus the benefit received.

When it comes to satisfaction with Local Authority input into helping small marine companies with cluster activities there appears to be a geographic divide with the Southwest showing the most dissatisfaction (figure 10).

Figure 10 Should Local Authorities do more help marinas support local businesses?

It is this area that also has the strongest marine networks set up by businesses, to support local marine businesses. The southwest also has the largest marine industry in general compared to the rest of the south of England.

Membership to more generic business associations is sporadic. The Chambers of Commerce are the largest of the business support networks yet the marine membership appears to vary across the region. The Chambers of Commerce in the Isle of Wight are responsible for the Cowes Cluster and are supported by the marinas in the area. In Cornwall the Chambers of Commerce does not appear

to play a major role in the marine industry and there were no marinas who expressed an interest in this organisation. Interestingly in other areas it seems that the CoC have tried to encourage marine membership but have not been successful. The question that arises from this is whether the more generic business networking is understood to be as useful as the marine orientated networking.

When looking at marinas as a natural cluster and networking hub it has been pointed out that the majority of networking tends to take place informally rather than formally. The 'chance meetings' that take place within the marina between marina members/visitors can prove to be as useful as attending an organised event. It is important to realise that although the marina may consist of an assortment of businesses there are also a far greater assortment of regular visitors to the marina who bring with them a wealth of business opportunities that may often remain untapped.

Comments were also made regarding niche markets and unique positioning. Strengthening relationships with the local area will need a variety of different tactics depending on the size of the marina, the role they portray within the local area and the unique characteristics of the locality. Environmental awareness appears to be an increasing theme among marinas. Marinas are aware of the impact they have on the environment from an infrastructure as well as an operational aspect. Reducing their impact on the environment appears to have become a priority area over the last few years and encouraging members to become environmentally aware is also of importance.

Cluster activities do appear to be occurring on a fairly regular basis but are very informal. Quite often it seems that the participants are unaware of the fact the activities are an opportunity to increase their economic potential and the potential benefits are therefore ignored. Although it is not necessary to formalise cluster activities it is a benefit to the potential impact if the participants were able to ascertain the benefits to themselves and the wider community to enable wider participation and further benefits to be accessed.

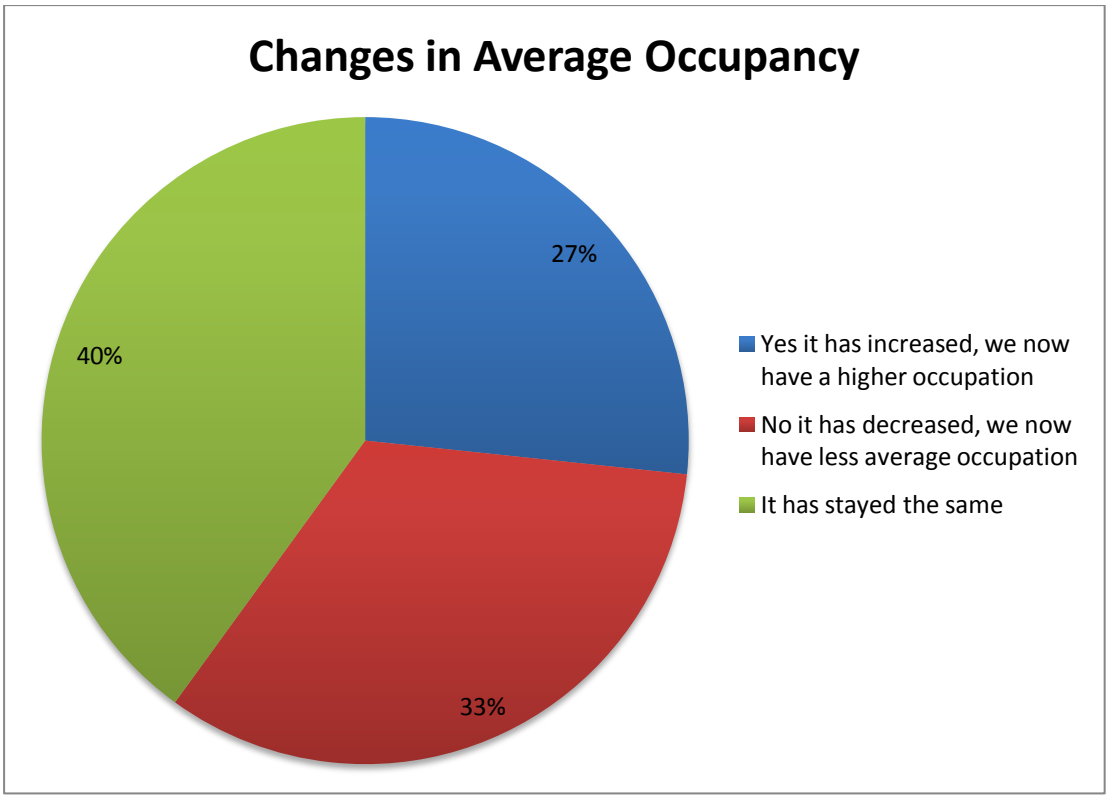
Economic Impacts of Marinas

The economic impacts of marinas was explained and analysed in the 2007 BMF report and do not need to be repeated here to any great depth. The BMF report highlighted on-site business impacts and supply chain impacts as two of the economic drivers to increasing growth and sustainability in the local area. The results of this survey have underpinned these findings but also go some way to identifying areas where the potential has not been achieved. Marinas were asked about impact of employment within the marinas themselves, the local area, and the impact that they believed they had.

