

Minutes
Scarborough Harbour Users Group
Wednesday 22 July 2026
Town Hall, Scarborough

Present:

Chris Bourne: Head of Harbours, North Yorkshire Council (NYC)
Gary Pearson: Harbour Master
James Buck, Deputy Harbour Master
Helen Jackson: Head of Regeneration, North Yorkshire Council (NYC)
Councillor Janet Jefferson: NYC Councillor, Castle Ward
Councillor Thomas Murray: Scarborough Town Council, Castle Ward
Wave Crooks: Operations Director, Seagrown
Keith Eade: Scarborough Boat Angling Club
Paul Fishburn: Fisherman (Smaller Boats)
Robin Gray: Scarborough Harbour Advisory Board
John Senior: RNLI
Adrian Sayers: Scarborough Yacht Club
Simon Bull: North Yorkshire Maritime Cluster

Apologies:

Shaun Wood
Malcolm Hall
Kirsty Patullo

		Action
1.	Welcome & Apologies: Chris opened the meeting, and apologies were noted as above.	
2.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record. No matters arising were identified.	
3.	Harbour Strategy and Action Plan Chris Bourne reported that the Harbour Strategy was adopted by the Council's Executive in June 2026, following public consultation and incorporation of feedback. The document is now publicly available on the Council's website. Action Plan Priorities for 2026: Harbour Communication Plan: Development of a corporate-style communication plan specifically for the harbours to improve communication with users. A draft will be circulated to the group for comment.	CB

	Scarborough Bull Nose and Lighthouse Piers Replacement: Project to replace the deteriorated steel piles around the lighthouse pier and bull nose is progressing, with procurement expected to commence within the next month. Clarification on Piling: Paul Fishburn questioned if this would be a proper re-piling or over-plating. Chris Bourne clarified that these would be brand new steel sheet piles driven in, unlike the temporary plating on the West Pier. The solution is likely to be to slightly advance the line of the piers, potentially reducing the entrance width by approximately one metre each side, and to align with future straightening plans for the West Pier. Project Timeline: Procurement within a month, contractor and designer identified by Christmas, marine licences from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) taking 6-12 months, aiming for design and consents by late 2027, and on-site work in early 2028, to be done in two phases. Concerns were raised about MMO delays and the need for earlier application, but full design and method statements are required before application. Second Scarborough Harbour Dredging Campaign: A second dredging campaign is planned for Scarborough later in 2026, after the dredger completes its work in Whitby.	
4.	Coastal Growth Fund Applications Five expressions of interest for funding from the government's Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund (approx. £300 million) have been submitted. Submitted Applications: • Maritime Cluster Development: £230,000 for staffing and events to support the North Yorkshire Maritime Cluster. • Clean Ports Power: £1.635 million to instal shore-side power outlets in Whitby and Scarborough to reduce pollution from stationary vessels. • Fishing Workforce Resilience: £1.875 million for physical measures supporting health and well-being, improving accessibility to moorings/berths, and replacing ageing cranes in Scarborough and Whitby. • Shellfish Processing: £625,000 for fitting out Building 3 to create a larger shellfish processing facility. • West Pier Extension Feasibility Study: £200,000 to conduct initial feasibility studies, designs, and surveys for the "Blue Sky" project. Discussion on "Blue Sky" Plan and Funding: Robin Gray and John Senior asked if the "Blue Sky" plan had been adopted by the Council ? Chris Bourne confirmed it is now integrated into the adopted Harbour Strategy. Robin Gray expressed concern about the accuracy of figures in grant applications, citing previous discrepancies (e.g., boat lift income projections). He stressed the need for robust business cases that demonstrate return on investment (ROI) and job creation. Chris Bourne clarified that the £200,000 application is for a feasibility study to establish accurate costs and benefits of the scheme.	

