

Newhaven Port User Group Meeting Minutes – 1430hrs Thursday 14th May 2026

Venue: - Newhaven Enterprise Centre, Denton Island.

1. Welcome and Introductions / Apologies

Attendees: -

Alex Clarke, Vertom Cory / Cory Brothers
Aran Simpson, Simpson Marine
Darren Phillips, EMR
Dave Miller, SubSearch Marine
Ian Lambert, Newhaven & Seaford Sailing Club.
Jim Skinner, Friends of Tide Mills
Jo Williams, Experience Sussex
John Everest, Rampion (RWE)
John Simcock, Sussex Boat Trips
Julia Johnson, Fine Marketing
Maurice Elford, Newhaven Yacht Club.
Michelle Connors, Newhaven Enterprise Zone
Peter Leonard, Peter Leonard Marine
Roger Cohen, Newhaven RNLI
Sam Bennett, PFSO & PSO, NPP
Steve Tindale, Harbour Master & Pilot, NPP (ST) - Chair
Szymon Kordacz, LCT Support/DFDS.
Thomas Levett, LCT

Apologies: -

Caroline Reynolds, Sussex Police
Dave Collins-Williams, Port Manager, NPP
Ellen Miller, Lewes District Council
Jules Nicholson, Sussex Police.
Russ Levett, Newhaven Marina
Simon Thomas, Newhaven Marine Services / Lochin Marine
William Heaps, Marico Marine

Welcome

As Chair, ST welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and reminded attendees that the group has been in place since 2010 to provide a forum for consultation and dialogue among all Port stakeholders, in line with the PMSC requirement for Harbour Authorities to consult their stakeholders. The apologies listed above were noted, and ST delivered the meeting using a PowerPoint presentation throughout.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Note 13th November 2025

These were accepted as being a true record and approved.

3. Actions Arising from previous meeting

None.

4. Matters Arising not covered on this agenda

Nothing arising.

5. Terms of Reference and Membership Updates

The Terms of Reference are available on the Port website (www.newhavenport.com). The PUG email distribution list now includes 108 individuals representing 58 organisations. ST asked whether any person or organisation had been omitted, or whether any amendments to the Terms of Reference were proposed; none were raised. He added that members were welcome to contact him at any time with suggestions.

6. Port Masterplan Strategic Objectives Update

ST advised that the Port Master Plan (PMP), originally published in 2012, was refreshed in 2024 and published on the website in August 2024. He noted that the PMP is a strategic document setting out how the port is intended to grow and develop over time. A total of 60 stakeholders were invited to contribute to the refresh, of which 39 organisations are members of the Port User Group.

As a standard agenda item, the group reviewed progress against the objectives set out in the Port Master Plan, as summarised below.

i. Support further development of the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry route, increasing utilisation and continuing to focus on the customer experience;

Berth 1 Structural Works: A2 Maritime has been appointed as specialist consultants to assess and address scour issues at Berth 1, Newhaven Port's ferry berth. A contractor is now being appointed.

Sustainable Ferry Operations: Discussions with SMPAT are continuing to explore future ferry developments focused on carbon reduction, including shore power, alternative fuels and vessel design.

GreenPortSide Project: Linked to sustainable ferry operations, NPP is working with Brighton University, Moda Energy and UCL on the Innovate UK-funded GreenPortSide project. The project examines how renewable electricity can be integrated into port operations to support cleaner shipping and long-term decarbonisation, including options for charging a future ferry. It was completed in March, and the reports are due to be published in the coming weeks.

Traffic Flow Improvements: NPP is working with LCT and Border Force to improve inbound and outbound traffic management and address space constraints within the port. The initial step is to move the fence line before implementing further optimisation measures.

Strategic Collaboration: NPP is part of the Working Alliance for Voyage and Economic Synergy (WAVES) Group, which promotes opportunities linked to the ferry service. Three strategic meetings

have now been held to support initiatives on both sides of the Channel, including one in Rouen, France.

Michelle Connors from the Newhaven Enterprise Zone (NEZ) discussed the Economic and Social Impact Study into *The Value of the Ferry between Newhaven (Sussex, UK) and Dieppe (Région Normandie, France)*, which was undertaken by the NEZ. The [full report](#) and [Executive Study](#) are available on the NEZ website.

ii. Continue investing in infrastructure to further increase the use of renewables throughout the port, both directly, in partnership with customers, and in partnership with renewable energy producers and local authorities to enable wider benefits beyond the port estate

NPP has continued its decarbonisation work across the port, including the GreenPortSide project, which is assessing the feasibility of wave and tidal energy, vertical wind turbines and energy storage. NPP is also working with Moda to develop an efficient port-wide power network to support shore power for ferry hotel loads while vessels are alongside.

NPP has also invested in four replacement electric vehicles and installed two EV charging stations. To date, the solar panels have generated 1,205,797 kWh, approximately 1.2 GWh.

Carbon Emissions Report: Over the past three years, NPP has commissioned annual carbon emissions audits led by an independent decarbonisation consultant. These reviews cover direct emissions (Scope 1), indirect emissions from purchased energy (Scope 2), and selected upstream emissions (Scope 3), including business travel and staff commuting. The 2024 findings have been brought together in the Newhaven Port Carbon Emissions Report, which is available on the NPP website and due for updating with the 2025 figures soon.

