



# North Yorkshire Council Harbours Strategy 2026 – 2036



# Executive Summary

North Yorkshire Council's Harbours Strategy outlines a 10-year plan to revitalise Scarborough Harbour, Whitby Harbour, and Filey Coble Landing. Following the 2023 local government reorganisation, the Council became the statutory harbour authority, aiming to ensure safe, sustainable, and economically viable harbours.

## Vision and Mission

- **Vision:** To fulfil the potential of Scarborough and Whitby Harbours and Filey Coble Landing, by providing safe, and sustainable facilities, which celebrate their rich maritime heritage and embrace innovation and economic growth. Our harbours will be environmentally responsible, resilient to future challenges, open and welcoming to all – offering accessible, and engaging spaces for users, residents, visitors and businesses alike. Through collaboration and investment, we will ensure that our Harbours remain cherished and dynamic destinations for generations to come.
- **Mission:** Manage harbours to benefit current and future communities while preserving their historic value.

## Strategic Objectives

1. Ensure safety and high service standards.
2. Strengthen stakeholder relationships.
3. Improve operational efficiency and resilience.
4. Maintain and upgrade infrastructure.
5. Invest in new facilities to attract growth sectors.
6. Develop markets in fishing, leisure, tourism, aquaculture and renewables.
7. Ensure robust financial management.
8. Support environmental sustainability and net zero goals.

## Challenges and Opportunities

- **Challenges:** Ageing infrastructure, fishing industry decline, climate change, and funding gaps.
- **Opportunities:** Offshore wind supply chain, tourism, maritime training, and improved harbour facilities.

## Strategic Actions

- Infrastructure upgrades.
- New developments.
- Environmental initiatives.
- Enhanced stakeholder engagement and financial planning.

## Conclusion

This strategy provides a clear roadmap to secure the long-term future of North Yorkshire's harbours through investment, innovation, and collaboration.

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# Introduction

Following local government reorganisation in 2023, North Yorkshire Council became the Statutory Harbour Authority for Scarborough and Whitby harbours and Filey Coble Landing.

The Harbour Authority is responsible for managing and operation of safe and efficient harbours and has responsibilities in relation to the safety of vessels and people within the harbour, efficient navigation and the protection of the harbour environment.

The harbours are governed by the Council's Executive. The Corporate Director of Environment is the Duty Holder. This strategy ensures that all three harbours have a clear direction and are aligned under the management of North Yorkshire Council whilst recognising their unique qualities and value to local communities and continue to operate as three separate and distinct harbours.

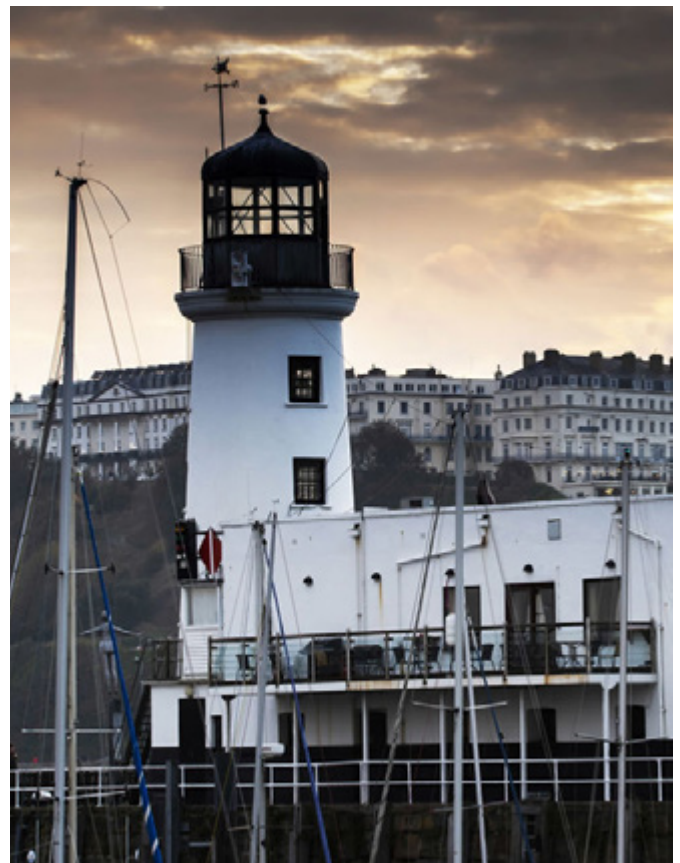
The harbours embrace a combination of both physical assets and operational responsibilities. As such, the Harbour Authority must always consider and often balance a set of important outcomes for the coast:

- The long-term financial sustainability of the Harbours as operational assets.
- The creation of active, inviting and accessible public spaces.
- Optimal use of land and water to meet the Town's economic, social, and tourism agendas.
- Compliance with Harbours legislation.

There are many challenges which our harbours face; a changing economy, increasing tourism pressures and changing needs of the tourism economy, keeping up with rapidly emerging technological advances, alongside climate change and the impacts of a changing coast on infrastructure, increased flood risk and increasing pressures on marine ecology. All these factors impact how the harbours will develop over the next ten years.

This strategy will help to underpin decision making on how the harbours develop by providing an overarching vision and objectives but will allow for flexibility for these changing considerations.

The document has been produced following a public consultation with stakeholders about the Council's positive vision for the future of the harbours and their development and management for the next ten years. The plan sets out the strategic and guiding policies and objectives together with timelines for achieving to proposed outcomes.



# Purpose and aims of the strategy

The North Yorkshire Council Harbours Strategy is a high level document which provides the framework for the development and future direction of management for Scarborough and Whitby Harbours and Filey Coble Landing, and how each of these unique assets will develop over ten years from 2026 to 2036. It is an ongoing and active document which will need to respond to economic, social and environmental changes as well as new policies.

The purpose of the strategy is to:

1. Set out a vision, aims, objectives and strategic goals to guide the operation and development of the harbours.
2. Provide a working framework to ensure harbour users, local communities and key stakeholders know what they can expect regarding development of the harbours over the next 10 years.
3. Aid the local planning authority to understand the ambitions of the harbours and help to ensure that future harbour development remains coherent with change delivered through the Council's Economic Plans, Local Plans, and other regional and local strategies.
4. Generate a partnership approach to the development of the harbours.

The Council has chosen a 10 year period for the strategy to allow time for the ambitious strategic objectives and actions to be delivered, including some of the significant capital projects which take more time to deliver. However, this is a 'live' document and will be reviewed on a regular basis taking into account any legal, financial, policy, operational or technological changes ensure continued relevance.

## Strategic Context

The strategy aligns with the [Council plan | North Yorkshire Council 2025-2029](#), which sets out the council's vision, ambitions and priorities for the next four years, as well as the approach we will take to achieve them.

