

Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group (LRHCG)
Meeting 09th October 2025 Lyme Regis Sailing Club 18:00

Present

Amanda Anderson	(AA)	Neighbourhood Policing Team
David Brown	(DB)	Non-Commercial Mooring Holders Rep
Ed Carter	(EC)	Weymouth Harbour Master – Harbours Manager
Peter Fosh	(PF)	Non-Commercial Mooring Holders Sub
Max Gollop	(MG)	Harbour Traders Rep
Sam Harding	(SHA)	Assistant Harbour Master
Sally Holman	(SH)	Sailing Club Rep & HCG Chair
Cllr Rob Hughes	(RH)	Dorset Council Harbours Advisory Committee Chair
Brian Johnson	(BJ)	Sailing Club Sub
Catherine Kinnersley	(CK)	Gig Club Sub
Rob King	(RK)	Boatmen/Charters Rep
Jo Law	(JL)	Sea School Trust Rep
Nick Marks	(NM)	RNLI Rep
Becky McGowan	(BM)	Harbour Admin Officer – Note Taker
Peter O’Connell	(PO)	Non-Boating Water Activities Sub
Matthew Penny	(MP)	Flood & Coastal Erosion Service manager
James Radcliffe	(JR)	Harbour Master
Cheryl Reynolds	(CR)	Town Council Councillor
Lee Roper	(LR)	Power Boat Club Rep
Matt Styles	(MS)	Commercial Fisherman Rep
Andy Turtle	(AT)	Citizens in Policing Manager
John Wright	(JW)	Town Clerk – Town Council

1. Welcome & introductions	Action
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JR – Welcomed everyone to the meeting, round the room introductions were given.

2. Apologies	
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Will Reed – Harbour Traders Sub
Karen Durham Diggins – Non-Boating Water Activities Rep
Aide Best – Marine Police

3. Election of the new Chairman	
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Application received from SH for Chair.

A unanimous vote sees SH the new appointed Chair.

SH – Stated, my main interest lies in Phase 5 but assured that this will not conflict with or hinder other areas of interest.

4. Minutes and Actions of the previous meeting	
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ID	Action	Assigned	Date of completion
4.	(Dog fouling) Seek advice re Harbour staff enforcements within the HRO	EC	Once HRO is complete, will look at general directions to possibly create an offence. Harbour staff agree to take on this responsibility.
6.	Seek advice from democratic serves re absence of Chair	EC	Consultation will be in November
7.	Follow up on coding marking solutions	SH	
7.	Arrange DNA tagging event along with Harbour Watch	JR	DB is in contact with AA, an event can be arranged when more interest is shown
9.	Letter to TC re dredging concerns and sand replenishment	JR to pass to engineers	TC are aware and are on board attending the HCG meetings
9.	Fuel charges, look at price structure	JR	Price structure altered to accommodate different amounts