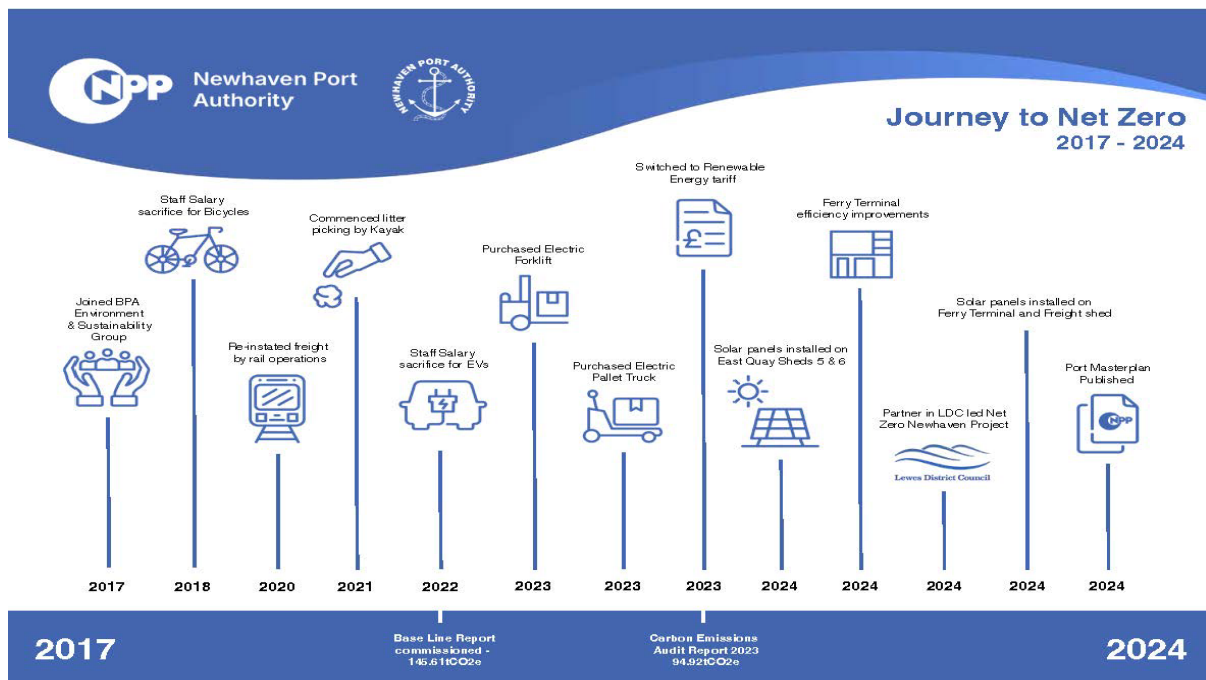


Figure 1 - Journey to Net Zero Page 1

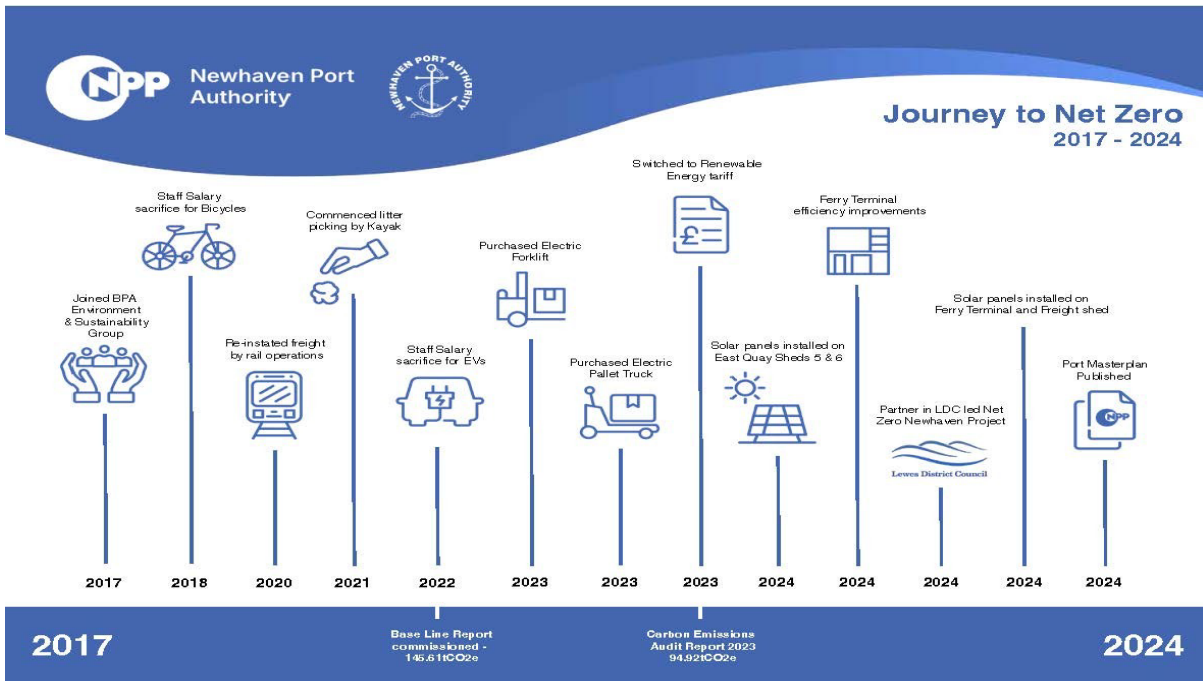


Figure 2 - Journey to Net Zero Page 2

Progress on Area E1, as shown in Figure 3, is continuing, alongside the preparatory work needed before submitting a planning application. Area E1 is the 4-hectare site between the Port Access Road and the Nature Reserve, identified in the local plan for port expansion. Pre-planning work has been completed and the full application is now being developed, supported by the necessary surveys. Although proposals are still being refined, the current concept is to allocate 1 hectare for landscaping and buffer zones, 1 hectare for renewable electricity generation and storage, 1 hectare for freight driver facilities and parking, and the remaining 1 hectare for warehousing, logistics and industrial units. NPP is also exploring the potential to extend the rail link into the site to create a multimodal hub and help reduce lorry movements on local roads.

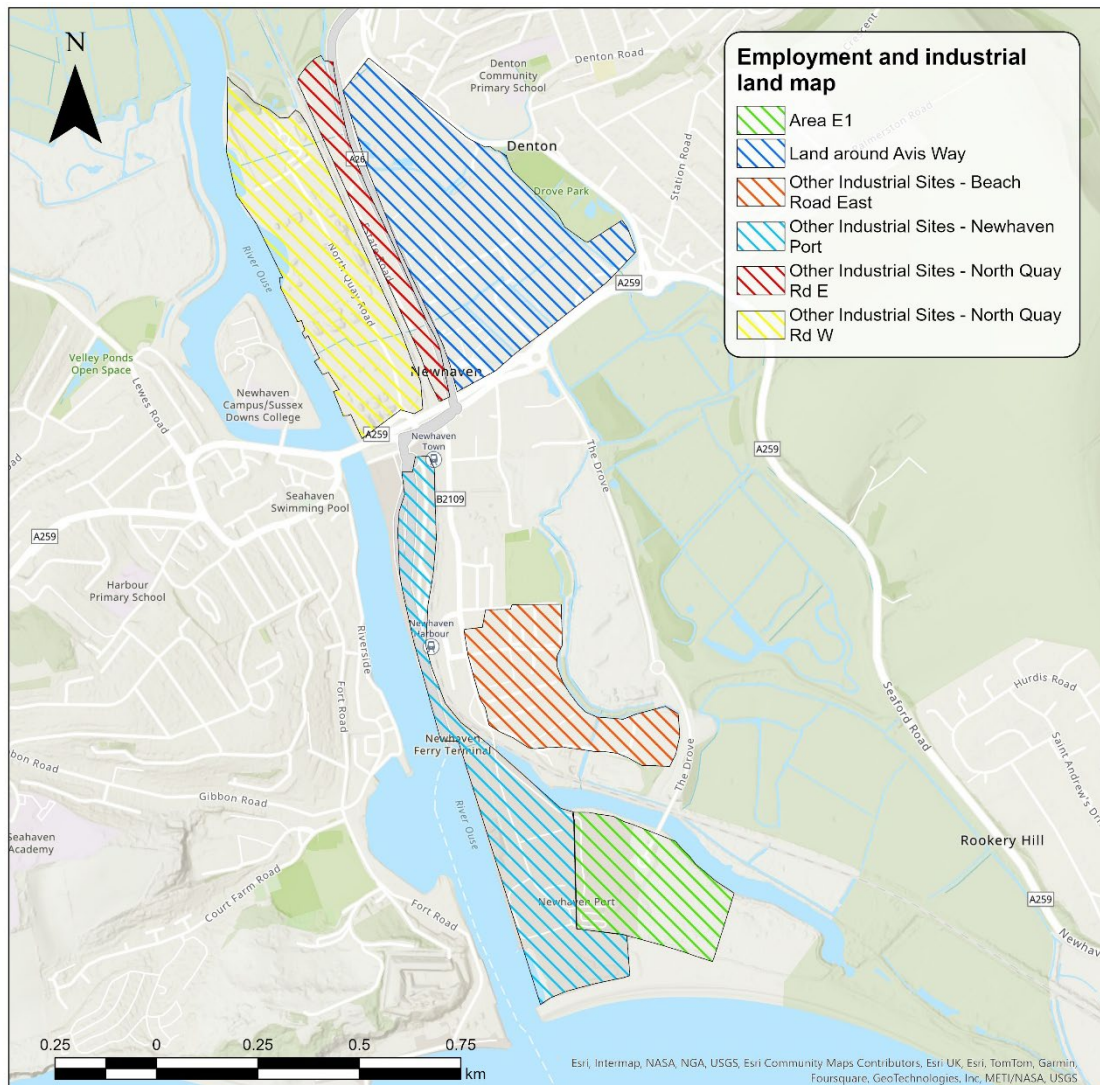


Figure 3 - Employment and Industrial land map around Newhaven Port showing area E1 in the south east

iii. Support the growth of trade through the port for: cargo by ship, tenancies within the port, and by attracting small cruise vessel calls;