The plan is based around five key themes (each theme has a number of ambitions and priorities):

- place and environment
- economy
- health and wellbeing
- people
- organisation

Locality working is another key element to the council plan, with the plan outlining our four pillars of locality working:

- local services and access
- local accountability
- local action
- local empowerment

This Harbours Strategy seeks to recognise the role of the harbours within this strategic context, and identifies how the harbours contribute to the Council's priorities. The strategy also aligns with other cross cutting themes such as carbon reduction, our Climate Change Strategy and our economic growth strategy.

## Current Position Statement

The harbours at Scarborough and Whitby, and Filey Coble Landing have been in a period of decline due to several factors:

- **Structural Issues:** Despite significant investment in repairs, the infrastructure at both harbours continues to deteriorate due to constant exposure to the marine environment. Problems such as accelerated low water corrosion weaken the steel piles supporting harbour walls, leading to sinkholes and reduced load-bearing capacity.
- **Lack of Investment and Strategy:** Local Councillors have expressed concerns over progress in support of the harbours. There is a desire from local members to attract renewable energy supply chain businesses and develop a formal investment strategy. Officers have been in discussions with representatives from the renewable sector, as the Council believes the coast has a unique opportunity in this area, with the North Sea having favourable wind conditions, shallow waters and proximity to larger markets.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and dredging difficulties are impacting the usability of the ports.
- **Decline of the fishing industry:** decades of overfishing leading to stricter quotas and regulations, shellfish die-off, rising fuel costs and competition from larger commercial fleets, and Brexit impacts have combined to create a difficult environment for the fishing industry and put financial strain on local fishing communities.

Whilst efforts are being made to address these issues, the decline remains a pressing concern for the Local Authority and businesses.

## Vision Statement

Our vision for the harbours is:

**“To fulfil the potential of Scarborough and Whitby Harbours and Filey Coble Landing, by providing safe and sustainable facilities, which celebrate their rich maritime heritage and embrace innovation and economic growth. Our harbours will be environmentally responsible, resilient to future challenges, open and welcoming to all – offering accessible, and engaging spaces for users, residents, visitors and businesses alike. Through collaboration and investment, we will ensure that our Harbours remain cherished and dynamic destinations for generations to come.”**

## Mission Statement

Our mission is:

**“Manage harbours to benefit current and future communities while preserving their historic value.”**

It will present a set of strategic goals which will help achieve our vision:

## Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives are:

1. To provide safe working harbours and the highest practicable levels of service to our customers and stakeholders.
2. To strengthen relationships with harbour users and stakeholders and work in partnership to achieve common goals.
3. To consolidate and optimise operations and practice together with the utilisation of resources to drive up commercial viability of the Harbour undertakings.
4. To maintain the existing infrastructure, property and facilities to a necessary standard to sustain current Harbour activity.
5. To invest in new overarching infrastructure, property and facilities necessary to grow future Harbour activity and attract growth sectors and activities.
6. To provide a significant focus of effort on the development of growth markets and opportunities in all sectors including commercial fishing, leisure, tourism, aquaculture and the renewables sector.
7. Ensure that the commercial and financial management is robust, market-led and enables the Statutory Harbour Authority to deliver its statutory duties, strategic objectives and fund harbour operations and maintenance.
8. To rise to the challenge of net zero by identifying long-term decarbonisation opportunities for electrification and reducing carbon emissions and increasing biodiversity.

## Strategic Actions

These strategic objectives are then underpinned by a number of strategic actions. Each strategic action will be brought forward as an individual action or a specific project. In the case of larger projects these will be delivered in line with the Council’s corporate arrangements for project management including governance and finance. At this level business cases and project plans will be prepared for the relevant strategic action with SMART objectives.

## Beyond the Shoreline

This strategy should also be read in conjunction with the Council’s complimentary “Beyond the Shoreline” report dated March 2025 which explores the scale and nature of maritime economic opportunities for North Yorkshire’s Coast.



# Governance and legislation

Scarborough and Whitby harbours and Filey Coble Landing operate under a mix of local, national, and international legislation governing maritime activities, environmental protection, and public safety. Key legislative frameworks include:

1. Harbour, Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847: provisions relating to the construction of the harbour, the appointment and functions of a Harbour Master, the regulation of activities and conduct at the harbour, including the power to make byelaws, and an open port duty to keep the harbour open at all times.
2. Harbours Act 1964: This is a foundational UK law that regulates harbour authorities, providing powers to manage and improve harbour facilities. It outlines provisions for harbour development, charging harbour dues, and managing navigation.
3. Dangerous Vessels Act 1985 and Dangerous Substances in Harbour Areas Regulations 1987: Harbour Masters given powers re dangerous vessels and substances.
4. Merchant Shipping Act 1995: Regulates shipping and navigation in UK waters, including the safety of vessels using the harbour, pollution control, and enforcement powers for harbour authorities.
5. Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code (PMFSC) and supplemental guide to good practice: A national code that applies to all UK harbours, ensuring safe marine operations. Harbour authorities are responsible for maintaining navigational safety and implementing risk assessments and marine safety management systems.
6. Environmental Legislation:
  - Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009: Governs the sustainable development of the marine environment, including environmental protection and the establishment of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs).
  - Water Resources Act 1991: Regulates water pollution and outlines responsibilities for managing water quality in and around the harbour areas.
7. Local Harbour Acts: Specific to each harbour, these acts define the operational jurisdiction and authority of the local harbour boards or authorities in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey, detailing their powers to manage harbour infrastructure, collect dues, and regulate activities and an obligation to do everything necessary to protect and preserve the port and harbour.

These statutory purposes form the key drivers for the strategy.



As successor to Scarborough Borough Council, North Yorkshire Council is the statutory harbour authority for Scarborough and Whitby Harbour. This function transferred to North Yorkshire Council by virtue of Local Government Reorganisation, particularly the North Yorkshire (Structural Changes) Order 2022 and the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transfer of Functions, Property, Rights and Liabilities) Regulations 2008).

The council accommodates underlying statutory requirements (both in local government legislation and in any specific local harbours legislation) in its approach to management of its harbours. Statutory harbour authorities are under a common law duty to conserve and facilitate the safe use of the harbour. This includes a duty to ensure that those who may choose to navigate the harbour, may do so, without danger to their lives or property. In addition to any provisions in local legislation, the common law duty to conserve and facilitate safe use of the harbour extends to maintenance of the harbour, including dredging, and a discretion to repair, improve and maintain harbour infrastructure. Scarborough and Whitby are subject to the 'Open Port Duty' to keep the harbour open, upon payment of rates, for the shipping and unshipping of goods and the embarking and landing of passengers.

Local Authority-owned harbours are part of the council and so are ultimately accountable to elected Council members and the local electorate. They also operate within the council's governance and decision-making structure. Relevant delegations to the Executive, Executive Member, Corporate Director and Harbour Master are therefore set out in the Council's Constitution. Local legislative harbour functions are reserved to the Council's Executive. The Council's Executive is the main decision-making body in respect of harbours.