10.	Extend invitation to Historic England	JR	Other arrangements have been made outside of the meeting	
<p>Q – How is the flare facility going in West Bay? A - All working going well.</p> <p>Q – Vessel’s speeding, is this still ongoing? A - Staff have spoken to some individuals however ineffective. JR – Under the HRO we can have more power to enforce.</p> <p>Works are commencing on the Cobb buildings after issues were raised with property services.</p>				
5. Representatives and Substitutes				
<p>Jo Law – Sea School Trust Rep – Confirmed tenure renewal for 3 years from October 2025 Chris Joiner – Sea School Trust Sub – Tenure ends Oct 2025, awaiting confirmation of tenure renewal.</p> <p>JR – Note on attendance for representative of the Gig club. If there is continued non-attendance, the representative may need to consider swapping roles with the Substitute.</p>				
6. Marine Police update & Harbour Watch				
<p>Deputy Chief Officer Andy Turtle sent apologies on behalf of the Marine team.</p> <p><u>Regional Issues Update</u> Several incidents have been reported outside this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vessel arriving in Bournemouth suspected of smuggling drugs onto a public beach. • Related concerns in Swanage and Christchurch. <p>No current issues reported in this part of the county, but there are signs of increased activity in the Channel, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger “mother ships” operating offshore. • Smaller boats being used for human trafficking. <p>Community Vigilance is important, and organisations such as Craken and Harbour Watch are encouraging the public to report any suspicious activity.</p> <p><u>Upcoming Events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poole Harbour Bi-Annual Conference scheduled for February 2027. • Opportunity to either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote attendance from this end of the county. - Explore hosting a similar event locally. <p><u>Staffing and Support</u></p> <p>A 45% reduction in staff has occurred due to restructuring. Efforts are underway to determine how best to support affected groups. Plans to recruit a volunteer to act as a communications liaison. If anyone is interested, please get in touch.</p> <p><u>Security marking</u> Discussions with Amanda confirmed March, April time 2026 to look at setting up an event. BD – Added, not many people seem interested as everyone has insurance.</p> <p><u>Government Funding & Distribution</u> Dorset’s Police and Crime Commissioner secured £24,000 in government funding to</p>				

<p>distribute Selecta DNA anti-theft marking kits to farmers. These kits help mark equipment with a unique DNA code, making stolen items easier to identify and recover. Research shows these kits can reduce theft risk by up to 83%. Although up to 50 DNA bottles have been registered, only 3 or 4 farmers are reportedly attending related events or follow-ups. This is something we could potentially apply for, to distribute marking kits to harbours.</p>	
<p>7. Harbours Advisory Committee Chair's updates</p>	
<p>Congratulations to SH, looking forward to working with you in the future.</p> <p>Dorset Council has a new appointed Chief Executive. Katherine Howe has joined from Worthing and Adur Councils and started her role during the first week of August.</p> <p>It has been a quiet time over the summer. No meetings were held in August or September and I was away during the September Advisory Committee.</p> <p>SH - Proposed that Nick remain as the HCG representative and continue to lead on Phase 5 matters, citing his experience and the benefits of working closely together. A query was raised regarding the constitutional appropriateness of this arrangement, noting that such responsibilities would typically fall to the Vice Chair. After discussion, all members agreed that Nick can continue in the role. LR – Current Vice Chair will discuss this further with SH and NM outside of the meeting.</p>	
<p>8. Harbour Masters update</p>	
<p>Dredging trials are hoped to proceed in the second week of November. If successful, a full application for a dredging licence will be submitted.</p> <p>Bridport already holds a licence and is authorised to use the water injection method.</p> <p>The expected outcome of the trials is to confirm that the water injection method is effective. Materials are successfully moved and dispersed outside the harbour area, in line with environmental and operational requirements.</p> <p>JW – Offered to run an article or feature in the Town council magazine if given the information. BM – Will ensure TC members are added to our Newsletter circulation list.</p> <p><u>HRO Timeline</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 September 2020 <p>Initial Council Discussion - Dorset Council's Harbours Committee recommended applying for a joint HRO to modernise legislation for both harbours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 December 2020 <p>HCG Meeting – KB explained what will be highlighted within the HRO that will be made by full council and Harbours Committee to the MMO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 July 2020 <p>Formal Application Submitted - Dorset Council submitted the HRO application to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2022 <p>Draft HRO Published - The draft Harbour Revision Order was made publicly available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2022 <p>Statement of Support Issued - Dorset Council published a formal statement supporting the HRO.</p>	<p>BM</p>

- **26 January 2023**

Public Consultation Begins - A statutory 42-day public consultation period commenced. 26th Jan and 2nd Feb 23 - HRO Public Notice was Published in Bridport and Lyme Regis News.

- **9 March 2023**

Public Consultation Ends - Deadline for submitting objections or representations to the MMO.

- **6 February 2025**

HCG Meeting - Harbour Consultative Group discussed harbour matters, including HRO, reported we are still waiting to hear from the Government on sign off.

