

BRIGHTLINGSEA HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 03 Dec 2025

AT THE WRECK HOUSE COMMENCING AT 1830hrs

Present:

Andrew Scott – Chairman
James Thomas – HM/CE
Karl Lumbers – KL
Patric Foley-Brickley - PB
Ali Johns – AJ
Colin Watkins – CW
Rob Dorey – RD

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
5505	Apologies Daniel Stoker – DS Tony Curzon Price - TP	
5506	Minutes of Meetings held on 5 Nov 2025 were approved. Proposed, RD Secounded, KL	
5507	Matters Arising from those minutes HM listed outstanding actions.	
5508	HM Report Shipping 1 x Scrap, 2 x Cement Marketing Brightlingsea Harbour Facebook 4,902 followers (5 since Nov), Foot Ferry Facebook 7,291 Followers (41 since Nov). Harbour App 2000 + cannot exceed the amount. TikTok 324 up 8 in Nov. Harbour Entry 3861 views up 25 since Nov. Foot Ferry Video 10231 up 11 since Nov. Harbour Instagram 1479 up 9 since Nov. Foot Ferry Instagram 1086 up 3 since Nov LinkedIn 152 up 1 since Nov. The HM made a short presentation and sent out a report to Commissioners covering our social media statistics. Noted that some of BHC content has been viewed by 1.9 million people. There is a more detailed report which includes strategy available which Commissioners are welcome to study if required. Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Accidents and Incidents – Nil Pilotage Update – More potential pilots from Harwich are undertaking trips, with an experienced Pilot, to familiarise themselves with the harbour and pilotage operations. HM will be meeting with Pilots for a regular review during December. DHM reported on recent UK Harbour Master's Association conference. He noted that compliance with and enforcement of the revised Port Marine Safety Code had been the subject of significant discussions.	

HM alerted Commissioners to the next national PMSC compliance exercise by Maritime and Coastguard Agency Jan- Mar 2026.

The Wharf, Rowhedge Moorings and E Donyland Council have all contacted the HM and are now taking action to improve their compliance with the PMSC. This includes taking some action to building their own safety management system.

PMSC online training for Commissioners is available for British Ports Association. hosted on Microsoft Teams. Contact HM if Commissioners want to take part. Dates are;

PMSC Duty Holder Awareness Monday	8 December 2025 10:30 - 12:30
PMSC Duty Holder Awareness Friday	30 January 2026
PMSC Duty Holder Awareness Monday	30 March 2026
PMSC Duty Holder Awareness Friday	11 September 2026
PMSC Duty Holder Awareness Monday	7 December 2026

Maintenance Tasks November

- Marina tide gauge scrubbed
- 95% of mooring inspections completed; just the damaged ones to repair
- Colne leader singing prop resolved. Prop with French marine for repair
- Fisheries 1 buoy refurbished: back on station 17/11/2025
- Community reach ferry: plastic welding complete and door repaired
- Changed batteries and replaced communication cable on tide gauge.
- Removed radar for tidal range and waiting for replacement from supplier.
- Christmas decorations in place.
- Town Jetty Tanks removed and are being refurbished
- Colne innovation brought into yard for winter
- Colne Leader second cutlass bearing replaced
- Colne Leader handrail whippings replaced.
- Re cabling in the marina on C pontoon
- Fuel Berth RCB replacement
- Pressure washing pontoons
- Colne Innovation floor refurbished
- Sky Tiles installed in Showers and Toilets

Staff

Our new Head of Maintenance started on 24/11/25

Owen Evans, Deputy HM, was presented with his hard-won Harbour Master Certificate at the UKHMA Conference.

One of our Apprentices was given an award in East Anglian Maritime awards. Staff Hampers have been issued in recognition of another of personal endeavour.

Operations

Following a competitive tender process, Van Oord have been appointed as dredging contractors for next year's Marina and Harbour dredge..

Visitors Guide being built up.

Buoy Inspection one minor fault now rectified.

Invitations for HM meeting with local clubs to review season and discuss future plans have been sent out.

Christmas nativity scene in place outside harbour office.

Colchester City Council (CCC)

BHC are assisting CCC with the removal and disposals of abandoned boats at the Hythe