	Chris Bourne highlighted the council's commitment by applying for funding to initiate the project, noting that securing initial grants often facilitates further funding. The need for a feasibility study and cost estimates was acknowledged as a prerequisite for approaching external bodies for funding. General frustration was expressed regarding the slow pace of progress and perceived wasted money on consultations without tangible outcomes. Concerns were raised that the council might be less willing to invest if external grants are not secured, particularly following issues with ring-fenced harbour funds. Chris Bourne disagreed, stating that securing funds has been easier since the ring-fencing issue was identified, with more money spent on harbours in the last three years than in the previous decade. Chris Bourne reiterated the 10-year strategy to refurbish West Pier buildings, extend the inner pier, and deliver the "Blue Sky" vision, aiming for a successful harbour. Attendees stressed the need for greater urgency, citing opportunities like gas field developments and declining fishing income, advocating for a faster timeline than 10 years. Robin Gray advised he had developed a Green Book standard business case showing significant income potential of a boat lift and associated facilities (chandlery, engineering) was highlighted, with estimates of over £1.4 million per year and the potential for 240 berths in the outer harbour. Chris Bourne invited Robin Gray to share his detailed financial document for the feasibility study. Action: Keep the group updated on feedback from the MMO regarding the Coastal Growth Fund grant applications. – Chris Bourne. Action :Share the detailed financial document ("Green Book") regarding the harbour's income potential with Chris Bourne –Robin Gray	CB RG
5.	Scarborough Harbour User Group Structure and Membership Paul Fishburn questioned the selection process for group members, arguing that the current group is not a true "Scarborough Harbour User Group" but rather a council-selected committee. He advocated for an open meeting accessible to all harbour users. Chris Bourne explained that the previous Harbour User Group "fell apart" due to disruptive behaviour of one individual. He stated his intention to re-establish an orderly group, initially inviting organisational representatives, with the long-term goal of handing over stewardship back to the users once it is self-managing. Chris Bourne confirmed that certain individuals are now excluded due to inappropriate conduct including abusive social media posts, abusive emails, and illicit recording of meetings without consent. John Senior, Robin Gray and Paul Fishburn argued for including experienced individuals, regardless of past issues, for their valuable knowledge. Chris Bourne expressed concern that several of the individuals being proposed were not current harbour users and had conflicts of interest due to previous employment or commercial contracts that had recently ended. Paul Fishburn lamented the perceived reduction in the Harbour Master's autonomy compared to historical post holders, suggesting current Harbour	

	Masters are limited by council constraints. Chris Bourne clarified that the Harbour Master's legal powers are unfettered. Operational decisions are made locally by the Harbour Master but significant financial decisions especially regarding large capital expenditure are made within the local authority decision making structure set out in the Constitution, principally by elected members in the Executive.	
6.	North Yorkshire Maritime Cluster Simon Bull presented the initiative to establish a North Yorkshire Maritime Cluster, bridging the gap between existing clusters in Teesside and the Humber. It aims to coordinate the maritime industry across Whitby, Scarborough, Filey, and inland supply chains, fostering collaboration in education, leisure, tourism, marine renewables, oil and gas, hospitality, and water sports. North Yorkshire Council has provided seed funding. Richard Askam has been contracted to engage stakeholders and organise five kick-off meetings (Whitby, Scarborough, Filey, inland, and online) to gather input on the cluster's structure and objectives. An application to the Coastal Growth Fund aims to secure longer-term funding for the cluster. The cluster will be designed by its members, not imposed by the council, learning from best practises in Teesside and Humber which is expected to maximise opportunities, drive economic growth, and facilitate the delivery of projects outlined in the Harbour Strategy. Chris Bourne clarified that the council will facilitate and be a member of the cluster but believes an independent organisation is best suited to lead and run the cluster. Action: Circulate notifications for the North Yorkshire Maritime Cluster kick-off meetings to all attendees. – Simon Bull	SB
8.	West Pier Regeneration Project Update A previous planning application was controversial, leading to listed building consent being granted for repair works but not planning permission for the regeneration elements. Amended plans have now been prepared and were subject to public consultation. Chris Bourne provided a presentation (attached) of the public consultation approach and findings (1 June - 13 July): ○ Extensive outreach including Area Committee, harbour user sessions, local members, press releases, 3 public meetings (library), and one stall on Armed Forces Day. ○ Building 1 (Restoration): Strong support (87%). Comments highlighted poor condition, desire to preserve historic character, mixed views on future use (community, visitor, small business, maritime heritage). Opposition to restaurants/fast food, preference for fishing support. ○ Building 2 (Restoration): Strong support (87%). Similar comments, emphasis on workshops, offices, fish retail, prioritising fishing industry. ○ Building 3 (Fisheries Storage): Over 90% support. Emphasis on fishing industry needs and potential for offshore wind growth. Positive sentiment for existing businesses like The Lookout.	

