



THE NEXT HORIZON

The Trust Port of Saundersfoot Harbour



Chairmans Introduction

The Harbour Order of 2011 created a new Commissioner Board and authorised them to take over the management and development of Saundersfoot Harbour and its associated property holdings. The inherited estate consisted of a leisure mooring facility, a small fishing fleet and comparatively large car park, without which the harbour could not afford to function. There were no cash reserves or a bank facility to allow any improvements or development to be undertaken.

A development and ambition strategy was drawn up named 'Sailing Ahead' which became the initial guideline for the Commissioners and was distributed to the Trust Port's stakeholders and potential funders including Wales Government.

It was apparent that, for an ambitious development to take place, peripheral strategic properties had to be brought into the estate and via funding partners including Wales Government, Pembrokeshire County Council, HSBC, Euro funds/Coastal Communities and other available sources this was achieved in the first three years under the 2011 Harbour Order.



Now in 2025 after a £11m development programme, the Trust port of Saundersfoot is Wales highest yielding fishing port with a recently developed hotel, shopping precinct, Marine Centre of Excellence and a full capacity leisure harbour, all supporting some 100 full time equivalent new jobs.

The Commissioners have all far exceeded their initial agreed terms of service because the development programme has been so intense and complex with covid and finance rate challenges, it was important to maintain continuity of management. Now in 2025, I as Chairman and the rest of my colleague Board Members will stand down in a structured manner to allow a new regime of Commissioners to be appointed to take the business on to 'The Next Horizon'.

The Advisory Committee have also served a similar term and an identical process will occur here, with a new group of skill relevant people to consult with the Commissioners via scheduled meetings with the Chief Executive and the Harbourmaster.

As with all Trust Ports in the UK, a modernisation process is underway, and to this end a 2020 New Harbour Order application was submitted to Wales Government for Ministers approval to prudently put in place the essential elements of Governance, Structure and Stakeholder Relationships in line with current Government guidelines. Robbie Owen, of Pinset Masons, stated the importance of having relevant and up to date governance *'to ensure that the port or harbour concerned remains constituted in a way that is fit-for-purpose, and has the right powers. Things are always changing and trust ports must move with the times, to make sure that they are able to be an effective and productive engine in the local economy. If reviews are not carried out regularly, economic opportunities may well be missed. The second reason is to make sure that the port or harbour, as custodian of important local and regional assets, keeps up with changing standards and expectations for corporate governance including those relating to transparency, accountability and contemporary values such as ESG.'*

To ensure that the Commissioners obtained a wide and overarching view to create this ambition document a Strategy Group was created, and we are extremely grateful to the members for their time and intellectual contributions they have made which tied in with the Board's planned direction.



Strategy Group Members.

Philip Evans CBE (Chairman)

Ted Sangster (Vice Chair)

Wendy Goldsworthy (Strategy Board member)

Nicola Gandy (CEO)

John Cray (Harbourmaster)

Consultants.

Will Bramble CBE (Pembrokeshire County Council)

Stuart Denman (Commercial Vessel Fleet & Advisory Panel member)

David Lewis (Hean Castle Estate & Advisory Panel member)

Jan Tuttle (Commercial Fishing Fleet & Advisory Panel member)

Dr. Barry Walters (Principal, Pembrokeshire College)

Phillip Williams LL.M FRICS (Projects Director, Infrastructure and Projects Authority, UK Government)

Robbie Owens (Head of Infrastructure Planning and Government Affairs. Pinsent Masons)

David Plester (RYA representative)

Alec Cormack (Chairman Saundersfoot Community Council & PCC Councillor)

I am delighted to record that all members of the Strategy Group Consultants have agreed to continue to contribute and guide on a regular basis. These individuals will now form the nucleus of the Advisory Committee, which will retain an element of the existing members, alongside others that will satisfy the current statutory membership requirements.

Additional serving Commissioners.

Phillip Parker

David Mc Dermott

Jim Codd

Andrew Evans.

I take this opportunity to thank all of the above for their contributions to the success of the Port's development.

To ensure that a constant review of the business structure is implemented, the Board and Management Team under the CEO will have to consider the following monitoring process:-

- Market Analysis.

What are the current trends in our industry and how will they evolve over the next five years?

Who are our primary competitors and what advantages\disadvantages do they have in their business models?

What are the emerging market opportunities and how can we position ourselves to capitalise on them?

How is customer behaviour shifting and what are our customers long term needs and expectations? (Marine, Hospitality, Visitor Attractions/Events, Weddings, Tenants)

What is the current client perception of our business?

- Core Competencies and Differentiators

What are our organisation's core strengths and how can we leverage them over the next five years?

How can we utilise our unique geographic location, history or status as a Trust Port to strengthen our market position?

What makes our products or services unique (USP) and how can we maintain or enhance this situation?

