

**Report of the Commissioners and
Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioner**

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

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Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Organisation Information for the year ended 31 March 2025

CHAIRMAN

Mr A Scott

HARBOUR MASTER

Mr J Thomas

REGISTERED OFFICE:

4 Copperas Road
Brightlingsea
Essex
CO7 0AP

AUDITORS:

Sumer Auditco Limited
820 The Crescent
Colchester Business Park
Colchester
Essex
CO4 9YQ

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

INTRODUCTION

Brightlingsea Harbour is a trust port, established by Act of Parliament in 1927. As such is an independent statutory harbour authority governed by its own unique statute. There are no shareholders or owners, and any surplus is ploughed back into the port for the benefit of the stakeholders of the trust port.

This annual report encompasses the advice within the Department of Transport's "Port Good Governance Guidance" March 2018 publication. The UK Corporate Government Code sets out the purpose of corporate governance as being 'to facilitate effective, entrepreneurial and prudent management that can deliver the long-term success of a company'. This is relevant to the activities of Statutory Harbour Authorities, concerned as they are with the long-term success and sustainability of a harbour.

Brightlingsea Harbour are responsible for the areas covered by the water. They are not responsible for quays, wharves and other land based facilities owned by others. It provides around 500 berths and moorings of various types which can accommodate boats of up to 50 feet (15m) in length and 8 feet (2.5m) draft. Facilities provided by the Harbour include a water taxi, harbour trips, lunchtime river cruises, a seasonal ferry service, fuelling facilities, maintenance posts, toilets, showers and laundry service.

Following the Act of Parliament closing Colchester Port in 2007, Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners also became the Pilotage Authority and Local Lighthouse Authority.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners is governed by a board of Commissioners comprising the non-executive Chairman, the Harbour Master (who is also the Chief Executive) and several other non-executive commissioners. The Chairman and non-executive commissioners are all unpaid volunteers. Their appointment is based on the skills and knowledge they bring to the organisation. They are selected and appointed, after the positions are publicly advertised, for a four-year period which can be extended to a second four-year period. They meet as a minimum on 6 occasions throughout the year. The Harbour Master / Chief Executive is a Commissioner as well as a full-time employee.

As Commissioners, Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners (BHC) have responsibilities to the Department of Transport and stakeholders to serve local and regional interests. Trust ports are a valuable asset, safeguarded by the existing Commissioners, whose duty it is to hand it on in the same or better condition to succeeding generations.

The Commissioners, under the Port Marine Safety Code, are accountable for marine safety within the harbour and as such are required to "formally and actively consider the safety of people using the harbour and its environment". This responsibility includes the requirement to conduct channel surveys, maintain navigation marks and preparing for civil contingencies.

The limits of the statutory harbour include all the waters in Brightlingsea Creek to the east of a line drawn between the Martello Tower at Point Clear and Bateman's Tower in Brightlingsea, with the exception of the area of St Osyth boatyard and its associated pool. Following the closure of the port of Colchester, Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners assumed the responsibility for maintaining all the navigation marks and providing pilotage in the River Colne downstream of Roman River. The regulation of these waters is governed by Brightlingsea Harbour Acts and Orders 1927 to 2002, and the Colchester Borough Council Act 2001.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

BHC are publicly accountable for the execution of their duties and have the power to enforce Harbour Dues and fees to cover the costs of discharging their statutory obligations. These dues are payable by all users of the Harbour. As a Trust Port it is required to run as a commercial business, generating a financial surplus that is used to sustain and develop the port.

STAKEHOLDERS

Brightlingsea Harbour's stakeholders are not just the local marine community. Port Users, the local Brightlingsea community of 10,000 people, local businesses, port employees, related interest groups and regional and national economy are also considered. Commissioners are expected to consider the needs of all stakeholders when making decisions. If conflicts of interest occur between stakeholders, the Commissioners will exercise their duty to strike a balance which considers the need and concerns of all stakeholders along with the objectives of the port. This includes commercial considerations, what constitutes the 'common good' for all stakeholders and the port itself using the following guiding principles:

- Ensure sufficient water depth is maintained,
- Maintain a similar mix and number of moorings, managed by the Harbour,
- Maintain and sustain suitable facilities for visiting boats,
- Identify gaps in services and, where appropriate, either work with others to provide or provide ourselves,
- Maintain our compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code,
- Maintain current quality standards (e.g., YHA Gold Anchors, PMSC) and identify any appropriate standards that will help further improve the harbour's operation,
- Operate a financial model which ensures sustainability, phased capital equipment replacement and a regular maintenance schedule,
- Maintain and build strong working relationships with all harbour users and stakeholders,
- Provide value for money,
- Maintain, protect and enhance our natural environment.
- Encourage all harbour stakeholders to appreciate the unique character of the harbour.

