



Appendix D

20. 01. 2026

Pilotage Direction No 5

1. Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners (a competent harbour authority within the meaning of the Pilotage Act 1987), in the exercise of their powers under section 7 of that Act, direct that pilotage shall in all circumstances be compulsory for:
 - a. All vessels of 50 metres or greater in overall length, navigating within the River Colne or any subsidiary Creek or River, upstream of the Colne No 9 Buoy.
 - b. All vessels carrying marine pollutants in bulk or IMDG Class 1 over 10Kgs.
 - c. All passenger vessels of Classes I, II & II(A).
 - d. Tugs and Tows greater than 40m total length or 10m total beam.
2. A vessel for which pilotage is compulsory shall take aboard or land a pilot in the vicinity of No 9 Buoy (51°46.92'N 001°01.15'E). In adverse weather conditions a more sheltered location may be advised at the time.
3. This direction does not apply to any vessel under the control of a Pilotage Exemption Certificate holder issued by Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners. A Pilotage Exemption Certificate will assume the duties imposed upon pilots by the Merchant Shipping (Reporting Requirements for Ships Carrying Dangerous or Polluting Cargo) Regulations 1995.
4. It is a legal requirement that pilots/port authorities report any deficiencies which may prejudice the safe navigation of any ship, under merchant Shipping (Port State Control) Regulations 1995. A Pilotage Exemption certificate holder will assume this responsibility.
5. A Pilotage Exemption certificate holder that is involved in an incident caused by negligence, or by failure to follow the practices of good seamanship, may be excluded from exemption. Those excluded from exemption under the above clause may reapply for exemption subject to qualifying voyages being completed under pilotage.
6. This Pilotage Direction cancels Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners' Pilotage Directions No 4 dated 09th March 2023.



Addendum to Pilotage Direction No 5

1. The acceptance of vessels is subject to tidal constraints and the latest survey data. the minimum under hull clearance required is 0.2 metres, except when manoeuvring on or off the berth.
2. Vessels loaded for Brightlingsea Creek will normally board their Pilot 30 minutes before High Water at the Colne No 9 Buoy. Vessels in ballast and required to swing before berthing will normally board their Pilot 1 hour before High Water and vessels proceeding to all other destinations will normally board their Pilot 1 hour and 30 minutes before High Water.
3. Vessels subject to compulsory Pilotage should place a provisional Pilotage Order via their Agents to the Harbour Office with not less than 72 hours' notice. Vessels should report inwards to 'Brightlingsea Pilots' on VHF Channel 68 (manned only when a vessel is expected), when passing the Colne Bar Buoy and outwards when departing the Berth.
4. Single-screw vessels <100m Length with a proportionate beam/length ratio will be subject to assessment by the Harbour Master and the Pilot on an individual basis. Such vessels will only normally be allowed to manoeuvre within the harbour if fitted with a fully operational bow-thruster.
5. The use of a gutway immediately upstream of Olivers' Wharf gives a potential turning circle for vessels up to 100 metres in length.
6. Vessels which are deemed by the Harbour Master and the Pilot to have an excessive beam will be subject to assessment on an individual basis.
7. Vessels between 100 - 120 metres in length can be accepted subject to an individual risk assessment by Harbour Master and Duty Pilot, which will take into account such factors as the use of tugs, thruster configuration/type (s), rudder design and propulsion (i.e. twin propellers).
8. Movements will normally be permitted in winds up to 20kts (10m/s) and up to a wave height of 2.0m. Movement of vessels in greater wind or wave height will be decided on an individual basis. Factors including vessel characteristics, wind direction and time of day will be considered.
9. In conditions of visibility less than 200 metres within the compulsory pilotage area movements will be suspended. Trends in changing visibility will be considered in making this decision.
10. Only one large vessel (>50 metres) at a time is permitted to be underway within Brightlingsea Creek. In general, only one large vessel is permitted to be underway in the approaches to Brightlingsea Creek and River Colne; exceptionally with the Pilot's and Harbour Master's approval, to allow departure and arrival of vessels on the same tide, passing of vessels south of No 13 Buoy is permitted.



Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

James Thomas
Harbour Master

Owen Evans
Deputy Harbour Master

11. Acceptance of Tugs and Tows is conditional on the designation of a Tow Master, submission of an adequate Towing Plan and individual Risk Assessment by Tow Master, Harbour Master and Duty Pilot.