Are there new skills or resources we need to develop or acquire?

- Financial Goals and Growth Targets.

Revenue and profit targets analysis over the next five years?

How realistic is this?

What investments are needed in infrastructure & capital expenditure, technology, human resources and skill base?

How will we fund this process and how far 'outside the box' can we raise working capital?

- Customer Strategy

Who are our target customers and how do we expand our customer base?

Perhaps ...How do we diversify our customer base while enhancing relationships with existing clients?

What strategies can we use to enhance customer loyalty and retention?

How do we monitor customer experience and satisfaction levels?,

- Product/Service Development.

What new services, products (Retail?) can we introduce?

How do we prioritise these developments and how do we maintain a competitive advantage?

What are client's unmet needs currently?

Can we offer our business model to others to achieve an additional revenue stream?

- Marketing and sales strategy.

How will we differentiate our marketing strategies to stand out in a crowded market?

What channels do we concentrate on to reach new customers? (Digital marketing, events, trade shows, partnerships)

What role will branding play over the next five years?

- Operations and efficiency?

What are our obvious weaknesses and can we relate a cost base to them? a. Visible b. Internally aware.

How do we optimise our operations to be more efficient and cost effective?

What processes can be eliminated, automated or improved?

Can we outsource or partner for better efficiency?

Should we be selling our skill base to other similar organisations to increase cash flow without creating competition?

The Advisory Panel is an integral part of the Harbour Order requirement. What are our requirements of this Panel and how do we best achieve it?

- Vision and Mission alignment.

Analysing the above challenging questions, what is the vision for our business over the future?

Does our Mission Statement align with this vision?

How do we see the overall brand recognition evolve over the strategy period.

- Risk Management

What are the most significant risks facing our industry, and how can we mitigate them?

How prepared are we to handle potential environmental, economic or political disruptions?

CEO Overview

‘Next Horizon’ represents another exciting period for the Trust Port of Saundersfoot, focusing on the sustainability and growth of the Trust Port, both in terms of community and the commercial growth.

The Strategy Group identified key themes for growth, these being, Education, Tourism in all aspects, Community, Estate Management and Commercial fishing.

Education

The Trust Port of Saundersfoot aspires to be a proactive partner with the education sector, leveraging its unique location and resources to create meaningful learning experiences. The Principal of Pembrokeshire College, Dr Barry Walters, was a key contributor to this strategy. Through discussion with Dr Walters, the strategy has been developed with an aim to promote marine and harbour related career opportunities, improve environmental awareness and to create sustainable ‘live’ projects to benefit young learners within Pembrokeshire.

By actively engaging with the full breadth of education sector from local primary schools to universities, Saundersfoot Harbour can become a hub for learning, creating opportunities for learners in diverse curriculum areas such as Marine Engineering, Renewable Energy, Tourism, Events, Facilities Management and Creative Arts. Such collaboration will enable learners to have the opportunity to engage in industry-specific projects that not only deepen their understanding of their chosen fields but also equip them with practical skills and insights that are vital for their future careers and ensuring future generations are passionate about protecting Saundersfoot Harbour and the wider environment.

The Trust Port has the opportunity now to establish working partnerships with the education sector to serve as a bridge between education and industry, allowing learners to apply classroom knowledge in dynamic, real-world context. This is acknowledged by Dr Walters in his comments below:

“Pembrokeshire College is delighted to collaborate with the Trust Port of Saundersfoot at this exciting juncture, as the Port unveils its ambitious Strategic Plan for the next five years. This partnership approach underpins a shared commitment to fostering stronger community connections and opening up valuable opportunities for learners across Pembrokeshire. Saundersfoot Harbour's vision of building meaningful community ties aligns perfectly with our strategic aim of providing our learners with enriching and real-world experiences that enhance their educational journey.”



In addition to traditional education, the harbour must play a role in sea safety education and increasing access to water based activities. David Plester commented *‘the location is certainly a major positive both in terms of boating environment (safe bay which while tidal would allow courses to be run throughout the year and in most conditions), excellent classroom, storage and accommodation and finally a potential offering not replicated in south Pembrokeshire’* Taking full advantage of our location and the facilities already on site educational and awareness raising opportunities to collaborate with other bodies, such as the Royal Yachting Association and the RNLI, must be explored.

Furthermore, the development of the Celtic Free Port brings potential for new skills and workforce demands. By collaborating with industry partners and educational institutions, the Trust Port can play a central role in equipping learners with the skills necessary to support and benefit from these emerging economic opportunities.

Tourism

Tourism is a key revenue stream for the Trust Port, it underpins the harbour operations and the provision community facilities and activities. Bottom of FormFollowing the redevelopment of the harbour the future of tourism for Saundersfoot Harbour looks promising. By providing sustainable and accessible accommodation, the brilliant basics, high quality retail and food offers, well-being and water sports opportunities and a diverse range of events Saundersfoot can position itself as a tourism leader in Wales.