- Building 4 (Demolition & Replacement): 87% support for modern fisheries building. Concerns about space loss and accommodating existing tenants. Recognition of working harbour functions, potential for boat hoist.
- Public Realm Area: 79% support. Positive feedback on relocating kiosks, mixed views on design/placement. Concerns about flood risk for new electrical substation (addressed by elevated, flood-proof design).
- Materials: 78% support for proposed materials, desire for heritage emphasis, avoiding "tacky seaside" styles.
- General Comments: Wide range of comments, some unrelated to the project (e.g., free toilets). Feedback predominantly from residents and visitors, with 13 harbour users and 7 business owners.

Adjustments suggested to the Scheme by some consultees :

- Kiosks to remain in current orientation and be renewed in situ.
- Public toilets to remain in Building 1.

Chris Bourne stated he was supportive of these but the final design was subject to further discussions with Management Board and Executive members and a future Executive decision.

Phase 1 Works:

Urgent building work and repairs to Building 1 will commence in September 2026. Listed building consent is already in place. This will remove the hoarding, re-open the building and remove the temporary toilets from the car park.

Future Phases:

Buildings 2 and 3, and later phases, require further planning permission and Executive approval.

Sewerage Issues:

Paul Fishburn highlighted the need to address the sewer system on the West Pier, suggesting comprehensive repair during toilet works.

Boat Lift Space:

Confirmation that the plans for Building 4 (reduced length, two stories) accommodate space for the boat lift.

Fishing Gear Storage: Paul Fishburn raised significant concerns about the lack of dedicated storage for fishing gear (pots), especially with increasing shellfish diversification.

Pot Storage Policy:

Gary Pearson confirmed a draft pot storage policy is being developed for both Scarborough and Whitby, designating specific areas. A walkabout with fishing representatives is planned to identify and remove unused gear.

Actions:

**Circulate the draft pot storage policy to the group for consultation.
Conduct a walkabout with a fishing representative to identify and address unused fishing gear on the harbour. – Gary Pearson**

Building uses :

Simon Bull noted the importance of finding suitable commercial tenants for refurbished buildings to avoid them becoming vacant or being converted to less desirable uses (e.g., restaurants). Chris Bourne confirmed three local

GP

	fishing/maritime industry businesses have expressed interest in expanding into the spaces once refurbished. Whitby Maritime Hub: Update provided on the Whitby Maritime Hub, which is nearing completion. Prospective tenants include the Harbour Master, education providers for maritime courses, and boat builders in advanced lease discussions. 2nd Floor Space remains to be filled.	
9.	Harbour Operations Update (Gary Pearson) Dredger Status: The dredger has suffered extensive breakdowns, attributed to its lack of historic maintenance, age, specialised equipment, and hostile working environment. It is comprised of two separate pieces of plant (vessel and excavator). Extensive repairs include replacing a faulty digging arm (corroded from 2.2 tonnes to 1.4 tonnes) and a "splitter engine" (first time this has failed), which is crucial for spoil disposal. The splitter engine repair is expected to be completed by tomorrow, with the dredger potentially operational by next week. While not "future-proof," the extensive repairs are hoped to significantly reduce future breakdowns. The excavator operator has also received additional training. Programme of Works: The dredger will return to Whitby to complete extensive work there, particularly at the river mouth. The aim is to complete Whitby work before the end of the bathing season, then return to Scarborough for another campaign. Dredging is restricted by MMO licences, requiring sampling and analysis to determine disposal at sea. This limits the volume and areas that can be removed. In April, 353 tonnes were removed from the sandbank, followed by 1199 tonnes in May over four working days. A new workboat, "Top Dog," has been acquired with significant capabilities. This is currently awaiting recertification, which is challenging due to a shortage of surveyors and upcoming changes to workboat codes. It will be fitted with survey equipment and a plough, allowing for both dredging and ploughing in rivers and harbour entrances. This represents a significant council investment. Oil Spill Response (OPRC Plan): Scarborough is being upgraded to a full OPRC Tier 2 area, mirroring Whitby's status. James Buck is developing the plan with Tier 2 contractors. Tier 1 approval is expected by end of September. Some staff are already trained as Level 5 responders. Local Aids to Navigation (AtoN): An external contractor has been engaged to conduct a full survey of local AtoN, as the last review was 12 years ago. Recommendations will be implemented. Fishing Industry Update: Tuna Licences:	

