Emergency teams put to the test in Beaulieu River oil spill exercise

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The Beaulieu River team tells us:

(Photograph and all words from the Beaulieu River Team).

The Beaulieu River has hosted a coordinated oil spill exercise in collaboration with marine and conservation agencies. The drill tested the marina’s readiness and response capabilities during a simulated emergency response situation in Beaulieu village. The exercise focused on protecting both the local community and surrounding wildlife habitats, ensuring teams are prepared to act swiftly and effectively in the event of a real oil spill.

Representatives from Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, the Marine Police Unit, Environment Agency, Natural England, Hampshire County Council and Perenco joined Harbour Master Wendy Stowe and the Beaulieu River team for the drill on October 9th, which was facilitated by the Adler & Allan marine response service.

Using a scenario in which an oil tanker rolled over while passing through Beaulieu village, the exercise was conducted in real-time to evaluate the readiness of the river and Beaulieu Estate teams. As the simulated incident unfolded, team members promptly engaged with emergency services and environmental specialists to manage the ever-evolving situation.

The river team deployed marine booms, effectively containing the spill and preventing contamination of nearby sensitive wildlife habitats. Meanwhile, the Beaulieu fire & rescue service practiced using its equipment and techniques, critical for responding to such incidents.

From the incident command centre at Beaulieu Fire Station, the response team underwent rigorous assessment focused on the decisions made, actions taken and the speed of reactions. The operation was supported by expert guidance ensuring a comprehensive and effective emergency response exercise.

Harbour Master Wendy Stowe said: *"I felt the day was a success. Conducting the exercise in Beaulieu village, where it was visible to members of the public, added an important element of realism and community engagement. The team worked very well, and I feel very reassured that if a real incident occurred, we have the right tools and expertise to respond effectively. Additionally, and most importantly, we were able to demonstrate that our current oil spill plan is robust and reliable."*

The custodianship of the Montagu family has protected the Beaulieu River for over four centuries, maintaining its unique natural charm and protecting its unique habitats and species.

As the jewel of the Solent at the gateway to the New Forest, Buckler's Hard Yacht Harbour

recently celebrated the opening of a new boatshed after a £2m redevelopment, which has created workshops, waterfront offices and meeting rooms with panoramic views across the Beaulieu River.

The yacht harbour has a long track record of giving a personal and outstanding service to its customers. For more information on moorings, berths or boatshed business opportunities see www.beaulieuriver.co.uk, email harbour.office@beaulieu.co.uk or call 01590 616200.