The accommodation element on offer at the harbour has been very well received, planning permission is already in place to expand this offer. Expansion of the accommodation has to be a primary objective of this strategy to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Trust Port. David Lewis commented ‘ *If creating further rooms, as discussed, I would strongly recommend you consider providing some accessible rooms as this has generated a lot of interest for us. In conjunction with your easy access to boats that is already in place, this could be a really strong offer. Perhaps consider a ‘Changing Places’ Public toilet facility when the opportunity and funds permit, and you would have a possibly unrivalled offer in this space.*



The increasing popularity of staycations and the desire for outdoor experiences, Saundersfoot harbour’s location offers a wealth of opportunities to all.. The harbour already offers a range of water-based activities such as kayaking, paddleboarding and fishing trips as well as retail offers, food offers and well-being offers through our tenants. The Trust Port

must work to develop commercial partnerships with these businesses, bonding the harbour and tenants together to ensure the sustainability and quality of the diverse range of offers available.

In addition to water-based activities, cultural tourism provides the Harbour with an opportunity to showcase its history. Opportunities to collaborate with heritage and arts bodies should be explored with the aim to host a variety of exhibitions. Additionally, there is a growing trend for well-being tourism and given the facilities available at Saundersfoot harbour, coupled with the beauty of the wider area, there is a real opportunity to capture this market and place Saundersfoot firmly on the well-being tourism map.

Lastly, there's potential for Saundersfoot Harbour to establish itself as a hub for high quality events. Hosting a year-round diverse programme of events would not only attract more visitors but further foster a sense of community and pride.

Community

The Trust Port has a strong desire to build and strengthen partnerships with the community of Saundersfoot and Pembrokeshire. Actively engaging with the Community Council, local groups, residents and businesses can identify shared goals that support economic growth, environmental responsibility and social well-being within the community.

The Chairman of the Community Council, Cllr Alec Cormack, shared his thoughts on the need for the harbour and the community to work closer together. He views the opportunity of a new Community Council, together with a change in Commissioners, as the ideal time to further harness this positive relationship *'for the good of the village'*.

In addition to the Community Council, Pembrokeshire County Council are key partners of the harbour and as such the Chief Executive, William Bramble, inputted to the strategy. He commented on the success of the redevelopment and felt that the *'focus now should be to ensure the Trust Port is a well-run community harbour, examining the parts that work well and addressing those that don't work so well. The scope for opportunities for social enterprise need to be examined, for the benefit of both the Trust Port and the community'*



Community links can be strengthened through hosting events, offering educational programs, and supporting local initiatives that promote activities which align with the Next Horizon Strategy. One of those initiatives would be to work with the Royal Yachting Association, there is clear synergy between our two organisations and the Next Horizon will see a strengthening of our relationship through the support of events, particularly those which involve young people.

Finally, communication is key to foster good working relationships, the Next Horizon will have a strong emphasis on improving all communication links with the community, through community groups, social media and increasing our visible presence. .

Estate Management

Management of the harbour estate involves balancing the maintenance and enhancement of the land based buildings together with the harbour operational infrastructure. Ensuring that Saundersfoot remains both a well-run, safe working harbour and a nationally important tourism destination.

The strategy needs to ensure the harbour remains a dynamic asset for the future generations of Saundersfoot. Estate management needs to look long term, and considerations need to be given to ensuring the sustainability of the harbour, the safety of the harbour and its users and to plan for events out of the control of the harbour such as potential sea-level rises. Solutions to future challenges such as these will require some 'out of the box thinking' and for the Trust Port to adapt appropriately.

The Trust Port needs to be alive to all funding opportunities, and to take advantages of any funding streams available which benefit the sustainability and future growth of the harbour. Philip Williams advised '*that the ambitions of the harbour fitted with many of the requirements of available and future funding streams and given the harbour's track record of delivery it would be a strong candidate for funding.*' The ambition of the harbour to progress with a saltwater Lido should remain, and future grant funding rounds will assist its materialisation, given the health, tourism, renewable energy benefits associated with the proposed Lido.

The harbour needs to keep up to date with emerging technologies to ensure that the harbour remains able to meet customer's needs. Evolving technologies, such as electric charging points, must be a consideration in future developments.

Finally, ensuring the safety of all harbour users and employees is a top priority. Regular safety exercises, signage and enforcement of health and safety regulations are key priorities. A culture of safety must be adopted by both employees and users.

Harbour Master Overview

Following successful completion of the redevelopment of derelict, underutilised and redundant areas around the harbour under the “Sailing Ahead Strategy”, it is now time to look forward to a bright future. The focus will be on providing a safe, sustainable and effectively managed harbour that will allow investment into further development of marine facilities such as mooring infrastructure and additions to improve the usability of the harbour for all.