	Commercial bluefin tuna licences have been issued for Whitby fishermen, with the season starting soon. Infrastructure improvements have been made to facilitate landings for fishermen. This could be a future diversification for Scarborough, as historical records show tuna landings. Half a dozen charter permits for tuna fishing have also been issued, offering lucrative opportunities (£1200 for four people per trip). This could attract more visitors and revenue to harbours. Fishing Catch figures for Scarborough are included in the Harbour Master's report.	
10	Harbour Maintenance and Capital Projects The contractor is remobilising to finish grouting on the West Pier, expected to take a couple of months. This involves pumping foam grout into gap between the new plates and old piles. Paul Fishburn and Robin Gray reiterated concerns about large voids behind the original piles, citing diver observations. Chris Bourne stated that surveys have not shown these voids and offered to arrange a meeting with engineers to review documentation. Action: Arrange a meeting for Paul Fishburn and Robin Gray with the relevant engineers to discuss concerns about voids under the West Pier. Chris Bourne. The current West Pier repair is a temporary 10-year fix (£1.8 million) to buy time for the "Blue Sky" plan, as the pier was structurally unsound and would have required closure. A full repiling would have cost £5 million and been wasted if the line is moved. The repair has a +10 year life and 12-year guarantee. An independent dive team will inspect the completed works to identify any defects.	CB
12	Any Other Business Visiting Vessels FOI: Paul Fishburn questioned an FOI response regarding visiting commercial vessels, stating the figures seemed too low. Chris Bourne clarified that the FOI asked for "number of different vessels", not "number of launches". Bulletins: Gary Pearson was asked to share bulletins on ribs, life jackets, and LOI. Safety bulletins can be accessed here : MAIB safety information and flyers - GOV.UK Captain Bay Site Extension: Wave Crooks mentioned extending their Cayton Bay site, with consultations already held with yachts, anglers, and fishing groups.	GP
13	Date of Next Meeting Thursday 05 November 2026 – 14:00 in Seaview Conference Room, Town Hall	

User Group Update

July 2026

Dredger "Sandsend" 2025



Dredger

You may be aware that we have suffered some "breakdowns" lately. We did anticipate that we would have some issues when we received dredger back from a third-party management firm.

In layman's terms the dredger can be regarded as two pieces of heavy plant operating in a hostile marine environment, one being a 360 excavator with an 18m reach and capable of reaching a dredge depth of 8m, and the other the vessel itself. The Sandsend has several differing engines which includes:

- Two Main Engines
- Two HRP 360 Azimuth Propeller Units
- A Splitter Engine
- Bow Thruster Engine
- Generator Engine
- 360 digger Engine
- Hydraulic systems for the operation of the 2x 14m Spud Legs

As you may appreciate this is quite a specialised piece of heavy plant and many parts cannot not be sourced by nipping to our local Halfords

This list does not include electrical systems and navigational equipment. The term often used is that the "dredger as broke down" these four little words can mean a multitude of scenarios.

The majority of maintenance issues have been centred around the 360 excavator which recently required a new digging arm due to excessive corrosion.

The latest issue is related to the vessel itself, the splitter engine pump. This is the engine which is required to open and close the vessel to deposit the spoil at sea. Our regular engineering contractor has had to sort repair from a specialist engineering firm, hence the prolonged timescale for repair.

As we have undergone some extensive and differing repairs both to the digger and vessel, we anticipate that potential breakdowns may be greatly reduced.

It is our intention to proceed with our dredging program as soon as reasonably practicable.

Dredging

Dredging Scarborough Harbour

Scarborough Harbour- An emergency dredge was implemented due to excessive sand ingress in the harbour entrance.

Month	Loads	Activity Maintenance / Capital/ External Contracts	Material	Working Days
April 2026	353t 1 load	Maintenance/Emergency	Sand	1
May 2026	1,199t 5 loads	Maintenance/Emergency	Sand/Spoil	3

Dredging Whitby Lower Harbour Channel

Whitby Harbour – The Lower Harbour Channel campaign is now complete, and the Upper Harbour Campaign is now underway.