BHC intend to hold regular meetings with stakeholders, two public meetings with stakeholders were held during the year, therefore this was achieved. In addition, BHC also meets when requested with representatives of the Brightlingsea Harbour Interest Group (BHIG). No meetings were requested this financial year. The Harbour Master also meets with local water sports clubs twice in the year, gathering feedback on the season and the plans for next year.

Development of the harbour's website, greater use of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and You Tube to promulgate information, Minutes of Commissioners' meetings and the 'annual report and accounts' are available from the website. Over 2,000 people have downloaded the harbour's App. The harbour entry video, providing pilotage information for craft entering and leaving the harbour, has been viewed over 3,636 times.

There are many ways to contact the Harbour, visit in person, email, letter, telephone call, contact us, tell us what you think button on the Website, Facebook, twitter, Instagram and Tik Tok. Although it is possible to engage anonymously via the website, though in that case a response from the harbour is not possible.

The Harbour in conjunction with stakeholders has developed its 2025-2030 Strategy which can be read on the website <https://www.brightlingseaharbour.org/documents/478/Five - year Strategy 2025 - 2030 Website.pdf>

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE

BHC have appointed an independent 'Designated Person' to advise them on compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code. The designated person reports to the Commissioners directly, not the Harbour Master.

Inspection.

In 2024 an annual inspection was carried out by the Designated Person during the period. That report was sent to, and discussed by, Commissioners. It was published on the BHC website.

Incident/accident Investigations, Reports and Data.

Twenty-five accidents were logged; Nineteen collisions/ allisions, Two MOB, Four individual work accidents. Fifteen incidents were logged; Two Medical, Five Confrontations, Four Maintenance incidents (Including Coordinated Mayday Rescue), Four Anti-Social (Vandalism, etc).

The medical injuries included a heart attack and Appendicitis.

The individual reports are shared with Stakeholders at meetings twice a year, where it is possible to take action, it is taken.

Personal Watercraft

Management of Personal Watercraft within the harbour limits required an investment of approximately £15,000 for the deployment of security at Point Clear launch site and provision of swimming marker buoys. There was a general improvement in behaviour of Personal Watercraft overall, whether this can be attributed entirely to interventions is not clear due to extremely poor weather on some weekends. The Commissioners have and continue to work with stakeholders and engaged with the landowners, to bring about more control over launch areas. The BHC priority was to remove anonymity from PWC (Personal Watercraft) users. This enables authorities to identify those responsible for anti-social behaviour, improving their behaviour and reducing the problem.

A great deal more registrations of PWC and powered vessels were made so that they might launch into the harbour where they would have to pay harbour dues and register their vessel. Working with those launching at Point Clear enabled us to achieve that.

There were a number of prosecutions for PWC breaches of by-laws within the Harbour or the River Colne.

Safety Management System

The transfer of elements of the Safety Management System into an electronic format has been completed and will be uploaded to our website in due course.

PMSC Training for Commissioners

Commissioners now take part in formal Port & Marine Facilities safety code training, provided by the British Ports Association, to prepare them for the role of Duty Holder.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The demand for mid-stream pontoon moorings remained high, whilst the Harbour had spare capacity in the more traditional swinging and fore and aft moorings.

Overall, the number of visiting boats saw a slight decrease from the previous year from 3,221 to 2,621 visitors. Unfortunately, the season's weather was the likely cause for less. However, this figure is still significantly higher than numbers previous to COVID.

The water taxi revenue is down slightly. Possibly due to a reduction in visiting numbers and regular boat users over the early part of the summer season, with the poor weather. Overall, the water taxi roughly breaks even, with income close to costs.

Due to unseasonably poor weather the income generated by the scheduled ferry service across to Point Clear and East Mersea failed to reach the estimated target of £2,000.