NPP are continuing to look into ways to increase trade through the port. This is through development of the East Quay site.

The sail cargo that was previously discussed has not materialised. NPP continue to explore different sail cargo options. In addition NPP are looking at alternative cargoes and any project cargoes. The quay will be available as a multiuser site so that more types of cargoes can be handled with a time limit of 48 hours set on storage before shifting off site.

There remains some damage to the quayside which is undergoing repairs ready for future operations, as shown in Figure 4. The repair work has been split into different phases with phase 1 (blue) complete and Phase 2 (red) nearing completion.

In April, Newhaven hosted the first cruise ship in 13 years, the National Geographic Explorer. The feedback to the port call has been good and the team continue to work on attracting future vessels to Newhaven. The port have recently joined Cruise Britain to aid in the attracting cruise vessels to Newhaven.

The last sea going paddle steamer, the Steam Ship Waverley called at East Quay last year for a berthing trial. There is a plan for the vessel to return to Newhaven in September for a port call with passengers.

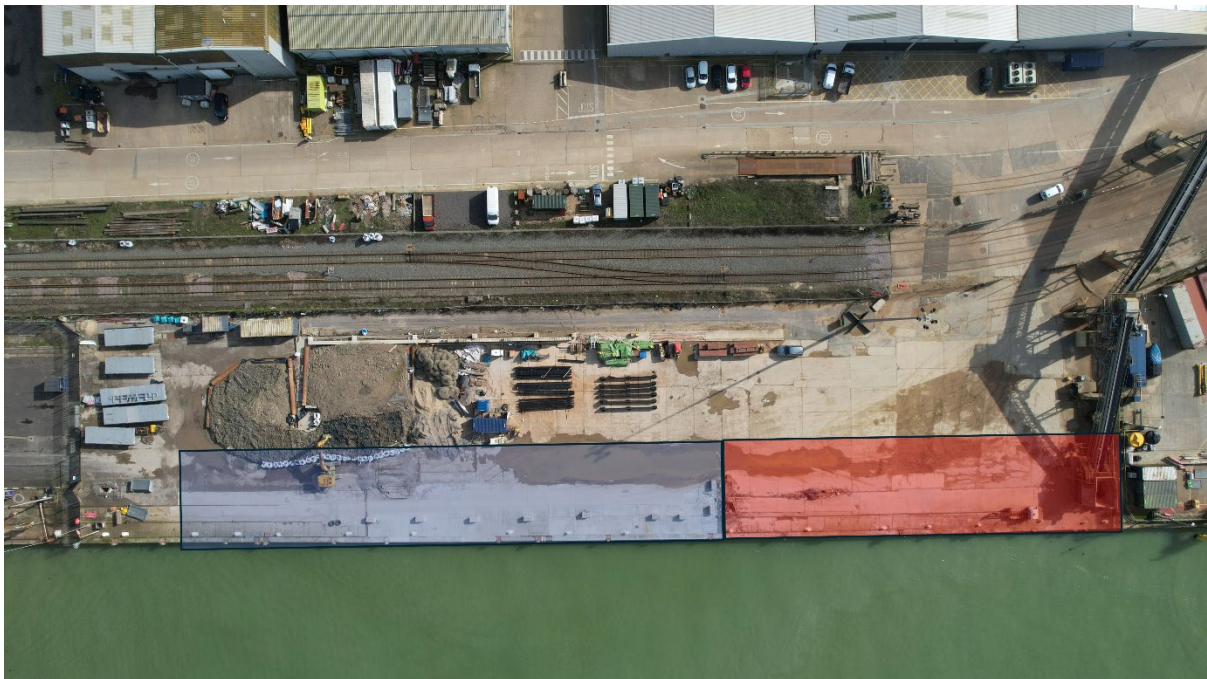


Figure 4 - Photo showing condition of East Quay prior to repairs.

iv. Support the continued development of the fishing and marine leisure sectors, and through partnership with operators ensure the highest standards are always maintained; and

The development of the new fishing stage on West Quay, called Stage 21 continues. The Fishing Stage 21 is a joint project between Lewes District Council and Newhaven Port with additional funding from the NEZ. The current estimate is for the project to be complete by the end of June.

NPP continue to licence Small Commercial Vessels ensuring that operators standards are maintained to the highest levels. We have Maverick Watersports and Sussex Boat Trips both offering trips out of Newhaven into Seaford Bay and beyond.

The Marina has completed the first and second phases of their dredging campaign with the installation of new pontoons by Walcon.

- v. **Bring further benefit to Newhaven by supporting cultural and leisure activity on the west bank of the river Ouse, the regional economy by increasing small cruise operators' awareness of local attractions, and over time, making the port more of a landmark for the town.**

The first cruise vessel call was a success. ST thanked the team for their hard work in converting a commercial quay into a suitable berth for a cruise ship. The aim was to deliver a successful first call before increasing marketing and PR activity around future visits. This has already helped NPP engage with excursion companies, and we hope to expand the range of local attractions and tours offered in future.

NPP have also worked with the WAVES (Working Alliance for Voyage and Economic Synergy) group, meeting in both Newhaven and Rouen. The group promotes the ferry route and related opportunities on both sides of the Channel.

NPP have also collaborated with Experience Sussex to explore ways of promoting Newhaven and the port to cross-Channel passengers, including through its Welcome to Newhaven workshop, which ST would recommend to anyone in a front-facing role.

NPP continues to work with Newhaven Town Council, Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council to strengthen the port's role in the community. We are engaging with local schools and organisations through outreach and work experience opportunities to highlight the careers and benefits the port can offer. We aim to build on these partnerships and give more young people a better understanding of opportunities in the port sector.

NPP have also supported Newhaven Marina by coordinating its planning and development works, which will help create a world-class marina at the heart of Newhaven. This is expected to increase visitor footfall locally and in the surrounding area.

7. Statutory Harbour Authority, Competent Harbour Authority, Port Security Authority and Local Lighthouse Authority.

Newhaven Port & Properties are the Statutory Harbour Authority, the Competent Harbour Authority, the Port Security Authority and the Local Light House Authority for Newhaven.