The Council thus acts in two distinct capacities, pursuant to its powers and functions as a local authority, and its powers and functions as a harbour authority with the Council's Executive performing both functions.

The Council has established three stakeholder groups; one for each harbour as well as Filey Coble landing. Membership includes the NYC Portfolio Holder, Ward Member, harbours staff and a range of harbour users as well as a Ward Member from each of the Town Councils.

These frameworks ensure the harbours operate safely, sustainably, and in compliance with environmental and navigational standards.



# Overview of harbours – where we are today

## Scarborough Harbour

See appended Plan No. 1 in Annex 1

Scarborough Harbour is situated at the foot of Scarborough Castle and in the lee of the Castle Headland, and with a southerly facing entrance Scarborough Harbour offers direct access to the North Sea. The Harbour has been in existence in one form or another since the 13th century. In the 19th century the Harbour served as one of the east coast's principal ship building centres. Since that time, it has served a wide range of roles including a major harbour for the herring fishery, a cargo harbour for timber and foodstuffs; and between the 1970-1990s a major regional harbour for the commercial North Sea fishing fleet.

The waters of the harbour are purely marine in nature and are subject to drying out at low water to varying degrees.

The harbour is directly open to the sea and is protected from marine inundation by the East Pier, West Pier and Lighthouse Pier. The RNLi has a rescue boat based adjacent to the seaward side of the West Pier. The harbour is separated by the Vincent Pier into two parts. The outer harbour being ostensibly used for the berthing of leisure craft and the inner traditionally used for fishing trades, leisure and commercial pleasure craft.

Cargo trade has now ceased entirely within the harbour and the commercial fishing industry has reduced and rationalised. Scarborough is now host to 28 commercial fishing vessels. The majority of fishing boats are smaller vessels, under 10m, predominantly serving the shellfish industry. However, in recent years the Harbour has been a popular destination with visiting prawn trawlers and scallop vessels. The number of leisure craft in Scarborough has increased in recent years with over 200 leisure vessels in the Harbour and a healthy waiting list for future users.

The wharves and piers of the Harbour are open to the public and are considered to be part of the attraction of the town and are public promenades and visitor attractions in their own right. The Harbour therefore has a very mixed role within the local economy and to the community in which it is located.

Scarborough's geographic position makes it attractive for some commercial operations in the North Sea, such as the supply chain for wind farm development and operation. Competing for any offshore wind supply chain opportunities will be an important consideration moving forward.



## Whitby Harbour

See appended Plan No. 2 in Annex 1

The harbour of Whitby is situated at the mouth of the River Esk and is protected from the brunt of the marine environment by two masonry piers and their extension arms. The harbour is, in effect, separated into a lower and upper harbour by a mechanical swing bridge which was built in 1908. This controlling structure governs navigational access/ egress to many vessels using the upper harbour and facilitates vehicular and pedestrian movement for those using the town centre of Whitby, and is operated by dedicated harbours based bridge staff. The bridge opens on the hour and half hour on request for two hours either side of high water.

A harbour has existed at Whitby since the 16th Century and between 1700 – 1800 Whitby was the home to a large number of whaling vessels and Baltic traders used to lie up for the closed season in the port. In 1706 Whitby was the sixth largest trading harbour in Britain, building some 130 ships per year. In 1957 the harbour's fishing quay was built in the lower harbour (western side) includes a fish market, office accommodation, ice house and lobster hatchery. At the present time there are 31 fishing vessels operating out of the harbour on a regular basis.

In 1964 a commercial cargo wharf (Endeavour Wharf) was built to facilitate a demand for cargo handling at the harbour and in 1996 a new transit shed, and 40 tonne weighbridge was added. Whilst the cargo trade has now significantly declined the Wharf can still handle vessels of up to 85 metres in length and 3000 tonnes DWT, though the width of the harbour mouth and the swing bridge span are governing factors.

1979 saw the completion of dredging and land reclamation in the upper harbour and the laying of some 21 floating pontoon berths and drying pontoons. 7 acres of tidal flood plain land was reclaimed on the western side for car parking and marine-orientated business.



The berthing of vessels is split in the upper harbour between the east and west sides with marina type facilities predominantly on the western side. Local boatbuilding and maintenance businesses also operate from the upper part of the harbour. One business provides a dry dock and another provides a boat lift up to 16 tonnes.

The harbour is also home to a lobster hatchery – one of the UK's few active lobster conservation facilities, releasing thousands of juvenile lobsters into local waters annually to support stock recovery and the fishing community.

In 2025 the Council commenced the construction of the Whitby Maritime Hub located on Endeavour Wharf. The hub is designed to support education, training, research, and enterprise in the maritime sector, helping to diversify the local economy and provide new opportunities. The hub is expected to open in 2026.

The harbour is bounded by the town's main tourist area and a significant number of private properties face over the harbour. Some are actually founded on the harbour walls (eastern side).

The harbour has a RNLI rescue boat based in the lower harbour (east side).

Importantly, the harbour is subject to tidal and fluvial influences both of which can dominate depending upon various stages of tide and river conditions. Siltation caused by this interaction places a regular demand upon the harbour's dredging operation. At low tides and river flows, there are areas of the harbour which dry out especially in the upper harbour.

## Filey Coble Landing

See appended Plan No. 3 in Annex 1

Filey Coble Landing comprises a level, cobbled and concrete structure situated towards the northern end of Filey Bay. It has historically dated back to the Roman times in the 4th Century when the nearby Filey Brigg was used as a natural and safe harbour.

Since at least that time, the local fishing trade has used the Landing. However, tourism has now taken the forefront and the Landing is now used for a mixture of fishing, pleasure and passenger vessel storage and launching with tourist arcades and cafes abutting the landward and southern side of the Landing. The RNLI has a rescue boat based here.



### Main Activities

The main activities at each harbour can largely be broken down into 7 primary areas / sectors:

1. Commercial Fishing sector: including fish and shellfish catching sector, fish processing, sales and support services such as equipment, chandlery and storage and premises.
2. Leisure Craft sector: Privately owned and operated leisure vessels such as sailing yachts, motor launches, sport angling craft and supporting facilities such as pontoons, club premises launch facilities etc.
3. Commercial activity: such as passenger vessels, charter angling, speed boat operations and other commercial activity such as visiting work and survey boats etc.
4. Retail activity: largely but not entirely tourism-based activity such as cafés, restaurants, retail kiosks and other associated premises.
5. Public Parking: Chargeable Pay and Display public and permit holder parking.
6. Other / unrelated activity: Letting of buildings and land for other purposes i.e. artist studios, storage etc.
7. Communal space: such as public space, navigable water, slipways, access ways, piers, toilets etc.

Each of these activities generate income, while incurring both direct and indirect costs.

## Port and Marine Facilities Safety Code

The Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code sets out a national standard for every aspect of port and marine facility safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who works in, or uses, ports, harbours, marinas and other marine facilities.

