



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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PRESS RELEASE

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The Government regrets and rejects recent reports in the media relating to alleged 'delays' in providing berthing facilities to boat owners. These statements are misconceived.

The Government has not provided berths for Yacht Club members. False and sarcastic statements to this effect suggest a political motivation on the part of those who make them. A private marina owner has loaned to the Government, for the duration of construction works, an area for the temporary relocation of boats berthed at the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club, to enable the Government to reclaim land in the Yacht Club's present site, for the construction of the Government's new rental housing estate. The Yacht Club, and its boats, will then be relocated to its permanent new site. These facts are very well known to the makers of false statements designed to be provocative on the basis of perceived social classes and privilege.

Boat owning and boat use is primarily a Sport and Leisure Activity. This Government has an excellent record in investing in Sport and Leisure facilities for local residents, as Casemates, the King's Bastion Leisure Centre, the Bayside Sports Complex and the Coaling Island boat facilities testify. The excellent Coaling Island small boats berthing facilities were provided by the GSD Government, in a prime site, after the GSLP Government had abandoned the local boatowners in a supposedly temporary and exposed site at Western Beach.

The Government will continue to invest across the spectrum of sports and leisure facilities required by the whole population in a balanced, fair and affordable way. No one sport or leisure activity has greater rights to further or particular investment than others. There is no automatic and immediate right to a boat berth provided at taxpayer's expense by the Government.

All that said, the Government has a manifesto commitment to provide 150 more berths for small local boats at some point in time during this term of office. That remains the Government's

commitment. However, a manifesto is a programme for a four year term. It is not possible to deliver all manifesto commitments first or at the same time, nor are the beneficiaries of this particular policy commitment entitled to priority of timing over the beneficiaries of other policy commitments regardless of the degree of aggressiveness or political hostility or frequency of their demands.

The government has not refused to meet with any committee of local boat owners, but does decline to invite to further meetings any individual member of any such committee that has previously failed to behave appropriately at such meetings. That will remain the case.