The Charter service generated smaller revenues due to the inability of The Black Buoy to provide a lunch service, an owner not in service at The Anchor – Rowhedge and the late start in season for Afternoon Teas to St Osyth. Revenues were positive and suggested optimism for next year.

Next year we resolve to create a full seasonal service with alternative destinations and opportunities to get out on the water with the intention of growing revenues previously seen in the last financial year.

Oliver's Wharf (Port of Brightlingsea) is not operated by BHC; it is independently owned and operated. BHC commercial activity revenue from Oliver's Wharf and pilotage remained level. The wharf owner hopes to increase activity in the coming year. There is still a great demand for cement which is imported from Europe.

The amount of fuel litres sold decreased, resultant of fewer commercial vessels using the harbour. Fuel provision remains a key service provided to Harbour users and will be retained for as long as it is viable.

The legislation that closed Colchester Port appointed BHC to become the 'Local Pilotage Authority' and the Local Lighthouse Authority for the River Colne. This includes responsibility for specified navigation buoys in the River Colne, from Inner Bench Head buoy to Wivenhoe. An annual fee, set out in the legislation, is paid to BHC by Colchester City Council for taking on these responsibilities.

BHC continues to be involved in charitable events and donations. BHC undertakes engagement with local schools. 'Schools week' is organised by the Pioneer Trust, with financial support and contribution in kind from BHC. The week engages with schools that have a close connection to the River Colne to educate and stimulate younger stakeholders.

A maintenance dredging programme is now in operation, with the Commissioners setting dredging targets based on bathymetry surveys.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

FINANCIAL POSITION

The budget was set for the 2024/25 financial year aimed to deliver a cash contribution (from depreciation and surplus) to reserves of £78,649.00. This was sufficient to ensure that the harbour can replace its existing assets when needed, as well as enabling investment in additional assets. The turnover for the year ending 31st March 2025 was £741,903, with a surplus after taxation of £27,324.

BHC remains in a sound financial position with a satisfactory level of reserves. The current Commissioners' approach to allocating these reserves is as follows: -

- To maintain a minimum of £300,000 to ensure BHC can cover a full year's operational expenditure in case of a significant issue or emergency.
- A proportion of the remaining reserves allocated on a year-on-year basis to BHC's Capital Equipment Replacement programme.

EQUIPMENT

The current cost to replace or where appropriate repair all the Harbour's operational assets would be a minimum of £1,362,819.50. A fully costed comprehensive repair and replacement plan has been established. The plan requires, on average, £60,000 to be transferred to reserves annually.

DREDGING

The Harbour requires sufficient depth of water to maintain its commercial activities. This results in a dredging programme that covers specific areas:

Commercial

- The Harbour's main channel entrance up to the town pontoon, aiming to maintaining a depth of 1m below Chart Datum (CD).
- The Town pontoon to Oliver's Wharf and Fuel Barge, aiming to maintaining a depth of 0.75m below CD.
- Area of the Fuel Barge, aiming to maintaining a depth of 0.75m below CD.

Leisure Harbour

- Pontoon moorings in the South channel dredged. Aiming for a depth of 0.75m below CD.

Leisure Marina

- The Marina Depth is maintained frequently to try and keep sediment in suspension. Every few years a more comprehensive dredge is required, aiming for 2m below chart datum. This comprehensive dredge of the marina took place over the winter 2021/2. The Harbour master monitors depth and will arrange another dredge when required.

MARINE ACTIVITIES

Leisure Moorings

The Pontoons out in the Creek are at capacity. Demand is high with applicants on a waiting list. The Harbour Master is developing a plan for replacement (when required) and refurbishment of the pontoons.

Marina

In 2017 BHC were appointed to manage the Waterside Marina on behalf of Purelake Developments. The Harbour Master has created a detailed financial plan for marina management. Some restructuring, comprehensive maintenance and an enhanced maintenance dredging programme have been developed. In addition, continued investment in showers and toilets, has delivered a much-enhanced offer to visiting yachts' crews. The provision of £40,000 annually to cover marina rental and costs, is recovered from revenues generated by residents and visitors.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Demand for Waterside Marina moorings remain high, many berth holders are now opting to take out an annual, rather than seasonal, berthing contract. A complete dredge of the marina was carried out in 2021 returning it to its original depth. It was done at a cost of £90,000 and is likely to be carried out at intervals of 5 years.

