Biodiversity for Boaters

Free Online Training Tool

The 'virtual marina' can be accessed via GatherTown by this link:

https://tinyurl.com/25hhbnnc

Any recreational boater is welcome to use this space, alone or with their boating friends. If you are a boating or paddling organisation, or a marina or waters sports operator, please feel free to invite up to 20 people into this space for training at the same time. The more people in the marina, the more fun and interactive the biosecurity learning experience will be. We strongly recommend you consider offering this training to members and staff to better understand invasive non native species, the marina environment and good biosecurity practise. Previous participants have even said they had no idea about invasive marine non native species or their role in biosecurity before this course, and think all boaters should be encouraged to do more training like this.

If you would like a facilitator to help, or a bigger or adapted space, please contact me on L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk

What is the Virtual Marina?

Our virtual marina (or free biosecurity training tool) is hosted in Gather. Gather is a web-conferencing platform a little like zoom, but much more fun (we hope!). We recommend accessing Gather using Google Chrome or Firefox (Safari has limited support). The experience is best on a laptop or PC with video and microphone, but is possible with other mobile devices.

The space offers a great place to meet friends virtually, without the need for travel. So feel free to share the link with any boating or paddling friends. The more, the merrier!

We invite you to enter the space early to set up your 'avatar' – a virtual you that you can personalise. You can also turn on your camera and sound to interact with others, or leave them off to enjoy the experience without interacting if you prefer.

There are two rooms within the marina, one is a welcome arena to familiarise yourself with the format and controls, and interact with videos and signs using 'x'. Follow the 'exit' signs (left and right) to join the full virtual marina. In there, you will find videos, signs, posters, and all kinds of marine information dotted around, and you may even 'drop in' to the sea and see what surprises you will find in and around the marina.

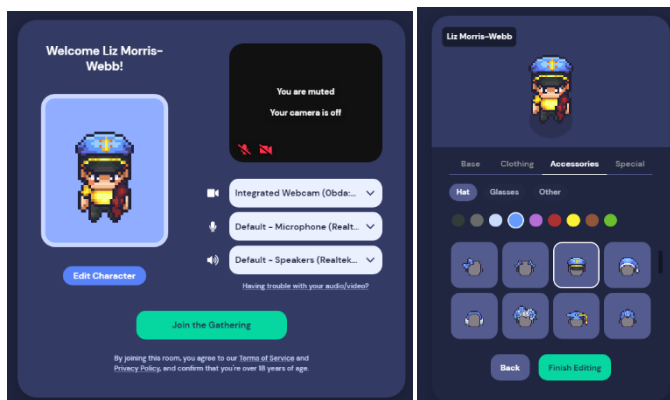Enjoy exploring and your immersive training experience!

L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk

If you are joining an event, <u>please allow 15-20 minutes before your event starts</u> to access the environment and orient yourself in the space.

Gather has provided a good YouTube video on how to use gather here>
https://youtu.be/89at5EvCEvk

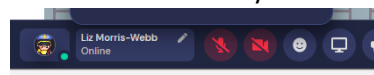If you would rather read instructions on the space, see the introduction to gather below.

When you access the space using the link above, you will be asked to create your avatar. Enter your name (or a fictitious name) so other participants can find you, and if you are happy to interact, then give permission to use your camera and microphone. You can personalise your avatar using the edit character button. When you are ready, you can join.

If it is your first time on Gather, you will be invited to a tutorial to help you find your way around.

During the tutorial you will

- Use arrow keys to move around (note you can also double click on a space to move there faster)
- Mute and unmute yourself

- Use the 'x' key to interact with objects

Interacting with people and objects…

When you get closer to other people, their video and sound will get stronger (just like reality). If you walk away from them, you will lose your connection with them. To pass other people, **press and hold G on the keyboard** as you move.
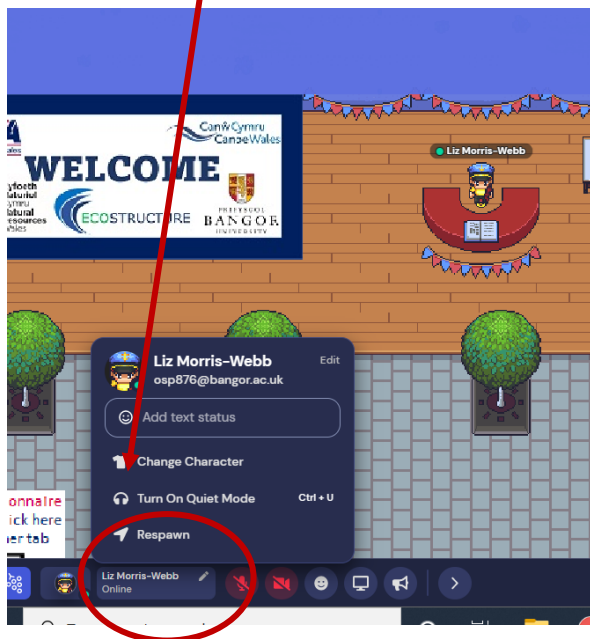
Around the marina, there are private spaces, especially around objects that you can interact with. In most cases, if you are interacting with something, you can also talk to others looking at the same object and talk about it together. They are a bit like breakout rooms. If you leave this space, you will again loose connection with those people. Please be kind and professional in your interactions.

