

# Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

## Stakeholders Meeting

1830hrs Brightlingsea Sailing Club 11 May 2026

**Chairman** A Scott  
**Harbour Master** J Thomas  
2 x Commissioners TC Price C Watkins.  
11 x Stakeholders

Chairman welcomed those in attendance.

BHC is a Statutory Harbour Authority

- Established by Act of Parliament in 1927 as a 'Trust Port', an Independent Statutory Body
  - Overseen by the Secretary of State for Transport
- Trust Ports are.
  - **"a valuable asset presently safeguarded by the existing board whose duty it is to hand it on in the same or better condition to succeeding generations. This remains the ultimate responsibility of the board and future generations remain the ultimate stakeholder."**
- Required to operate on a commercial basis.
- Surpluses reinvested in the Harbour for benefit of stakeholders.
- All Commissioners, other than the Harbour Master, are unpaid volunteers.

BHC responsibility is Brightlingsea Creek

Appendix A Statutory Harbour Limits



- Creek-Mouth boundary is line between Bateman's Tower and the St Osyth Martello Tower.
- Wharf is operated by 'Port of Brightlingsea', not BHC

Following the closure of Colchester Port, an Act of Parliament transferred some responsibilities from Colchester Council to Brightlingsea.

- The Local Lighthouse Authority for the River Colne.

- Responsible for specific buoys with the River
- The Pilotage Authority for the River Colne and Brightlingsea Harbour
- Colchester City Council remain responsible for the management of the River Colne
  - CCC make and enforce bylaws

### **The Role of the Commissioners**

- Safety,
- Setting strategic aims,
- Ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet those objectives,
- Reviewing management performance in meeting those aims and operational targets.
- Constructive challenge to executive team.
- The Chief Executive / Harbour Master has executive responsibility for running the business and is a Commissioner.

### **Change in Executive Leadership**

- James Thomas will be moving, towards the end of this season, to a senior marine facility role in the SW of England.
  - Until he leaves, James remains CEO.
- Owen Evans has been appointed Harbour Master, Chief Executive designate and Harbour Commissioner.
  - Former Deputy Harbour Master
  - Holds UK Harbour Master's certificate

Commissioners thank James for his 10 years of leadership at BHC and wish him well for his next role.

### **Port Marine Safety Code**

#### **Environmental Projects**

Upcycling boats – 1 successfully done.

To be destroyed(end of life) 2 or 3 – It is expensive.

Essex University environmental project, antifoul. Spit Movement.

Spit Movement working with EA and Universities.

Testing different wood types on colonisation and the possible effect of tannins (in the wood).

### **DREDGING**

#### **Main Channel**

- The deepest part is the leading line with depths above 1m below CD all way down, with the exception of the entrance where depths are 0.8m below CD for 17m all depths 3m east of line are 1m below CD.
- The Town pontoon to Oliver's Wharf and Fuel Barge, maintaining a depth of 0.75m below CD, we continued to achieve and will maintain this year.
- Area of the Fuel Barge, maintaining a depth of 0.75m below CD, once again achieved.

#### **Leisure Harbour**

- The pontoons and some moorings in the South channel dredged to a depth of 0.75m below CD.

#### **Leisure Marina**

- The Marina Depth, approximately 2m below cill as that reduces mud will always be kept in suspension.

# DREDGING

## Programme and Outcome

Contents:

1. Equipment.
2. Entrance.
3. Main Channel.
4. North Channel.
5. South Channel.
6. Marina.
7. Spit Movement.
8. Conclusions.

