

# Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

## Stakeholders Meeting

1830hrs Colne Yacht Club 11 Nov 2025

**Chairman** A Scott  
**Harbour Master** J Thomas  
3 x Commissioners K Lumbers.  
17 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
  - BHC provides assistance and advice to CCC (eg River Patrol)
- **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.
  - Challenging, constructively, and helping to develop proposals.
  - The Chief Executive / Harbour Master has executive responsibility for running the business and is a Commissioner.
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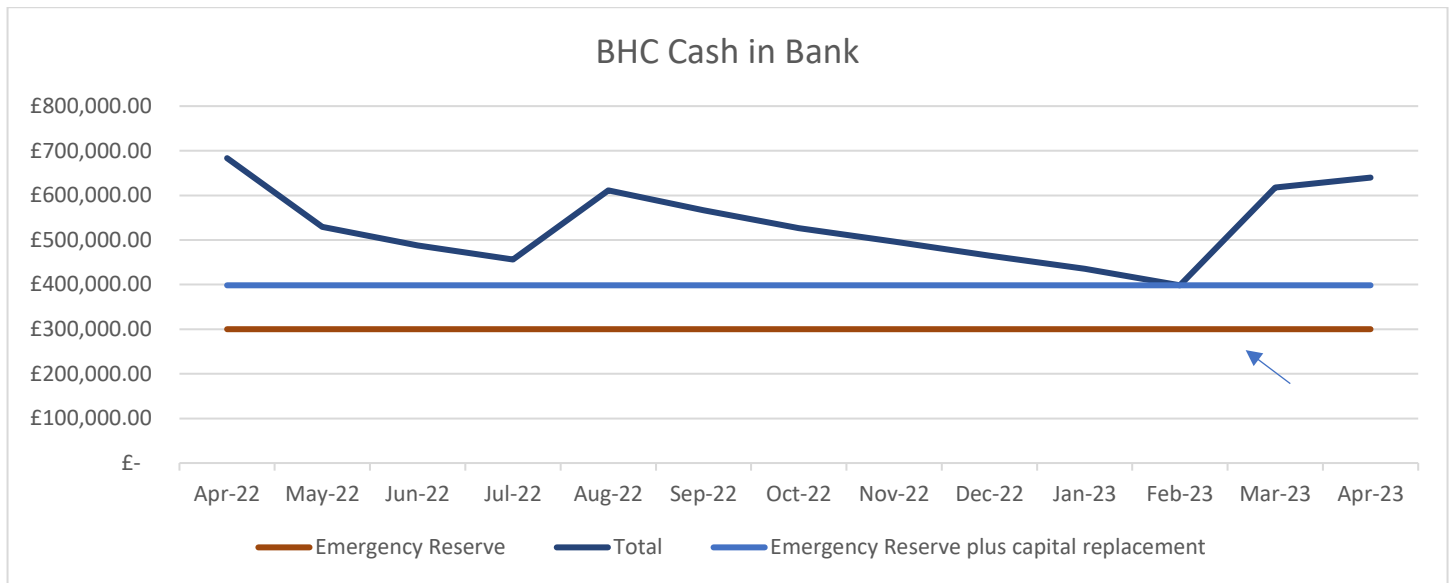
### **Finances Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

- Turnover            £741,903
- Surplus            £ 27,324
  - 3.7% of turnover.
- Cash generated to replace and develop assets £78,649
- That surplus is reinvested for benefit of stakeholders
  - Mainly in replacing assets which have reached the end of their life
    - Eg piles, pontoons, boats, etc.
  - BHC has around £1.5m invested in those assets
  - HM calculates that BHC need to put aside each year, on average, £65,000 to replace assets as they wear out

### **Main sources of income**

- Colchester City Council
  - Fee to BHC for taking on the local lighthouse authority
    - Following the closure of Colchester Port
  - Pays for buoy maintenance, work / pilot boat depreciation,
- Fees from commercial shipping
  - Pays pilot fees, work /pilot boat depreciation, work / pilot boat crew, associated harbour costs, etc
- Harbour dues
  - Low compared to other harbours.
  - Maintenance of harbour navigation aids, removing hazards, harbour monitoring and information, staff, etc.
- Berthing fees
  - From BHC owned moorings
  - Some of lowest on the east coast
  - 6,000 to 9,000 boating visitor nights
- Ferry, Tours and Water Taxi
  - Makes a small surplus
  - Ferry and Tours enables around 18,000 people to see the harbour and Colne from a boat

