Report of the Commissioners and

Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2026

for

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Report and accounts
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Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Company Information

Chairman
Mr A Scott

Harbour Master
Mr J Thomas

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Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Strategic Report for the year ended 31st March 2026

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 is a small mixed leisure and commercial port with a rich heritage and is within a nature conservation area of international importance. The Harbour comprises a commercial wharf, a marina and several boatyards. 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 a laundry.

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. This remains the ultimate responsibility of the Commissioners and future generations remain the ultimate stakeholder.

The Commissioners, under the Port and Marine Facilities 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. 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.

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; Four 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 held two public meetings with stakeholders during the year. This was achieved. In addition, there were two meetings with various commercial representatives Brightlingsea Harbour businesses. 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 2,300 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 4,234 times.

The 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 will not be provided.

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

PORT & MARINE FACILITIES SAFETY CODE (PMSC)

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

Inspection

In September 2025 an annual inspection was carried out by the Designated Person during the period. That report was sent to, and discussed by, Commissioners. It is published on the BHC website.

Incident/accident Investigations, Reports and Data .

Thirteen accidents were logged; Thirteen collisions/ allisions, Seven medical with injury were logged. An overall reduction of 20% from last year.
Thirteen incidents were logged including Six Anti-Social incidents (Vandalism, etc).
The individual reports are shared with Stakeholders at meetings twice a year, where it is possible to take action, it is taken. This information is published on the website.

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 users. This enable 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.

PMSC Awareness information for Local Marine organisations.

The MCA directed Marine statutory organisations to advise local marine facilities that they should comply with the Port and Marine facilities Safety code by 31 March 2026. There was a compliance exercise where organisations reported to the MCA that they were compliant with or working towards which the Harbour responded to.

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.

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 a slight increase from the previous year of visiting vessels to 2,641 visitors. Unfortunately, once again the season's weather brought about waning enthusiasm for visiting yachtsmen. However, this figure is still significantly higher than numbers previous to 2020.

The water taxi revenue increased by 28% based on last year, due to an increase in commercial visiting numbers. Overall, the water taxi roughly breaks even, with income close to costs.

Despite the unseasonably poor weather the income generated by the scheduled ferry service across to Point Clear and East Mersea managed to reach its budgeted estimate.

The Charter service also generated improved revenues due to The Anchor – Rowhedge being more engaged with river users and there were more dates capitalising on the success of the Afternoon Teas to St Osyth. There is enthusiasm for this activity which will be developed next 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 increased slightly. The wharf owner hopes to increase activity in the coming year. There is still a great demand for cement which is imported from Europe and North Africa.

The volume of fuel in litres sold has increased with a greater number of commercial vessels using the harbour. The revenue has increased by 31% however the size of the increase is due to fluctuations in price rather than volume of sales. 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. Engagement. '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.

FINANCIAL POSITION

The budget was set for the 2025/26 financial year aimed to deliver a 7% surplus for future investment. The turnover for the year ending 31st March 2026 was £847,531 with a loss before taxation of £9,999

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 £1,627,383. A fully costed comprehensive repair and replacement plan has been established. The plan requires, on average, £70,000 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 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 2026. 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.

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 returning it to its original depth was carried out in 2026 in conjunction with a dredge of the harbour. It was done at a cost of £141,685 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 £ 142,482, with the cost to inspect, replace, service and maintain buoys is approximately £ 99,155 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 £20,000 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 25/26 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 only occasionally receive 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 2025/26 Financial year we increased our investment to £5,051 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 12 years is 2,485 and visiting numbers for 25/26 increased by 6.3% above average. 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.

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 FY25/26, 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. These numbers included the Charter trips leading to an overall increase of 13%.

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 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 £3,237. 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 will also at times sponsor specific activities by stakeholders for example the Annual fireworks display, donating £250. In addition the annual Pyefleet Week hosted by Brightlingsea Sailing Club received a donation of £1,000 from Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners to support the event.

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 £1,017 'Brightlingsea in Bloom' £350, Stroke Association £300 and St Helena Hospice to name but a few. In total donations amounted to £3,267.

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.

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 two business administration apprenticeships. 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. The Harbour is exploring the possibility of developing an engineering apprenticeship in the future.

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 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 protype piling habitats were installed in the marina during the summer of 2020 and continue to show positive results.

REPORT OF THE COMMISIONERS
FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026

The Commissioners present their report with the financial statements of BHC for the year ended 31st March 2026.

The Commissioners shown below have held office during the period from 1st April 2025 to the date of this report unless shown otherwise.

J. Thomas (Harbour Master)
A. Scott (Chairman)
P. Foley-Brickley
C. Watkins
D. Stoker
A. Johns
K. Lumbers
R. Dorey
T. Curzon Price

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.

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.

On behalf of the Commissioners:
Mr. A. Scott
Dated: 26th October 2026

Chair of Commissioners

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Independent auditor's report
to the members of Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the Income Statement, the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Changes in Equity and notes to the accounts, including 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 the Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of its loss for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Harbours Act 1964.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our 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's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out below, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the commissioners' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts 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 accounts 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 accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The commissioners are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the accounts 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 accounts 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 accounts 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.