### Recent Dredging provision

Dredging Method – Injection

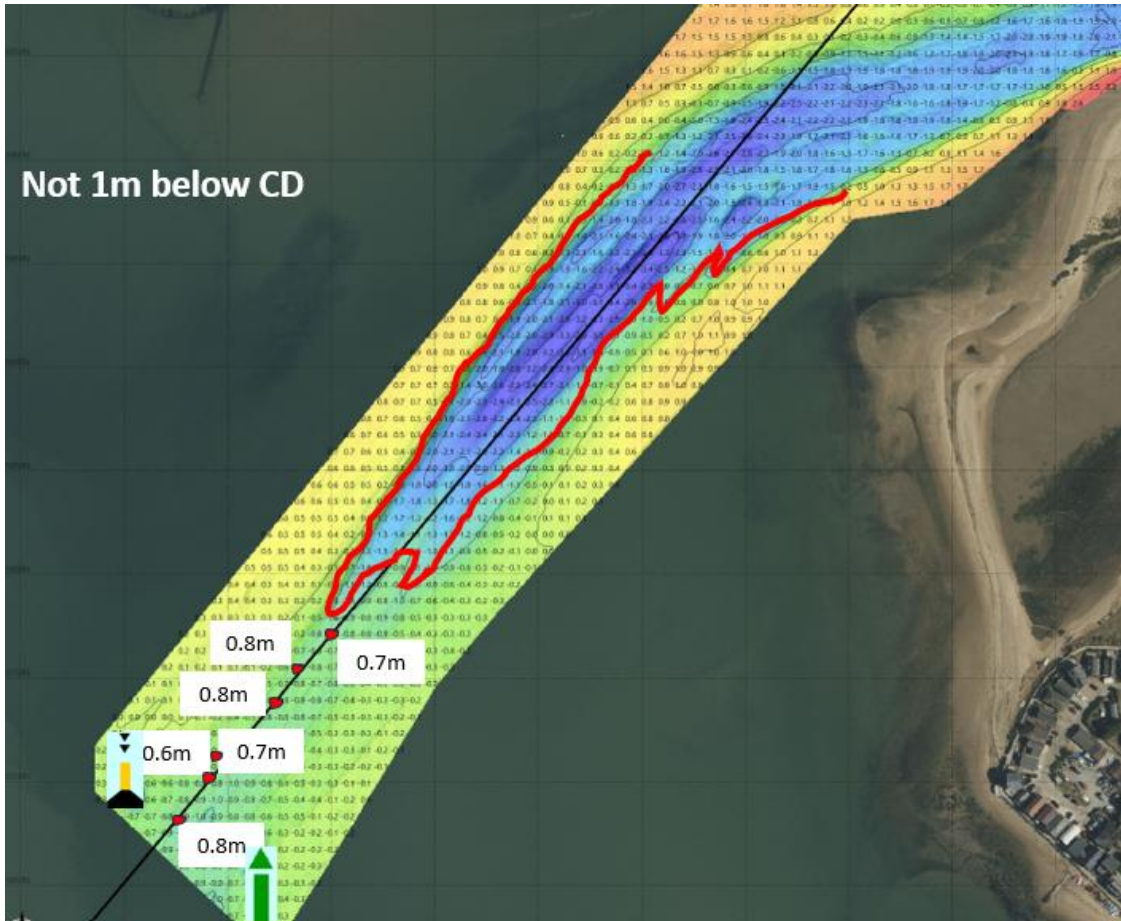
-Marina to 2m below sill 1 below CD

-Harbour to 1m below CD and 0.75 below CD

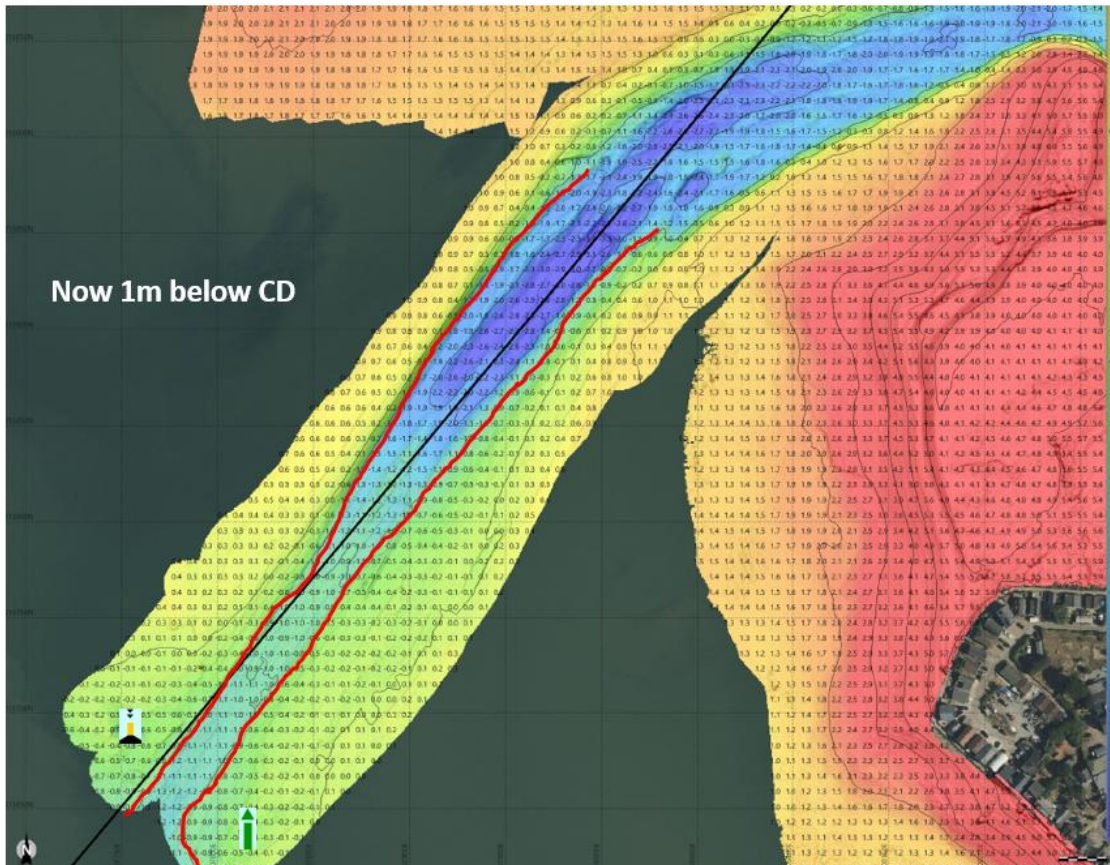
Survey Method- Drone and Waterborne Bathymetric



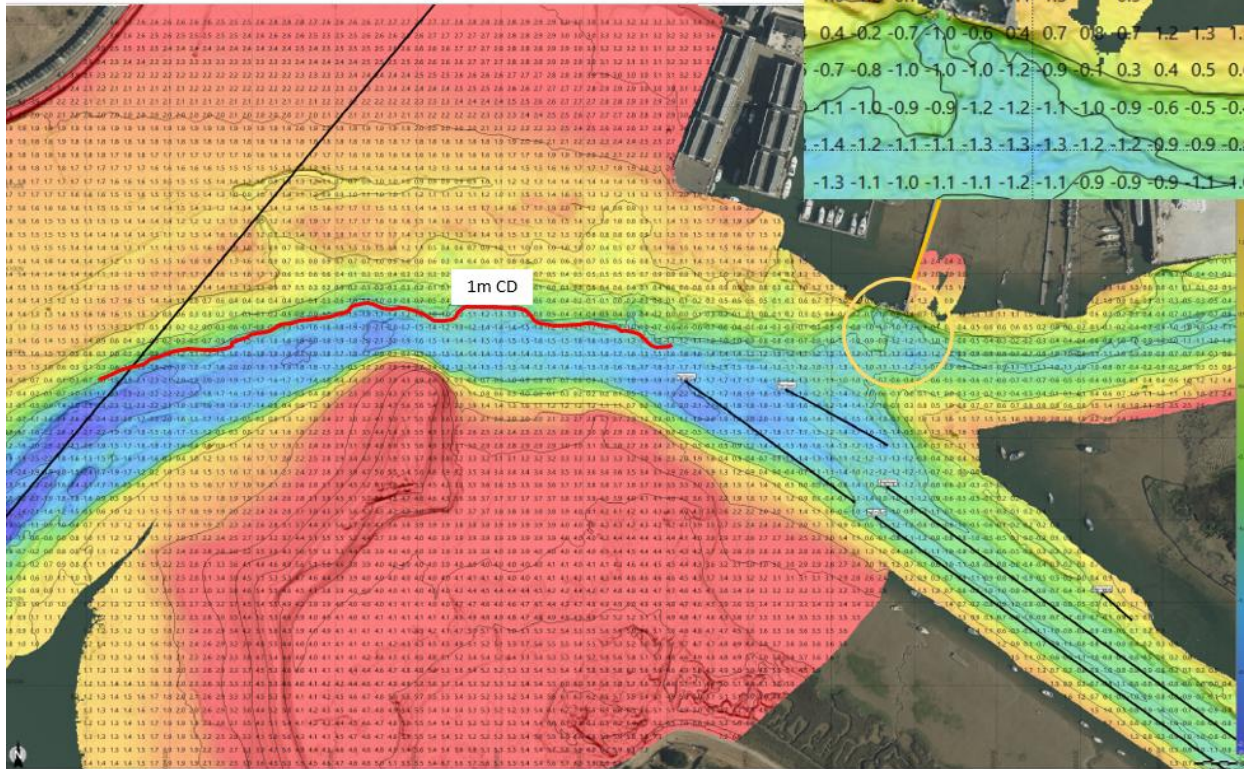
# Creek Mouth Channel 1/11/2025 Target Depth 1m below CD