This Code, and associated Guide to Good Practice, play an essential role in achieving this by setting out the minimum national standards to which all ports and marine facilities should be managed.

The Statutory Harbour Authority has an excellent record for safety within the harbours and compliance with the code and guide, and will continue this with regular internal and external audits and external inspections by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

Scarborough and Whitby Harbours certified their compliance with the Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code to the Department of Transport on 27 March 2026. Filey Coble Landing is not required to certify compliance.

## Fishing Industry

The fishing industry in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey has undergone considerable change in the last 30 years and is now facing significant challenges, with local fishermen reporting a sharp decline in catches – down by around 90% since a mass shellfish die-off event began nearly two years ago. All Harbours now feature fishing vessels that primarily focus on crustaceans. There are very few fish landings.

Additionally, recent EU trade agreements have sparked frustration among the fishing community, with industry leaders describing the latest deal as a betrayal that sacrifices UK fishing rights for other trade benefits. The agreement allows EU vessels continued access to UK waters for another 12 years, raising concerns about competition and sustainability.

Despite these challenges, the region remains one of the largest lobster fishing hubs in Europe.

## Offshore Renewables

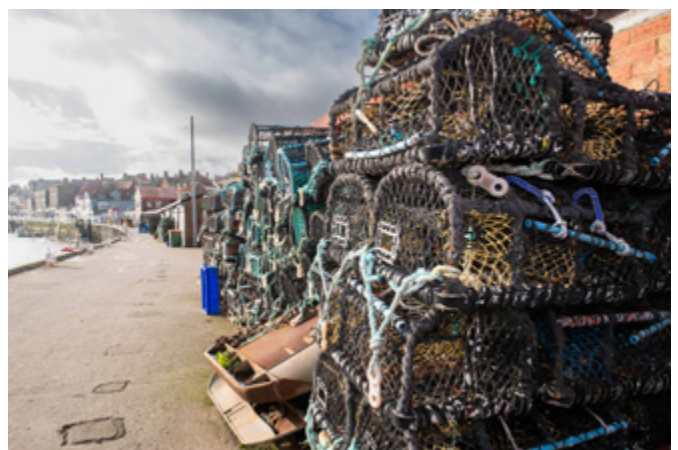
North Yorkshire's geographical proximity to existing and future offshore wind farms allows for quicker travel times and operational efficiencies in servicing and maintenance activities, and both harbours currently host visiting guard vessels and survey vessels.

The offshore renewables sector is experiencing significant growth, with increasing demand for maintenance and servicing of workboats such as crew transfer vessels (CTVs), survey vessels, and guard vessels. Survey and guard vessels already operate out of the harbours. There is an opportunity for Scarborough and Whitby to have the potential to capture a share of the wider market by providing maintenance, servicing, and port support for CTV's, subject to provision of additional infrastructure.

## Net Zero

The Statutory Harbour Authority is committed to supporting the UK's transition to a low-carbon future and contributing to the goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions.

However, fishermen have expressed strong concerns and resistance toward the decarbonisation of the fishing fleet, particularly in response to recent government and council initiatives. There are economic concerns that retrofitting or replacing diesel-powered boats with electric alternatives would be prohibitively expensive, especially for small-scale operators, and safety concerns about the practicality and safety of electric vessels in harsh North Sea conditions.



# Swot Analysis

This SWOT analysis explores the key factors shaping North Yorkshire's harbours, examining their unique advantages, challenges, potential for growth, and risks that require strategic management. By understanding these elements, we can make informed decisions to strengthen and future-proof these vital coastal assets.

## Strengths

- Unique identity – character and history.
- Diverse mix of uses.
- Large leisure fleet.
- User groups in place.
- All harbours under one governance structure.
- Provides diverse range of employment.
- Good strategic location for visiting vessels travelling up and down the North coast.
- Strong record of PMSC compliance.
- Events (e.g. goth weekend, seafest).

## Opportunities

- Proximity to offshore windfarms.
- Identified infrastructure development opportunities.
- Potential opportunities to diversify activities, e.g. Aquaculture, Guard Vessels, Survey Vessels, CTVs.
- Significant waiting list for leisure berths.
- Use of improved technology to manage harbours.
- Availability of government grants.
- Strong tourism offer.
- Support businesses (e.g. Chandlery, boat maintenance).
- Shellfish facilities.
- Prepare for net zero.

## Weaknesses

- Remote location.
- Poor access to the North East coast by road.
- Demand for parking can exceed available spaces.
- Congestion of people.
- Poor water quality.
- Poor reputation with users.
- Susceptible to flooding and overtopping.
- Local businesses heavily reliant on seasonal tourism.
- Ageing piers infrastructure that needs improvement and renewal.
- Buildings in poor state of repair.
- Drying of outer harbour.
- Lack of onshore facilities.
- Lack of maintenance facilities.
- Understaffed.
- Restricted access to Whitby upper harbour
- Vessel size restrictions.

## Threats

- Decline of the fishing industry.
- Low skills base of the local population.
- Differences of opinion over direction and redevelopment aims.
- Insufficient funding to implement all infrastructure improvements.
- Competition from other harbours.
- Ability to maintain satisfactory dredging.
- Insufficient staffing levels.
- Conflicts of interest between competing activities affecting fishing, commercial and leisure.
- Pollution incidents and contaminants in sediment.
- Shellfish mortality incidents.
- Climate change and sea level rise.
- Ageing workforce.

# Consultation and strategy development

As part to the development of this strategy, the Council has undertaken a range of consultation and engagement measures, including:

- Desk based research.
- Interviews with harbour staff.
- Consultation with harbour user groups including establishment of Working Groups in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey.
- Engagement with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Engagement with the Ward members through Area Committees.
- Drafts issued to Scarborough, Whitby and Filey Town Council's.
- Draft document available for public consultation via the Council website, and publicised in local media.

Initial consultation was based upon key areas of investigation for each of the three areas of strengths, weaknesses opportunities, threats and priorities.

Feedback from the consultation has been incorporated into the final strategy.