Fishing and Harbour operations

Saundersfoot harbour is currently the operational hub for a fleet of eight resident fishing vessels, the majority of which operate 12 months of the year fishing for whelks, in addition to this, a number of vessels operate from the harbour on a seasonal basis targeting and landing species such as sea bass.



Feedback received from Mr Jan Tuttle ‘a way in which to diversify the fishing fleet would be to allow for and facilitate an increased number of commercial bass moorings along with the re-establishment of a fish market on the harbour, potentially a mobile fish market’ this feedback indicates opportunities for further development of this offering whilst also diversifying into other fisheries, the desire would be to offer safe, efficient and cost effective mooring opportunities to encourage fishermen to invest in smaller vessels that can operate from the harbour with a view to landing a diverse variety of species in a sustainable and commercially viable manner.

The desire is to create a market like culture on the harbour enabling catch to be landed daily at the harbour during the summer months that equally could be sold on or around the harbour in a proactive a sustainable way, currently there is no provision for the sale of fresh fish in or around the harbour, evidently the contribution to the local economy could be significant, based on a fleet of around ten additional small vessels being in operation, there is potential to support and develop upwards of 15 – 20 long term sustainable jobs along with the creation of opportunities arising from the provision of the sale of fish direct to customer at source. Furthermore this reinforces Welsh Governments desire for a circular economy as local restaurants will be encouraged to purchase and sell local produce.



Any avenues for funding support for the fishing fleet would also be investigated and where viable utilised in order to develop and increase the facilities available to the fishing fleet in support of their individual operations, ensuring compliance with the wellbeing goals of the Welsh Government's Well Being and Future Generations Act.

Saundersfoot Harbour is uniquely placed and extremely fortunate to be able to offer fully accessible boat trips, Mr Stuart Denman advised *'his charter boat offer was accessible for all, including electric wheelchairs, Saundersfoot is the only place this side of Swansea that has this facility, and it is a 'Trump card'* Stuart also highlighted a desire for development of a low water landing facility and the potential benefits it would allow, Stuart *'the one current disadvantage with Saundersfoot is the lack of a low water passenger loading facility, Tenby are able to offer 1.5 hrs trips and for us it is 2 hour due to the need for a tender'* this is something that should be investigated and assessed thoroughly to fully appreciate the

potential advantages this could bring if a solution were to be found. Options brought forward ranged from movable pontoons to a purpose-built landing craft, for circa £150,000 a vessel could potentially be commissioned and put into service to address the low water landing issue.



Harbour User Interface

With the view to increasing the usability of the harbour and its facilities, new harbour management software package is to be implemented in the near future, “Harbour Assist” this software will bring a much need refresh to the customer experience and allow a higher level of data collection and retention. The system will increase efficiency and financial control, the end user will be able to interact with the software in a dynamic way to allow a much more favourable experience.

Chairmans Conclusion

I am delighted to say that the Board considers that the Executive and staff are of the highest standard that we have ever experienced over the development period. It is now important that the CEO and Harbourmaster are intrinsically involved in the Board Strategy process to ensure that the delivery mechanism of ever improving harbour operations is achieved.

It is also important to use an ESG framework to evaluate our Company's sustainability and ethical impact, focusing on our environmental practices, social responsibility and corporate governance. As encouraged by Wales Government we have the following trident responsibility, to which we are committed:-

Environment.

We need to assess our impact on the planet including our energy consumption , carbon emissions, waste management and use of resources.

Social.

We must constantly examine our relationship with stakeholders, including employees, customers and the community, focusing on issues like fair labour practices, diversity, gender balance and inclusion alongside community engagement.

Governance.

We are committed to constantly review how the Trust Port is governed, including its transparency, ethical conduct, correct Board structure and accountability and value to stakeholders.

As we move into Q2 of 2025 and the start of the next exciting phase of the Trust Port of Saundersfoot, we enjoy an enviable relationship with our Bankers and tangential funders because our financial prudence in taking this once inchoate harbour and developing the vibrant commercial estate we enjoy today.

We have ambitious plans to develop a Power Pool which would be a carbon neutral salt water lido that would also greatly enhance our accessibility by flushing the harbour entrance, as well as generating free electricity on selected tides. This, coupled with a strong desire to have low water accessibility for mooring holders vessels at anchor, so increasing sea-time and value, will be major targets for the immediate future. I leave my Executive colleagues to elaborate on these at a later date.

The Next Horizon document is not a set-in-stone rigid mandate. It is a modern thought process that has evolved from over 50 hours of consultation with colleagues and external experts coupled with the lessons learned from the last 13 years of trading. It is designed to be

adapted and improved, prompted by market forces and insight. I have total confidence that The Trust Port, with its very unique and well- loved harbour, will continue to develop and deliver amazing experiences for our residential, business and visitor communities.