# Creek Mouth Channel 1/05/2026 Target Depth achieved

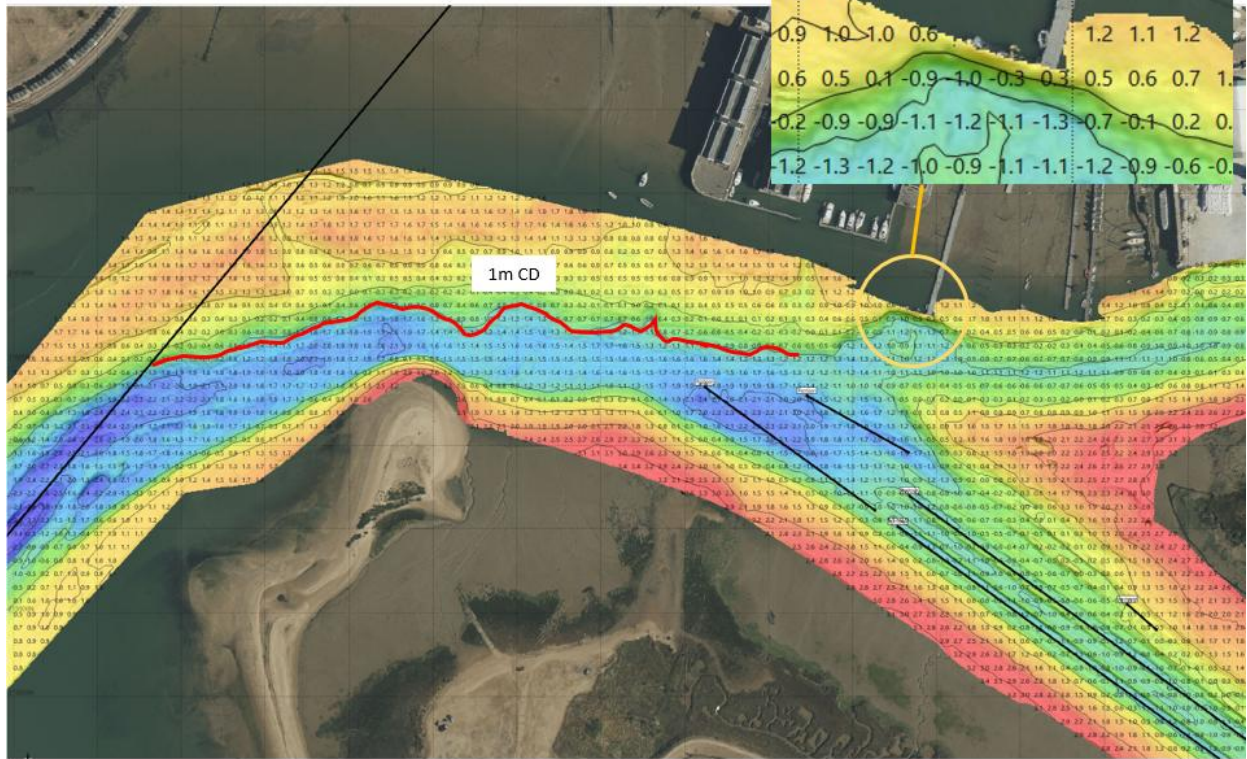


Main Creek Channel 1/5/2026



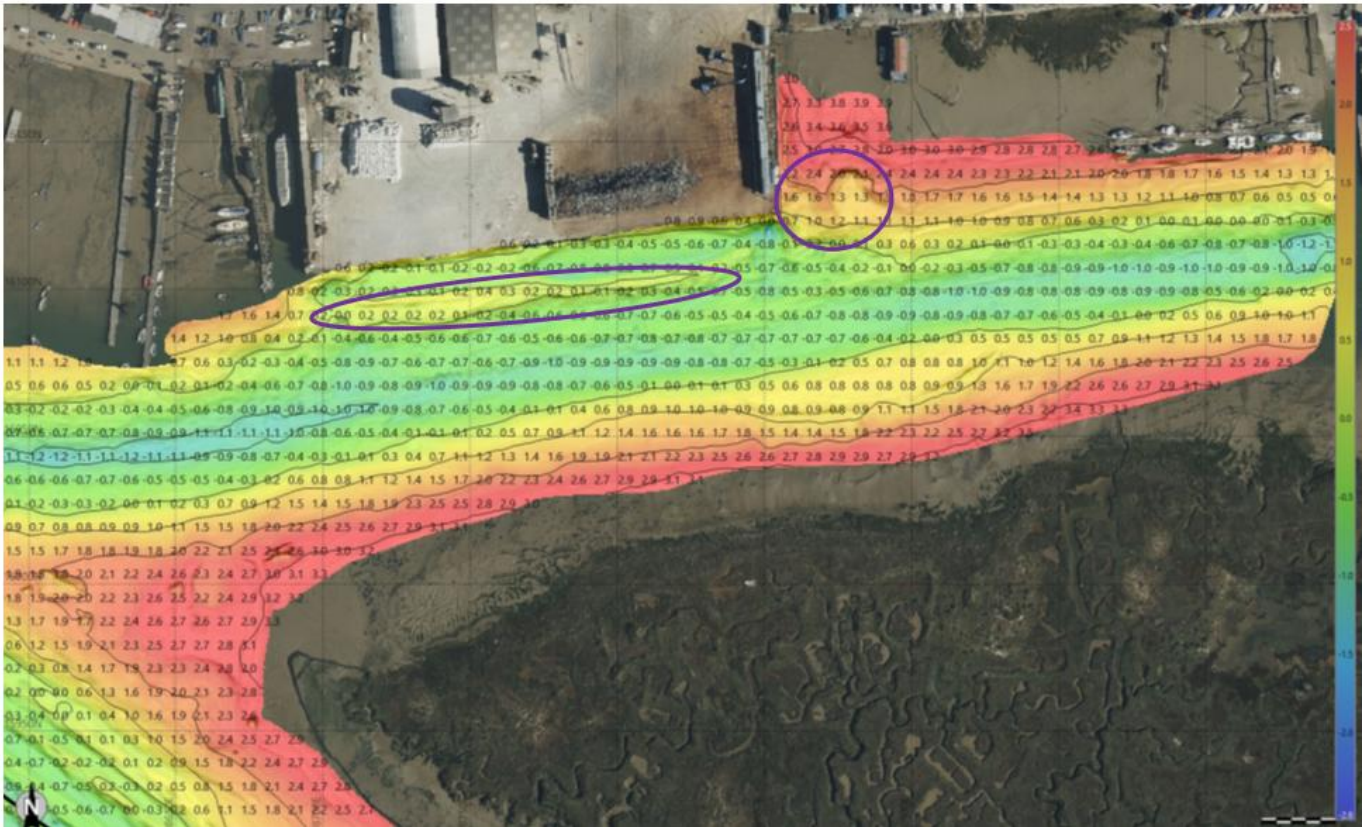
Target Depth 1m below CD then 0.75m to Wharf, also deepen Hammerhead and westside. Achieved