- **15 May 2025**

HCG Meeting - Another meeting of the Harbour Consultative Group, reviewing HRO, reported the HRO is currently at the top of the pile.

- **17 September 2025**

Harbours Advisory Committee Update - Committee received updates on HRO progress and harbour operations.

The Harbour Revision Order is scheduled to be laid before Parliament on 15 December. If successful, the order will be enforced from 1 January 2026.

SH – Asked what the main changes will be once enforced?

JR - Explained that the HRO will identify and formalise all land assets associated with the harbour, including kiosks, car parks, and the compound.

This will ensure that any income generated from these assets remains within the harbour and is ringfenced for harbour use result in the harbour operation reaching break-even, rather than being subsidised.

EC – Added that powers include the ability to give General Directions, with a minimum implementation period of six weeks for statutory consultation. General Directions will be given that replace the existing powers. This forms part of the modernisation and confirmation of all existing powers. It was noted that the last time the Cobb Act was updated was in 1821, highlighting the significance of the current legislative review.

9.Phase 5 update

Matthew Penny - Presentation of Phase 5 and Void Works. Managing coastal defences at Lyme Regis. Repair and stabilise, not modernise. (Appendix 1)

Planning: Summer 2026
 Construction Start: Spring 2027
 Inner Wall: Winter works
 Outer Wall: Spring works

Funding:
 Total cost: £8.5 million
 Current shortfall: 50%
 Increased costs are due to design changes, inflation and consultancy.
 Funding is secured for design stage only.

Licensing:
 Grade I listed structure.
 Complex consents from Historic England, MMO, Natural England.

LR - Asked what the consequences could be if we proceeded without full support?

MP - Proceeding without full support: Local Repercussions: Potential structural failure,

public safety concerns.

Political Repercussions: Member approval is required; reputational and financial risks, including potential legal consequences.

BJ – Asked if the objections are cosmetic or structural?

MP – A bit of both:

Structural concerns: Not fully convinced by the proposed design.

Cosmetic/historic concerns: Main issue is the impact on the historic nature of The Cobb. The preference is for traditional methods over modern engineering techniques.

JL – Asked if the shortfall is present or future?

MP - Based upon present value cost.

LR – Asked where figures of shortfall have come from?

MP – Design complexity increased to meet long-term lifespan. Previous estimates based on eligibility, not full scope. Inflation and consultancy costs.

Tourism benefits considered, but only partially funded due to national scheme criteria.

NM – Highlighted that the issue with Historic England has been ongoing for two and a half years.

MP – Emphasised the need to put forward proposals regardless of the delay.

DB – Mentioned concerns from harbour users about summer works, however, believes the situation will be manageable and noted the importance of considering seasonal timing (summer vs. winter) when planning works.

JK – Asked, as engineers reviewing the existing Cobb structure, what scale of storm events could cause a breach?

MP – The structure is old, making accurate estimations difficult. Consultants previously provided an audit approximately seven years ago, estimating a remaining lifespan of 15–20 years (up to around 2034). That estimate was considered reasonable at the time. If the void had not been repaired, failure could occur much sooner.

JW – Questioned whether aiming for 2027 is too optimistic, considering the volume of specialist work required.

MP – 2027 is the earliest realistic delivery date. Highlighting that licensing constraints will also impact the timeline.

CR – Asked what options are available if the current design is not being accepted.

MP – Stated that there have been no pre-meeting discussions on alternatives and added costs may reduce if different techniques are used, potentially allowing for a shorter design life.

LR – Clarified that although the method won't involve sheet piling, the structure will extend beyond that point and expressed hope that the design will support quicker natural greening.

DB – Noted that rock armouring was suggested for 2026 but never implemented. Raised concerns that it was expected to cause scouring and asked what is being done to prevent this.

MP – Confirmed that the current design addresses areas prone to scouring and is one of the main objectives. The use of concrete structures is intended to prevent further scour.