## Monthly Spend



## Cash in bank

- April bank account contains all the mooring fees paid in February and March. Total about £784,000
- The cash then steadily drops as BHC uses that income throughout the season
- In July Colchester paid their fee
- Lowest point is February, when the cash is just under £400,000
- Then the bank cash increases as mooring fees for next season are paid
- BHC holds a £300,000 reserve, to enable continued operation if there is a severe interruption
- We currently have around £200,000 in cash put aside to replace assets as they wear out

## Port Marine Safety Code

### Environmental Projects

Upcycling boats – 1 at the moment, process.  
 Destroyed 5 – It is expensive.  
 Essex University environmental project.  
 Spit Movement.

## DREDGING

### Main Channel

- The deepest part is approx 10m west of leading line with depths above 1m all way down, we will correct this over the year.
- The Town pontoon to Oliver's Wharf and Fuel Barge, maintaining a depth of 0.75m below CD, we continued to achieve and will run down again 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, mud will always be kept in suspension.

#### PRE-DREDGING SURVEYS

## Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners – Stakeholder Meeting 11-11-2025 RECENT DREDGING SURVEYS

### CONTENTS - **Update between 29/4/25 and 1/11/25**

- Survey Method
- Creek Mouth
- Point Clear Spit.
- Main Channel at hammerheads
- North Creek.
- South Creek.
- Marina
- Conclusions.

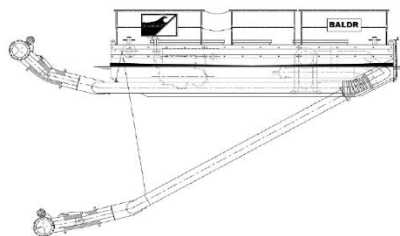
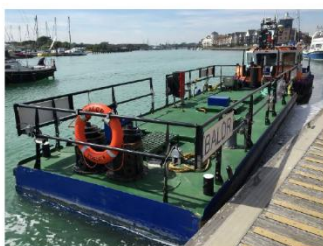
### Survey Method

- Remote controlled model catamaran
- Used multibeam echosounder survey equipment.
- Uses a transducer array to emit and receive multiple acoustic beams for mapping seafloor,
- Creates a detailed 3D images.