# Strategic action plans

## Strategic Objective 1

**To provide safe working harbours and the highest practicable levels of service to our customers and stakeholders.**

It is vital that the harbours are safe places for people to work and visit and there are a number of ways to maintain and improve safety including following the Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code which sets out the national standard for Port Marine Safety. Having appropriately trained harbour staff with clear roles and responsibilities is essential for the safety and the provision of good infrastructure and facilities throughout the seasons. It is important that the harbours are safe and accessible to all.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Implement guidance in the Ports and Marine Facilities Safety Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote a safety-first culture ensuring the highest standards of health and safety for employees and harbour users.</li> <li>Delivered via briefings at team meetings and user group meetings.</li> <li>Operating a safe management system that fully complies with the PMFSC.</li> <li>Delivered by a combination of annual internal audits, external audits every three years and external inspections by the MCA as requested.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
2. Promote, educate and enforce marine safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver harbour safety, working with harbour users and stakeholders on matters of safety and security to determine harbour performance and share reports on accidents and maritime incidents.</li> <li>Issue of enforcement action by the Harbourmaster where necessary.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Ensure staff roles and responsibilities are clear and staff are appropriately trained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff familiar with their job descriptions.</li> <li>All staff complete corporate mandatory training.</li> <li>All staff training requirements identified in annual IPM.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
4. Improve compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set out expectations of compliance with important harbour rules and policies for all users.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing

## Strategic Objective 2

**To strengthen relationships with harbour users and stakeholders and work in partnership to achieve common goals.**

A key part of harbours being at the heart of the communities is the relationships they have with their communities, users and key stakeholders. Harbour users are important and the way in which they are dealt with is equally important. Improvement in stakeholder engagement and consultation, both through the existing harbour users groups and public communications within the wider community is essential going forward. There needs to be consistency in approach to providing high quality customer service across the harbours with all users to build excellent working relationships. The harbours staff will continue to work in partnership and align with local, regional, and national plans and policies to achieve common goals.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Improve customer service approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the harbours in an open, consistent and accountable manner to deliver the highest quality customer service.</li> <li>• Develop robust partnerships with key maritime stakeholders.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
2. Re-establish Harbour User Groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of harbour user groups as a means of communication and consultation is long established but has been sporadic in recent years. Re-establish these meetings to a regular quarterly basis.</li> <li>• Use as a basis for development of constructive partnerships.</li> <li>• Review the existing arrangements to consider whether these groups contain appropriate representatives, are adequately inclusive and suitably representative of all harbour users.</li> <li>• Ensure Ward members are invited to attend user group meetings.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Improve consultation and engagement on developments through the consultative groups and associations and wider stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult regularly through relevant groups, recreational clubs, and businesses as well as other harbour users, residents and Town Council's to ensure that everyone's opinion is taken into consideration in harbour redevelopment.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
4. Develop a communications plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate well with our customers and stakeholders and develop the North Yorkshire Ports brand.</li> <li>• A bespoke communications plan will be developed for the harbours to ensure our active engagement with users.</li> <li>• Identify and implement more and better forms of communication.</li> </ul>	All	March 2026

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
5. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instigate a governance review to investigate alternative governance models and their suitability for adoption.</li> <li>• Present to Executive for consideration.</li> </ul>	All	March 2028



## Strategic Objective 3

**To consolidate and optimise operations and practice together with the utilisation of resources to drive up commercial viability of the Harbour undertakings.**

It is intended for the harbours to be operationally financially self-funding and be able to manage any ring-fenced reserves to ensure that the harbours see reinvestment to support the strategic goals.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Review staffing structure to build more resilience into the service and ensure succession planning for ageing workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake service transformation process.</li> <li>Review existing staffing structure and implement restructures to build in better resilience within the service.</li> <li>Ensure succession planning of ageing workforce.</li> </ul>	All	December 2026
2. Implement policies to ensure vessels are sea-worthy and do not remain static within the harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require provision of MCA inspections.</li> <li>Removal of vessels that do not move will free up valuable berths for alternative users and contribute more to thriving working harbours.</li> <li>Amendments to mooring contracts.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Review harbours policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harbours policies and procedures are numerous and detailed.</li> <li>Reviewing these will enable a rationalisation to drive efficiency and simplicity for harbour users.</li> <li>Move to rolling berthing licences to reduce administration.</li> </ul>	All	March 2027
4. Implement the recommendations of the harbours audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing the recommendations of the harbours audit will ensure improved procedures and better operational compliance.</li> </ul>	All	December 2025
5. Dredging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When not carrying out in-house dredging programmes, utilise the dredger to bid for external commercial contracts to generate additional income.</li> </ul>	Scarborough and Whitby	Ongoing
6. Harbours Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of a new Harbours Management System to replace the disparate current systems and lead to more integration and efficiency [subject to integration with new Finance system]</li> </ul>	All	March 2027

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
7. Whitby Swing Bridge Opening Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a users working group to review the opening arrangements and scheduling for Whitby Swing Bridge to explore if a different arrangement can be implemented to benefit all users.</li> <li>Agree terms of reference, an independent chair, and ensure users recognise SHA as the only decision making body for any changes.</li> </ul>	Whitby	September 2027
8. Improve customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and implement simple actions regarding cleanliness, facilities provisions, staffing hours etc to improve customer experiences.</li> </ul>	All	December 2026



## Strategic Objective 4

**To maintain the existing infrastructure, property and facilities to a necessary standard to sustain current Harbour activity.**

With few exceptions, the infrastructure of the harbours is ageing, and in some cases is not in a satisfactory operational condition. Improvements in the condition of these assets is therefore a strategic priority, subject to affordability and prioritisation.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Annual condition surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual condition surveys by Coastal Engineers will facilitate an overall assessment of condition of the harbours and provide a benchmark for continuous repairs and improvements.</li> </ul>	All	Annually
2. Maintain dredge depths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a sustainable and cost-efficient dredging operation underpinned by monitoring.</li> <li>Undertake two dredging campaigns per year per harbour at Whitby and Scarborough.</li> <li>Be proactive in renewing dredging licences with the MMO.</li> <li>Continue recruitment of Assistant HM Dredging and use of agency skippers under review.</li> </ul>	Both	Ongoing
		Both	Ongoing
		Scarborough	Dec 2027
		Whitby Whitby	June 2028 April 2026
3. Undertake repairs to West Pier inner sheet steel piles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the piles will prolong the life of the structure for a further 10+ years, and enable continued use by the fishing industry.</li> <li>This will support the West Pier Regeneration scheme and buy time to consider the further development and extension of the West Pier.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	December 2026
4. Replace sheet steel piles to West Pier Bullnose and Lighthouse Pier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacing the piles will ensure the ongoing structural integrity of the piers and protect the historic lighthouse.</li> <li>Two stage process (1): appoint a design and build contractor to carry out surveys and investigations, design a solution and obtain consents.</li> <li>Two stage process (2): Carry out the works subject to affordability and the approval of a budget for the construction works.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	2027
			2028