JL – Asked if this design has already been successfully implemented in other harbours.

MP – Yes.

PO - Asked if the concrete on the outside will affect moorings?

MP – No, it will be flush to the bed.

MS – Asked whether, in the absence of an exclusion zone, the structure could be built just inches away from existing defences? provided the new defence is strong enough. And added that any gaps would eventually fill in over time.

NM – Asked whether rock armour provides the same anti-scour protection as the proposed design, and if so, why it couldn't be used instead?

MP – Confirmed that rock armour was considered as an option, however, it's a modern design using large rocks and was found to be more expensive than the option currently being taken forward.

Funding has already been applied for and approved.
There is concern about the risk of reapplying, as it could jeopardize the funding already secured, however, there is potential for additional funding if new criteria are introduced. The team agreed that they would want to review any new criteria before considering a reapplication. It was noted that central government funding was allocated quickly, highlighting the competitive nature of the process.

LR – Asked what the Harbour Advisory Committees view is on design and risk?

RH - The committee is advised by engineers and has been hearing about the project over the past six years. Heritage England and other coastal bodies have tightened regulations, and while they are engaging with designs, they have not clearly stated what they would like to see.

LR – Also raised the point that funding opportunities are a key part of the discussion.

JW – Noted that the project is approaching the point of intervention, raising concerns about future funding needs.

DC – Asked whether funding would be available if the project reaches the intervention stage?

RH - Highlighted that there is a large funding gap, and Dorset Council does not have the necessary funds. Efforts to identify reserves within DC have proven difficult.

CR – Asked whether the current void works are part of the new design?

MP – Clarified that the void works are separate and are being carried out within the existing footprint of the Cobb. The new design extends outside the current structure. It will use marine-grade materials, which are stronger and more durable. While eventual wear is expected, the design has a long lifespan.

An engagement event is scheduled for the 27th at the Lyme Regis Pavilion. Community engagement is a key priority, and all are welcome to attend.

10. User representatives report

Harbour Traders

Local traders in Lyme Regis have reported a decline in income this season, this may be due to the ongoing cost of living crisis, and as a result, discretionary spending such as dining out has decreased.

EC – Added that this report is similar across many Harbours.

JW – Added there is a rise in food bank usage, 125 bags at Christmas just for single children, any help would be appreciated.

JW - Reported a rise in food bank usage, noting that 125 bags were distributed at Christmas specifically for single children.

Any additional support would be greatly appreciated.

CR - Added that the food bank operates on a voucher system, with distributions taking place on a weekly basis.

Boat Building Academy

The next student boat launch will be on Monday 8th December at 08:30.

4 boats will be launched and all are welcome.

Lyme Regis Sea School

Has finished its sailing operations for 2025 and is planning for 2026.

Our Principal, Josh Bolton, is stepping down due to getting married in October and taking on extra commitments in his normal work of being a teacher and our Chief Instructor, Natasha Dower, is moving into full time work.

Our replacements are Simon Law, who has sailed at Lyme since he was 10 and is returning from working abroad in the Water Sports industry. Phoebe Clark will become our Chief Instructor. Again, she has sailed in Lyme from her youth and was the Lead Senior Instructor at Sea School this year. The understanding of working closely with the Harbour staff will continue despite the change in staff.

We have worked closely with the Harbour team during the launch and recovery of the RIBS used during the summer and would like to thank the whole team for their commitment in making this a safe operational manoeuvre within our working day to complete.

Lyme Regis Sailing Club

It has been a mixed season, some blustery periods but also light winds. Easterlies have meant disconnection of pontoons more often than usual. Little interruption to sailing programme. Increased youth participation in club racing. The club has a healthy membership including dinghy sailors, cruisers and social members.

The annual AGM will be held on 15 November at 14.00hrs.

Thanks to all Harbour staff for good working relationship.

1. Firefly Nationals Championships 16 – 22 August

Entry was 74, berthed on slipway with 5 in club park.