- <https://www.towersoftwareltd.com/#software>
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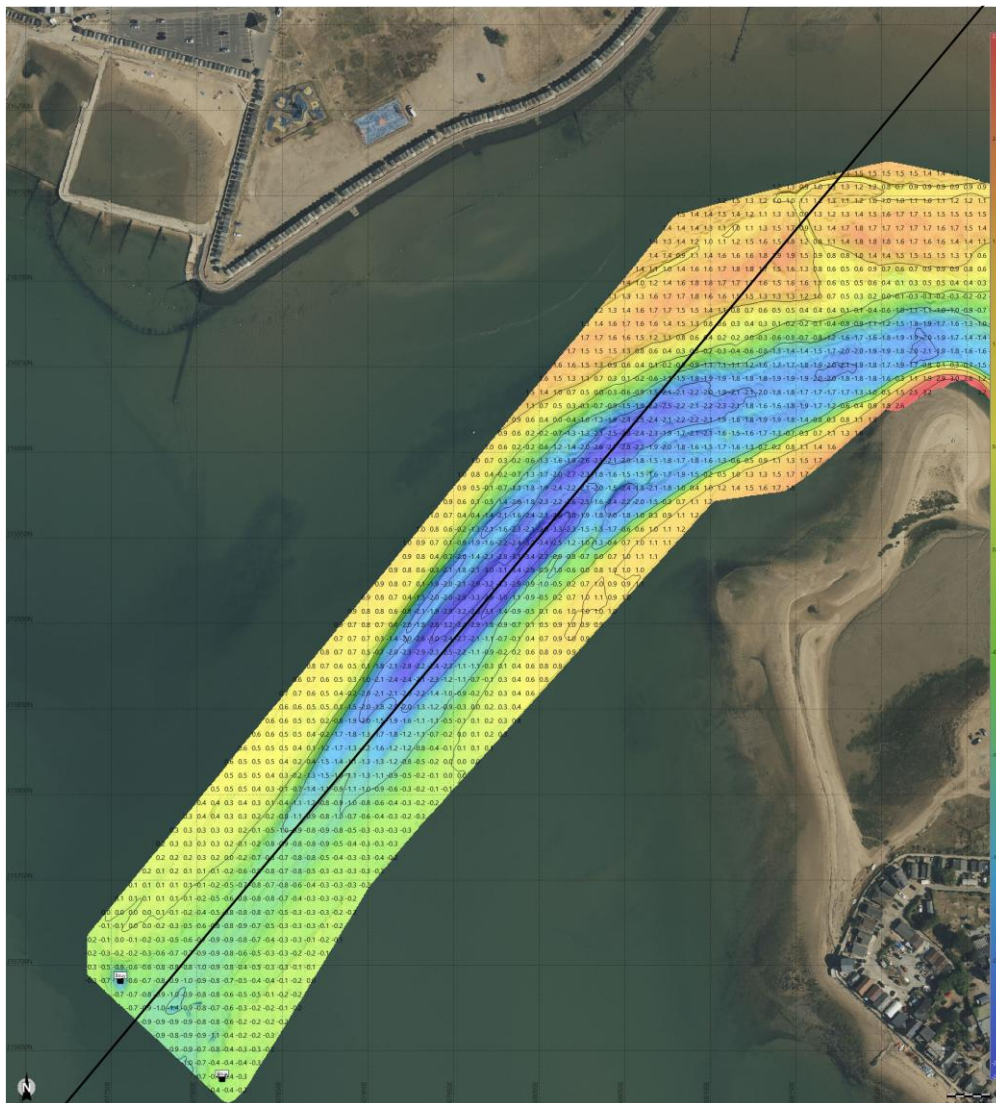
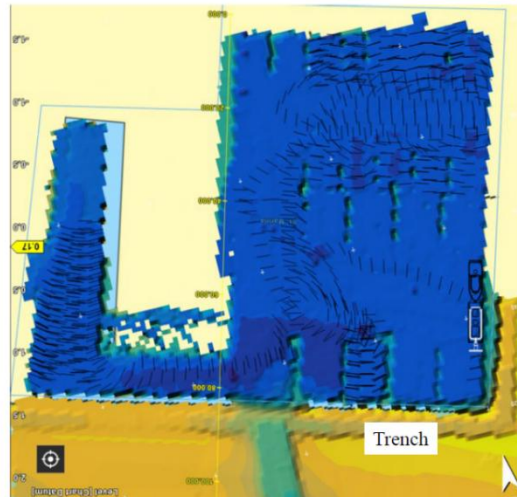
### Van Oord – Water Injection Dredger



- Dredger has on board survey system to control dredge depth and location

# Marina Basin Previous Dredging

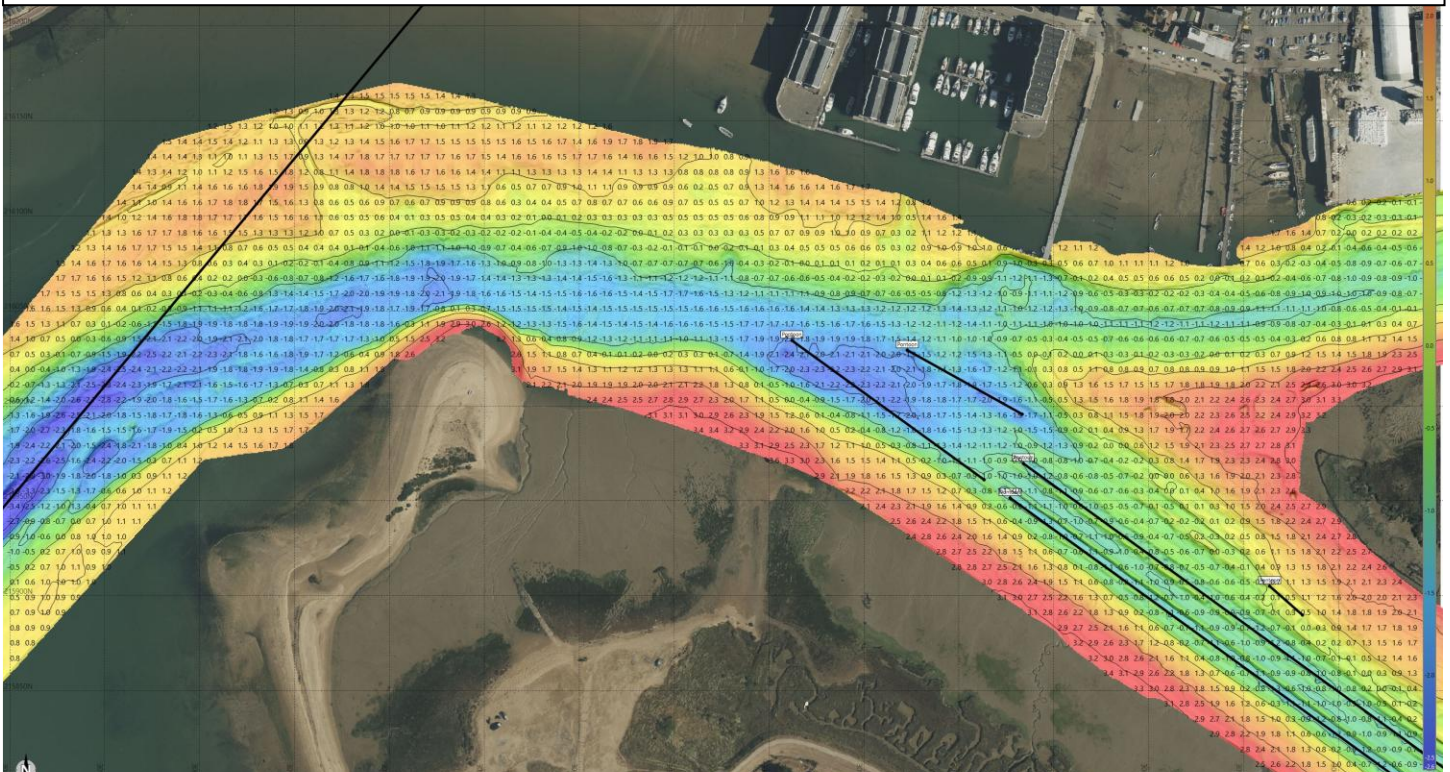
- Van Oord dredged Marina Basin and perimeter trench.
- Mud pumped by pipe into centre of creek on ebbing tide.



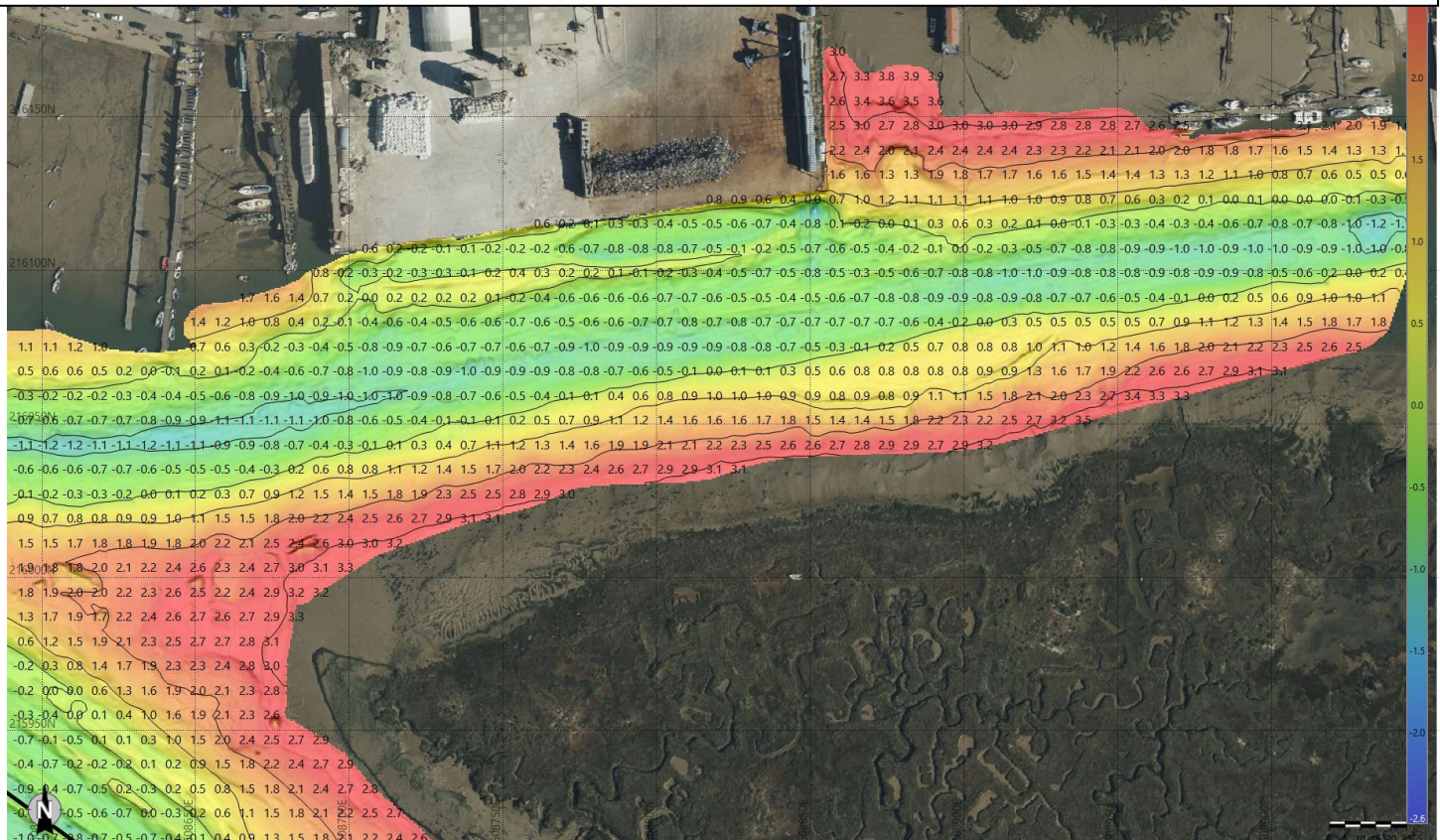
Post Meeting accurate Bathy  
**Entrance channel.** Aime to  
dredge to 1m below CD.  
Achieved most places  
however depths of 0.7m in  
some places. Deepest water  
10m to east of leading line.  
Dredging target to achieve  
1m below CD on leading line.



Post Meeting accurate Bathy **Town Jetty Area**, depths at Target generally. Lower depths at town Jetty 0.3m below CD.

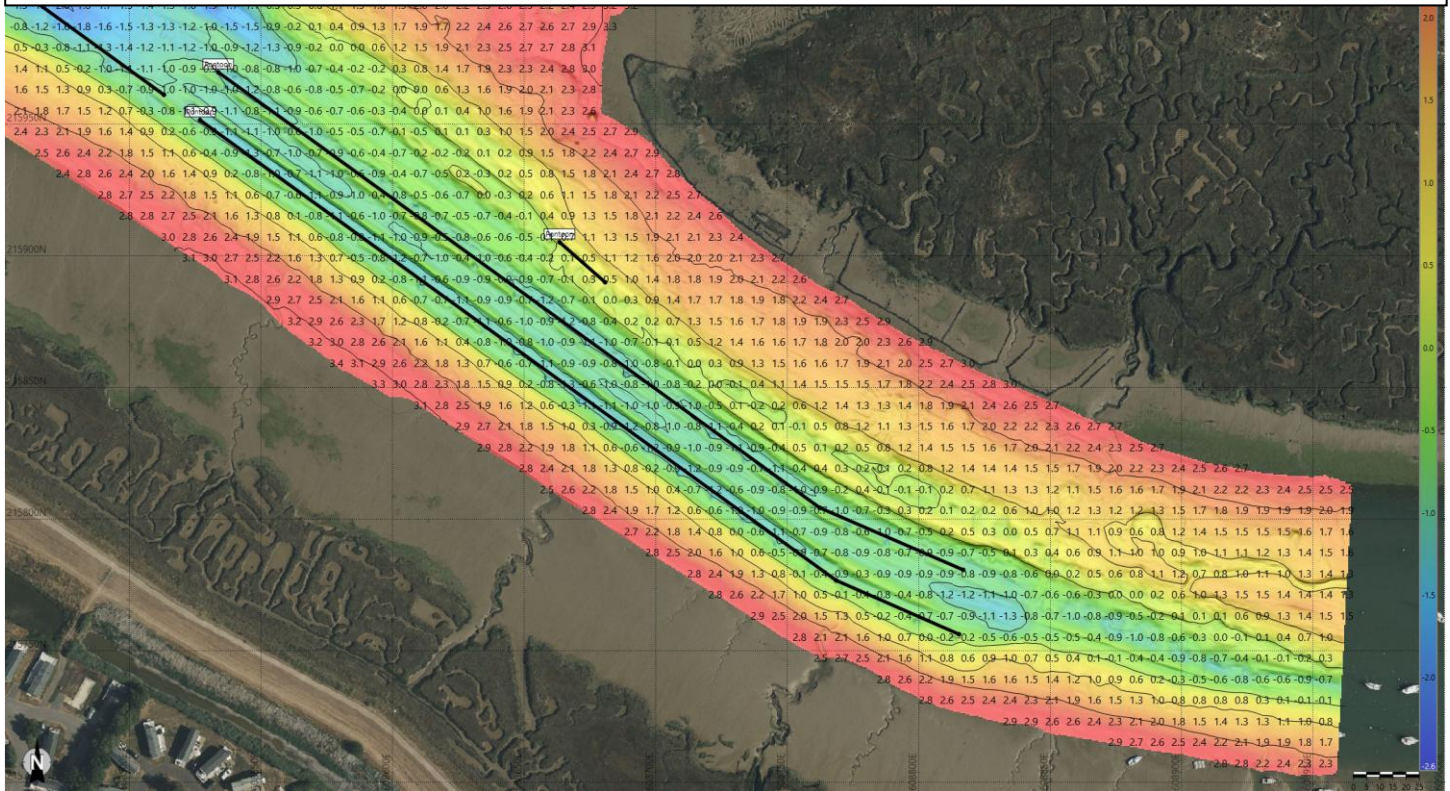


Post Meeting accurate Bathy **Wharf Area**, depths at Target in main channel generally. Lower depths at Wharf and Gutway these will be addressed.





Post Meeting accurate Bathy **Cindery/St Osyth** pontoons, depths in North not at target less than 0.4m and 0.3m, at target generally between pontoons. South of **St Osyth** is below target as is the turning circle.



## Conclusions - Dredging 1/11/25

- Survey used a model Catamaran with Multibeam Sonar.
- Creek Mouth Channel.
  - Target 1mCD – 0.6m Dredge
- Point Clear Spit.
  - No Drone survey so no spit contouring.
  - Link with Imperial College.
- Main Channel
  - Target 0.75mCD – 0.3mDredge off hammerhead
  - Remove mud upstream of pontoon.
- North Creek Pontoon Depths
  - Target 0.75mCD – 0.25m Dredge
- South Creek.
  - Target 0.75mCD.- 0.25m Dredge between pontoons 0.5m dredge outside pontoons
- Marina Basin
  - Target 1.5mCD? - 1m dredge?

## Accidents

### *Collision*

- Ferry came into contact with xx, leaving scuff marks down starboard side whilst unberthing.
- Xx Owner reported he had hit Past time, past time owner contacted and given xx owner details. No further action needed by harbour.
- During passage outbound ship collided with buoy no 13 on port side.
- Visitor after running aground at minters point, came into moor on the hammerhead colliding with the port quarter of community reach no observable damage to either vessel.
- The boat xx on CN20 has a bent stanchion. The owner is aware and has put fenders out however there is no timescale as to when it happened.
- Escorting visiting vessel into harbour the launch clipped the port side quarter at fender level of the visiting vessel. Minor scuff only . Skipper agreed nominal scuff and would attempt to polish out . Will provide his contact details for follow up.
- Vessel xx reported to have hit a number of vessels when entering the marina yesterday due to the strong winds - has refused to give insurance details to any of them.
- Reversing Colne leader into berth, West basin, overrun and made contact with pontoon. Ladder post just above water line port side dented.
- Sailing Dinghy, sail number xx, boom struck the safety ladder on the eastern end of the hammerhead, and it is now broken / cracked on the north side.
- Colne Ranger brushed against minters no 3 Channel marker no obvious damage.
- Owner of xx potentially hit a vessel on a fore and aft mooring. The owner of xx came into the office and said that he doesn't think he hit the vessel but instead thinks it was a mooring buoy.
- At 1143 whilst leaving the berth vessel xx got entangled with its bow sprit on No 3 green buoy, this had to be released by their own launch. No3 will need checking if in correct location
- Whilst departing berth D8 Marine East basin, visiting yacht xx made contact with xx and then on to xx C14. On recovery of vessel and a gentleman that stepped on to helm the vessel it then proceeded to hit xx C10 and then back into xx D7.

### *Medical*

- Whilst trying to release the filter cap with the wrench, my hand slipped catching the jubilee clip, this caused a 1-inch-deep laceration to my LH middle finger.
- Gentleman fell on eastern pontoon ramp, causing open wound and swelling. First aid administered by harbour staff and man's daughter.
- While carrying out repairs to the pump out on the fuel pontoon I hit my head on the metal framework, causing a small puncture to the top my skull.
- Ross deep cut on little finger on the rusty chain on Buoy 9, all cleaned and covered.
- Call from xxx 1 crew member injured requiring medical attention. ambulance called by office staff casualty taken to hospital via ambulance
- West Mersea lifeboat brought a male casualty approx 50 yrs old into harbour. casualty suffering head injury following a strike from a boom. casualty was part of a sailing school. Ambulance crews arrived shortly after and casualty placed in care of ambulance, casualty taken to hospital by road in ambulance. coastguard also in attendance.
- Report of a body in the water was made. Ambulance and paramedic crews along with Coastguard and Police attended Town jetty. Barge Pudge crew had seen a person enter water from a yacht. The crew launched and recovered a male casualty. on approach to harbour the casualty was transferred to Clacton Lifeboat. Once alongside the hammerhead the male casualty was transferred onto pontoon and clinical care was administered. The pontoon was shut down to all public prior to the casualty arrival. After a period of time the male casualty was transferred to Ipswich hospital via road and coastguard helicopter the Casualty later was pronounced dead.



## **Incidents**

### *Anti-Social*

- Young boy pushed in water from town jetty, helped back onto jetty with family. Checked over. Boys okay spoken to parents.
- 3 drunk men reported by member of public exposing themselves to children on the jetty .DHM called police and removed them from jetty. Police arrived but Member of the public didn't want to take it further and had no evidence, no other witness available.
- Man with black house on slip way ramp at point clear has removed our CCTV camera from his house according to Chris is also now telling people to ignore us, don't pay and just launch.
- 4 x jetskis launching at point clear refused to pay, drove around the barrier and proceeded to launch after giving abuse to security team. Caused a nuisance through BSC vessels on departure. vehicle details and ski details taken by security.

### *Marine*

- Lieutenant P returning to berth on one engine, windfarm vessel used power in doing so has swamped and sunk tender. Bailed out and refloated by windfarm crew, engine was submerged.
- DHM spotted on CCTV jetski with 3 males capsized near splash point, weren't able to get onboard, large waves, 2 Staff went out in HM1 with DHM directing. 3 men recovered from water exhausted, jetski and men returned to harbour town jetty. coastguard informed to save any lifeboat call outs.
- park and ride towed sunken vessel through harbour to be recovered on hard. small amount of fuel coming from vessel, less than 10ltrs. dispersed naturally. vessels and persons recovered to park and ride.
- Rowing vessel cut from town hard in front of approaching ship RMS Ratingen after leader had passed . Colne leader immediately went astern and intercepted and directed back to hard. Pilot has stated that he had to make a course adjustment and declared near miss . Pilot was concerned that the adjustment placed him south of his intended position . Colne leader intervened and pushed ship onto wharf .Pilot requested that I report the issue and is available for comment.
- Harbour launch 1 as reported to me by Nick who ran aground by bumpkin bay during evening drop off . Reported vibration . On review this morning I suspect the prop has been ripped at the collar at the shaft . We have replaced Harbour 1 with Harbour 2 for duty over the weekend.

## **M/V Nordica Hav involved in incident on departure**

Nordica Hav 27/08/2025

HW 0316hrs Local

Wind SW 15-20 Kts sea state Calm

0200hrs Pilot on Board

0213hrs Slipped lines manoeuvred down the wharf.

0215hrs Attached bow line to wharf bollard for turning. Began turn.

0218hrs Line went slack then released. Ship operated astern propulsion moved astern, bowthruster was operational at that point to manoeuvre ship to port.

Ship continued astern slowly until rudder and transom entered the mud, grounding the stern.

The lateral force of the tide forced the ship to pivot on the stern bringing the rest of it eastwards this made the bowthruster ineffectual. There was doubt whether the Bowthruster was operational or that it was thrusting in the opposite direction. The lateral movement occurred for approximately 1 minute, before the movement of the ship forward released the stern.

Although still moving easterly the forward propulsion allowed the stern to move sideways into the tide, Once the ship was moving forward the easterly movement ceased and the efficacy of the bowthruster was re-established. The movement of the bow to starboard caused the ship to allide a small 26ft sailing boat.

The ship was then reversed to create more sea room clearing the moored boats and brought the ship into the tide, operated forward propulsion then went alongside the wharf.

0224hrs the ship manoeuvred alongside the Wharf and was secured.

0233hrs Complete on Wharf.

## **Report- Recommendations**

The following action have been recommended and agreed:

1. Prior to the oral component of Pilotage, 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. Pilots will undertake a minimum of two additional Trips 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.

### **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."*

**Answer** Yes

### **Security**

3 x Prosecutions PWC.

Many PWCs registered.

Security meeting with PFSO in compliance with the PFSP.

Next meeting in Dec 25.

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**

- Trinity House LLA Annual inspection compliant and still well above our requirement at 99.8%.
- Pre-season meeting with Clubs, continues, code of practice published by BSC.

- Waste – Commercial oil, Commercial waste, new area.
- Bins on Pontoons – Then in Wreck house area.
- DP inspection in September 25 report will be published, on website.
- PMSC is now specifically to those that operate businesses on the water, although proportionately they will be required to submit a compliance statement 3 yearly from Jan 26.
- Servicing schedule on SOLAS, Lifejackets, Pilot Jackets, Life raft and other safety equipments completed now started.
- Wreck Removal/ Abandoned Boats

## **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** Regatta Fireworks, Hard Fireworks.

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

**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	10 Permanent staff Bsea, 4 local, 7 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 on track, YM Practical in Feb. Business and administration Apprentice on track. In post until end of next year.
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**

### **Leisure Moorings**

<b>Marina</b>	Superfast Wi-Fi 300Mb. Key fob for Showers, Toilets and Bins.
<b>Taxi</b>	Popular still, <u>cash</u> price £2.00. £3.50 other moorings Dogs and Children still free. Tokens 1.50 each in bags of 10. Taxi must be paid for, some don't use, we are caretakers. Competition
<b>Visitors</b>	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;
RYA Day Skipper	x	2
Diesel Engine Course	x	1
Petrol Engine Course	x	1
Sea Survival	x	1
First Aid	x	2
Pilot Crew	x	3
Pilots	x	2
RYA PB 2	x	1
PPR	x	1
GPDR	x	1
Management Trg	x	1
Slinger	x	1
Security	x	1

Trg Non-Permanent Cadre	:	x 12;
RYA Day Skipper	x	1
RYA First Aid	x	1
RYA Radio User	x	1
PPR	x	1

#### **Owen Evans Harbour Master Certificate**

##### **Induction Training**

Provision of such to 4 employees.

##### **Internal Role Training**

GPDR, AI

##### **Provision of Fuel**

It appears that we still provide some of the least expensive fuel;

	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>60/40</b>
BHC	0.97 + 5 % VAT	1.39 Inc VAT
Woolverstone		1.46 Inc VAT
Chatham		1.48 Inc VAT

##### **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 or Essex Uni to carry out investigations, perhaps a Citizen Science Project.

### The Strategic Plan

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



### Issues not covered in Presentation

#### Keith King

**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.

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 connection. and on that the mooring chains last up to 3 years sometimes wearing faster some years than other years

There are many documents stating the industry best standards when it comes to acceptable wear on the chains and we follow William and Hackets guidance of 15%, if the chain is 15% less than its manufactured size we replace with new. ( we have a measurement tool for both 13mm and 22mm chain to ensure continuity)

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.

In regard to this exact mooring, I'm not sure exactly where it has failed from 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.

**Hard** - 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.

This year we have been let down by the original provider; however, we have someone else 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.



**Member of the Public**

***Access to Point Clear to launch PWC-*** *Has the gate access been agreed, is a gate going in at the ramp at Point Clear and will I still be able to use it with a code.*

Yes, the Gate will be going in and Orchards will be erecting it. It is scheduled to happen in Spring, in terms of access a code will be issued to all authorised to pass through the gate, those that have paid harbour dues will be authorised.