

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

July 2022

## Sandringham Breakwater dredging

Maintenance dredging is conducted at Sandringham Breakwater as part of Parks Victoria's program to ensure safe boating access at key sites within Port Phillip and Western Port.

### Why does Parks Victoria dredge at Sandringham?

As the local port and waterway manager for Port Phillip and Western Port, Parks Victoria is responsible for providing safe access to local port facilities. Over time sand can naturally build up across boating access channels like at Sandringham. Dredging is undertaken to maintain safe access to this, and other local port facilities like boat ramps, piers / jetties and harbours. Dredging has been occurring at this site for more than 20 years.

### How often does dredging occur?

The decision to undertake dredging is determined by the design depth of the area and minimum depth triggers. Water depths at Sandringham are monitored to determine when dredging is required. Dredging may occur anytime of the year to ensure safe access for vessels in response to sedimentation cycles.

### Where is the dredged material deposited?

The dredged sand is distributed in predetermined areas north of Sandringham Harbour Beach, where it can benefit the beach profile. The natural direction of coastal sand movement is considered when establishing a delivery site for the dredged material. The sand will renourish the beach and replace what has been eroded.

### Is the dredged material contaminated?

No. The dredged material is local sand that has washed into the access channel from the adjoining beaches as part of the local coastal processes. Parks Victoria completes testing at all of its sites requiring maintenance dredging and follows the testing and environmental requirements outlined in the EPA Best Practice Guidelines for Dredging, and other relevant regulatory standards. The quality of water will not be affected during dredging, but it may appear turbid (cloudy) until the sand settles. This is similar to the turbidity experienced when strong wave action stirs up sand and sediments during storms.



*Equipment is used to disperse sand*

## Why does the dredged sand have a dark colour and smell?

The dredged sand is mobilised with a lot of water which helps with its transport. Wet sand is darker than dry sand, regardless of its natural colour. Also, sand usually contains decaying aquatic plant material, such as seaweed, which sometimes gives the dredged sand a grey appearance and a mild odour. These characteristics quickly change once it has been exposed to air, sun light and tidal processes.



*Dredged sand is transferred through pipes to the disposal site*

## What are the pipes for?

The pipes are used to transfer a slurry of sand and water from the dredge to the disposal site. As the sand and water flows out onto the site, the sand settles and slowly accumulates as it builds up. Additional pipes may need to be attached in order to progress the sand distribution or deliver the sand to a specific location.

## Can I still use the dog beach?

Yes, you can still access the harbour beach, also known as the dog beach, unless otherwise marked onsite.

Sections along the northern end of the dog beach will be closed to the public during the dredging works for safety reasons. This area may remain closed for a short time after the works until the sand settles and stabilises. All temporary beach closures will be clearly marked.

For safety reasons, visitors should keep their pets away from the closed areas and prevent them from entering the water or getting close to any vessels or machinery operating in the area.

## Can I still use the marina?

The marina entry will remain open while dredging takes place along the breakwater. Entry to the marina may be temporarily restricted from time to time to ensure safe operation of the dredging equipment when working around and near the end of the breakwater.

## Can I still use my boat in the harbour during the dredging?

Access to the harbour will not change during these works. Mariners are reminded to obey speed limits, proceed with caution, and be aware of floating or submerged pipelines while the dredge and support vessels are present in the harbour.

When encountering a dredge, vessel operators should always pass on the non-obstruction side of the dredge. The safe side of passage is indicated by a double black diamond day shape on the vessel. A double black ball day shape indicates the obstruction side to avoid. The top black ball - black diamond - black ball day shape indicates the vessel is restricted in its ability to maneuver.



*The two diamond shapes on the dredger indicate the safe side for vessels to pass*

## How long will the dredging take?

The entire process is expected to take 2-3 weeks, depending on weather.

## Further information

Updates can be found on the Parks Victoria website at: <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/sandringham-jetty-and-breakwater>.

For further queries, please contact the Parks Victoria information centre on 13 1963 or email the Parks Victoria maintenance dredging team at [dredging@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:dredging@parks.vic.gov.au)