Taxi

The water taxi facility enables resident mooring holders and visitors to cross between boats and the Town Jetty. It runs throughout the year during office hours. In the main season, taxi hours are extended. The Harbour wishes to maintain this subsidised service to users, working towards 'break even'. Greater use of tokens has been revenue positive, and the service now returns consistent revenues. Those using the taxi for moorings not owned or managed by the Harbour currently pay more for the service.

Colne Pilotage and Navigation

The Harbour's management as the Local Lighthouse Authority for the River Colne from the Inner Bench Head Buoy to Wivenhoe continues. The inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement of buoys is carried out at regular intervals to ensure they are fit for purpose. The capital value of the Buoys is estimated at £141,900, with the cost to inspect, replace, service and maintain buoys is approximately £98,750 pa. Independent inspection from Trinity House (the Lighthouse authority for England and Wales) confirms that our work meets the standard they require. Their reports include some very positive comments on BHC's performance.

In addition, BHC is the Pilotage Authority for the River Colne and must ensure BHC has suitably trained staff, pilots and appropriate vessels to meet the requirement. There have been problems meeting Pilotage requirements for shipping due to retiring staff, this is unfortunately an issue facing ports nationally. It is our intention to partner with Harwich Haven Authority in the near future to be able to meet our requirements with their resources and thereby solve the problem.

Colne Policing

The Harbour committed to investing at least £15,000 annually in the education, control and policing of the Harbour and River Colne by users speeding in their vessels. Large signs have been erected at launching locations, waterproof leaflets have been distributed to users, alongside visits to clubs and PWC launch areas. There have also been several successful prosecutions.

In FY 24/25 the Harbour enhanced its plans to manage PWC, erected large inflatable buoys to mark unrestricted speed areas and provided a security patrol at a cost of £15,000. BHC have also attempted to establish a partnership with Colchester City Council (who are responsible for enforcing River Colne bylaws) to provide a River Patrol. Despite requests we have not yet received funding from CCC for this patrol. Despite this BHC has continued to operate a patrol at peak periods, with estimated costs of £10,000 pa.

Visitors

The Harbour has a part to play in attracting visitors. In this 2024/25 Financial year we increased our investment to £4,461 in advertising, visited other ports, produced leaflets and continued with the Visitors' guide.

Since the Harbour began analysing visitor numbers, last year was a record year. The adverse weather conditions this year fell over a number of weekends including bank holiday ones which had a direct impact on numbers especially during the peak summer season. Looking at the data this year the overall visiting numbers was still above average. The average over 11 years is 2,470 and visiting numbers for 24/25 increased by 6.1%. BHC estimates that each boat has a crew between two and four on average. Combined with ferry users, this suggests that up to 22,000 people visit Brightlingsea each year via the harbour.

The Harbour continues to work with Brightlingsea Town Council's Tourism Advisory Panel to boost tourism in the town. The steady flow of visiting yacht numbers certainly suggests we are having an impact.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Ferry

The seasonal ferry does not attract public subsidy. The Ferry to Point Clear and East Mersea, although not a commuter line, does offer passengers the ability to travel between locations which would have otherwise meant a longer journey by car or bus. For FY24/25, the Ferry Users numbers were impacted by the adverse weather conditions however numbers maintained a similar level to the previous year. It is estimated that 14,000 to 16,000 ferry passengers were carried. Another significant contribution to the visiting numbers in town.

Tourism

We have a role as a tourist information centre for Brightlingsea, although revenues from tourism only partially affect the Harbour, they are of significant financial benefit to the Town. 22,000 visitors into Brightlingsea were recorded this year another benefit to be enjoyed by stakeholders.

Wharf and commercial activity

The Port of Brightlingsea's Wharf still provides a working trade platform for import and export from the UK. The Wharf is run by Essex Cement who rely on the Harbour to maintain a channel depth of 1m below CD. The first year of the Dredging Plan achieved this. The Harbour continues to maintain the dredged depth.

The Harbour continues to engage with other commercial operators to provide support where required in the same manner as it does with Orsted (a renewable energy company that has a windfarm support centre at Brightlingsea Harbour) the largest commercial operator within its customer base. Short term commercial operators using the Harbour is based on demand for their activities. This year the commercial operators only stayed for a few weeks, rather than months.