Thank you to other Harbour users for consideration, minimum disruption to event.

Care taken by Beach master and Slipway team to monitor slipway and control fleet especially during launching and recovery periods.

Thanks to Harbour staff for adapting assistance when pontoons disconnected during easterlies and for extension to landing pontoon. Little congestion except on 22nd when recovery slot brought forward.

Harbour staff attended reception and prize giving.

2. Sailing Regatta

Held successfully with a limited number of visitors. Youth sailors took part.

3. Club Programme 2026

No major events planned. A Fireball Open Meeting for about 30 boats to be held on 20/21 June weekend, date booked with Harbour. Sailing Club Regatta will be 1 and 2 August, at start of Regatta Week. There will be a Youth Regatta, racing and training programme similar to 2025 but with more opportunities for free/family sailing. Programme available Spring 2026.

4. Youth training

Race group continues throughout the Autumn. Saturday Seamanship group runs until Christmas.

Optimist group has ended for the season.

5. Beach dinghy park.

Dinghies have allocated Winter season spaces from 1 October.

6. Lift Out of Cruisers

This is planned for 7 Oct for bilge keelers and 10 Oct for lift keelers. Bookings for lifts are through the Harbour staff.

Phase 5 works

We are anticipating an update to this meeting, with progress on Historic England's latest response and Phase 5 funding, with the emergency work starting on the spring tides in November.

Non-commercial Mooring Holder

1. Ghost moorings are still proving to be a big problem in various parts of the harbour. These are mooring buoys and lines that are half covered and easily picked up by a prop especially in low light. Also there have been lots of stray lines floating around.
2. Props are still left unprotected in various places.
3. Over width tenders protrude well beyond the width of tender racks and are proving to be making access difficult for several boat owners.
4. Motor/Sailing season has been virtually non-existent. My early year sailing pilgrimage to Helford was marred by irregular winds and weather. An excellent summer season but with virtually no consistent wind. Please note for those who undertake longer voyages that there are several Mussel farm/beds [Not on Charts] East of Torbay. The rest of the year stopped by a combination of too much sunshine and no wind.
5. Observation the end of season lift date 27th September appears to be getting earlier. Could we have a reason for this? Also, can harbour staff make sure that mooring holders have prepped their boats prior to launch and retrieval. e.g. Engines start.
6. Prior to 2026 Season could harbour staff complete a standardisation survey?

1990 Chains were 3M Allowing for adjustment depending on boat length, Mooring lines 2 Mts. Warps, Pick up lines and buoys leaded. Pick up lines Starboard side [assuming boat pointing West East]. Hopefully preventing boats from contacting each other, allowing leaving and return to harbour less stressful.

7. Can Dorset at the HCG meeting address/explain that they are investigating "Coastal tidal drift erosion and prevention. "West side of Cobb Wall" Caused by extended rock armouring of South side of Cobb.

JR – 1&2. Will ensure Mooring lines are checked and props not covered to be investigated.

3. Tenders will be organised to allocated specific spaces for wider tenders.

7. JR – Suggested that a letter from this group could be beneficial in influencing decisions.

NM – Has written to the MP and the Harbour Advisory Committee (HAC) and received a direct response to a question.

PF – Suggested pressuring Natural England like how road and building schemes are sometimes pushed through.

BJ – Explained that schemes can only be pushed through if they are of national importance. The Cobb is not considered nationally important. Also mentioned that there is clear guidance available and it can be reviewed.

MM - Administer can call in planning applications, especially when objectors include bodies like Historic England.
How about applications from Dorset Council and Town Council.

JW – Emphasized the power of face-to-face meetings. Suggested inviting relevant stakeholders down through the local MP.
Also recommended making the public consultation process more transparent and accessible.

