



Dunbar Harbour Trust

Long-Term Development Plan  
2050 (and beyond)

## Introduction

- This document details the long-term development plan for the Dunbar Harbour Trust (DHT), covering the period up to 2050 (and beyond).
- This document details DHT's long-term plans for harbour development to meet the current and future needs of its users and stakeholders, with the overall aim to remain financial stable in the years ahead.
- This document does not replace the DHT three-year plan which focuses on maintaining and improving the existing harbour infrastructure through small scale projects.

## Why have a long-term development plan?

- The underlying business model for DHT is unlikely to change in the next ten years however there are longer term risks that need to be accounted and planned for to ensure the long-term future of the harbour.
- Harbour use will likely continue to be based on four streams of activity:
  - Fishing boats of 12m or less. It is envisaged that unless another economic shock occurs (Brexit, pandemic, etc.) there will likely be around 25 fishing boats using DHT as their base.
  - Tourist trip boats of 24m or less taking passengers to the Bass Rock and May Island.
  - Small leisure vessels, either moored in the harbour or launched and retrieved on the day.
  - Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) station - All Weather (ALB) based between Dunbar and Torness depending on tides and Inshore Lifeboat (ILB) based in Dunbar
- Harbour users in the future could include (but are not limited to) the following:
  - Renewables - crew change and material loading / unloading
  - Expanded Leisure users including kayak & stand-up paddleboards
  - Expanded use of the Battery for the arts
  - Development of the Castle & Vaults as a tourist attraction

## The Process

- The first iteration of this plan was created following a series of DHT board exploratory sessions between August and November 2024, to identify stakeholders, risks and future focus areas for long term planning.
- This plan will be distributed to the identified stakeholders for awareness, feedback and updated as well as identification of opportunities to support.
- Following review and consolidation of feedback, this plan will be submitted, discussed and approved by the DHT board.
- Work to implement and raise awareness of this plan will commence after it is approved.
- This plan will be reviewed as a minimum, every two years, to ensure it remains relevant and up to date.

## Background

Dunbar is situated at the mouth of the Firth of Forth, nationally & internationally important for wildlife and is the birthplace of John Muir, father of environmentalism. Located 30 miles east of Edinburgh and 30 miles north of Berwick upon Tweed with excellent walking, cycling, sea, bus and train links.

Dunbar harbour is made up of three harbours

- Cromwell, the 'old' harbour, built in the 17th century, and now a grade 'B' listed structure.
- Victoria Harbour, built in the 19th century.
- Broadhaven, originally the entrance route to Cromwell, now a harbour formed by a rock armoured breakwater.

Dunbar Harbour also includes the Battery, built in 1781 and the Castle and Vaults, dated back in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, both with rich histories. The Battery is a spectacular and freely accessible historic public space in the heart of Dunbar Harbour, the Dunbar Battery is an open-air venue that is well worth a visit for the views, the public art or to enjoy a unique performance in East Lothian. The Castle and Vaults are currently closed to the public.

The harbour is also home to one of the largest lifeboat stations in the area, a thriving Sailing Club and a Coastal Rowing Club. It is a tourist and leisure hub with many diving clubs setting off to enjoy the under seascapes around Dunbar and local and visiting anglers taking advantage of local fishing grounds.

## Purpose and Vision

Dunbar Harbour Trust was established by the Scottish Government in 2004. It is a charity registered with the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR).

The purposes of the organisation are laid down in law

- a) operating the harbour for the benefit of all its stakeholders including both port users and the local community;
- b) maintaining and improving the harbour facilities;
- c) attracting new uses of the harbour and new business to the harbour;
- d) advancing public education concerning the harbour; and
- e) providing facilities in the interest of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation.

Dunbar Harbour Trust is managed by up to twelve volunteer Trustee/Directors. Each director is appointed for a three-year term and can serve up to twelve years. The Dunbar Harbour Management Committee (DHMC) is a sub-committee of the Harbour Trust, overseeing the day to day running of the harbour.