Schools' week

Every year the harbour partners with the Pioneer trust to deliver a marine activity-based week to local primary schools. The Harbour receives no revenue for this activity and funds the rental of a fishing boat, a minibus, fuel, museum use and salaries paid to staff assisting in the running of activities. The contribution to costs for the week excluding salaries was £3,442. Those taking part in Schools week often return to the Harbour later to Crab, enjoy water sports some even seek employment and currently have senior roles in the harbour. It is very much seen as an investment in the harbour's future.

Sponsorship and use of local services

Wherever possible the Harbour will use local service provision at the market rate to carry out its functions. It also at times sponsors specific activities by stakeholders for example the Annual fireworks display, donating £250.

Charitable causes

Many of the projects the Harbour supports financially in 'in kind' are non-profit making. One such example is Schools' week. The week is organised by the Pioneer Trust. Young stakeholders (school children) spend a day being shown the marine environment aboard fishing vessels, ferries, historical smacks and the museum. This is not only educational but aims to inspire potential future Harbour users.

The Harbour also regularly donates sums to local charities – 'First Responders' this year a commendable £440, 'Brightlingsea in Bloom' £350, and St Helena Hospice to name but a few. In total donations amounted to £1,440.

In addition, the Harbour provides pre- arranged free use of passage on its resources to those engaged in charitable work.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Harbour does not operate in isolation and is reliant on positive business relationships across the local marine sector. When a service critical to harbour users ceases, BHC will consider assisting or, if appropriate replace, until such time a commercial business provides that service. Budgets will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

STAFFING

Permanent and Incremental The staffing element of the Harbour is made up of a small permanent cadre of staff, supported by locally available incremental staff during busier periods. All are appropriately qualified and licenced. The balancing of individual needs and requirements is a sensitive one and continually under review. The only way to guarantee a steady and consistent team is to ensure that revenue is maintained and enhanced by the Harbour actively engaging in advertising its activities and continuing to improve its offer.

Apprenticeship

BHC continues to offer an Apprenticeship scheme that involves training to a marine occupational standard.

The 'Level 2 Workboat crewmember apprenticeship' meets all of BHC requirements for water-based staff. It is a demanding qualification and, in addition, provides the apprentice with a commercially endorsed Yachtmaster Coastal certificate of competence qualification.

Successful integration of marine apprentices into the business has led to an expansion of the programme. BHC now offers a business administration apprenticeship. Much of this is office based but includes research, video and picture taking for social media which occurs outside and on vessels. In addition to a Level 3 Business administration qualification, they also qualify as an RYA Level 2 powerboat handler.

All apprentices are employed by BHC for a period of 24 months before they are assisted in finding new employment ideally within the marine industry. BHC believes that training apprentices for the wide marine industry is an important part of a Trust Port's activities .

Environmental Protection

The harbour works with partners improving marine life and protecting the environment within its limits.

Essex University produced initial results on project testing the impact on marine life by various anti fouling paint. They are developing the research to consider Coating type, Concentration, Exposure time and Temperature. They hope to be able to provide stakeholders with information before selecting choose Anti – fouling.

The harbour has also reached out to Imperial College London, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering who have expertise in hydrodynamic and morphodynamic modelling (numerical and physical) as well as remote sensing methods (using satellites), which will help us understand what may happen to the Point Clear Spit and entrance channel in the future.

In partnership with a private environmental company, BHC has helped to encourage marine habitat development in intertidal zones. Geo engineered cups formed from aggregate using dredged sediment assisted with the development of marine rock pool habitats. These prototype piling habitats were installed in the marina during the summer of 2020 and continue to show positive results.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

The Commissioners present their report with the financial statements of BHC for the year ended 31st March 2025.

The Commissioners shown below have held office during the period from 1st April 2024 to the date of this report unless shown otherwise.

J. Thomas (Harbour Master)
A. Scott (Chairman)
D. Nicholson (Resigned Dec 2024)
P. Foley-Brickley
C. Watkins
D. Stoker
A. Johns
K. Lumbers
R. Dorey (Appointed Jan 2025)
T. Curzon Price (Appointed Jan 2025)

COMMISSIONERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Harbours Act 1964 as amended by subsequent legislation requires the Commissioners to prepare financial statements for each year which comply with the Companies Act 2006 and are in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. Under Company Law the Commissioners must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners (BHC) and of the results of BHC for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Commissioners are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that BHC will continue in business.