L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk

Getting help: How to find other people or your event organisers …

If you have a question for the organisers, use the smiley face emoji to find the raise hand symbol and a other people will find you, or use the chat function to raise a question.

Alternatively, if you are joining an organised event, a facilitator should wait by the welcome desk to help. Any user can return to the welcome desk by 'respawning' at any time to find a facilitator who will be able to assist you.

Finally, you can see how many participants are online on the bottom right of your screen. You can click here to see the names of participants, send them a message on the chat, locate them on a map, or Follow them without needing to use the arrow keys.

Entering the virtual marina …

Once you are confident with the controls, take an exit (left or right) from the welcome arena and join the virtual marina.

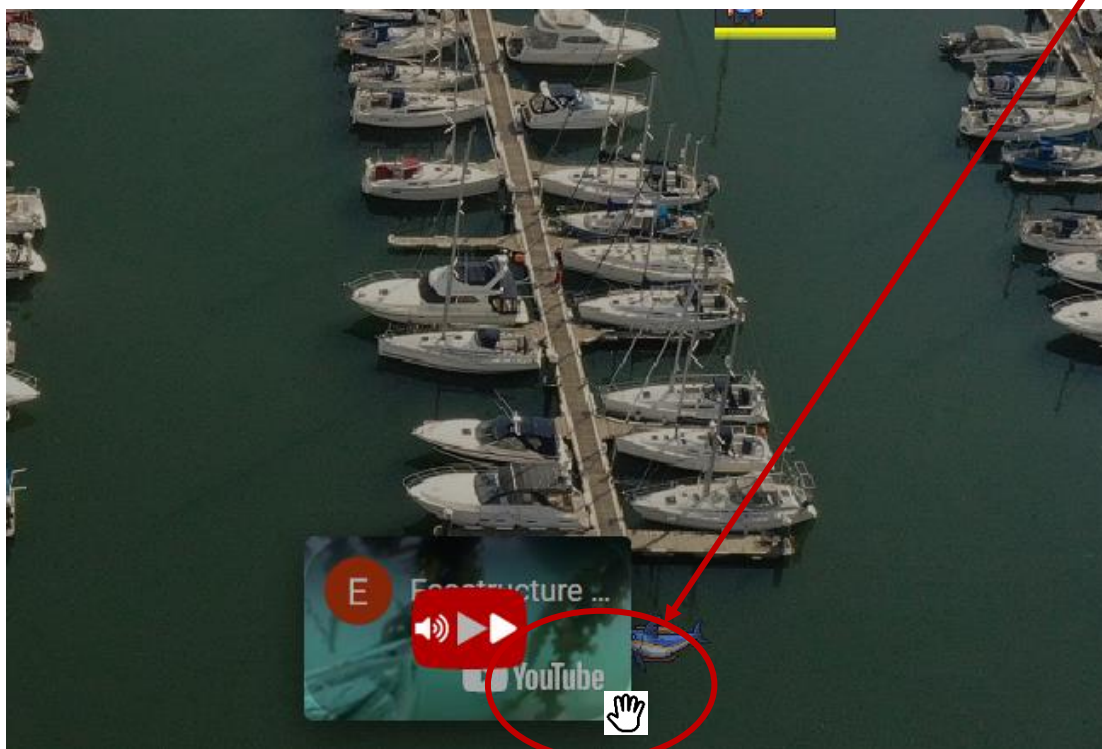L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk

What is in the marina??

The marina is full of interactive exhibits for you to explore alone or with other participants. Some are marked, and some are hidden and can literally be 'fallen into'.

If it is possible to interact with an object, a prompt will usually appear telling you to press 'x' to interact with it.

Occasionally, some videos or materials may not be fully interactable using the x button. **In these cases, a YouTube preview video will appear at the bottom of the screen. Hover over the bottom right corner and a grab hand will appear. Double click when your cursor becomes a grab hand,** and the video will open a new browser. This is particularly the case for 360° video of the underwater environment.

Thank you for taking part.

We hope that you enjoyed our virtual marina experience, and feel that you have benefitted in some way.

If you have any questions, or would like to arrange a bigger or adapted workshop in person or in the virtual space, for your own club or marina, please feel free to get in touch with me at L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk

You can follow the results of this project on the Ecostructure website

http://www.ecostructureproject.eu/

Thank you to our partners and funders.

L.Morris-Webb@Bangor.ac.uk