The majority of small marinas were either unaware of the impact of their marinas on the local employment market or thought their impact would be very small. The larger the marina the more jobs are supported in the local area and the diversity of job also increases with the size of the marina. Job creation and sustainability within the marina was dependent on the amount and type of business units available in the marina rather than the size of the marina itself. Employment by the marina, rather than just within the marina, was variable. Many independently owned marinas provided services themselves and therefore employed people to carry out the services. MDMCs tended to provide fewer services preferring to allow independently owned companies to offer the service. This is shown in the results as the MDMCs employ fewer people than any other type of marina owner.

Average occupancy is varied and there are differentials apparent between locations and ownership type. Some marinas provide a higher percentage of visitor spaces than others and one marina specified that they were only a transit marina and did not have any residents. Figure 11 shows the changes in average occupancy over the last couple of years and it is interesting that even in a recession there are a high percentage of marinas that are maintaining occupancy and more than a quarter who have increased their average occupancy.

Figure 11 Changes in Average Occupancy



The reasons given for the changes in occupancy highlight the local economic conditions and also the competition that is in the area. The recession was given as the main reason for a reduction in average occupancy and in one case it was felt that there was an oversupply in the immediate area that had impacted on the general decrease in occupancy. Niche markets, competitive pricing, improved facilities and marketing initiatives were all given as reasons for a rise in average occupancy.

The cost of berthing varies considerably across the south and visitors are targeted with offers of value, service and facilities. It seems there is only so much a marina can do for its members as membership is not dependent on cost alone. Many members prefer small quiet rural locations whilst others will want entertainment, leisure activities and a choice of services - no marina can provide everything. Loyalty was one area that marinas appear to be looking closely at. MDMCs can provide discounted visits to other marinas within the group but independently owned marinas are unable to provide the same services easily. TransEurope Marinas is one organisation that consists of independently owned marinas that provide reduced cost of visits to other independent marinas within the network.

Conclusion

There appear to be many barriers that marinas have to overcome to be able to grow and develop, not least planning legislation, environmental impacts, and the physical geology constraints. Relationships with the local authorities are not always positive and support appears sporadic and varied across the coast. Ownership, size and location all impact on the customer base and service provision and although almost all marinas provide the core services they differ from each other in many other ways due to their unique geographical locations and associated service provision. Yet even though there is evidence of demand in excess of capacity in many areas competition between marinas is strong and possibly counterproductive to increasing sustainability.

The BMF and TYHA are well respected amongst the marina industry and the award scheme fully supported. It is clear that marinas provide a unique opportunity for increasing the economic growth and sustainability of an area yet their contribution does not always seem to be understood. The marinas themselves also need to be aware of their potential and make best use of their location, geography and service provision. Enhancing their uniqueness and expanding on niche markets will enable collaboration without competitive threat.

This research has further underpinned the conclusions of the BMF study into coastal marinas and highlights two possible scenarios that may alleviate the problems the report emphasised:

1. Increasing awareness – collaboration and exploration with local authorities to identify specific areas of mutual benefit to increase the economic sustainability of the local area
2. Restrictive health and safety legislation – organise joint training and awareness to reduce the cost of training and ensure the marina businesses and marinas themselves are informed.

This report, as part of the CAMIS Project, aims to look at identifying best practice and economic sustainability through clustering. It is clear that there are opportunities for marinas to increase their impact on the local economy and utilise their facilities to help other local industries by actively pursuing cluster activities. Increasing the efficiency of those businesses that support the marina will directly impact positively on the marina saving both time and money.

It is the intention of the CAMIS research to take the findings of this research and to actively facilitate the development and sustainability of the marinas through cluster activities. This report will therefore be followed up with a comprehensive account of the activities that wll be carried out and an analysis of the impact these activities have on the marina and local area.

Appendix 1

The CAMIS project (Channel Arc Manche Integrated Strategy) was given approval in June 2009 as part of the INTERREG IVA France (Channel) - England Programme, following on from the success of the Espace Manche Development Initiative (EMDI) project (Buleon and Shurmer-Smith 2008). The aim of CAMIS is to draft and implement an integrated maritime policy in the Channel space whilst encouraging concrete co-operation schemes between stakeholders in France and the UK. The project brings together 19 British and French partners, including a range of local authorities and universities, to work together in light of the new EU and national requirements (Devon CC 2010). The project has been split into six different strands that look at various aspects that impact on the Channel space such as – security, knowledge transfer, innovation and business clusters.

The cluster strand of CAMIS is disaggregated into four themes – off-shore renewable energy, marine operations, marine environment, and marina tourism. The CAMIS project is unique in that it not only aims to identify cluster activities within the four themes but it also aims to facilitate further cluster activities using the best practice that is identified. Therefore the project is disaggregated into three sections:

1. 3a – Identification of cross-border cluster opportunities
2. 3b - Cross-border cluster development
3. 3c - Thematic benchmarking activities

Although there has been a substantial amount of work into clustering and marine clusters there has been little research on the potential benefits from cross-border collaboration. It is the aim of this research to address this issue and from these aims the following objectives will be achieved:

1. Promoting genuine symbiotic business relationships throughout the region
2. Sharing best practice initiatives
3. Identification of sources of and opportunities for, innovation within clusters
4. Facilitating the development of existing clusters or the creation of new ones where they do not already exist
5. Enabling new channels to market

This report is the property of the University of Chichester, School of Enterprise, Management & Leadership (SEMAL)

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