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 accounts 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 accounts 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, the commissioners are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the commissioners determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, 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 have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report 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 accounts.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

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 an auditor's report 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.

Azets Audit Services

Julian Golding
(Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Azets Audit Services
Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
28 October 2026

7-8 Britannia Business Park
Comet Way
Southend on Sea
Essex
SS2 6GE

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Income Statement
for the year ended 31 March 2026

	2026 £	2025 £
Turnover	847,531	741,903
Cost of sales	(308,083)	(170,169)
Gross surplus	539,448	571,734
Administrative expenses	(799,440)	(736,853)
Other operating income	234,735	181,428
Operating (loss)/surplus	(25,257)	16,309
Loss on the disposal of tangible fixed assets	(402)	-
Interest receivable	15,660	17,507
(Loss)/surplus before taxation	(9,999)	33,816
Tax on (loss)/surplus	1,380	(6,492)
(Loss)/surplus for the financial year	(8,619)	27,324

All amounts relate to continuing activities

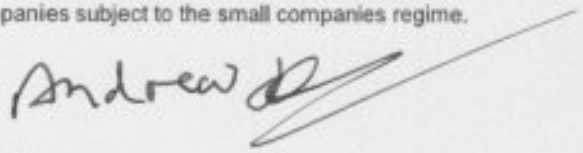
Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Statement of comprehensive income
for the year ended 31 March 2026

	2026 £	2025 £
(Loss)/surplus for the financial year	(8,619)	27,324
Other comprehensive income		
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	344,321	-
Deferred taxation arising on the revaluation of land and buildings	(65,421)	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	270,281	27,324

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2026

	Notes		2026 £		2025 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	4		1,015,703		696,765
Current assets					
Stocks		18,473		7,211	
Debtors	5	152,242		161,359	
Cash at bank and in hand		953,960		784,003	
		1,124,675		952,573	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	(613,274)		(451,847)	
Net current assets			511,401		500,726
Total assets less current liabilities			1,527,104		1,197,491
Provisions for liabilities			(99,119)		(39,787)
Net assets			1,427,985		1,157,704
Capital and reserves					
Revaluation reserve	7		278,900		-
Other reserves			300,000		300,000
Retained earnings			849,085		857,704
			1,427,985		1,157,704

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



A Scott
Commissioner
Approved by the board on 26 October 2026

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Re-valuation reserve	Retained earnings	Other reserves	Total
	£	£	£	£
At 1 April 2024	-	830,380	300,000	1,130,380
Surplus for the financial year		27,324		27,324
At 31 March 2025	-	857,704	300,000	1,157,704
At 1 April 2025	-	857,704	300,000	1,157,704
Loss for the financial year		(8,619)		(8,619)
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	344,321			344,321
Deferred taxation arising on the revaluation of land and buildings	(65,421)			(65,421)
Other comprehensive income for the financial year	278,900	-		278,900
Total comprehensive income for the financial year	278,900	(8,619)		270,281
At 31 March 2026	278,900	849,085	300,000	1,427,985

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2026

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 preparation

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.

Turnover

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, net of discounts and value added taxes. Turnover includes revenue earned from the sale of goods and from the rendering of services. Turnover from the sale of goods is recognised when the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer. Turnover from the rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The stage of completion of a contract is measured by comparing the costs incurred for work performed to date to the total estimated contract costs.

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 (£).

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulative depreciation and any accumulative impairment losses. Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, other than land and buildings, at rates as follows:

Leasehold land and buildings	Not depreciated as residual value is greater than cost.
Plant and machinery	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.

Stocks

Stocks are measured at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost is determined using the first in first out method. The carrying amount of stock sold is recognised as an expense in the period in which the related revenue is recognised.

Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price (which is usually the invoice price), less any impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts. Loans and other financial assets are initially recognised at transaction price including any transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost determined using the effective interest method, less any impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts.

Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at transaction price (which is usually the invoice price). Loans and other financial liabilities are initially recognised at transaction price net of any transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost determined using the effective interest method.

Taxation

A current tax liability is recognised for the tax payable on the taxable profit of the current and past periods. A current tax asset is recognised in respect of a tax loss that can be carried back to recover tax paid in a previous period. Deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences between the recognition of income and expenses in the financial statements and their inclusion in tax assessments. 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 profits. Deferred tax is measured using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the reporting date and that are expected to apply to the reversal of the timing difference, except for revalued land and investment property where the tax rate that applies to the sale of the asset is used. Current and deferred tax assets and liabilities are not discounted.

Provisions

Provisions (ie liabilities of uncertain timing or amount) are recognised when there is an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that economic benefit will be transferred to settle the obligation and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

Foreign currency translation

Transactions in foreign currencies are initially recognised at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the transaction. At the end of each reporting period foreign currency monetary items are translated at the closing rate of exchange. Non-monetary items that are measured at historical cost are translated at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction. All differences are charged to profit or loss.