The Statutory Harbour Authority which covers the limits as shown in Figure 5 – under various legislation, primarily responsible for managing the safe movement of vessels and for conserving the harbour fit for use. Any comments or suggestions for improving the safe running of the harbour are always welcome. There is a lot of information available on the NPP website, which is currently going through a revamp. www.newhavenport.com



Figure 5 - Indicative image of the Statutory Harbour Limits

NPP is also the Competent Harbour Authority under the Pilotage Act 1987, meaning it sets the requirements for vessels that require a pilot. The Pilotage Committee meets each February unless an additional meeting is needed. There are currently two authorised pilots: Senior Pilot Paul and Harbour Master Stephen Tindale. Dwain Rodgers left the port in February. Although he was involved in an accident during his final week of pilotage duty, he has since recovered fully and returned to sea with Calmac Ferries. He has been replaced by Conor Hudson, who joined from sea as Trainee Pilot and Deputy Harbour Master and is progressing well.

In addition to the two pilots, NPP has six ferry Pilot Exemption Certificate (PEC) holders and two more in training. There are also several dredger PEC holders, and the Pilotage Directions were amended this year to support a PEC for *Britannia Beaver*.

Visits to the Warsash Ship Simulator suite at Solent University in Southampton continue. Newhaven Harbour has been modelled in the simulator and has been used for training for the past 10 years. It

allows pilots to train in a safe but realistic environment and is also valuable for incident investigation, assessing new vessel types, and testing different weather and tidal conditions without operational risk. Conor and Stephen Tindale recently attended with Coxswain Billy, which provided valuable support at an important stage of Conor's training and gave Billy useful insight into bridge operations.

As Port Security Authority, NPP oversees the four port facilities in Newhaven: Newhaven Port East Quay, the Ferry Terminal, Conways and EMR. Biannual Port Security Authority meetings are held, along with an annual exercise to test the facilities' security plans. Sam Bennet, a Duty Officer in Port Control, is the Port Facility Security Officer for East Quay and the Port Security Officer for the Port Security Authority.

NPP is also the Local Lighthouse Authority on behalf of the General Lighthouse Authority (Trinity House). This includes installing and maintaining all navigation lights and marks with Trinity House's approval and under its regular audit. Anyone who notices a navigation light or mark out of position is asked to report it to Port Control so that action can be taken. In support of these statutory and operational responsibilities, the port continues to maintain a capable and fully certificated marine fleet.

The port's pilot vessel, *Seaxe*, was built by Goodchild Marine in Great Yarmouth and delivered to Newhaven in March 2025. She is a Goodchild ORC 121 pilot vessel, a proven design used widely across the UK. Her bow features an innovative beak form that cuts through the wave ahead of the vessel. Combined with *Seaxe's* stability, this allows pilot boardings to be carried out safely at speeds of up to 18 knots. The pilot vessel *Seaxe*, workboat *Magnus Musson* and survey vessel *Triton* are all operating well and remain fully certificated.

The port said farewell to *Pelorus* last year when she was transferred to Fraserburgh to continue operations there.

Karl, our long-serving Coxswain, left at the beginning of April and has been replaced by Billy Hipperson, previously one of our part-time boatmen. The coxswain team now consists of Lee, Nick, Mike and Billy, who continue to carry out regular operations and training. Their strength as a team was clearly demonstrated on Tuesday during the dramatic rescue of a sailing yacht from Seaford beach.

The port also has seven part-time boatmen who support vessel mooring operations, provide backup on the port's vessels and form part of the port's contingency arrangements.



Figure 6 - Rescue of sailing yacht Cornish Legend from Seaford beach by PV Magnus Musson and PV Seaxe

8. Marine Safety Management System/Port Marine Safety Code

The Port Marine and Facilities Safety Code (PMSC) is a national standard that sets out safety requirements.

Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who works in, or uses, ports, harbours, marinas and other marine facilities.

The most recent edition of the PMSC was issued in April 2025 and expressly applies to all ports, harbours, marine facilities, berths and terminals. ST wrote to all relevant facilities and berth operators in Newhaven to advise them of the updated Code.

Newhaven Port's Marine Safety Management System is a live document based on the requirements of the PMSC. William Heaps is the Designated Person. He provides independent assurance that the port complies with the Code and reports to the Board of Directors, who are the Duty Holders.

Regular Teams meetings are held to review ongoing activity. Annual audits are also carried out each year, with the next audit being held in June.

As part of the MSMS, NPP maintains Navigational Risk Assessments and marine health and safety risk assessments. These are reviewed regularly by ST and Conor using the Marico Marine HAZMAN system. Port Control procedures are managed in line with those risk assessments.

Port Control visits for PEC holders continue, and other visitors are also encouraged. Since the last meeting, welcome visits have been made by gig clubs, small commercial vessel licence holders and the National Coastwatch Institution. Anyone wishing to arrange a Port Control visit is asked to provide a few days' notice and to limit groups to a maximum of six people.

Relevant safety and industry information received from the MCA, MAIB and other organisations is circulated to members of this group where appropriate. Useful material is also published on the website.

The 2023 revised edition of the *Code of Practice for Recreational Users* is available to download from the website. Its purpose, as always, is to help ensure a safe harbour for all users. Signal cards are also available on request.

Any organisation planning an event within the Harbour Limits must submit an event registration form and risk assessment at least 21 days in advance. The registration form and a risk assessment template are available on the website and in the *Code of Practice for Recreational Users*.

Under the Newhaven Harbour Revision Order 2016, NPP may licence small commercial vessel operations within the harbour. The following operators are currently licensed for commercial activities:

- Maverick Boat Adventures
- Sussex Boat Trips
- Seahaven Maritime Academy
- Cutts Marine
- CTVs

Peter Leonard and Simon Thomas are also licensed to operate within the harbour.

Any other vessel operating in or from Newhaven for payment without the appropriate licence is doing so unlawfully. Please report any such activity immediately. NPP relies on the cooperation of the marina, slipway and boatyards to help identify vessels that may be operating in breach of the licensing requirements.

It should also be noted that, under the Merchant Shipping Act (Watercraft) Order 2023, all vessels and craft are subject to the COLREGS and the Merchant Shipping Act.

ST invited any comments before moving on.

9. Incidents, Training and Exercises

ST provided an update on incident reporting arrangements at Newhaven Port.

As shown in Figure 7, 37 incidents were reported in the 12 months to the end of April 2026, across all categories.

Anti-social incidents have fortunately continued to decline, although this may reflect some under-reporting rather than a genuine reduction in activity. During the summer months, NPP arranged for a security presence on East Pier to deter anti-social behaviour and tombstoning. Reports of anglers deliberately casting at, or over, passing vessels from East Pier and the West Pier/Hope Inn area also appear to have reduced. Two dedicated CCTV cameras have been installed to monitor angling activity in the narrows. The largest category of incidents remains breaches of vessel regulations. Bridge faults were also a concern, particularly where the bridge failed to open for approaching

commercial vessels. However, this appears to have been resolved by the bridge engineers, with the last fault recorded in early January 2026.

