

Bridport (West Bay) & Lyme Regis Harbours Report

Harbours Advisory Committee
29 June 2026



James Radcliffe

Bridport (West Bay) and Lyme Regis Harbour Master

Harbour Statistics Report

1. Bridport

The current statistics tables indicate that Bridport's performance remains broadly comparable over the two-year comparison period in terms of season tickets and visiting boat nights. An increase in single launches is evident, reflecting higher levels of day-use activity. Shop income remains consistent across the two years, while diving air fills are slightly lower, aligning with recent weather conditions affecting diving activity

2. Lyme Regis

The statistics for Lyme Regis show that increased season ticket sales over the two-year comparison period have been offset by a reduction in day launches, resulting in a broadly balanced overall activity level. Visiting boat nights continue to perform strongly, demonstrating good demand from the visiting fleet, and shop performance also remains strong, contributing positively to overall income.

3. Seasonal Conditions

The start of the season has been relatively slow, largely due to unfavourable weather conditions. Low temperatures, frequent high winds, and persistent cloud cover have limited harbour activity. It was not until mid-May that a more noticeable increase in boat launches and visiting vessels was seen, as conditions began to improve.

4. Relinquishments

At Bridport, 15 moorings have been relinquished, with 8 new offers accepted.

At Lyme Regis, 26 moorings have been relinquished, including 5 removed due to non-use and therefore not meeting harbour criteria. A total of 19 new mooring offers have been accepted.

5. Mooring Occupancy

Bridport: Mooring occupancy is 77.4% for private moorings and 61.5% for commercial moorings.

Lyme Regis: Mooring occupancy is 79% for private moorings and 68.5% for commercial moorings.

Bridport Harbour Statistics

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Against Previous Year Profile
Season Tickets	82	85	66	69	4.5%
Single Launches	489	404	318	371	16.6%
Visiting Boats Nights	157	163	160	150	-6.2%
Boat Lifts	£11,098	£7,785	£9,285	£11,145	20%
Quay Side Parking	£8,478	£10,024	£13,795	£11,395	-17.4%
Shop	£26,278	£17,740	£17,764	£20,007	12.6%
Diving Air Fills	£28,239	£23,134	£27,462	£24,382	-11.2%
Waiting List – Leisure	17	9	10	5	-50%
Commercial	6	7	6	6	0%
Leisure Moorings (out of 137)	124	110	95	94	-1.0%
Commercial Moorings (out of 26)	23	21	12	12	0%

Lyme Regis Harbour Statistics

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Against Previous Year Profile
Season Tickets	61	78	51	78	53%
Single Launches	211	159	181	160	-11.6%
Visiting Boats Nights	375	313	168	199	18.45%
Boat Lifts	£14,722	£11,341	£12,375	£12,262	-0.90%
Quay Side Parking	£15,535	£21,541	£61,560	£63,000	2.4%
Shop (New July 2021)	£6,626	£11,772	£10,825	£11,148	3%
Waiting List – Leisure	32	14	13	10	-23%
Commercial	11	09	11	12	9%
Leisure Moorings (out of 209)	195	158	140	156	11.4%
Commercial Moorings (out of 35)	35	30	30	22	-27%

Staff Training and Competency

Staff Update

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the Bridport Harbour team:

- Andy Poole
- Mark Taylor

Andy and Mark bring a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to the harbour, and we're delighted to have them on board as we head into a busy spring and summer season.

Harbour Administration Staffing

Following a request to reduce administrative hours by one day per week, we are actively reviewing our current arrangements. Subject to approval, we are proposing to relocate Becky to work primarily from the Bridport office and to recruit a full-time administrator based in Lyme Regis. This approach is

intended to improve administrative resilience across both sites while enabling operational staff to spend more time out of the office focusing on harbour activities.

Staff Training and Courses

- MCA Beach Master's Course (date to be confirmed)
- New staff have qualified and are now able to fill dive cylinders
- JCB Telehandler renewals (to be arranged)

Harbour Consultative Group (HCG)

Both HCG groups meeting were held at each harbour during the second week of May. Both meetings were well attended and covered a broad range of topics, which have been reported on by the respective group Chairs.

PMSC Audit

An audit of Bridport Harbour against the requirements of the PMSC was held on the 24th of March. The recently re-formatted Marine Safety Management System was audited against the April 2025 revision of the PMSC, and the harbour was found to be compliant with all relevant aspects of the code.

The following points of best practice are noted:

- Provision and maintenance of Aids to Navigation is recognised as an area of best practice with a 100% availability statistic across all categories of Aid.
- The Council has a consistent and measurable approach to marine safety.
- Quayside safety and provision found to be in excellent order.
- New updated Marine Safety Management System (MSMS) was audited in its draft form, this new MSMS aligns with the requirements of the new Code and is an improvement in clarity and operational functionality over its predecessor.

The PMSC audit identified 2 observations relating to improvement opportunities for management consideration, the detailed findings being presented in Appendix A. The following points identify the more significant items:

- There has been an issue with considerable sand depositing in the Harbour following a series of winter storms. It is advised that a form of mitigation control is considered to reduce or prevent this becoming an issue moving forward.
- The CHA function has been reviewed as not required, progress to removal of the pilotage service is needed.

James Hannon (Designated Person) said: *"The harbours team are demonstrating an excellent attitude towards marine safety across Dorset ports, with continuing improvements being implemented and maintained to a very high standard."*

A full report on the audit by James Hannon will be presented to members at the September meeting.

