



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
24 APRIL 2026**

Present: Phil Hagen – Chairman (PH)  
Mark Bew (MB)  
Clive Blount (CB)  
Vanessa Clifford (VC)  
Fiona Fitzherbert-Brockholes (FF-B)  
Jason Losty (JL)  
Giles Peckham (GP)  
Lee Rayment (LR)  
Jackie Riley (JR)  
Gary Hall (GH) – Chief Executive

In Attendance: Jon Kidd (JK) – Harbour Master  
Roger Parrott (RP) – Finance Director

PH welcomed Lee Rayment, the new Cowes Harbour Commissioner, to his first meeting as an observer.

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of Interest and Declarations of Related Party Transactions for Cowes Harbour Commissioners are documented on the CHC website. Commissioners are in the process of updating their annual Declarations of Interest.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Rupert MacInnes (RM)

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 13 March 2026, having been sent out, it was resolved that they be signed as a true and complete record of business transacted. The Public Report was also unanimously approved.

**4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Action Tracker has been updated to show completed and live actions.

**5. HARBOUR MASTER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The HM Operational Report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board. JK highlighted the following:

- a. **Pilotage** – This remains quiet although three are scheduled for the forthcoming weekend.
- b. **New marina dredging** – There were some noise complaints, in particular after hours and

early mornings. JK has been working with the IWC Environmental Health Team and negotiated new working hours which have been agreed so the issue is now resolved.

- c. **Pontoons at Town Quay** – These will be replaced next year. The deck boards will be pressure jet-washed in the meantime to reduce slippiness.
- d. **Flare disposal** – CB asked whether it would be worth considering having an amnesty week, as a stakeholder benefit, which might reduce the dumping of some flares. It was felt that this would be counterproductive and costly, so a reminder will be put out through social media that flares can be handed in at any time, at a cost of £6 per flare.
- e. **Chain ferry** – JK updated the Board on the discussions and in particular that the designers appear adamant that the ferry must be made from steel and not aluminium. CHC wish to challenge this assertion and would prefer to see more focus on local involvement with Island shipyards. JK will seek an official response from the designers as to why they are ruling out aluminium, and PH will write to the IWC Leader setting out CHC's view.

## 6. HARBOUR MASTER'S HEALTH and SAFETY REPORT

The HM Health and Safety Report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board. JK highlighted the following:

- a. **Site Inspections** – Site inspections were conducted by the management team, and an in-depth dive was conducted around the fuel berth.
- b. **MAIB reports** – JK shared links within the recent MAIB and HSE reports and links have been shared with the site managers.
- c. **SaRG meeting** – the last meeting was positive with the main action being to draw up the operational risk assessments for the new marina.
- d. **Incidents** – Six incidents were reported, three of which were propulsion failure, one was a grounding, one a medical assistance and one assistance with a mud rescue. There was a near-miss at Kingston whereby a small area of concrete showed signs of sinking under one of the hoist wheels. The hoist was immediately manoeuvred clear, and the area will be repaired. A pre-use inspection of the crane at Shepards showed a spring on the hook safety catch to be damaged. This was replaced. RA and SOP reviews are ongoing.
- e. **New signage** – New signs are being installed on the Shrape Breakwater and RYS Battlements for 6kts/No wash/VHF 69. A galvanized frame on bolted mountings will be used rather than being welded, so that if there is contact it will swivel rather than bend. Some work is also going to be undertaken in tidying up the river and signage.

## 7. CEO REPORT

The CEO report was previously circulated with the papers and fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following:

- a. **Cowes Harbour Marina** –
  - i. Planning application – Island Roads raised an objection about parking. GH has met with IR and the IWC planning officer and explained why the Island Waterways Regulations do not apply to marinas.
  - ii. The Guard House – GH had a good meeting with the IWC planning officer and Heritage officer focusing on the practicalities of what CHC is trying to achieve. CHC have now submitted an addendum to the planning application setting out why the Guard House has been designed the way it has been, and that any other configuration would require a larger extension.
  - iii. Natural England – NE claimed the existence of salmon in the river and CHC have challenged this. However, they have also raised concerns about sea trout and a requirement to protect smolts and adults and have said that no piling can occur between March and October. This would severely impact the marina build and GH has therefore contacted NE to try and discuss the issue with them and in particular what

evidence they are using to form their view. FF-B highlighted that other ports have come across this issue and there were some steps that could be put in place, such as piling at specific times of the day. GH will look further into this.

- iv. **MMO License** – notification has been received from the MMO requesting CHC to put out a public notice in two local newspapers and a physical notice near the marina development. The notices have to be available for 42 days. It is expected that the planning application will go to the planning committee around 22 June 2026.
- b. **Shepards and Kingston** - GH urged commissioners to visit these when they can as both are looking very good and significant work has been undertaken to spruce them up. PH also said that the teams are always happy to meet with the commissioners.

## 8. FINANCE REPORT FOR APRIL 2026

Copies of the Financial Management Reports for April 2026 were circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board.

## 9. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The Environment & Sustainability report was previously circulated with the papers and fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following

- a. **Green Impact** – the Toolkit has been submitted and there was a successful audit, the results of which will be published in June.
- b. **Pump Out Facility** – Filming is booked for 11 May at Shepards Marina.
- c. **Rubbish Networking Event** – these events are held in collaboration with NOSY Creative Agency, and the next event will take place on 22 May in Cowes, meeting and finishing at the Sugar Store. This event is useful for aligning with EcoPorts and covers stakeholder engagement, waste management and community engagement. The event will be covered through social media and the CHC newsletter.
- d. **Sea Bin** – this has now arrived and once a location has been determined, will be installed and signage ordered.

## 10. CHAC MEETING

- i. The meeting took place on 15 April and GH gave the group an update on the planning application for the new marina, and explained how CHC undertook substantial consultation before the application went in. JK also updated the group on safety and harbour activities.
- ii. GH and Mark Southwell had worked on a new Constitution which had been previously circulated to the CHAC. Two key changes were firstly putting a time limit on how long a representative can be on CHAC (it now replicates CHC's constitution) and secondly that when someone leaves, the Chair decides who the replacement will be. The new constitution was approved by the group.

The next CHAC meeting is on Wednesday 9 September at 10.00 at East Cowes Sailing Club.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **CHC Strategy Day** – Ra Hennessey will put together a draft research paper and notes from the meeting. CB has produced an extensive list of questions and GH encouraged commissioners to put thoughts and ideas forward to help decide what should go in to the research.
- b. **British Ports Association Trust Port Governance Survey** – PH has received this and will circulate to the Board.
- c. **Vanessa Clifford** – PH gave thanks to Vanessa and her seven years of valuable service as commissioner and added that Vanessa will be greatly missed.

Date of next meeting: Friday 12 June 2026, at Cowes Harbour Commission Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight.

 12/06/26