The Commissioners are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain BHC transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the BHC and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of BHC and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report For the year ended 31st March 2025

STATEMENT AS TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

So far as the Commissioners are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the BHC auditors are unaware, and each Commissioner has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Commissioner in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the BHC auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners have agreed to the reappointment of the auditor, Sumer Auditco Limited.

On behalf of the Commissioners:

Mr. A. Scott

Dated:

11/11/25

Chair of Commissioners

Mr. J. Thomas

Dated:

11/11/25

Report of the Independent Auditor to the Members of Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Income Statement, Statement of Other Comprehensive Income, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Harbours Act 1964.

Basis for opinion

We conducted the audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to the audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for the opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the commissioners' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the commissioners with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The commissioners are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Harbours Act 1964

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Strategic Report and the Report of the Commissioners for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and the Report of the Commissioners have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report or the Report of the Commissioners.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Harbours Act 1964 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of commissioners' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the commissioners were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Commissioners.

Responsibilities of Commissioners

As explained more fully in the Statement of Commissioners' Responsibilities set out on page eight, the commissioners are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the commissioners determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the commissioners are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the commissioners either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Auditor that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial experience and through discussions and enquiries of the board and management. During the engagement team briefing, the outcomes of these discussions were shared with the team, as well as consideration as to where and how fraud may occur in the company.

The following laws and regulations were identified as being of significance to the company:

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements including UK Financial reporting standards and The Harbours Act 1964.
- Those laws and regulations considered to have an indirect effect on the financial statements. These include the Port Marine Safety Code, Employment Law, Health and Safety regulations and GDPR.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: enquiries of management and those charged with governance as to whether the Group complies with such regulations; enquiries of management and those charged with governance concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal documentation; review of Board minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries and the performance of analytical review to identify any unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud; and review of the latest Port Marine Safety Code audit certificate and report.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Auditor.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in a Report of the Auditor and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

John Perry FCA
Senior Statutory Auditor
Sumer Auditco Limited
Fitzroy House,
Crown Street,
Ipswich,
Suffolk,
IP1 3LG
Date:

JA Perry

28 November 2025

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Income Statement for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
TURNOVER		741,903	784,296
Cost of sales		<u>170,169</u>	<u>212,816</u>
GROSS SURPLUS		571,734	571,480
Administrative expenses		<u>736,853</u>	<u>734,408</u>
		(165,119)	(162,928)
Other operating income		<u>181,428</u>	<u>194,581</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS	4	16,309	31,653
Interest receivable and similar income		<u>17,507</u>	<u>13,833</u>
SURPLUS BEFORE TAXATION		33,816	45,486
Tax on surplus		(6,492)	(30,056)
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		<u>27,324</u>	<u>75,542</u>

All amounts relate to continuing activities
There was no comprehensive income for 2025 (2024: £Nil)

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Statement of Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		27,324	75,542
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		<u>27,324</u>	<u>75,542</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Balance Sheet 31 March 2025

	Notes	31.3.25 £	£	31.3.24 £	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	5		696,765		725,487
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		7,211		13,751	
Debtors	6	161,359		203,078	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>784,003</u>		<u>672,028</u>	
		952,573		888,857	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>451,847</u>		<u>445,892</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			<u>500,726</u>		<u>442,965</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			1,197,491		1,168,452
PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES			<u>39,787</u>		<u>38,072</u>
NET ASSETS			<u>1,157,704</u>		<u>1,130,380</u>
RESERVES					
Other reserves			300,000		300,000
Retained earnings			<u>857,704</u>		<u>830,380</u>
			<u>1,157,704</u>		<u>1,130,380</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Commissioners and authorised for issue on 5 April 2025 and were signed by:

.....
Commissioners

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Retained earnings £	Other reserves £	Total equity £
Balance at 1 April 2023	754,838	300,000	1,054,838
Changes in equity			
Total comprehensive income	<u>75,542</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>75,542</u>
Balance at 31 March 2024	<u>830,380</u>	<u>300,000</u>	<u>1,130,380</u>
Changes in equity			
Total comprehensive income	<u>27,324</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,324</u>
Balance at 31 March 2025	<u>857,704</u>	<u>300,000</u>	<u>1,157,704</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners is an independent statutory body, established by an Act of Parliament. The Commissioners registered office address can be found on the company information page. The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" including the provisions of Section 1A "Small Entities" and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The disclosure exemption from preparing a separate statement of cashflows has been applied.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the basis of a going concern.