Leased assets

A lease is classified as a finance lease if it transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership. All other leases are classified as operating leases. The rights of use and obligations under finance leases are initially recognised as assets and liabilities at amounts equal to the fair value of the leased assets or, if lower, the present value of the minimum lease payments. Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction in the outstanding liability using the effective interest rate method. The finance charge is allocated to each period during the lease so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability. Leased assets are depreciated in accordance with the company's policy for tangible fixed assets. If there is no reasonable certainty that ownership will be obtained at the end of the lease term, the asset is depreciated over the lower of the lease term and its useful life. Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Pensions

Contributions to defined contribution plans are expensed 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.

3 **Employees and commissioners**	**2026 Number**	**2025 Number**
Average number of persons employed by the company	20	30

Aggregate remuneration paid to Commissioners was £65,998 (2025 - £60,845)

4 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Plant and machinery etc £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2025	352,942	1,111,398	1,464,340
Additions		26,018	26,018
Revaluations	344,321		344,321
Disposals	-	(25,223)	(25,223)
At 31 March 2026	697,263	1,112,193	1,809,456
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2025	-	767,575	767,575
Charge for the year	-	50,999	50,999
On disposals	-	(24,821)	(24,821)
At 31 March 2026	-	793,753	793,753
Net book value			
At 31 March 2026	697,263	318,440	1,015,703
At 31 March 2025	352,942	343,823	696,765

Freehold land and buildings:	2026 £	2025 £
Historical cost	352,942	352,942
Cumulative depreciation based on historical cost	-	-
	352,942	352,942

5 Debtors

	2026 £	2025 £
Trade debtors	98,592	133,873
Other debtors	53,650	27,486
	152,242	161,359

6 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2026 £	2025 £
Trade creditors	215,622	14,309
Taxation and social security costs	38,891	66,795
Other creditors	358,761	370,743
	613,274	451,847

7 Revaluation reserve

	2026 £	2025 £
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	344,321	-
Deferred taxation arising on the revaluation of land and buildings	(65,421)	-
At 31 March 2026	278,900	-

8 Commitments under operating leases

	2026 £	2025 £
Not later than 1 year	5,671	9,263
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	102,011	2,731
Total	107,682	11,994

9 Related party transactions

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.

10 Controlling party

The Commissioners consider there is no ultimate controlling party

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Detailed profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 March 2026
This schedule does not form part of the statutory accounts

	2026 £	2025 £
Sales	847,531	741,903
Cost of sales	(308,083)	(170,169)
Gross surplus	539,448	571,734
Administrative expenses	(799,440)	(736,853)
Other operating income	234,735	181,428
Operating (loss)/surplus	(25,257)	16,309
Loss on the disposal of tangible fixed assets	(402)	-
Interest receivable	15,660	17,507
(Loss)/surplus before tax	(9,999)	33,816

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Detailed profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 March 2026
This schedule does not form part of the statutory accounts

	2026 £	2025 £
Sales		
Harbour Dues	98,199	72,924
CBC	152,348	145,833
Mooring fees	390,227	365,795
Fuel	206,757	157,351
	847,531	741,903
Cost of sales		
Purchases	179,826	130,841
Decrease/increase in stocks	(11,263)	6,540
Tank hire and maintenance	-	3,563
Other direct costs	139,520	29,225
	308,083	170,169
Administrative expenses		
Employee costs:		
Wages and salaries	408,737	373,752
Pensions	7,236	6,957
Employer's NI	33,516	25,104
Staff training & welfare	10,953	6,495
Protective clothing	10,123	11,535
Travel and subsistence	10,405	13,152
Motor expenses	4,142	3,444
	485,112	440,439
Premises costs:		
Rent	9,530	10,713
Rates	1,110	3,399
Security costs	10,582	8,073
Light and heat	2,982	4,097
Repairs to property	7,994	5,228
Office costs	16,065	15,397
	48,263	46,907
General administrative expenses:		
Telephone and internet	4,107	4,548
Postage	130	-
IT support	2,856	-
Subscriptions	9,421	7,641
Bank charges	3,254	3,277
Insurance	31,299	29,894
Schools week	3,238	3,442
Pilot fees	35,572	14,742
Waterside marina	43,353	49,936
Town jetty and hard	4,677	6,628
Donations	3,717	2,264
Foreign exchange	-	2,340
Equipment maintenance	14,185	13,701
Boat and buoy maintenance	12,934	33,732
(Ferry) Vessels	20,555	3,680
Environmental costs	5,626	5,597

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
Detailed profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 March 2026
This schedule does not form part of the statutory accounts

	2026	2025
	£	£
Depreciation	50,999	51,326
Difference	-	(4,894)
Sundry expenses	4,035	6,716
	249,958	234,570
Legal and professional costs:		
Audit fees	8,500	5,000
Accountancy fees	2,919	4,643
Legal & professional fees	-	833
Advertising and PR	4,688	4,461
	16,107	14,937
	799,440	736,853
Other operating income		
Rents received	9,127	7,635
Sundry receipts	31,694	13,351
Ferry	73,992	65,445
Marine Services	18,352	15,078
Pilotage	67,427	35,110
Boat park/hard/jetty	2,716	23,244
Water taxi	23,827	18,565
Government grants	7,600	3,000
Deposit account interest	-	-
Corporation tax interest	-	-
	234,735	181,428