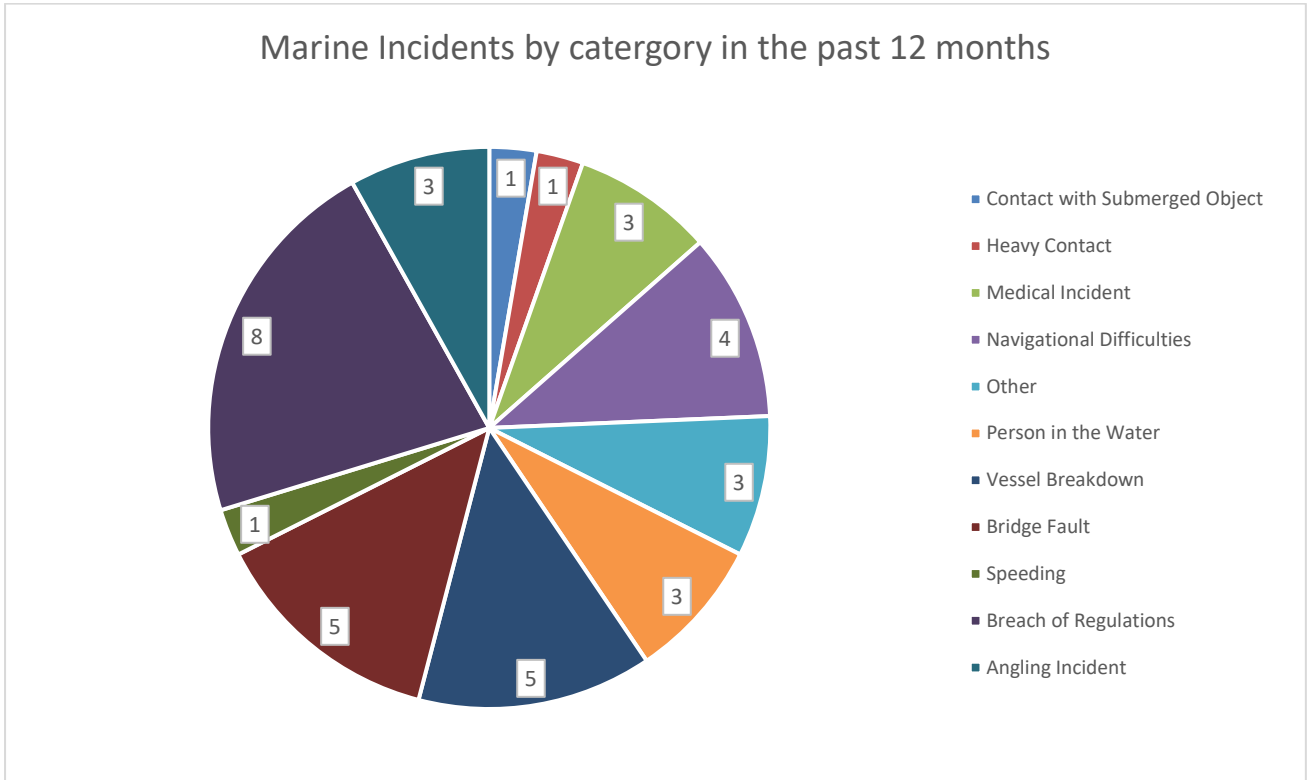


Figure 7 - Chart showing Marine Incidents the past 12 months up to May 2025 – April 2026

ST circulated marine incident records for 2023, 2024 and 2025 with the meeting papers. As shown in Figure 8, incident numbers peaked in June and July 2025. However, Figure 9 shows that these were mainly observations and near misses, which reflects a positive reporting culture. The major incident involved a cardiac arrest on board one of the ferries, while the serious incident related to Dwain Rodgers breaking his heel while disembarking from *Britannia Beaver*.