Main Creek Channel 1/11/2025

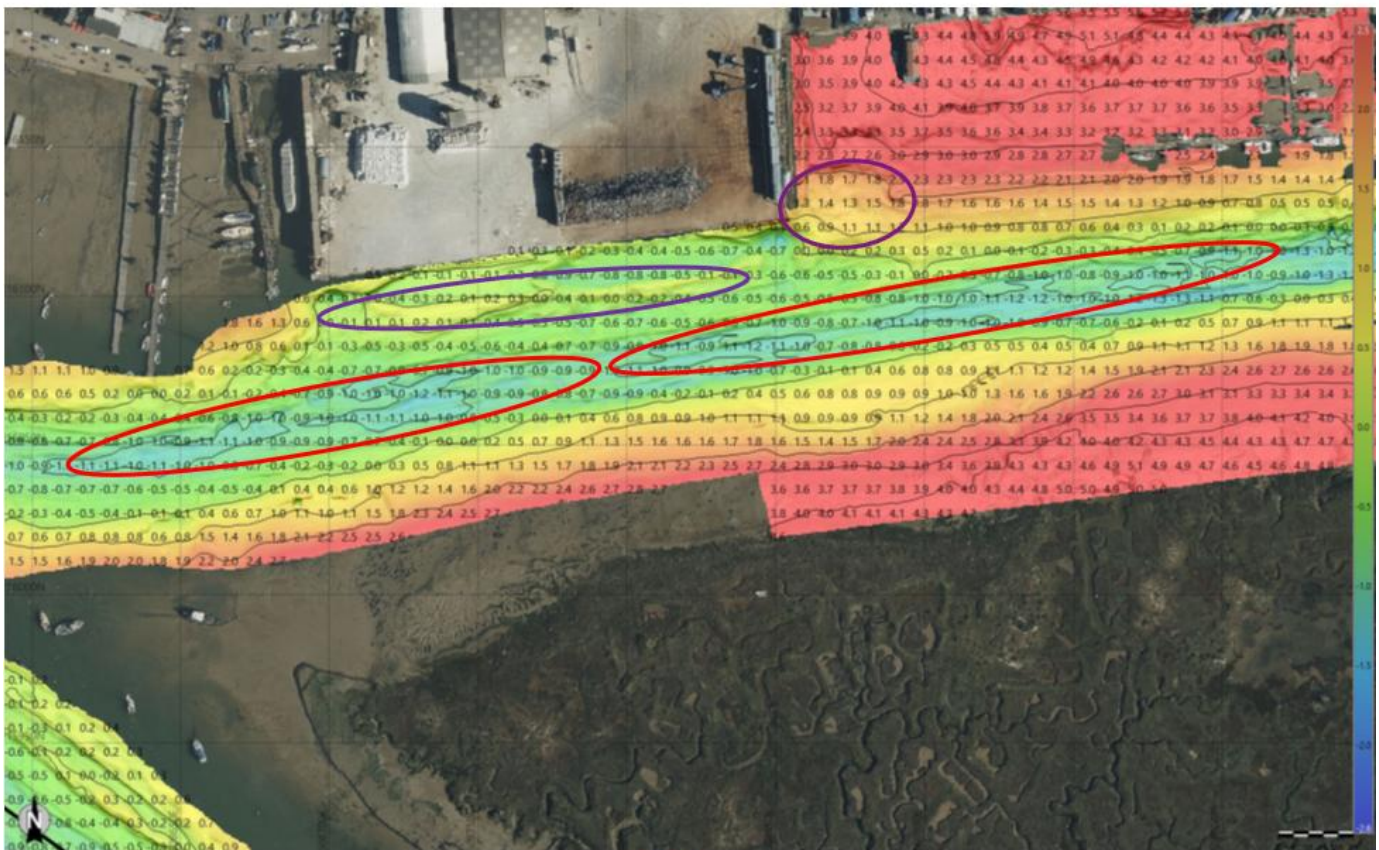


Target Depth 1m below CD, also deepen Hammerhead and westside

North Channel 1/11/2025 Target Depth 0.75m below CD



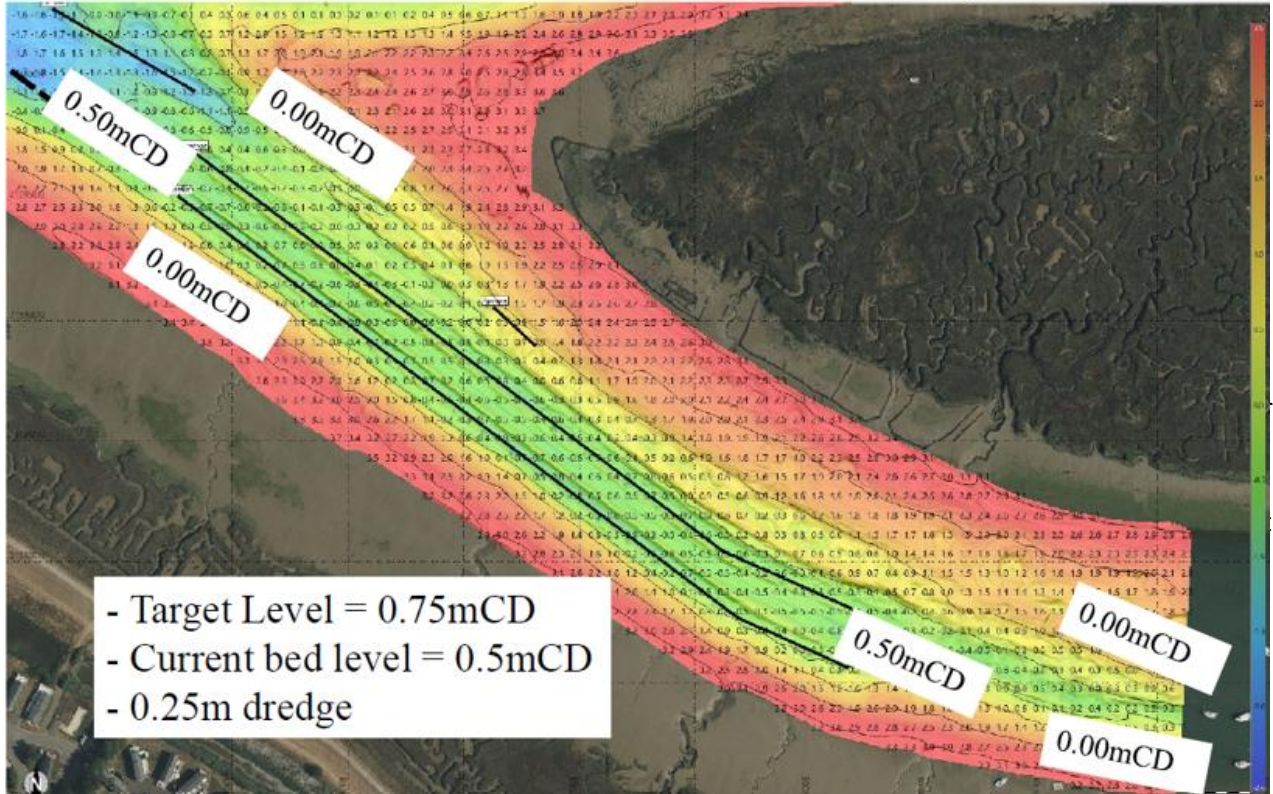
North Channel 1/5/2026 Target Depth 0.75m below CD