RNLI

A total of 30 shouts so far this year. This is relatively low for Lyme Regis. A breakdown is as follows:

- Assisting other emergency services 4, Cas care (land deployed) 2, Cut off by tide 3, Fire on board vessel 1, Floating debris 1, Inflatables 1, Kayaking 1, Missing Person 1, Paddleboarding 3, Person in Water 1, Powered Boat 6, Landslip Rescue 1, Vulnerable people 2, Yacht/sailing boat 2.

RNLI lifeguards were stationed on the beach from late July until early September. During the season they dealt with several incidents requiring first aid, along with multiple missing children. The team also carried out several water rescues using the rescue board helping members of public back to the beach after getting into difficulty in the water. Two of these incidents involved users of Stand-Up Paddle boards unable to get back to shore.

We held a successful Lifeboat Week in late July which generated significant funds for the charity. As always, we are grateful to the Harbour staff for their assistance during these and other events, and for the forbearance of other harbour who may have been inconvenienced by activities in and around the harbour.

Lyme Regis RNLI is celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2026, and several events have already been planned to mark this milestone. We are looking at mid-August to hold 2026 lifeboat week.

Non-Boating Water Activities

The dolphin was last seen on 30 September, and we understand has moved along the coast.

JR –
SHA

Lyme Splash Swim was cancelled due to the weather and will be run by a charity next year. More details will be announced later in the year.

Lyme Splash Water Polo Championship was successfully run this year by Bridport Barracudas - with minimal input from myself - and they will carry on next year.

Lyme Regis Power Boat Club

We would like to mention our waterski racing team's performance at the recent world championships in Belgium. James Bartlett achieved fourth place in Men's F2, but the GB Team's outstanding performance went to Sam Hopkins in the juniors. Sam achieved 6th place 18 months ago in Australia but improved this to second in Belgium. This is an incredible result given the US' and Australians' dominance in this sport, and who knew Lyme Regis had two world class athletes!

We would also like to mention a memorial gathering that took place at the clubhouse this weekend for a stalwart of our club, Syd Hawkins, who passed away recently, aged 78.

Syd was a [very] long-standing member of the club. He was secretary when I joined in 1984, and he played a major part in the club's move to its current location. He was out enjoying his boat right up until a few weeks before his passing.

At the gathering a memorial was unveiled in the form of a small unassuming gate at the side of the club car park, an access that Syd always used to move between the club and his beach hut. The new gate (and plaque) was made by the Furniture School above the BBA, so a big thank-you to them for providing a little something to help us remember Syd.



Boatmen/Charters – Concerns were raised regarding the lack of communication and planning around the recent RNLI air event. 48hrs notice received from the Harbour office wasn't enough time to make necessary changes.

It's been observed that the standard of cleanliness at the Cobb is poor.

Action is needed; Jet washing and other cleaning measures should be rigorously enforced.

JR: This responsibility lies with the fishermen, and enforcement should be strengthened.

MS - Holes are filling with water. Facilities need improvement.

Suggestion, Grooves should be cut to allow water to drain properly.

JR - Will add this to the job list.

Concerns were raised over increasing numbers of kids swimming in and around the Harbour mouth, this is very dangerous.

Commercial Fisherman – The pontoons have now gone, why is there a vessel sat on wall? Can it be moved to a mooring?

JR – Yes.

<p>Q – Where are you dredging when you have the trial? A – JR, the pontoon area but may need to look at approach. Q - If it doesn't work do you have a plan B? A – JR - Possibly back to Axminster Excavators.</p> <p>Q – Any news on the Crane? A – JR, this should arrive in November.</p>	
11. Q&A's	
12. AOB	
<p>DB – Toilets are a concern. CR – The Town Council are currently trying to take toilets back from DC to maintain them JR – I believe they are being maintained at this moment.</p> <p>SH – A shed on the Cobb has recently been relinquished, there are rumours around plans for this, can you provide any information? JR – There are no plans now.</p> <p>Next meeting – provisionally marked for Thursday 5th February</p> <p>Meeting concluded, 20:20</p>	