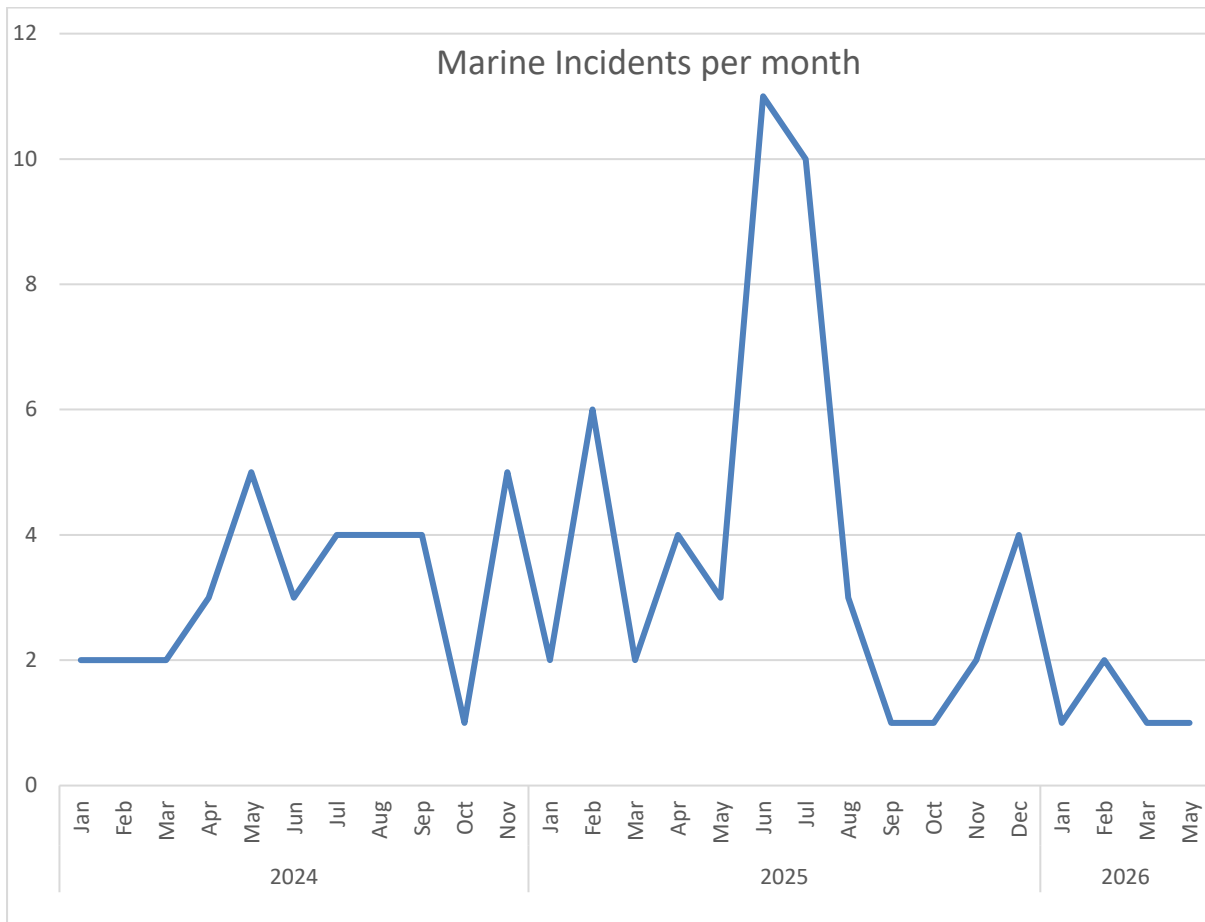


Figure 8 – Incidents per month, Jan 2024 – May 2026

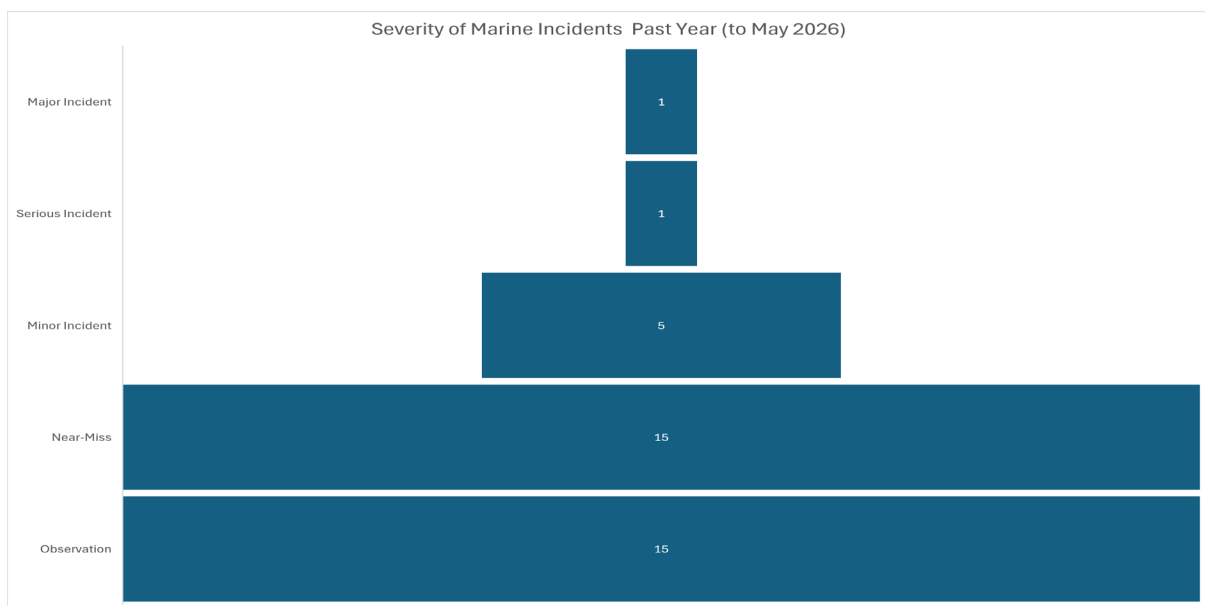


Figure 9 - Severity of Marine Incidents

ST asked all port users to continue reporting incidents to Port Control so that NPP can meet its duties under the PMSC to investigate and report incidents where required. Where unlawful activity is involved, CCTV can be used to help identify those responsible and support reporting to the Police. Anyone in immediate danger should call 999. ST added that the more incidents are reported, the more effectively action can be taken. He also continues to encourage the Marina, Simpsons and other operators to remind their customers to act responsibly and follow the rules.

Anyone with comments or feedback on incidents was invited to contact ST.

Training and exercising of NPP staff is ongoing, with Seahaven Maritime Academy used where appropriate. ST encouraged members to visit the Academy's website to learn more about the training it offers.

Regular training is also carried out on the pilot boats, including a recent visit to Fleetwood where Conor and ST attended a pilot ladder training course.

The latest versions of the Newhaven Harbour Emergency Plan and Oil Spill Plan are available on the website and are reviewed in full each year. These plans do not remove the need for other port businesses, operators or users to maintain their own emergency contingency arrangements. ST asked whether there were any further comments.

Attendees raised concerns about anglers in the Narrows and on East Pier. This is a known issue, and a multi-agency task force has been established to consider how best to address it. It was reiterated that any illegal activity should be reported to the Police on 999, while all other incidents of anti-social behaviour should also be reported so that the scale and pattern of the problem can be properly understood.

Jim Skinner, representing Friends of Tide Mills, raised concerns about people camping on the beaches south of the NPP offices and around East Pier. ST shared these concerns and noted that security staff are deployed during the summer months to help deter camping and anti-social behaviour. It is hoped that the multi-agency task force being established to address angling-related issues will also help tackle illegal camping.

10. Local Notice to Mariners (NTM)

These are available from the website or upon request to ST or Port Control. Copies are forwarded to all on the distribution list. Anybody not on the email distribution list and wishing to be, please let ST know. There have been 8 issued so far this year, with No.1 being the list of notices still in force from previous years.

11. Vessel Traffic Figures, Commercial, Fishing, Recreational & DFDS

Figure 10 compares vessel traffic from January to April 2025 and 2026. Overall vessel calls were broadly similar across the two periods, although North Quay traffic fell from 15 vessels in 2025 to 8 in 2026.

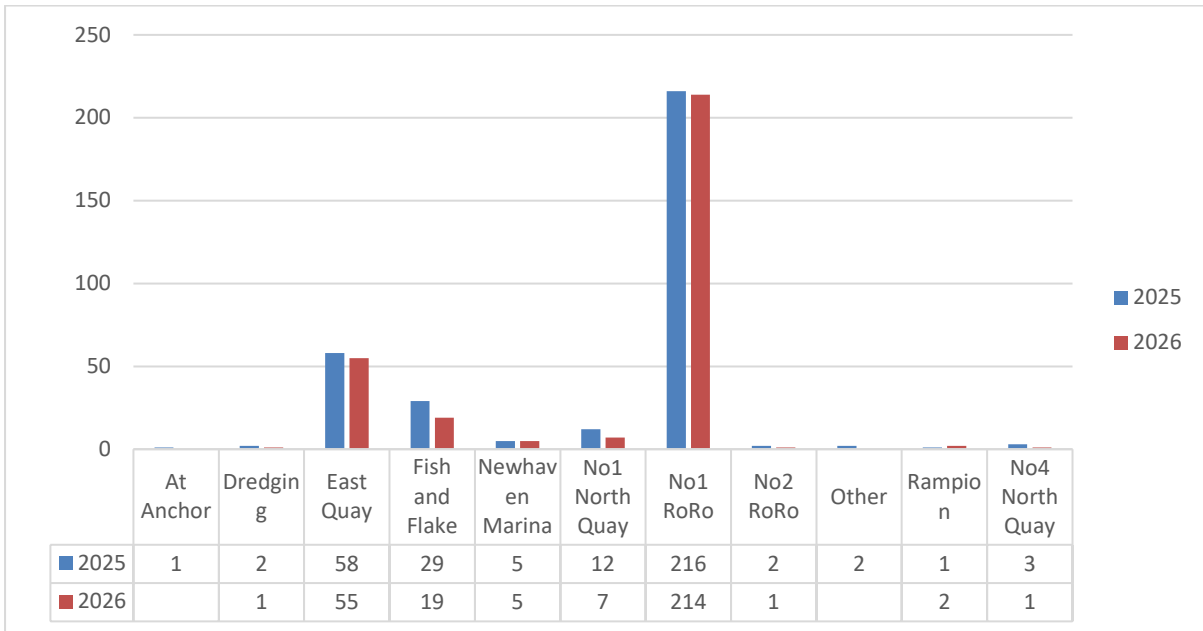


Figure 10 - Vessel numbers by Quayside January – April

The annual vessel traffic figures from 2014, up until April 2026, were provided to the group as part of their meeting notes and these are included below in Figure 11 to Figure 13. Vessel activity remained broadly stable in 2025, with the grand total increasing to 1,131 calls from 1,094 in 2024. Vessel calls also rose from 244 to 289, supported mainly by strong East Quay aggregate traffic. Ferry calls remained consistent at 842, close to prior-year levels.

Bretts continue to export around 40% of their cargo out by train.

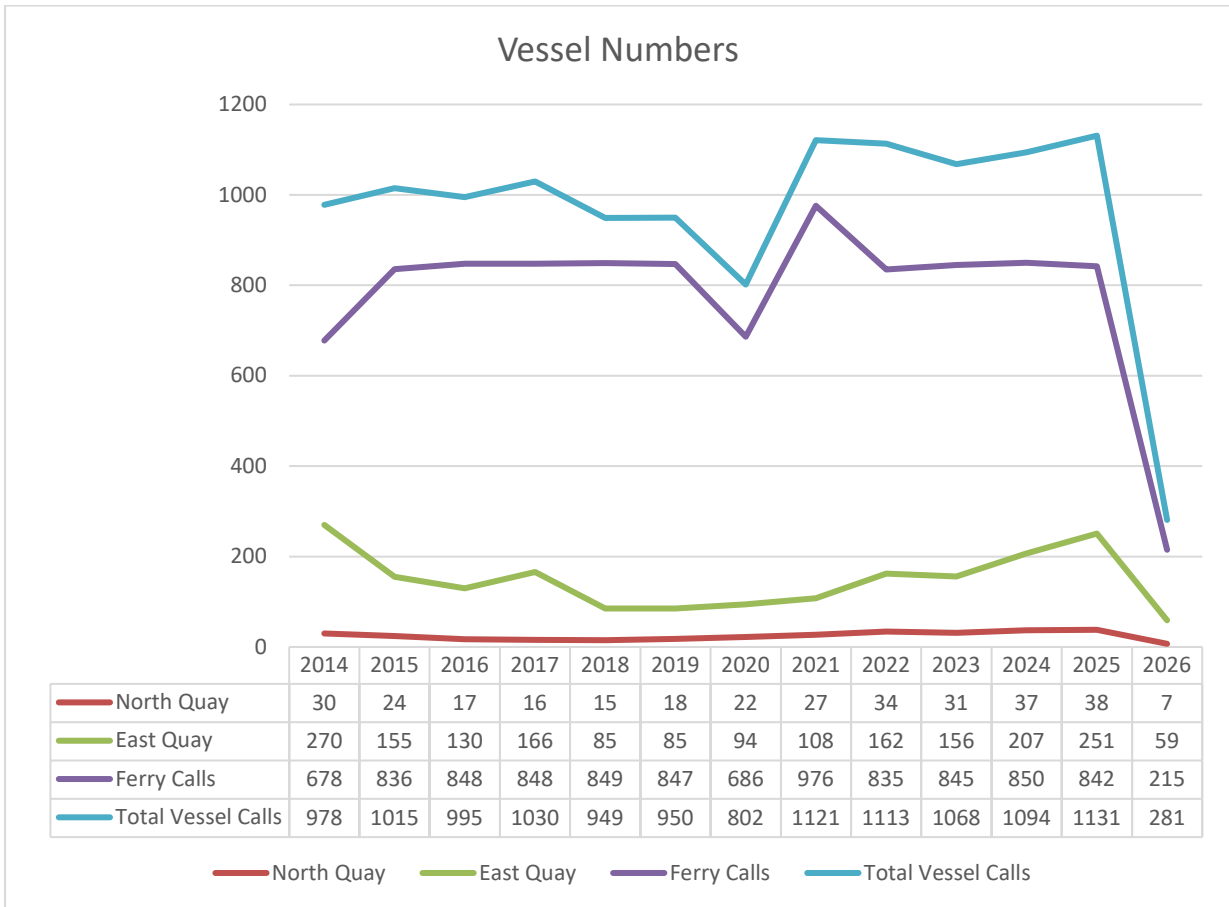


Figure 11 - Vessel numbers by Quayside up to end of April 2026

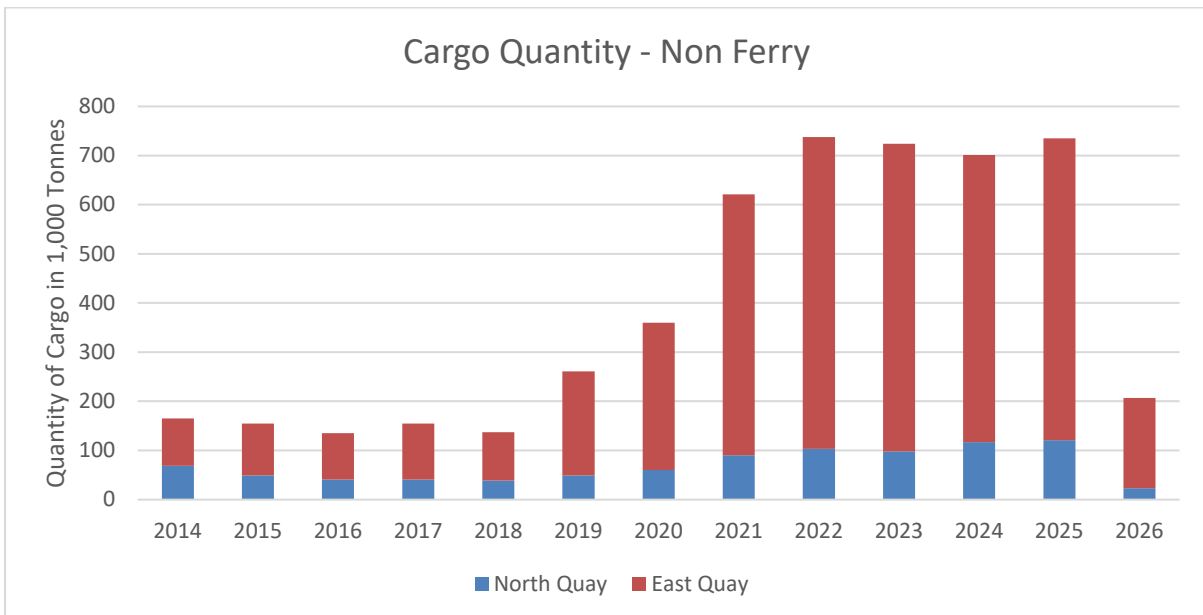


Figure 12 - Cargo Quantity in 1,000 tonnes by quay

Fishing vessels continue to do well at the Fish and Flake Ice Society.