Also assisting CCC with Hythe Clean Up

	Replied to CCC on annual fee set by Act of Parliament	
5509	<p>BTC Update The HM briefed the members on discussions and agreement on collection of Harbour Dues for those boats which launch from the BTC boat park.</p>	
5510	<p>Stakeholders The HM listed some of the headline information from the Stakeholders meeting. HM will publish a summary report of the whole meeting soon.</p> <p><i>Accidents in 2025</i> Collision x 10 Medical x 7 <i>Incidents</i> Anti-Social x 4 Marine x 6</p> <p>Equipment- Replacement Plan until 2050 BHC has assets of £1,627,383.00 . HM has financial plans in place for their replacement as they reach the end of their life.</p> <p>Nordica Hav Marine Incident HM has submitted a formal report to the Marine Accidents Investigation Branch. The following actions have been recommended and have been agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prior to the oral Pilotage interview, those in training will visit the turning area at low water, tour it in a small launch where they will be made familiar with the topography of the ground, carry out their own soundings if required and make notes of any transits, distances or objects that may aid their swing. 2. A current bathymetric survey will be produced with roundels overlaid that will indicate distances. Ship lengths will be shown 80, 90 and 100m so pilots may better plan their pilotage. 3. Trainee Pilots will undertake a minimum of two additional familiarisation trips on ships arriving in the port in ballast and swinging. 4. The provision of updated Bathymetry will be provided every six months. 5. BHC are working with Morgan Marine to ensure there is no one aboard boats in any potential at risk areas during shipping manoeuvring. . <p>Question from Steve Kempley Would the Harbour Commissioners be prepared to evaluate some proposed practical changes to the pilotage and docking procedures for cargo vessels loading and discharging at Olivers Wharf? The aim is to improve safety and reduce the risk of cargo vessels colliding with moored small craft. These suggestions are outlined in a document I have submitted. I thank the Harbour team for the measures they have taken already. “ BHC told Steve Kempley that BHC will consider these suggestions. Next step is that the HM has meetings with Pilots in Dec 2025 at which he will discuss these suggestions with Pilots.</p> <p>Keith King <i>Annual inspections and maintenance of moorings - Can you confirm at the meeting, annual inspections of moorings, top to bottom, with any necessary maintenance/renewal work - noting that one of the mooring chains, on my sons' fore and aft mooring, broke at the bottom in the summer, worn right through, and many of the ropes through the buoys are now very old.</i></p> <p>The moorings are inspected from the ground chain from bottom to top every year checking every link. It is not always 100% possible to check the ground chains however we always ensure we check to the bottom</p>	

	<p>connection. Mooring chains last up to 3 years, though wearing faster some years than other years</p> <p>There are many documents stating the industry best standards when it comes to acceptable wear on the chains and BHC follow William and Hackets guidance of 15%; if the chain is 15% less than its manufactured size we replace with new. (BHC have a measurement tool for both 13mm and 22mm chain to ensure continuity)</p> <p>The ropes through the Buoys are changed at any sign of fraying, the link lines are replaced and adjusted by owners their role is to prevent buoy twisting.</p> <p>In regard to this exact mooring, HM is not sure exactly where it has failed, due to being unable to find the connection on the ground chain. However, a full new length is planned on being connected during the winter season.</p> <p>Hard - <i>Can you confirm arrangements for clearing the hard of mud between the causeway jetty and posts down to low water next year, as pushing mud to one side this year onto the Pannell land didn't stay there long but washed back.</i></p> <p>This year BHC have been let down by the original contractor; the HM has now appointed a new contractor who will clear the current hard shortly. We will then schedule clearances for the end of March 26, Mid-season (Jun/Jul) and end October 26.</p> <p>Member of Public</p> <p>PWC – <i>Can you confirm when and if you are fitting the gate and that we will still be able to access the launching point from Point Clear?</i></p> <p>Yes, Orchards are fitting the gate, it did not breach planning, it should be in place for next year.</p>	
5511	<p>Commissioners Portfolio</p> <p>Responsibilities initial feedback and thoughts on next steps.</p> <p>Commissioners reported back.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Visibility and costs increasing Pontoon berths.</i> CW reported back that there was still much work to do, he believed that there was a demand. Solutions could include seasonal anchored pontoons in the Bumpkin bay area. Although he was clear that none of these ideas had yet been fully explored and there was much to do before presenting any plans for approval. <i>Continue to understand the Stone Point spit movement.</i> HM stated there is a meeting planned on Friday with Essex University and we will be reaching out to ICL shortly. Review AtoNs and Harbour entry. RD updated members on the process that would be followed next month after a meeting scheduled on Friday 5th Dec. Ultimately he would ensure that a system is in place which is fit for purpose and addresses the key risks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial shipping access and egress around High Water. Deep draft yachts around Low Water. Mixed traffic combined with other harbour activity at all states of the tide. Consider risk mitigation against leisure craft groundings. Engage with BTC on the Waterfront development plans. Discussions had started on the potential structure of any group set up to address this issue. Club meetings, HM would work with TP to continue the meetings in future. Chairman stated that he would make time for updates approximately quarterly on meetings. 	<p>CW</p> <p>TP KL</p> <p>RD</p> <p>Chair PB</p> <p>HM TP</p>
5512	<p>Matters Raised by Members</p> <p>HM asked for views regarding the ultimate procurement of a Dredger, members were keen to explore that idea with a caveat that we should take advice at an early stage to ensure that we bought one that met our needs. Duncan Nicholson should be invited to consult. Advice from other dredging</p>	

	experts on suitable dredgers should also be sought. (An example Dredger which was referred to in the discussion has now been sold for approx £70K).	HM
Next Meeting	Time 1830hrs, 4 th Feb 2025 Venue Wreck House	Next meeting biscuits;
Time Ended	2045hrs	DS

Approved

Andrea Sos

4th Feb 2026