*Dunbar Harbour Trust - photo of the three harbours*



## Stakeholders

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Dunbar Harbour Trust Board              | Local & Regional Diving Clubs         |
| Dunbar Fishermen (Association)          | Dunbar Coastal Rowing Club            |
| Ron Bailey                              | Dunbar Sailing Club                   |
| Dunbar Harbour local residents          | Dunbar Sea Cadets                     |
| Marine & Coastguard Association (MCA)   | Harbour and Dunbar residents          |
| PMSC                                    | Dunbar Harbour retailers              |
| Scottish Government inc. local MP & MPS | Boat owners - visitors & local        |
| Dunbar Community Council                | Belhaven & Coast to Coast Surf School |
| Marine Scotland                         | Motorhome (Visitors using car park)   |
| Harbour Master                          | Ocean Vertical – Coasteering and SUP  |
| Harbour mooring holders                 | OSC                                   |
| Enjoy Leisure                           | Be Green (Dunbar)                     |
| Dunbar and Linton Area Partnership      | Visitors – sightseeing – tourists     |
| Dunbar Community Rangers                | Pleasure boats inc. Jet Skiers        |
| Dunbar Parish Council                   | Paddleboarders                        |
| Accountants / Auditors                  | Dunbar Angling Club                   |
| Harbour Staff                           | Kayakers                              |
|   | Local hospitality providers           |
|   | Battery Volunteers and Users          |
|   | Sparkling Dunbar                      |
|   | Black Agnes Society                   |
|   | Wind Farm developers                  |
|   | Local Charities inc. The Ridge        |
|   | Royal National Lifeboat Institution   |
|   | Local support boats inc. crew changes |
|   | Local schools                         |
|   | Sealife Centre & Research Groups      |
|   | Bird Watchers                         |

## Risk to the Harbour

- Reduction and / or loss of commercial harbour users e.g. fishing boats, tour companies, etc.
- Reduction and / or loss of leisure harbour users e.g. Sailing boats, pleasure boats, etc.
- Loss of harbour grants
  - East Lothian Council - Harbour Grant.
  - Marine Scotland - Wall Maintenance.
  - Local and national grants.
- Marine and Coastguard Association requirements e.g. non-compliance/s, changes in harbour safety / operation, etc.
- Climate change:
  - Swell becoming too great for safe harbour use with a resulting loss in confidence for continued use.
  - Damage to and / or failure of harbour wall/s as happened to North Berwick Harbour in 2023.
- Deterioration and / or failure of the Harbour walls and slipway.
- Deterioration and / or failure of the Harbour bridge.
- Integrity of the Battery, Castle and / or Vaults.
- Reduction in Harbour depth due to silting.
- Reduction and / or loss of harbour retailers.
- McArthurs store deterioration and / or becoming unusable.
- RNLI decides to no longer use Dunbar harbour as its base.
- Lack of community involvement.
- Inability to recruit harbour staff and harbour board member.
- Failure to recognise emerging markets and changes to local markets.



## Long-Term development focus areas

### Increasing Harbour Usage

#### ***Commercial boats e.g. fishing, tours, windfarms, ferries, etc.***

- Increase the number of commercial boats using the harbour to provide a diverse and varied number of users and income sources to the trust.

#### ***All users - Shore facilities***

- Increased provision of storage and boat maintenance facilities.
- Installation of power and water facilities for harbour users.
- Provision of a boat hoist to allow removal of boats year round, removing the need to 'crane in' and 'crane out'.

#### ***Leisure Users - Moorings - chains***

- Upgrade and expand Victoria harbour mooring chains to provide improved facilities for existing users and increase mooring options for new users.

#### ***Leisure Users - Moorings - fixed pontoons***

- ***This cannot happen without harbour wall void maintenance to provide 'solid' pontoon fixings and changes to the harbour entrances due to the excessive swell that occurs within the harbour during severe weather.***
- Install a seasonal fixed pontoon to provide access to users who are unable to use the fixed ladders and / or tenders when accessing boats.
- Install fixed pontoons for year-round berthing.

### Improving facilities maintaining existing harbour infrastructure

#### ***Broadhaven sea defences***

- Replacement of temporary rock armour break water with a permanent harbour wall.
- Provide fixed pontoons and access for all users, removing vertical ladder and tender only access for boats.

#### ***Existing harbour walls and defences***

- Reinforce existing harbour walls to maintain defences and fill voids which have occurred within the walls and walkways.

- Install harbour external wall armouring to reduce swell intensity and the damage it can cause.

### ***Deep water berthing***

- Install breakwater and / or harbour wall at the harbour entrance to remove swell and provide facilities for users who are unable to enter the harbour due to boat size, and other users requiring 24-hour deep-water berthing.

### **Expand use of Battery**

- Provision of entrance doors and a retractable awning to remove the 'wind tunnel effect' and provide weather protection for users.
- Provide facilities and expand the use of the battery for special occasions such as weddings, music and art events, film showings, food markets, etc.

### **Development of castle & vaults as tourist attraction**

- Provision of edging and rock protection to allow the castle and surrounding areas to be reopened.
- Preservation of the Castle and Vaults to reduce deterioration and provide increased access for tourists.
- Provision of education facilities for visitors.

### **Provide office space for Harbour staff and flexible working**

- Review the layout of McArthur store during future maintenance and upgrades to identify opportunities to use spaces to increase revenue.