Harbour Works

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS) Funding

Quay side davits and cranes

Bridport's project is currently ongoing and is expected to be completed shortly, after which a funding claim will be submitted. Lyme Regis' project has now been completed, with the new crane installed and operational, and the associated funding has been successfully received.

- *Bridport* – Total project cost: £78,421
75% grant value: £58,815.75
- *Lyme Regis* – Total project cost: £9,850
75% grant value: £7,387.50

Bridport Harbour

Food Kiosk

Refurbishment of the food kiosk has commenced, including the installation of new external cladding, which will significantly improve its appearance.

Black Hut Coffee & Ice Cream

The replacement "Black Hut" for the East Pier is currently being constructed off site. The existing hut is scheduled for dismantling in June, with the new structure to be installed shortly thereafter.

Staffing

Catering staff roles are currently undergoing job evaluation and will be advertised shortly, with the aim of both the food kiosk and Black Hut being operational by July

Harbour Buildings and NHS Porta Cabins Update

We currently have a number of porta cabins located on the slipway area, which are on a long-term loan from the NHS.

These units will provide temporary office accommodation, enabling us to maintain operations during periods when relocation is required, particularly in relation to the upcoming harbour wall works. They will also serve to house office equipment and ensure business continuity should access to existing facilities be restricted.

Looking ahead, as wider harbour administration plans are progressed, the porta cabins will continue to be utilised as office space to support operational needs.

In the longer term, there are larger plans in development for the site, including a full rebuild of the Harbour Master's office and public toilets. The proposed scheme will deliver a new, larger office facility, together with a shop, public conveniences, dive air filling room, retail unit, and meeting room. Subject to securing the necessary planning approval and funding, the porta cabins will act as our primary accommodation during the construction phase of these works.

These plans are currently progressing and are expected to be submitted for full planning later this year.

Dredging Update

Following the significant easterly storms earlier this year, the harbour experienced an unprecedented ingress of sand, which rapidly reduced available depths and posed a risk to harbour operations.

In response, we mobilised a crane equipped with a grab to undertake dredging works. This enabled us to maintain harbour operability while longer-term solutions were being progressed. Over a five-week period, from 2 February through to 13 March, approximately 10,000 tonnes of sand were removed using this method, ensuring the commercial fleet could continue daily operations with minimal disruption.

During this period, water injection dredging trials were also undertaken within the inner harbour, specifically in the East Basin. These trials proved highly successful, removing close to one metre of accumulated silt and significantly improving navigational conditions in that area.

At Lyme Regis, however, similar trials did not achieve the same level of success due to differing local conditions. As a result, alternative dredging options are currently being considered in consultation with engineers.

In parallel, we progressed the necessary consents for a larger-scale dredging operation. Members will appreciate this is a complex process involving multiple stakeholders and regulatory bodies, including the Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency, and Natural England. Consideration was also given to the financial implications and overall viability of proceeding with the full dredging programme.

Once consents and resources were secured, a cutter suction dredger was mobilised to site on 20 April. Dredging operations commenced on or around 26 April and were successfully completed by 8 May.

Overall, the approach taken ensured that the harbour remained operational throughout and that adequate depths have been restored for ongoing use.

Lyme Regis Harbour

Cobb Buildings Refurbishment

Works are scheduled for June to maintain and refurbish the Cobb buildings, including the fishermen's stores. Asset and Property-led works will include redecoration of the buildings, along with the completion of any necessary repairs to ensure they remain in a safe and serviceable condition

Timber Piles – Victoria Pier

Recent harbour inspections have identified that the timber piles along Victoria Pier have deteriorated more rapidly than anticipated and are now in need of replacement. The current arrangement includes access ladders fixed directly to these piles, and further deterioration may require their removal. A replacement programme is therefore being developed, making use of available materials sourced from Bournemouth Council.

Images below illustrate the extent of the deterioration to the piles, along with the condition of some of the ladder fixings.



Aids to Navigation

Inspection of Local Aids to Navigation, Merchant Shipping Act, 1995, Section 198(1)

Since the last committee meeting, no inspections of aids to navigation have been carried out by Trinity House; however, local inspections confirm that all aids remain in good and efficient order

Maritime and Local Events

A full list of a events can be seen below with more event information on our harbour websites.

Bridport

- UKWR Waterski Race 16 & 17 May 2026
- West Bay Days Pirates Weekend 23 & 24 May 2026
- WBSAC 18 & 19 July 2026 Open Boat Weekend
- WB River Annual Raft Race 23 July 2026
- OCRDA Race 25 July 2026
- West Bay Days West Bay Weekend 1 & 2 August 2026
- Gig Club Regatta 8 August 2026
- Earth my Earth art project 13 September 2026
- West Bay Days Bonfire by the Beach 31 October 2026

Lyme Regis

- Bridgewater Harleys Group 2 May 2026
- RNLI Blessing of the boats 10 May 2026
- LRGC Masters regatta 16 & 17 May 2026
- Lyme Regis Sailing Club (LRSC) Fireballs Open 21 June 2026
- LRSC Youth Regatta 11 July 2026
- Somers Day Parade 2 July 2026
- LRSC Regatta 1 & 2 August 2026
- Lyme Splash Water Polo 1 & 2 August 2026
- Lifeboat week 15 – 23 August 2026
- Lyme Splash 6 September 2026