The commissioners are satisfied that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for a period of at least 12 months from the date of approving these financial statements. For this reason the commissioners adopt the going concern basis in preparing the accounts.

Functional currency and presentation currency

The financial statements are presented in the currency of the primary economic environment in which the Authority operates (its functional currency). For the purpose of the financial statements, the results and financial position are presented in Sterling (£).

Turnover

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Land and buildings	- Not depreciated as residual value is greater than cost.
Plant and machinery etc	- 33% on cost and 20% on cost.
Pilot boat	5% on cost as the useful life of the asset is considered to be greater.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than 95 days from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Debtors

Short-term debtors are measured at amortised cost. Impairments are accounted for when deemed necessary.

Creditors

Short-term creditors are measured at amortised cost. Other financial liabilities are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Financial instruments

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price.

Financial assets that are measured at cost and amortised cost are assessed at the end of each reporting period for objective evidence of impairment. If objective evidence of impairment is found, an impairment loss is recognised in the profit and loss account.

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, and the net amount reported in the Statement of Financial Position when there is an enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Taxation

Taxation for the year comprises current and deferred tax. Tax is recognised in the Income Statement, except to the extent that it relates to items recognised in other comprehensive income or directly in equity.

Current or deferred taxation assets and liabilities are not discounted.

Current tax is recognised at the amount of tax payable using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date.

Deferred tax

Deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed at the balance sheet date.

Timing differences arise from the inclusion of income and expenses in tax assessments in periods different from those in which they are recognised in financial statements. Deferred tax is measured using tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the year end and that are expected to apply to the reversal of the timing difference.

Unrelieved tax losses and other deferred tax assets are recognised only to the extent that it is probable that they will be recovered against the reversal of deferred tax liabilities or other future taxable surplus.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to surplus or loss on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Impairment of fixed assets

At each year end, the company reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication of impairment loss. If any indications exist, the recoverable amount of the assets is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairments loss (if any).

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to surplus or loss in the period to which they relate.

Judgments in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions about the carrying value of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and assumptions are based on experiences and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The main area requiring judgement over estimation concerns the useful economic lives of fixed assets. Details regarding property values are included in the fixed assets note to the financial statements. As disclosed within the strategic report the directors consider that the market value of the freehold assets is significantly in excess of their carrying value in these financial statements.

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the year ended 31 March 2025

3. EMPLOYEES AND COMMISSIONERS

The average number of employees during the year was 30 (2024 - 13).

Aggregate remuneration paid to Commissioners was £60,845 (2024 - £56,596)

4. OPERATING SURPLUS

The operating surplus is stated after charging:

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	51,325	52,958
Auditors' remuneration	6,000	5,000
Operating leases	<u>12,880</u>	<u>10,302</u>

5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Land and buildings £	Plant and machinery etc £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2024	347,980	1,093,757	1,441,737
Additions	<u>4,962</u>	<u>17,641</u>	<u>22,603</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>352,942</u>	<u>1,111,398</u>	<u>1,464,340</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2024	-	716,250	716,250
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>51,325</u>	<u>51,325</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>-</u>	<u>767,575</u>	<u>767,575</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2025	<u>352,942</u>	<u>343,823</u>	<u>696,765</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>347,980</u>	<u>377,507</u>	<u>725,487</u>

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Trade debtors	133,873	157,148
Other debtors	<u>27,486</u>	<u>45,930</u>
	<u>161,359</u>	<u>203,078</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Trade creditors	14,309	27,431
Taxation and social security	66,795	28,875
Other creditors	<u>370,743</u>	<u>389,586</u>
	<u>451,847</u>	<u>445,892</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Brightlingsea Harbour Commission

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the year ended 31 March 2025

8. RESERVES

	Brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Carried forward
Retained earnings	830,380	940,838	913,514	857,704
Other reserves	300,000	-	-	300,000
	<u>1,130,380</u>	<u>940,838</u>	<u>913,514</u>	<u>1,147,704</u>

Other reserves

Includes a full year of operational expenditure in case of a significant issue or emergency.

9. COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

At 31 March 2025 the Company had future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Not later than 1 year	9,263	9,083
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	2,731	5,526
Total	<u>11,994</u>	<u>14,609</u>

An additional 50 year lease was signed during the financial year for the Town Jetty with annual rent of £2,000.

10. OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners has a lease on the site of the fuel barge for which it pays an index linked annual rent of £5,000 and a variable 6p per litre charge based on volumes sold, subject to a £6,000 limit. The lease provides for an annual break clause since December 2016.

11. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

The Commissioners do, from time to time, use the services provided by the entity but these are always provided at commercial rates.

The Commissioners Mr J Thomas was employed by Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners and was paid salary at a commercial rate.

The Commissioners consider there is no ultimate controlling party

The notes form part of these financial statements

**Trading and Profit and Loss Account
for the year ended 31 March 2025**

	31.3.25		31.3.24	
	£	£	£	£
Turnover				
Harbour Dues	72,924		70,473	
CBC	145,833		141,212	
Mooring fees	365,795		358,765	
Fuel	<u>157,351</u>		<u>213,846</u>	
		741,903		784,296
Cost of sales				
Opening stock	13,751		15,450	
Purchases	130,841		175,520	
Other direct costs	29,225		32,734	
Tank hire and maintenance	<u>3,563</u>		<u>2,863</u>	
	177,380		226,567	
Closing stock	<u>(7,211)</u>		<u>(13,751)</u>	
		<u>170,169</u>		<u>212,816</u>
GROSS SURPLUS				
		571,734		571,480
Other income				
Rents received	7,635		4,632	
Sundry receipts	13,351		12,390	
Ferry	65,445		62,050	
Marine services	15,078		14,593	
Pilotage	35,110		39,764	
Boat park / hard / jetty	23,244		34,478	
Water taxi	18,565		19,374	
Government Grants	3,000		7,300	
Deposit account interest	16,423		13,833	
Corporation tax interest	1,084		-	
		<u>198,935</u>		<u>208,414</u>
		770,669		779,894
Expenditure				
Rent	10,713		10,302	
Rates and water	3,399		3,399	
Insurance	29,894		30,004	
Light and heat	4,097		4,726	
Repairs to property	5,228		542	
Equipment maintenance	13,701		22,177	
Boat and buoy maintenance	33,732		29,189	
Ferry	3,680		1,384	
Environmental costs	5,597		6,362	
Wages	373,752		373,535	
Social security	25,104		24,185	
Pensions	6,957		7,251	
Office costs	15,397		17,944	
Telephone	4,548		3,829	
Advertising	4,461		2,432	
Travelling	13,152		12,153	
Motor expenses	3,444		1,370	
Carried forward	<u>556,856</u>	<u>770,669</u>	<u>570,784</u>	<u>779,894</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

**Trading and Profit and Loss Account
for the year ended 31 March 2025**

	31.3.25		31.3.24	
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward	556,856	770,669	570,784	779,894
Sundry expenses	6,716		5,364	
Schools week	3,442		2,328	
Protective clothing	11,535		10,952	
Pilot fees	14,742		12,655	
Accountancy	4,643		3,867	
Subscriptions	7,641		6,427	
Waterside Marina	49,936		47,378	
Town jetty and hard	6,628		6,628	
Legal & Professional Fees	833		833	
Security costs	8,073		8,073	
Auditors' remuneration	5,000		5,000	
Donations	2,264		2,264	
Foreign exchange losses	2,340		-	
Bad debts	-		9,438	
Staff Training	6,495		5,336	
		<u>682,250</u>		<u>677,327</u>
		88,419		102,567
Finance costs				
Bank charges		<u>3,277</u>		<u>3,073</u>
		85,142		99,494
Depreciation				
Improvements to property	4,344		4,343	
Depn of equip & fittings	6,630		8,263	
Depn of fuel barge	280		1,531	
Depn of boats	27,469		26,610	
Depn of pontoons	<u>12,603</u>		<u>12,211</u>	
		<u>51,326</u>		<u>52,958</u>
		33,816		46,536
Loss on disposal of fixed assets				
Motor vehicles		<u>-</u>		<u>1,050</u>
NET SURPLUS		<u>33,816</u>		<u>45,486</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements