

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RIVER YEALM HARBOUR AUTHORITY
HELD IN THE HARBOUR OFFICE AT 18.00 on 17th FEBRUARY 2026**

Members and Officers in attendance:

Ian Kennedy – Acting Chair
Stephen Maltby – Vice Chairman – via WhatsApp
Kevin Thomas – via WhatsApp
John Endicott

Martyn Oates
Mark Steggles
Nicky Tewson

Jez Spring – Harbour Master

Debbie Rhead- Office Manager

Apologies for Absence

Dominic Crawley, Peter Hinchliffe, Tom Edie and John Stansell.

Declarations of Interest

None.

013/26 MINUTES

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2026 were presented to the meeting for consideration and amendment. The minutes were then proposed by Mark Steggles to be a true record, seconded by Kevin Thomas and agreed by all other members present who had attended the meeting.

014/26 FINANCIAL REPORT

A presentation on the new Management Information (MI) Pack was delivered by Mike Cosby, a Chartered Accountant from Yealmpton, who has worked closely with the Harbour Office and the Authority's Accountants over the past 8 months. He explained the work undertaken to improve the office admin processes. In particular the move to Xero accounting software, updates to the moorings database and location software, are all designed to save improve efficiency. He then provided a detailed overview of the new MI Pack, highlighting the revised format of the monthly financial reports and the benefits of improved clarity and oversight of the Authority's finances. He emphasised that the enhanced reporting structure would enable the Authority to make more informed decisions based on accurate and accessible financial information. Importantly, Mike proposed the compilation of Medium-Term Plan and presented a draft for population. The Acting Chair suggested this would require a sub-group of members to provide a structured format for forecasting expected expenditure over the next 5-10 years. Mike also confirmed that Peter Franklin, the Authority's Accountant, had spent a morning in the Harbour Office with him and the Office Manager reviewing the proposed changes. Peter was satisfied that the new processes and reporting framework were beneficial, and noted that the MI Pack included estimates of depreciation which would greatly improve the accuracy and alignment with Franklin's end of year accounts.

Income and Expenses for November and December

In January our income was just under £137,000.

Expenses totalled just under £7,000 and our overheads were just under £7,500 giving a net profit for the month of £just over £122,000.

Budget Variance

At the end of January there was a budget variance of just under £9,500 up on the budget target. This was mainly attributed to the delay in the Repairs and Maintenance programme (-£6,500), caused by the remediation works on the International Paints Ltd site and poor weather, delaying invoicing for planned work. There was also an increase of £1,750 in Harbour Dues.

Balance Sheet

Current liabilities show debtors totalling £15,319, mainly outstanding annual mooring dues.

Cashflow

The closing balance at the end of January was £414,000.

015/26 MATTERS ARISING

None

016/26 CORRESPONDENCE

None

017/26 POLICY REVIEW

Draft 2 of the Book of Reference (BR) had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, Ian Kennedy reviewed Sections identified for debate with those present. Amendments were made where necessary following discussion which the Ian agreed would be included in Draft 3. He then agreed to circulate this version before the next meeting with a view to the Authority formally adopting the BR as the main guidance and policy document at the April monthly meeting.

018/26 HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT

Incidents:

No incidents were formally recorded since the last Authority meeting.

Akzo Nobel/International Paint Limited Remediation Project:

The project has now completed, and all equipment and vessels removed from the river. Resident vessels are now returning to their own moorings along the Fairway. HM has sent thank-you letters sent to Management Teams of TMS and Geosyntec for the positive engagement of their on-site workers and supervisors. The assistance of those mooring holders who were disturbed during the clean up operation was greatly appreciated by all.

Marine Insurance Policies:

These are in the process of being renewed via Marsh Commercial Insurance Brokers with a renewal date of 1 March 2026. Total Cost for the 4 policies is £8,524 (up from £8,144 in 2025).

Deputy Harbour Master - 2026 Employment Contract:

Alex Robson has signed a 6-month contract for the period 1 April to 30 September 2026.

YCET Electric Water Taxi:

The RYHA -YCET contract for 2026 has been issued. YCET have confirmed that their insurance covers them for Lithium Battery operations and that they have Public Liability Cover of £5 million. Kevin Thomas explained the alterations that had been made to the Electric Ferry over the winter and that they were due to have their 3-year inspection this week.

Scrubbing off Vessels:

Initial guidance has been published on the RYHA website, temporary signs placed at Bridgend and the main commercial users of the quay informed of acceptable practices. Permanent signs will be purchased for Bridgend Quay and the Lift-In / Out Handbook will be updated and given to all boat owners using Bridgend Quay for Winter storage.

Yealm Steps Pontoon - Dinghy Congestion:

The pontoon will be monitored to assess if congestion levels reduce this Summer Season. The plan is to count and record dinghy numbers each Friday and for frequent checking of dinghy sizes and eligibility.

Kitley Estate Moorings – Clear Area:

Two of the 3 encroaching moorings have now been repositioned upstream into the Kitley area.

Harbour Launch:

A maintenance package by Plymouth Pilots Ltd will start on 23 Feb 26 and an electric-powered launch will be used on loan from the company for the duration of the package. Insurance cover has been arranged, and YCET are kindly allowing us to use their charging point on the Yealm Steps pontoon.

Disposal of Derelict / End-of-Life Vessels:

The HM briefed the Authority on the meeting he attended on this topic last week and raised some issues for consideration regarding the risks surrounding wrecks and unseaworthy vessels, and the impact on future funding provision and insurance cover. This will be reviewed ahead of the next budget round and insurance renewal.

019/26 PARISH COUNCIL LIAISON

Wembury – Nothing to report.

Newton and Noss – The appointment of representatives is agreed at the AGM. In the normal course of events, it is not expected that there would be a complete turnover of Authority members.

Brixton – Martyn Oates informed the Authority that Brixton had not yet managed to find a replacement for him but had readvertised this and will get back to us as soon as they have any news.

Yealmpton – Nothing to report.

020/26 CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS – Nil.

022/26 MOORING APPLICATIONS AND PROPOSED MOORING ALLOCATIONS AND PARTNERSHIP REQUESTS

In January there was one new applicant requesting to join the mooring waiting list.

10 moorings were allocated.

There was one partnership request made.

023/26 AOB

The HM advised that the Annual Report from the Designated Person (Capt. Keith Hart), should be published on the RYHA website.

024/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Harbour Authority will be on Tuesday 17th March 2026 at 6pm at The Harbour Office.

Minutes approved at a meeting of the Harbour Authority held on 17th March 2026



Chairman