



Brightlingsea Harbour Port Marine Safety Code Designated Person Audit September 2025

Brightlingsea Harbour Office

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Colchester

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CO7 OAP

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1. Port Marine Safety Code

The Port Marine Safety Code (“the Code”) sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the UK port marine environment. It is endorsed by the UK Government, the devolved administrations and representatives from across the maritime sector and, while the Code is not mandatory, these bodies have a strong expectation that all harbour authorities will comply. The Code is intended to be flexible enough that any size or type of harbour or marine facility will be able to apply its principles in a way that is appropriate and proportionate to local requirements.

The code has been reviewed and a new version published April 2025.

2. References

- Port Marine Safety Code- April 2025
- A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations Prepared in conjunction with the Port Marine Safety Code
- Brightlingsea Harbour Marine Safety Management System (MSMS), Issue 4, June 2023.
- Brightlingsea Harbour Byelaws 1990
- The Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847
- Brightlingsea Harbour Order 1927 as amended
- Brightlingsea Harbour revision orders 1972,1981,1985, 2002
- Pilotage Act 1987

3. Designated Person (DP)

The main responsibility of the Designated Person is to provide independent assurance directly to the Duty Holder that the MSMS, for which the Duty Holder is responsible, is working effectively in ensuring compliance with the Code. (PMSC 2025 Section 2.2).

4. The Harbour

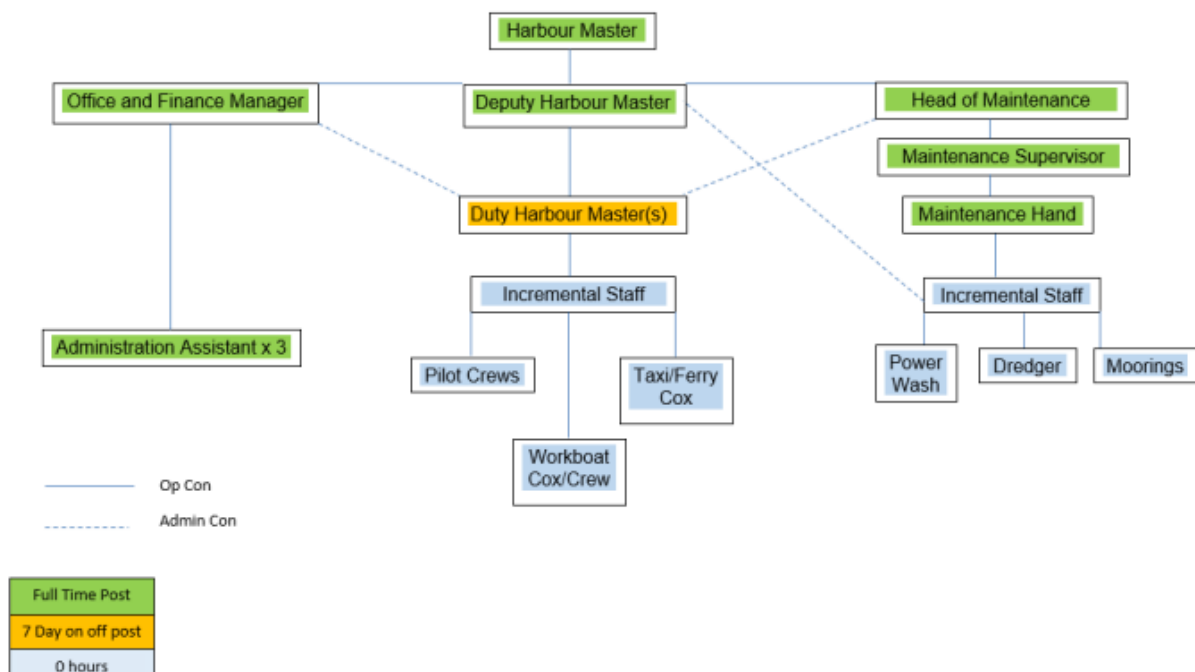
Brightlingsea Harbour is a small mixed leisure and commercial port with a rich heritage, situated in Brightlingsea Creek close to the mouth of the Colne Estuary where it meets the Blackwater and Thames Estuaries. The Harbour is within a nature conservation area of international importance. The River Colne is navigable on the tide for 7 miles to Colchester in Essex and the River Blackwater is navigable for 11 miles to Maldon. Brightlingsea is a day sail from most ports on the Thames Estuary.



Harbour Management

Brightlingsea Harbour is a Trust Port managed by Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners. There are eight commissioners which includes the Harbour Master leads a dedicated team of permanent and seasonal staff who oversee the day to day activities within the Harbour.