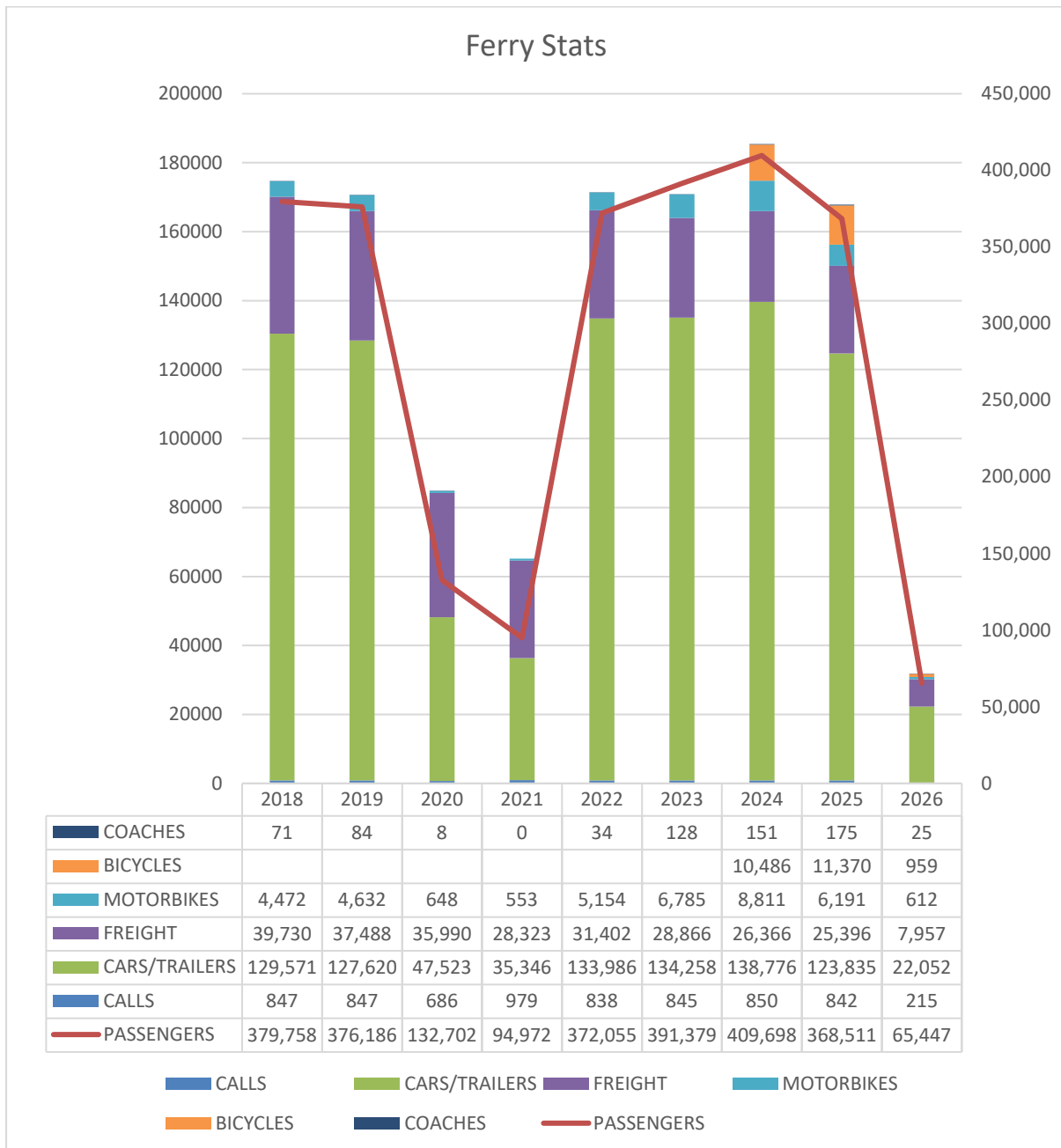


Figure 13 - Ferry Passenger and Vehicle numbers

Figure 13, shows ferry activity remains broadly stable in terms of calls, with 2025 close to pre-pandemic levels. Passenger and car/trailer numbers recovered strongly after the 2020–21 downturn, peaking in 2024 before easing slightly in 2025. Freight continues to show a longer-term decline, down around 36% versus 2018. Bicycle and coach traffic have increased in recent years.

The winter schedule had 2 sailings with a single ferry. Summer time table was for 3 sailings a day using 2 ferries with the peak weekends during the summer their will be 4 sailings a day on weekends, this is extended to Fridays during school summer holidays.

12. Harbour Works and Dredging Updates

Planned breakwater maintenance and repair works continue on an annual basis. Work on the canopies is also ongoing.

Works are also being undertaken on A-Shed to ensure it remains safe to use and is brought up to modern standards.

The port is also moving the fence line to allow more flexible arrangements between freight and tourist traffic.

Dredging was carried out by *Freeway*, followed by *Acamar*, in January and February this year. A further dredger is currently awaited to complete works in the outer harbour.

13. Consultation Groups/Meetings

ST noted that, as usual, the port has remained highly active in attending a wide range of meetings and working groups, both nationally and locally, either in person or virtually. These include forums led by the British Ports Association, UK Harbour Masters Association, Port Skills and Safety, government departments and agencies, as well as internal and local meetings covering health and safety, security, maintenance, pilotage, ferry operations, Rampion, fishermen, Police, ESFRS, MCGA, RNLI and Border Force.

14. Marine Planning / Environmental

NPP renewed the disposal licence in November 2025, allowing dredged material to continue to be disposed of at the approved site for a further three years.

15. Updates from member organisations present

Rampion

John Everest provided an update on Rampion wind farm operations, team development, future plans and community engagement, including apprenticeship programmes and upcoming multi-agency exercises.

Rampion is currently operating at 99% availability, with generation exceeding budget expectations. Service campaigns are ahead of schedule, and the site continues to perform well despite an increase in maintenance shutdowns.

The apprenticeship programme remains strong, with 16 apprentices trained to date and a further seven currently in progress. Two new apprentices are due to start in September, with a continued focus on recruiting from across Sussex.

Planned engineering work includes the replacement of two gearboxes and a multi-agency rescue exercise in September involving Newhaven Port, RNLI and the MCA. Internal and stakeholder tours of the wind farm are also continuing.

Discussions on a joint facility for Rampion 2 at Newhaven remain ongoing, although current activity is focused on government contract rounds. The team is also seeking local volunteering opportunities and encouraged community groups to make contact.

RNLI

Roger Cohen provided an update on RNLI operations, volunteer activity and future planning for lifeboat services. Roger will be stepping back from his role with the RNLI in December. The station currently has 29 volunteers, of whom 30% are female. Since the last meeting, 46 tasks have been completed, and volunteers continue to train three times a week, amounting to around 240 exercises each year. Strategic planning for future lifeboat classes is also underway.

Marina

Russ Levett provided the following update, however it was received post meeting:

- 90% of old pontoons have been dismantled and removed from the original position.
- 75% of the old piles have been removed.
- New A, B, E, F & G piles and main walkways have been installed
- 80% of the new berthing fingers have been installed across these pontoons.
- All current berth holders have been repositioned to a new deep-water berth, although many are awaiting their final position as more berths are installed.
- 95 % of new electrical bollards and water standpipes have been installed to new pontoons
- 90% of the dredge area has been completed, with around 4-5 working days left (nearly 30,000 m³ over the full program).
- Further pile and pontoon installation from next week.
- New facilities due to be installed in the converted building onsite, housing new offices, showers, toilets, and laundry room, due for completion mid-summer.

The project is broadly on schedule with only around 2 weeks overall delay, predominantly due to weather delays earlier in the year. All being well we will expect to operating more normally around mid-July.

16. AOB

A brief discussion was held on the local council reorganisation, which has now entered its third round of consultation. A question was also raised about the development of the West Promenade. No further update was available, although it is understood that Lewes District Council is seeking to appoint a developer to deliver the scheme.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 2026.

Stephen Tindale

04/06/2026