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
5. Replace sheet steel piles to Eskside Wharf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacing the piles will ensure the ongoing structural integrity of the wharf and the continued operations of Parkol Marine.</li> <li>Two stage process (1): appoint a design and build contractor to carry out surveys and investigations, design a solution and obtain consents.</li> <li>Two stage process (2): Carry out the works subject to affordability and the approval of a budget for the construction works.</li> </ul>	Whitby	Ongoing  2026
6. Refurbish West Pier Lighthouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Property Service to carry out masonry repairs to lighthouse to prevent further deterioration, subject to affordability and approval of budget.</li> </ul>	Whitby	December 2028
7. Carry out phase 2 of North Wharf Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 2 of the North Wharf strengthening will build on the phase 1 works and improve loading capabilities on the wharf, whilst also extending its structural life subject to affordability and approval of budget.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	December 2029
8. Refurbish Lancaster Landing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refurbishing Lancaster landing will extend the life of the structure, subject to affordability and approval of budget.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	December 2031
9. Install protection measures to Endeavour Wharf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installing protection measures such as cathodic protection will extend the life of the structure.</li> </ul>	Whitby	December 2032
10. Piers Coast Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Coastal Infrastructure Service and Environment Agency to secure grant aid to protect the piers and extension arms.</li> </ul>	Whitby	2032-2040 (tbc subject to grant aid)
11. Fuel supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring fuel supply in house to better control supply and availability to users.</li> <li>Provide NYC's own fuel tanks in both harbours</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby	Summer 2025 2032 at end of lease
12. Pontoons and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide well-maintained slipways, accessible pontoons, safe dinghy access points and basic onshore facilities such as water, power and waste disposal.</li> <li>Review the feasibility of additional waiting pontoons in the outer harbour.</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby  Whitby	December 2027

## Strategic Objective 5

**To invest in new overarching infrastructure, property and facilities necessary to grow future Harbour activity and attract growth sectors and activities.**

It is recognised that ongoing development of the harbours is essential in order to grow and this ambitious set of objectives provides scope to deliver industry leading facilities. Most of these initiatives will require and be subject to external funding bids and funding availability and will only be able to progress once appropriate funding has been identified.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Improve dredge depths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving dredge depths in selected locations will enable the harbours to attract larger vessels (up to 50m), particularly the markets related to offshore renewables supply chain.</li> <li>Dredging deeper channels to match mooring depths.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
2. Extend the West Pier to provide additional working area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An extended area will provide additional space for the fishing industry and offshore renewables industry and will generate additional income for the harbour.</li> <li>Will be dependent upon significant grant aid being available, a harbour revision order, and other associated consents.</li> <li>Potential to reduce overtopping.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	2036
3. Improve our moorings to best meet the needs of our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing new drying pontoons in the outer harbour associated with some additional dredging if possible will reduce waiting lists and generate additional income for the harbour.</li> <li>Provide new pontoons in Whitby Marina with deeper dredge depths to accommodate larger keels</li> <li>Balance waiting lists by increasing numbers of more popular mooring types, such as pontoon berths, whilst reducing numbers of less popular moorings.</li> <li>Encourage more visiting boats.</li> </ul>	Scarborough  Whitby  All  All	December 2027
4. Improve existing or provide new onshore user facilities building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving existing or providing a new onshore user facilities building, as well as providing better facilities will compliment the provision of new berths and increase revenue.</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby	2036

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
5. Replacement of Vincent Pier crane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vincent Pier crane is unreliable, and due to its Italian manufacturer, spare parts and repairs can be a lengthy process.</li> <li>Replacement of the crane will increase lifting capacity (to ~ 7t)</li> </ul>	Scarborough	December 2026
6. Explore provision of a boat lift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a boat lift will replace the 'grid' enabling better maintenance of vessels and avoiding the need for boats to travel to Bridlington or further afield.</li> <li>A boat lift will be subject to the West Pier Regeneration scheme being completed, sufficient demand being demonstrated and external grant aid being secured.</li> <li>Define the nature/size of a boat lift that is right for the harbours.</li> <li>Possibility of a boat lift in Whitby to compliment the Whitby Maritime Hub</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby	TBC
7. New management arrangements to FCL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing new management arrangements will ensure better upkeep of vessels, better access and an improvement to the general area.</li> </ul>	Filey	December 2025
8. Complete construction of Whitby Maritime Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opening of the Whitby Maritime Hub will provide a new, state of the art facility for maritime businesses and the related education sector.</li> </ul>	Whitby	2026
9. Improve facilities for fishermen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match facilities to meet the diversification into shellfish.</li> <li>Deliver Scarborough West Pier Regeneration scheme.</li> <li>Improve quayside facilities for the shell fishing fleet – including bait storage, pot storage, landing facilities, and cold storage.</li> <li>Assist to create diversification pathways, such as supporting fishermen to engage with conservation programmes, marine tourism, or citizen science initiatives.</li> </ul>	All	2028

## Strategic Objective 6

**To provide a significant focus of effort on the development of growth markets and opportunities in all sectors including commercial fishing, leisure, tourism and the renewables sector.**

Recognise the importance of leisure boating, water-based tourism and local access to the coast. Reduce barriers to entry by actively addressing financial, administrative and physical obstacles that prevent local people from using leisure vessels, by providing affordable berths, clear policies, simple access to slipways and pontoons, and facilities that support small private craft.

In order to thrive, the harbours need to focus on growth markets, and provide suitable facilities for emerging sectors to invest in. Aim to provide facilities and infrastructure that meets the needs of a range of workboats operating in the North Sea, including the offshore wind supply chain, which will explicitly require external funding.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Deliver the Action Plan contained in the “Beyond the Shoreline” report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working closely with the Regeneration Service, deliver the action plan, with a focus on the essential actions.</li> </ul>	All	2029
2. Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the harbours marine facilities and services to potential users in a manner designed to provide value for money for customers, promote the overall improvement of the harbours and encourage water borne tourism to the towns.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Continue engagement with offshore renewables sector through active participation within the Humber Marine and Renewables Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being visible within the cluster will place North Yorkshire at the forefront of opportunity</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
4. Deliver education and training from the Whitby Maritime Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with education providers to deliver maritime skills training within the Whitby Maritime Hub.</li> <li>Assist industries in decline to diversify into new growth sectors.</li> </ul>	Whitby	Ongoing from 2026
5. Refocus future lettings of harbour properties in the first instance to maritime related uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures business space within the harbours is put to the correct primary uses.</li> <li>Encourage harbour users to also co-locate their land-based operations onto the harbour or surrounding area including business parks.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
6. Progress and enter into Memorandums of Understanding with key organisations in the offshore renewables sector supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enter into MOU with organisations to work together to improve infrastructure and meet their future operational requirements.</li> </ul>	Scarborough	Ongoing
7. Seek to attract businesses that provide operational maintenance support to wind farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wind farm businesses already operate out of our ports (survey vessels, guard vessels etc).</li> <li>Following regeneration, the space and facilities will be created to attract more wind farm support related businesses such as CTV to operate out of the harbours.</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby	Ongoing
8. Maritime Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Regeneration Service to develop the relationships between education and employment within the maritime sector.</li> <li>Work with existing education providers to ensure young people have the skills required to meet industry requirements.</li> <li>Support maritime careers engagement with schools and colleges, improving visibility of supply chain opportunities linked to offshore wind and the clean energy transition, and encourage knowledge sharing between coastal harbours and the wider regional maritime sector.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
9. Encourage water sports activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to provide a leisure, health, and wellbeing focus.</li> <li>Provide safe access to facilities for active leisure activities.</li> <li>Provision of better facilities for leisure users including swimmers at Coble Landing.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
10. Maritime economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen collaboration between North Yorkshire harbours and the wider regional maritime economy.</li> <li>Harbours such as Whitby and Scarborough operate within a broader Northeast maritime ecosystem which includes major industrial ports, supply chains, training providers and innovation activity.</li> <li>Recognising the value of regional collaboration would help ensure that opportunities linked to offshore wind, clean energy, skills development and maritime innovation are maximised for coastal communities.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing

## Strategic Objective 7

**Ensure that the commercial and financial management is robust, market led and enables the Statutory Harbour Authority to deliver its statutory duties, strategic objectives and fund harbour operations and maintenance.**

Following the judgment in relation to the Whitby Harbour court case, there are separate, ring-fenced reserves held for each of Whitby and Scarborough Harbours. All income and expenditure in relation to all activities carried out on 'harbour land', as set out in the relevant legislation, is ringfenced within separate Harbour accounts and any operating surpluses are held within earmarked reserves for each of the Harbours. All capital expenditure carried out on the Harbours is funded from the relevant Harbour reserve. Should a Harbour reserve contain insufficient funds to meet the costs of committed works, the works will initially be funded by the Council's Strategic Capacity Reserve and this funding will then be repaid by the Harbour from future surpluses arising. External grant funding will be sought wherever possible to provide additional funding for works to the harbours. It should be noted that the Filey Coble Landing is accounted for within the Council's wider General Fund services rather than being separately ringfenced.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Manage movements to reserves for future investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct surpluses to the appropriate harbour reserve to fund new initiatives and provide supplementary capital funding when required.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
2. Review harbour fees and charges on an annual basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harbour management will consider all fees and charges in the autumn prior to the Council's budget setting process for the following year.</li> <li>Determination of fees and charges will be based upon the legal framework, economic landscape, operational requirements, input from consultative groups and benchmarking against other local harbours.</li> <li>Early discussion will take place through Harbour User Groups to ensure Users are aware of the proposed fees as early as possible in the berthing renewal process</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Explore external funding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continually investigate external funding opportunities to help meet our development aspirations.</li> <li>It is recognised that external funding will be required for infrastructure developments, and also to respond to the challenges of climate change in the future.</li> <li>Seek to attract private investment.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing

## Strategic Objective 8

**To rise to the challenge of net zero by identifying long-term decarbonisation opportunities for reducing carbon emissions, increasing sustainability and biodiversity, and improving the environment.**

We will seek to maintain and improve the natural environment through sustainable management and conservation of the harbours, and respond to the climate emergency as we strive to achieve net zero emissions by 2030.

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
1. Manage water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the bathing water partnership we will encourage and support the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water to meet their statutory responsibilities for water quality.</li> <li>We will contribute through partnership working, provision of appropriate education, and promoting responsible waste disposal within the harbours.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
2. Facilitate Biodiversity Net Gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities on harbour land for projects to meet their BNG obligations.</li> <li>Facilitate the offshore renewables sector to meet their Biodiversity Net Gain obligations through continued support for the Aquaculture sector.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
3. Investigate the shoreside power energy opportunities at Whitby and Scarborough harbours, and Filey Coble Landing to provide an alternative option to power vessels when operating in the harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The driving factors of this project is to meet global and local Net Zero targets and guidance.</li> <li>Analysis has determined that fishing and commercial vessels who have a yearly consumption of more than 1,000 litres of fuel per annum are the biggest carbon emitters within the harbour. Due to this, they would require the most power out of all vessels at the harbour if shoreside power charging or renewable energy provisions were considered.</li> <li>Analysis has concluded that North Yorkshire Council should prioritise grid connectivity via shoreside power charging points first, renewables second, and wider technologies third.</li> </ul>	Scarborough, Whitby and Filey	2030

Action Point	Brief Description	Harbour	Completed by
4. Align with the Shoreline Management Plan and Coastal Defence Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the development of the Shoreline Management Plan and Coastal Strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change and in particular overtopping. Ensure proposals coordinate with harbours strategic objectives.</li> <li>Contribute to coast protection capital projects where these affect harbours assets, e.g. Whitby Piers and Extension Arms.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
5. Actively engage in opportunities to enhance and protect the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take part in national, regional and local initiatives. Incorporate opportunities to enhance and protect the natural environment.</li> <li>Work closely with conservation bodies and environmental groups including make space available for biodiversity enhancement.</li> <li>Recognise, engage with and encourage marine science and aquaculture as growth sectors.</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
6. Fishing sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with conservation organisations to develop a Shellfish Recovery Action Plan.</li> <li>Work with conservation organisations to assist in actions to address stock decline including supporting grant applications and developing biodiversity baseline surveys.</li> </ul>	All	2028
7. Flood risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with other agencies to combat flooding risk and environmental actions for the River Esk drainage basin and also Scarborough Foreshore.</li> </ul>	Scarborough Whitby	Ongoing



# Conclusions

North Yorkshire’s harbours serve as valued and vital economic, cultural, and environmental assets which are well loved by residents and visitors alike. By implementing a strategic approach that leverages their strengths, addresses challenges, and embraces new opportunities, the Council can ensure their long-term sustainability. Subject to affordability, continued investment in modern infrastructure, sustainable fishing, and tourism development will support local communities while preserving maritime heritage.

This strategy sets out a vision for the future which will ensure that the harbours:

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for harbour users and members of the public.
- Thrive economically; and
- Can adapt to climate change and better support nature.

Collaboration between local authorities, businesses, and residents will be essential in adapting to economic shifts, environmental concerns, and evolving industry demands. This proactive, well-informed strategy will help North Yorkshire’s harbours not only withstand future challenges but thrive as key coastal hubs for generations to come.

This ten-year strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis taking into account any legal, financial, policy, operational or technological changes ensure continued relevance.

For further information and enquiries about the North Yorkshire Harbours Strategy please contact the Harbours Service at:

Email: [Port.services@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Port.services@northyorks.gov.uk)

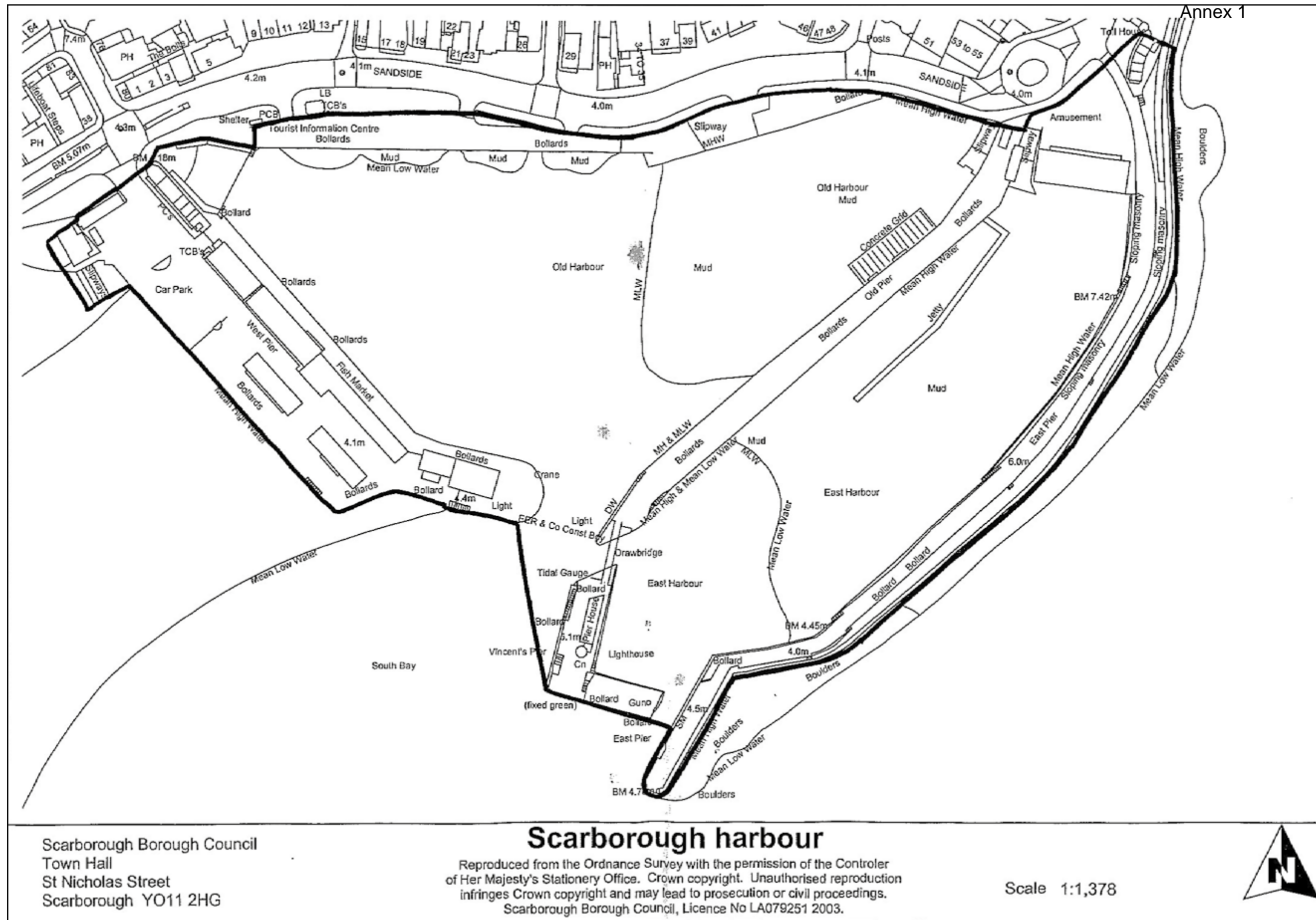
Website: [northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/ports-and-harbours](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/ports-and-harbours)



# Annex 1

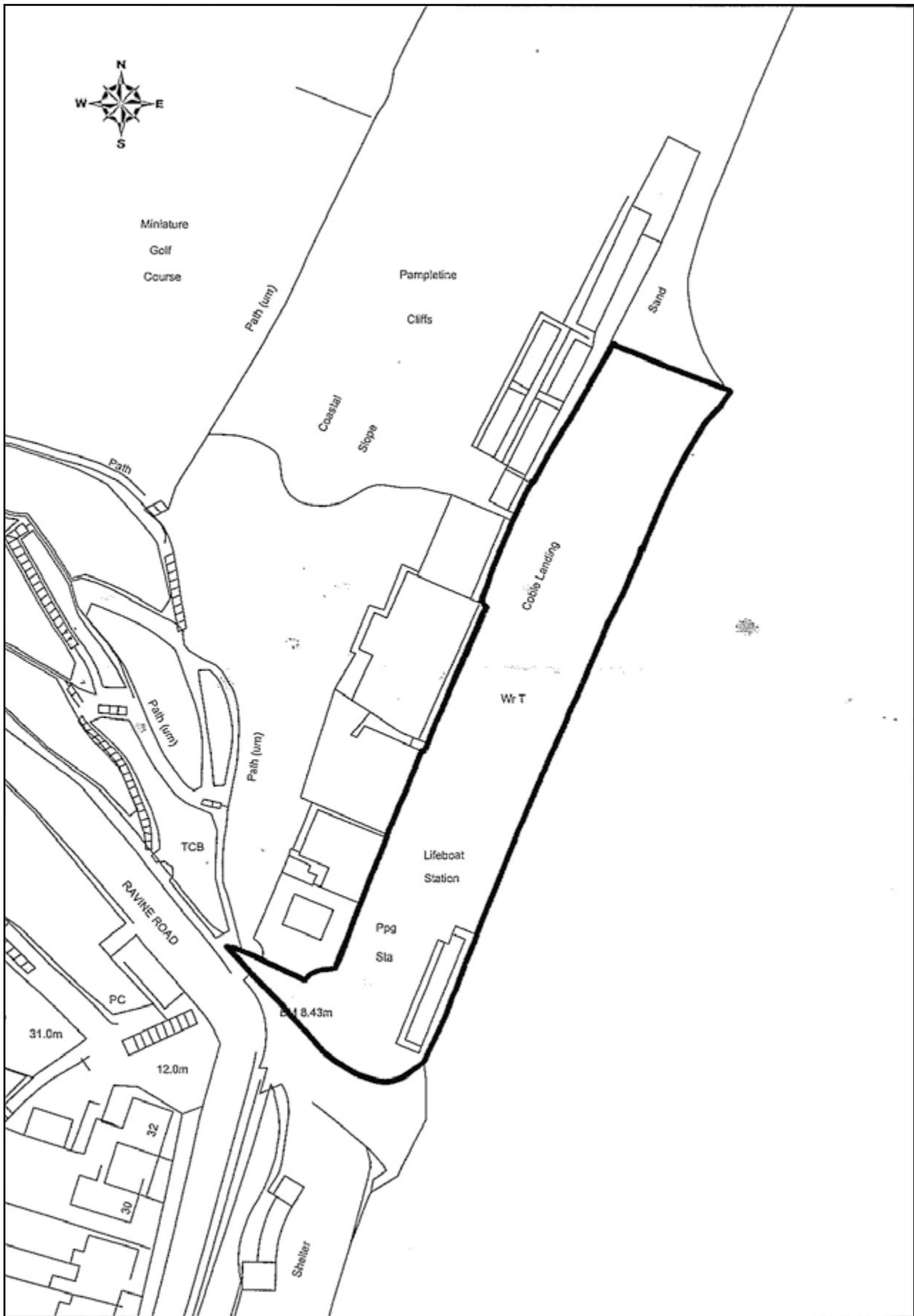


Plan 1: Scarborough Harbour





### Plan 3: Filey Coble Landing



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