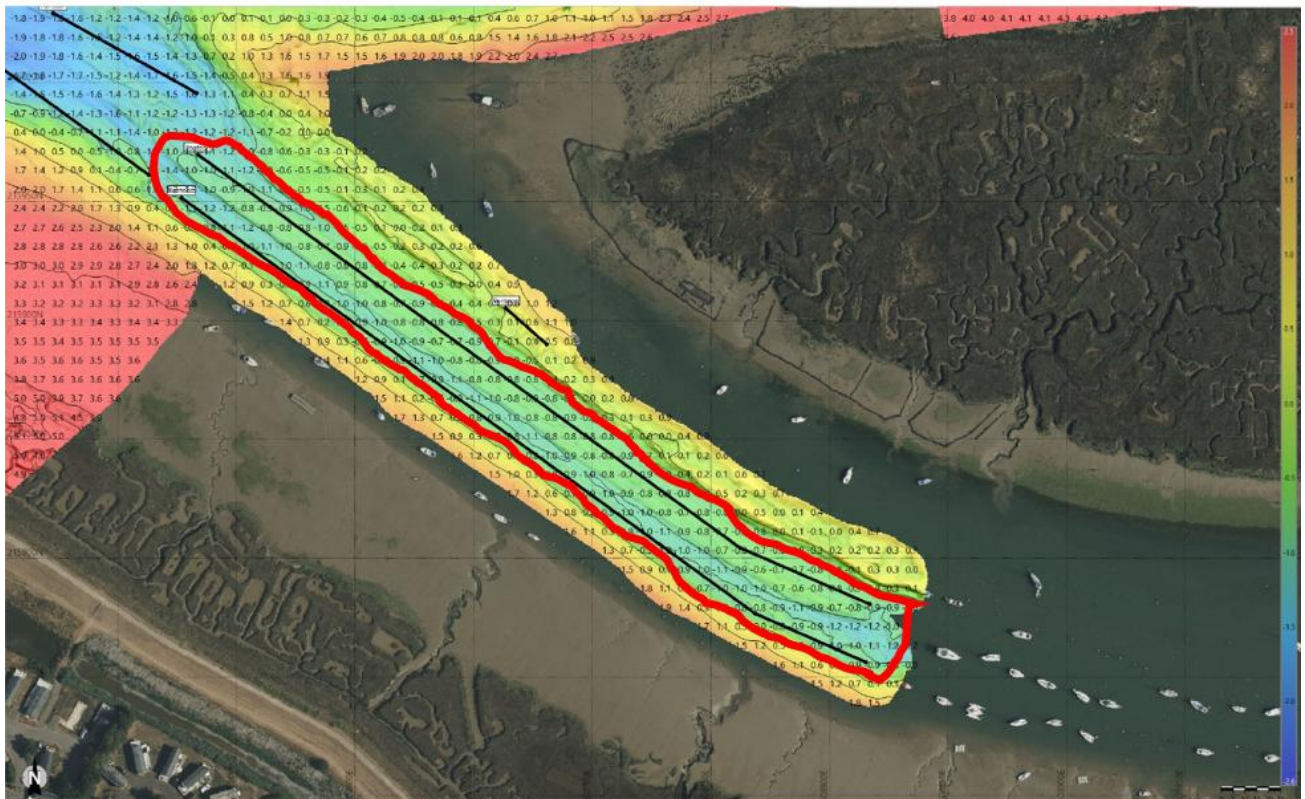
○ Removed Mud/Lumps

○ Depths exceed 0.75m below CD

# South Channel – 01-11-2025 Bathymetric

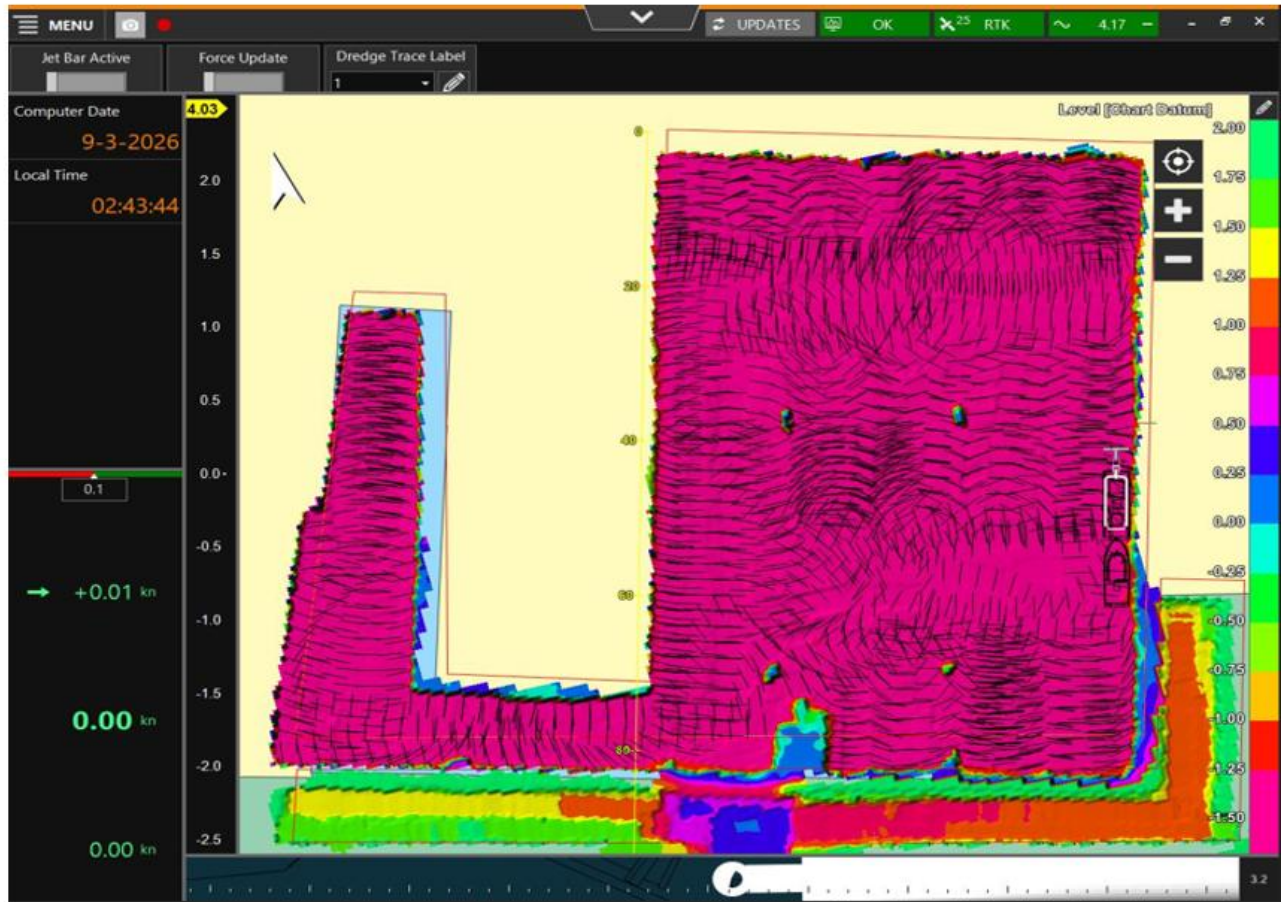


South Channel 1/5/2026 Target Depth 0.75m below CD



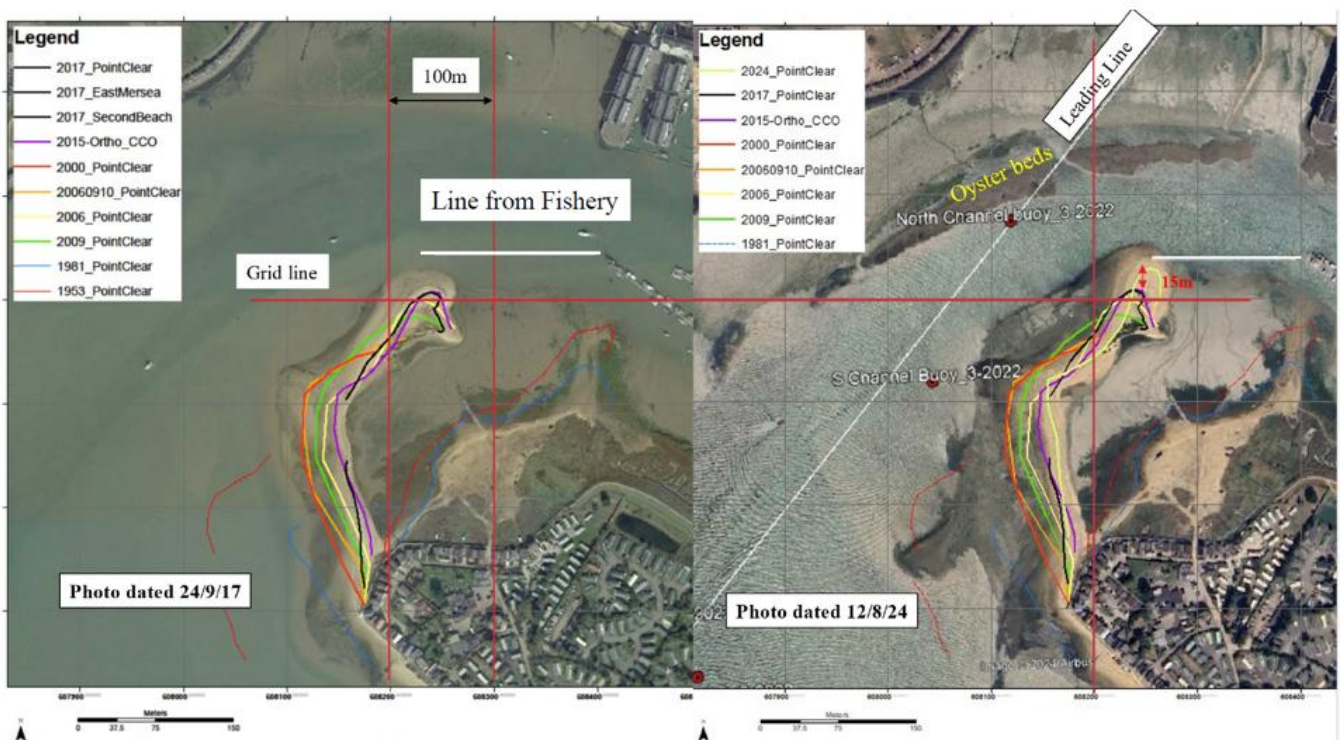
Target Depth Achieved between 0.75m and 1.2m below CD

Marina Target Depth 2m below cill = 1m below CD

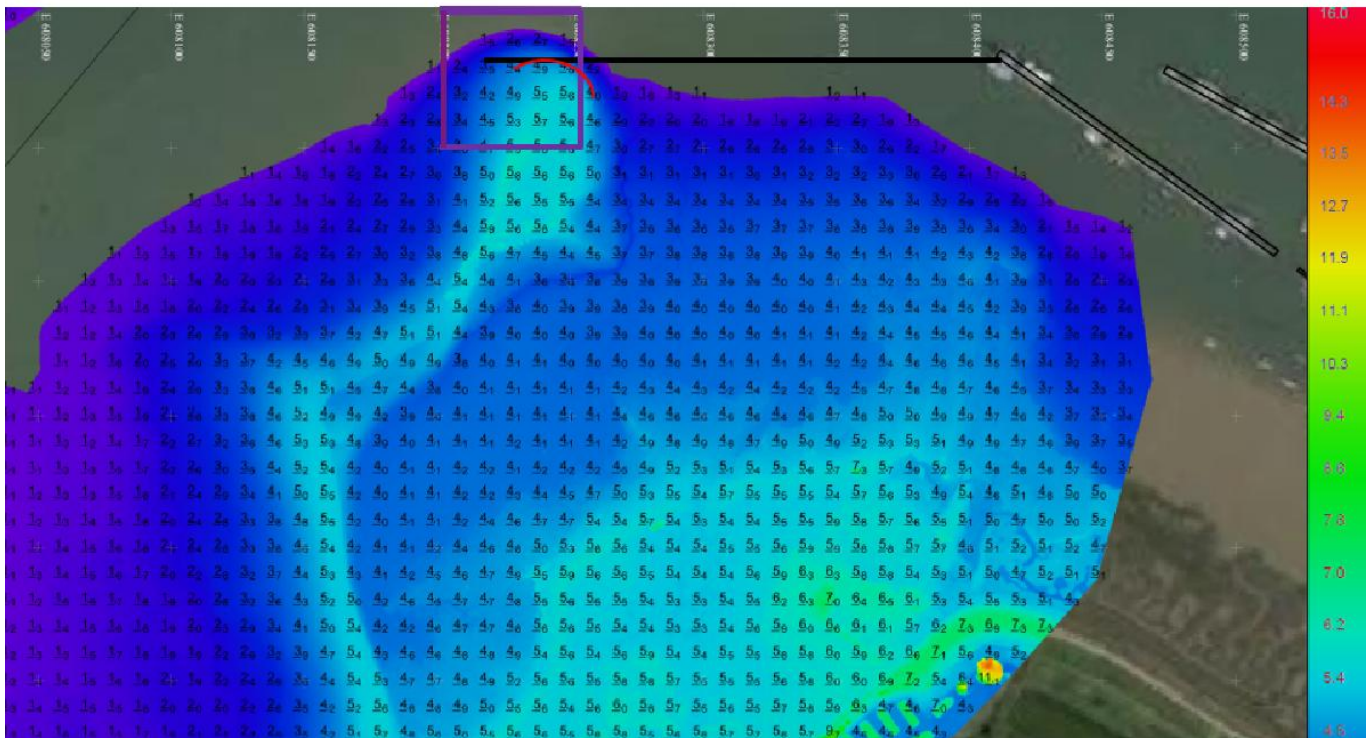


Target depth achieved between 1m and 1.25m below CD.