Duty Holder	Commissioners, Chairman- Andrew Scott
Harbour Master / Chief Executive	James Thomas
Deputy Harbour Master	Owen Evans



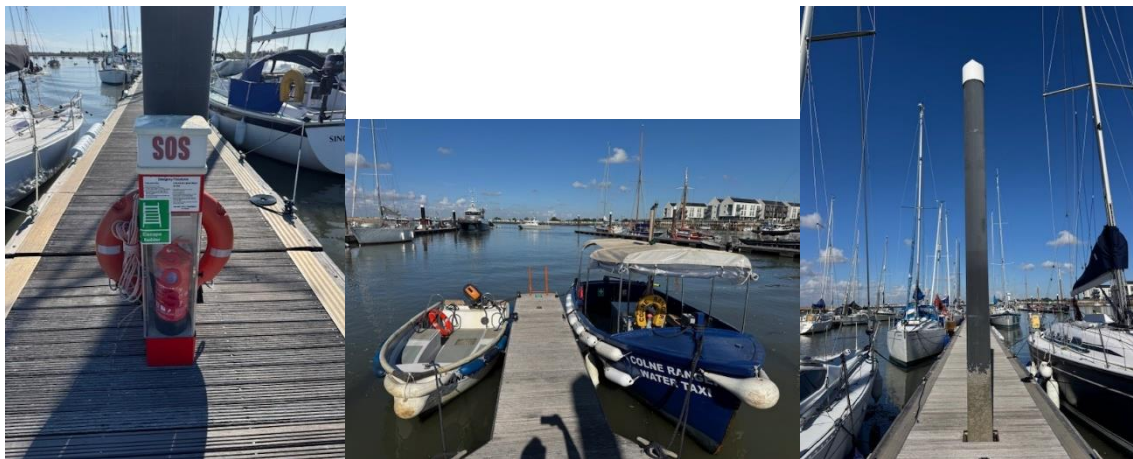
5. Audit

The audit commenced at 1300 on 8th September. During the visit I spent time speaking with the HM, DHM, Commissioner Colin Watkins as well as front office & finance personnel.

Day 1 of the audit commenced with a review of the recent incident where a departing ship allided with a boat moored on the pontoon at Morgan Marine. Whilst this was an unfortunate incident resulting in minor damage to the yacht the follow up actions of the Pilot no doubt mitigated the extent of more serious damage. The investigation into the incident was thorough, assisted by CCTV footage. All statutory reporting carried out and lessons shared with all relevant parties to help prevent reoccurrence. A new pilotage arrangement with Harwich Haven had been introduced recently. While the Harbour remains the statutory Pilotage authority Harwich Haven provide pilots to the Harbour.

This was followed by walk around with the DHM Owen and a tour of the harbour on the Pilot Boat, Colne Leader.

Day 2 commenced with an independent walk around with full and unhindered access throughout the harbour premises as well as time spent reviewing the MSMS and risk assessments. I then, once again, went afloat with DHM Owen on one of the water taxis. This gave me the opportunity to engage with a number of berth holders, as well as walking the length of the pontoons. The condition of the pontoons and moorings appear in good order with maintenance work being carried out at the time. Worth noting that clear concern for the welfare of all boaters in the vicinity demonstrated when a non-berth holder's boat was spotted aground. Contact made with the boat's owner who remained onboard at the time and had arranged their own recovery.



Some pertinent points to mention:

Maintenance Department

Progress, from last year, has been made within the maintenance department which is evident from being in and around all areas of the harbour. New office portacabin sourced and available for the head of maintenance. The old offices now repurposed as a dedicated storage area for critical spares and other useful equipment.



Environmental

New bin storage area has been created behind the maintenance building.



Gold Anchor Global Marina Accreditation

The Harbour has been awarded Four Gold Anchors by the Global Marina Accreditation Award. This is based on the Harbour's services, procedures & facilities. This is a great achievement and testament to the hard work of the harbour management & staff and good investment in the Harbour. It is clear that there is a great relationship between the harbour staff, management and harbour users.



In the course of the audit, using the recommended PMSC 'Aide-memoire' for attending MCA Officers & Harbour Authorities, I was presented with evidence by BHC. With the exception of those observations and recommendations listed below. I believe the other areas referred to in 'Aide-memoire' For attending MCA Officers & Harbour Authorities were found to be more than satisfactory.

Inspection concluded at 9th September at 1300.

6. Audit Outcomes

The audit report uses the following potential outcomes:

Satisfactory- System of component that meets or exceeds the requirements of the code.

Observation- An improvement opportunity.

Non-Compliance- Not complying with the Code such as a breach of obligations or may compromise safety of persons or the environment.

	Key Measures	Outcome
1	Duty Holder	Satisfactory
2	Designated Person	Satisfactory
3	Legislation	Satisfactory
4	Duties and Powers	Satisfactory
5	Risk Assessment	Satisfactory
6	Marine Safety Management System	Observation / Finding
7	Review & Audit	Satisfactory
8	Competence	Satisfactory
9	Plan	Satisfactory
10	Aids to Navigation	Satisfactory

The observations / findings are outlined in detail on the following page.

7. Audit Findings / Recommendations

Finding	Recommendation	Responsible	Completed
Condition of fuel barge	As seen in the photos the fuel barge is showing signs of significant rusting. Recommend full inspection & overhaul of the barge. Annex A	HM / DHM	
Pillar drill in workshop marked 'DO NOT USE!'	Repair or disposal Annex B	Maintenance Department	
Two-wheel hand truck heavily corroded	Remove from service Annex C	Maintenance Department	
Signage on Town Jetty	Sign to be replaced with new Annex D	HM / DHM	
MSMS not signed by all Commissioners	To be signed	Commissioners	

8. Annexes

Annex A



Annex B



Annex C



Annex D