Month	Loads	Activity Maintenance / Capital/ External Contracts	Material	Comments
December 2025	3,774t 13 loads	Maintenance dredging	Spoil	Upper harbour
January 2026	3,600t 10 loads	Maintenance dredging	Spoil	Upper harbour
February 2026	253t 1 load	Maintenance dredging	Spoil	Upper harbour
March 2026	4,069	Maintenance dredging	Spoil	Upper harbour

Note: We are still in talks with the MMO regarding a variation to the Whitby dredging license in relation to the exclusion zone.

PMSC/Compliance and MAIB Reports

Code Compliance	Authorising Body	Revalidation/ Inspection Dates	Action
PMSC	MCA	Compliance Exercise Revalidated March2026	Green
OPRC	MCA	Plan approved April 2025	Green
ISPS	DfT	Revalidated November 2025	Green
PWMP	MCA	March 2026	Green
LAtN	Trinity House	AtN Audit scored 97.41% cat3 November 2025	Green

OPRC

Following a successful Tier 2 exercise at Whitby in February observed by the MCA Counter Pollution Officer, it was recommended that we re-assess the Risk Assessment for Oil Spill Response in Scarborough. The Deputy Harbour Master has been working closely with our Tier 2 Contractor and Scarborough Harbour Oil Spill Plan will be upgraded shortly.

Safety of Navigation

We have arranged for an external survey for our LAtN Local Aids to Navigation for both Whitby and Scarborough Harbours, this shall be conducted 21 & 22 July. This to action any faults and enhance navigational safety within our ports. In addition, we have also ordered new SLOW signs for Whitby and Scarborough Harbour entrances.

It is also my intention to review the Safety of Navigation documents in the near future; this will be completed with Harbour User consultation.

Trinity House report just released.

Recent Incidents

Incident- 12.30 16 July 2026 MFV Skipper acting in a manner to endanger safe navigation, and **grounding**.

Note:

- Local Notice to Mariners-active
- Entering the harbour at low water on a MLWS
- Observed tide lower than predicted tide



North-east Regional Coastal Monitoring, tidal data off the chart.

Facility Compliance

We have received a mixed response from our Third-Party Facilities, some have declared proportional compliance to the code, others have not responded. After attending the Northeast Ports Group many Harbour Masters have received the same mixed response.

This said I did work closely with our Designated Departure Point Vessels, who take large passenger numbers to sea, to assist them with their compliance.

MAIB Reports- Please see

- Safety Flyer -Peaky Blinder.
- Safety Flyer - Wilaya

Fishing Industry

Whitby

Two commercial Tuna Licenses have been granted, to assist with this new potential diversification for the Fishing Industry we are making a few upgrades to the Trawl Door Winch and adding crane scales.

New electrical access to be fitted on Endeavour Wharf.

New door to be fitted on Bait Store, and personnel door to be fitted on the market door. Old plywood facing to be removed.

New curtain screens to be fitted. (New curtains already fitted in SH.)

We are also looking at investing in new fish quay scales for both ports.

Scarborough

New electric pedestals installed on North Wharf

Extensive Fish Quay Piling repair undertaken.

Whitby

		2025	
October	Weight	32,731	Kilos
	Value	250,247	£
	Wharfage	7,629	£
November	Weight	18,051	Kilos
	Value	131,278	£
	Wharfage	3,938	£
December	Weight	10,785	Kilos
	Value	127,666	£
	Wharfage	3,830	£
Total to date	Weight	61,567	Kilos
1 October to	Value	509,192	£
31 December	Wharfage	15,397	£

October figures show grossing's to be 100% Shell

November figures show grossing's to be 2% Fish and 98% Shell

December figures show grossing's to be 1% Fish and 99% Shell

Scarborough

		2025	
October	Weight	77,460	Kilos
	Value	311,171	£
	Wharfage	9,335	£
November	Weight	27,718	Kilos
	Value	147,654	£
	Wharfage	4,429	£
December	Weight	14,887	Kilos
	Value	134,970	£
	Wharfage	4,049	£
Total to date	Weight	120,065	Kilos
1 October to	Value	593,795	£
31 December	Wharfage	17,813	£

- 1.4 October figures show grossing's to be 99% Shell, 1% Fish
 November figures show grossing's to be 99% Shell, 1% Fish
 December figures show grossing's to be 99% Shell, 1% Fish