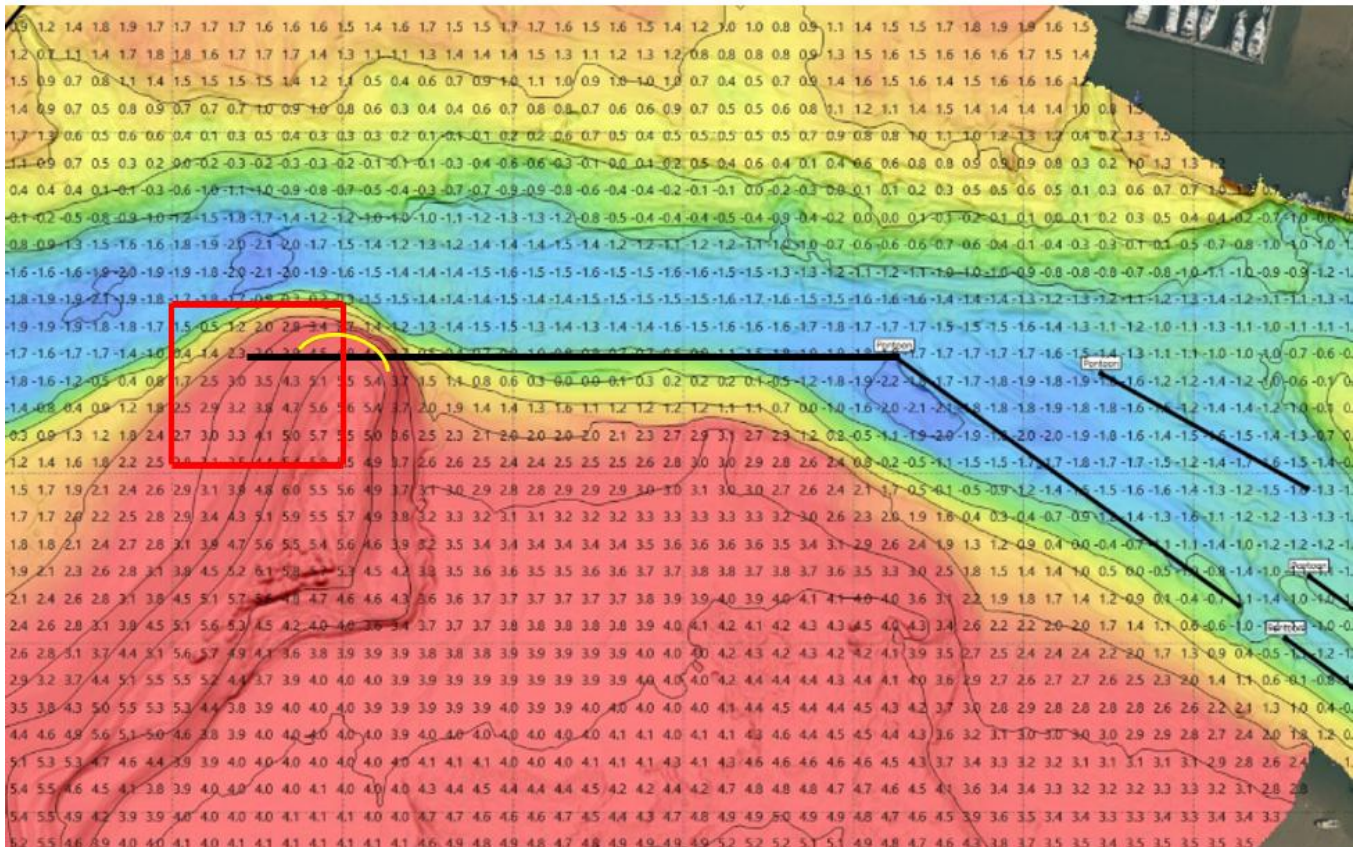
## Spit Movement 2017 - 2024



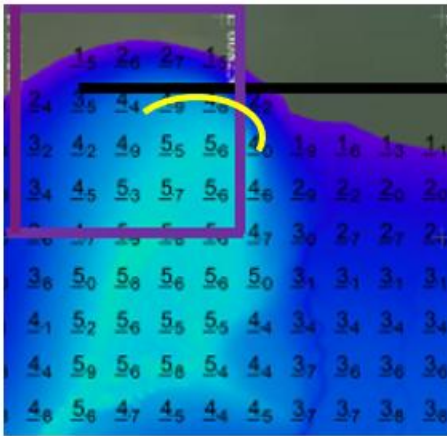
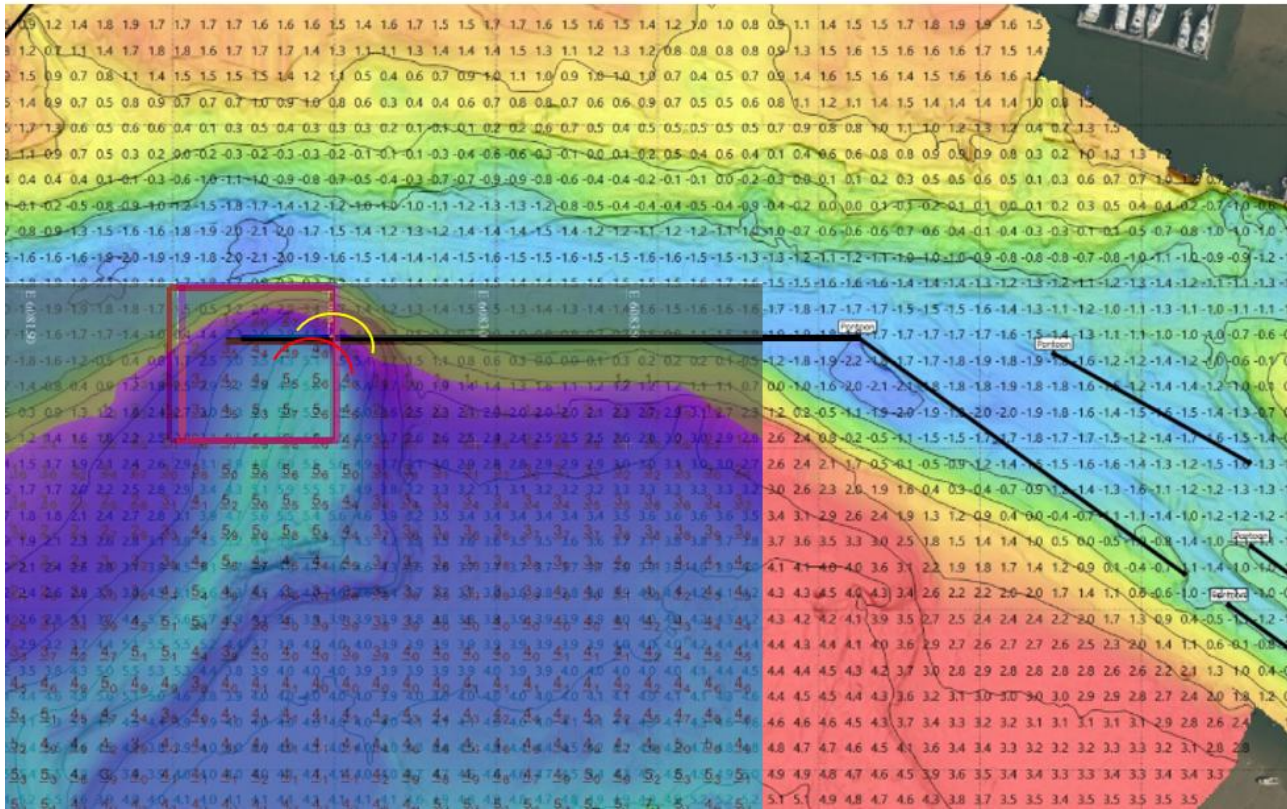
# Spit April 2023 Grid Square



# Spit April 2026 Grid Square

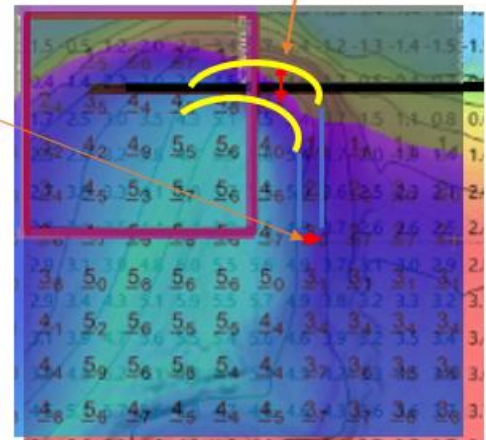


## Comparative overlay



3.5 metres North

1 metre East



The mass of the Spit has moved 1m East and 3.5m North in 3 years.

Collaborating with Educational institutions and Environment agency to gather evidence, make recommendations and act on them.

## Conclusions

1. Equipment. – This system is effective.
2. Entrance. – 1m below CD - Depth achieved.
3. Main Channel. – 1m below CD to Town Jetty then 0.75m below CD to Wharf - Depth achieved.
4. North Channel. – 0.75m below CD - Depth Achieved.
5. South Channel. – 0.75m below CD - Depth Achieved.
6. Marina. – 0.75m below CD - Depth Achieved.
7. Spit Movement. – Collection of Evidence, collaborative working the appropriate action.

## Accidents

Collision x 3

## Incidents

Marine x 7

## Incidents

Anti-Social x 2

## Security

Security meeting with PFSO in compliance with the PFSP.

Next meeting in Jun 26.

Victoria Barreto update.

Outboard Legs are being targeted.

Please report anything unusual, it may be the key.

## PWC

1. Orchards, St Osyth PC and Tower estates have engaged all vessels are now required to register and pay harbour dues.
  - This has caused some upset some accusing the Harbour of Overreach. The Harbour Dues and registration is for use of the Harbour's water and has nothing to do with launching.
2. Access will be controlled on PC side; a gate has been fabricated and will be erected by spring.
3. More work has and is being done to manage the safety issues, which will be shared as they develop.
4. The new problem is Foiling windsurfers, electric foilers.

## General

- Pre-season meeting with Clubs, continues, code of practice published by BSC.
- Waste – Commercial oil, Commercial waste, new area.
- Bins on Pontoons – and Wreck house.

- PMSC course run at Harbour. PMSC is now specifically to those that operate businesses on the water, although proportionately they were required to submit a compliance statement 3 yearly latest Mar 26.
- Servicing schedule on SOLAS, Lifejackets, Pilot Jackets, Life raft and other safety equipments completed.
- Wreck Removal/ Abandoned Boats 2/3 now in the queue.

## Harbour Development /Plans

### STAKEHOLDERS

Harbour Users,  
 Anyone who thinks they are,  
 Brightlingsea and local areas community of approximately 10000 people,  
 Local businesses,  
 Port employees,  
 Interest groups.  
 Councils; Town, District and County.  
 The National economy.

*Trust ports are independent statutory bodies run on a commercial basis by independent boards for the benefit of their stakeholders. Trust ports are accountable to those stakeholders. The interests of the wide community of stakeholders should at all times be the guide by which the board of a trust port sets the strategy and direction of the port.*

*Trust port boards should consult stakeholders on **significant** decisions, where appropriate. Trust ports can and should consult and engage with stakeholders in a variety of ways including through an open Annual Meeting.*

### CAPITAL SPENDING

**Equipment-** Plan until 2050 **£1,627,383.00 to date**

#### **Capital Equipment Replacement 2025**

*Strategy endorsed, with aim to replace, as and when necessary, with more environmentally friendly equipment.*

Pontoon Repairs Town Jetty.

Maintenance Dredging Harbour.

Technology.

Engines.

We must transfer at least £65000 to reserves annually.

### ACTIVITIES

*The harbour is a commercial business and must be run as such. Trust port boards should reinvest surpluses to support the continuing and long-term success of the port for the benefit of its stakeholders.*

#### **Stakeholder Benefits:**

**Community Commitment** Hard Fireworks.

**Local Businesses** Engineering firms, Electrical provision, Dredging, Security CCTV and access, Cleaning, Marine service providers, Chandlers, Clubs, Tailoring, Food and drink.

**Schools Engagement** Schools week still very much engaged. We support and resource the Schools week in partnership with Pioneer Trust. They hold the activity licence, they engage with the schools and collect the contributions, the Harbour take no fees. We staff the event, provide transport, vessels and coxes, provide foul weather gear, lifejackets and management. This year in addition to labour and equipment we contributed £3167. Feedback from schools was that this year was the best ever school's week.

Employment	8 Permanent staff Bsea, 6 local, 4 Casual Bsea, 5 local.
Charitable Causes	RNLI, Brightlingsea in Bloom, 1st Responders, Regatta, CYC Fireworks, Christmas tree festival, Museum. Sea Change sailing Trust.
Apprenticeships	Workboat crewmember apprenticeship on course. Second Workboat crewmember apprenticeship distinction, YM Commercially endorsed. Business and administration Apprentice on track. In post until end of this year. Second Business and administration Apprentice on track.
Tourism	Bringing visitors to town Boats/Ferry approx 24000.

**Colne Navigation Trinity House:** Independently inspected All in good order and subject to regular servicing.

**Pilotage and vessel support** HHA Pilotage contract in operation.

### Leisure Moorings

**Marina** Superfast Wi-Fi 300Mb.  
Key fob for Showers, Toilets and Bins.

**Taxi** Popular still, cash price £2.00.  
£3.50 other moorings Dogs and Children are still free.  
Tokens 1.50 each in bags of 10.  
Taxi must be paid for, some don't use, we are caretakers.  
Competition is selective.

**Visitors** Still popular.

**Charters;** There has been no enthusiasm from Brightlingsea Establishments. We would love to do Wivenhoe to Brightlingsea.

Rowhedge, to the Anchor for Pub Lunch.

St Osyth, to The boatyard for afternoon tea.

**Harbour tours;** Very popular.

**Historical Land and water Tours;** In partnership with the Museum picking up.

**Ferry;** Continues.

**Wharf and commercial activity** Continued activity.

Windfarm Project support vessels continue to use the harbour.

**River Patrols** Continued resourcing of River Patrols and security, including Commissioners on board.

**Jetty** Management, maintenance and control of the Town Jetty. Currently no one pays for use of the Jetty. We provide staff, equipment, replacement of items. We will introduce charging to those previously enjoying the facility for free whilst others pay.

**Boat Park** No longer a Harbour Asset.

**Hard/Posts** Management, maintenance and control of the posts, the cost of service is just above break even.

### **Staff Training General**

Trg Permanent Cadre	: x 14;
YM Coastal	x 1
RYA Day Skipper	x 2
Diesel Engine Course	x 1
Petrol Engine Course	x 1
Sea Survival	x 2
First Aid	x 2
Pilot Crew	x 2
Pilots	x 3
RYA PB 2	x 1
PPR	x 2
GPDR	x 1
Management Trg	x 2
Trg Non-Permanent Cadre: x 9;	
RYA Day Skipper	x 1
RYA First Aid	x 1
RYA Radio User	x 2
PPR	x 1

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Staff Training**  
**General**  
**Isobel**  
**Yachtmaster**  
**And**  
**Crewmember**  
**L3 Apprentice**  
**Distinction**

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### **Induction Training**

Provision of such to 2 employees.

### **External Specialist Training**

HM Foundation Knowledge and HM Certificate Introduction Course for Duty HMs.

### **Internal Role Training**

GPDR, AI, Canva.

### **Provision of Fuel**

Unfortunately due to events outside our control the prices are too inconsistent to fairly represent.

### **This Year**

- To continue to ensure that BHC investigates emerging technology and where benefits are identified it considers adding them to their inventory as equipment is replaced. Continue
- Following the evidence gathered from anti fouling project in the last 12 months, BHC agreed that further consideration should be given to the environmental impact of current use and ways to mitigate this. We are now taking part in a university research programme on anti-fouling. Ongoing
- Investigating the movement of Material through longshore drift, looking to partner with ICL / Essex Uni and possibly the EA to carry out investigations, perhaps a Citizen Science Project. Ongoing

## The Strategic Plan

This covers the next five years and is published on our website, please read through it.



## Managing the environmental impact of antifouling biocides in recreational marinas through stakeholder engagement

Jacob Cook

Supervisors: Nick Aldred, Natalie Hicks and Zeta Bakaki

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University of Essex

LEVERHULME  
TRUST



### Antifouling

- Over 4000 species of foulants ready to settle and grow on marine vessels (Benda et al., 2022).
- Shipping accounts for around 3% of GHG emissions (Bouman et al., 2017).
- Non-indigenous species transportation.
- Biocides entering the environment through leaching and APPs.
- Approximately 90% of vessels are coated with biocidal paints (Lotz, 2016).
- 550,000 recreational boats in the UK vs 110,000 commercial vessels worldwide.



## Antifouling panel tests

- Two panels deployed from pontoons at Brightlingsea
- Coatings selected based on local survey feedback – biocidal and non-biocidal
- One cleaned monthly and one seasonally
- Two seasons of data collection
- Provides a realistic assessment of coating performance in a natural setting

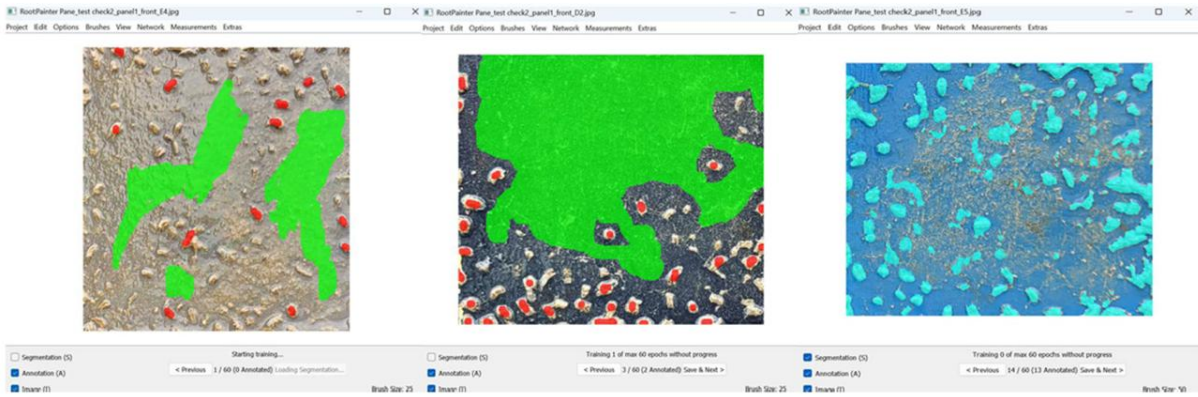


## First year observations

- Clear visual differences between coating performance
- Virtually no macrofouling on Silic One across first season
- All biocidal coatings showed visible macrofouling from month two



Panel 1 – regularly cleaned (Months progress from top left to bottom right: April to November)



## Analysing the data

- Monthly panel images will be analysed with RootPainter machine learning image segmentation software
- Calculating percentage macrofouling coverage for each coating
- Provides comparable quantitative data

## Objective data

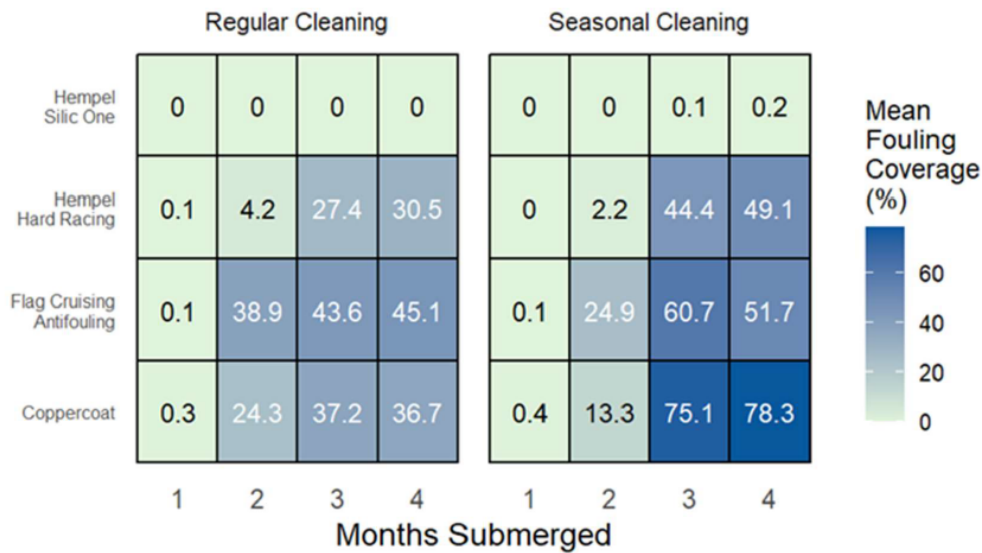
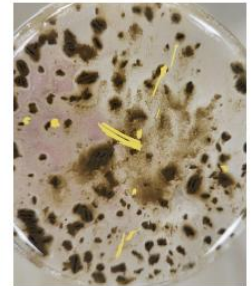
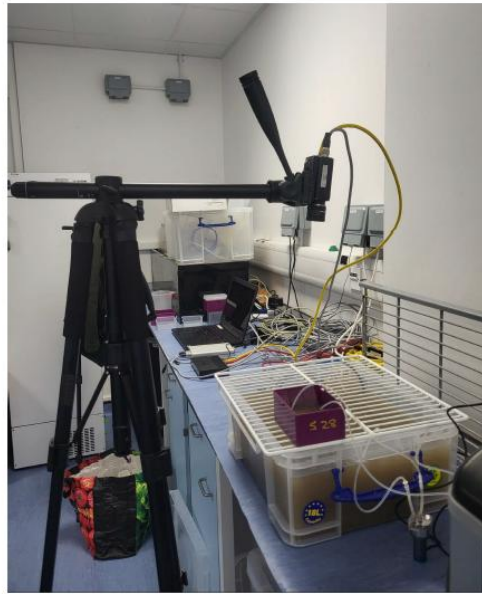


Figure 3 – Heatmaps of mean macrofouling coverage (%) on antifouling coatings after one to four months in Brightlingsea Harbour. Each tile shows the mean coverage for a coating and month. Panels compare Regular Cleaning and Seasonal Cleaning regimes. Data generated with initial RootPainter models.

## Future work

- Bioassays on local species
- Antifouling Paint Particle analysis
- Large-scale survey
- Local feedback



### Issues not covered in Presentation

#### Jane Long

**Polluting Cement Dust** Please can you advise who we contact to complain about the cement dust we believe is emanating from the Wharf, **HM** stated that it falls within the purview of the EA. He would try and find a contact number to make a complaint.

**Alice Davies** Gave a thank you to the HM who departs later in the year for the work done in the last 10 years and wished him well.

**Keith King** Stated that he had some data regarding the spit dating back to the Eighties which he could send in, HM thanked him and welcomed the information.