

**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Draft Harbours and Marina Strategy 2026-2036

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Summary



Causeway Coast and Glens has over 100 miles of coast with harbour and marina facilities.

We need a plan to make sure that our harbours and marinas match the council targets for the future.

We want to run harbours and marinas in a way that is efficient, sustainable and good for the local economy. We want to make the best use of these facilities for the public, including improving local areas and supporting marine tourism.



This plan includes our assessment of harbours and marinas and shows our targets for 2025 – 2036. We carried out the assessment by visiting the harbours and marinas, looking at records, speaking to people and asking questions by surveys.

Our harbours and marinas are full and there is a waiting list for space. People have told us that they are interested in us improving what we offer.

At the moment, the harbours and marinas loses £66,000 per year with an extra £600,000 needed to keep it running in good order.



Our harbours and marinas provide many benefits to the community including trade, employment, fishing and tourism. They meet our social needs which improves our health and wellbeing.

This plan will protect our harbours and marinas and make them better for the future.



Introduction

Vision

Causeway Coast and Glens has over 100 miles of coast with harbours and marinas. We need a plan to make sure that our harbours and marinas match the council targets for the future.

Opportunity

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (CC&GBC) want to assess and recommend a plan that will set targets to make sure we are making the most of our coast. It is important that the facilities and services are used to their full potential. It is important that we assess the costs of the plan.

Purpose of the strategy

This plan is for the development of the harbours and marinas owned by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CC&GBC). We want to work in partnership with everyone to make it happen. The plan will run until 2036 and we hope it helps everyone in the borough.



Exclusions – what is not included

Things that are not in this plan but need to be looked at in the future are:

- Managing the environment
- Managing the people who use the harbours and marinas
- Plan for protecting the heritage of harbours and marinas
- Fishing and Farming from the sea and rivers
- Security
- Shipping



Policy context

This plan will fit with the Government's and Council's other plans such as:



- Programme for Government 2024-2027
- Corporate Strategy 2021 – 2025
- Causeway Coast and Glens Community Plan 2017-2030
- Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPSS)
- Local Development Plan 2030
- Causeway Coast and Glens Local Development Plan 2030
- Retail & Commercial Leisure Capacity Study 2025
- Estates Strategy 2025-2030
- Destination Management Plan 2026-2036
- Rathlin Island Action Plan 2016-2020
- Climate Change Action Strategy 2025 – 2050
- Northern Ireland Marine Plan

Summary

CC&GBC has many marine resources which provide leisure, financial, tourism and environmental benefits.



Governance

CC&GBC harbours and marinas are run by the council and the councillors. The Director of Environmental Services manages them on a day to day basis.



Council Stakeholders – people with an interest in the harbours and marinas

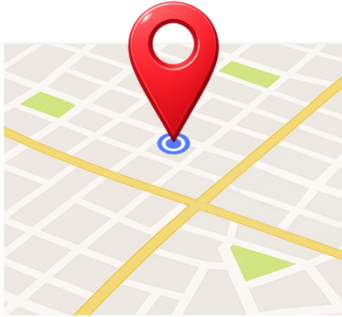
The following people have helped with this plan.

- Project Lead - John Richardson - Head of Capital Works, Energy, and Infrastructure
- Harbour and Marina Staff - John Morton – Senior Harbour Master
- Business Support - Amanda Shields - Project Co-ordinator for information submission
- Capital Projects– Gregg McClements - Capital Projects Manager – Site Maps
- Tourism and Recreation - Peter Thompson, Head of Tourism & Recreation
- Prosperity and Place - Niall McGurk, Head of Prosperity & Place
- Sport and Wellbeing - Wendy McCullough, Head of Health, Wellbeing & Sport
- Community and Culture - Julie Welsh, Head of community & Culture



Overview of Facilities – Harbours & Marinas

Harbours & Marinas run by CC&GBC are as follows.



1. Coleraine Marina
2. Portstewart Harbour
3. Portrush Main Harbour and Pontoon
4. Portrush, Portandoo Harbour
5. Portballintrae Harbour
6. Ballintoy Harbour
7. Rathlin Island Harbour
8. Ballycastle Marina & Harbour
9. Red Bay Harbour
10. Dalriada Slipway
11. Waterford Slipway
12. Christie Park, Coleraine



Here are the places on a map.



We have not included Dunseverick or Magilligan as they are having a different plan written.

Coleraine Marina



Coleraine Marina is the only inland marina within this plan. The Marina is located on Portstewart Road in Coleraine. It sits on the River Bann and has a Blue Flag Award.

It has space for 59 boats. The marina is old and in need of some maintenance but it is accessible, well signed posted and has good lights.

It has equipment available on the site. The marina is managed by a Harbour Official.

Portstewart Harbour



A small coastal fishing harbour in Portstewart which can be difficult for boats because of the weather.

The harbour has an inside and outside quay wall. There is a slipway between the inner and outer harbour.

Portrush Main Harbour



Portrush Harbour has 2 parts, a main harbour and a small-boat harbour. There is a special place for the lifeboat – RNLI.

There is a slipway at the harbour mouth, a dinghy park, lifeboat launch and historic slipway.

The harbour is used by Portrush and Coleraine Yacht Clubs.

Facilities at the harbour are good and well looked after and includes water, toilets and safety equipment. There is a harbour office. Portrush is a lively town, with beaches, promenade, shops and tourism services.

Portrush, Portandoo Harbour



There is a small harbour near Ramore Head called Portandoo. It has a short quay and slipway.

It is beside a wastewater pumping station. It is close to an old swimming pool, parking, hotels and restaurants. There is not enough space for big boats but there is basic lifesaving equipment and can work for small boats like dinghies.

People love the harbour and the history with the harbour.

Portballintrae Harbour

(no photo provided)

A natural cove with a quay wall and slipway in the Causeway Coast area of outstanding natural beauty.

Portballintrae has lots of holiday homes and has fishing, small boats, beach goers and swimmers.

There are some moorings within the cove but there are no pontoons, fuel or power points.

Ballintoy Harbour



Ballintoy Harbour sits inside a rocky coastline on the Causeway Coast's area of outstanding natural beauty.

It has a quay wall and a slipway. It can be difficult to enter the harbour because of the rocks and swell of the sea.

Harbour also has historic lime kilns and former boat house structures.

It is popular with tourists as it was a Games of Thrones filming location. Carrick-A-Rede and White Park Bay are close by.

Rathlin Island Harbour

Rathlin Island is the only inhabited offshore island in Northern Ireland.



The harbour has a special role within the wider harbour network.

Rathlin Island Harbour is located at Church Bay. It has piers, ferry berths and a modern marina. It connects to transport for Ballycastle, It is well looked after and in good condition with lots of visitors. Rathlin is a European Marine Site.

Ballycastle Marina & Harbour

Ballycastle is a busy and vibrant seaside town and has a harbour and marina. The harbour is within the Causeway Coast Area of Natural Beauty.



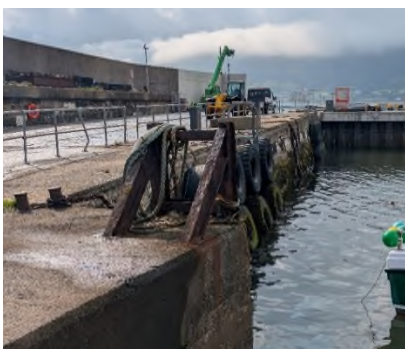
It is a modern marina with pontoons and slipways and supports leisure and commercial activity.

The harbour provides the transport connection to Rathlin Island.

The facility is well looked after and part of Ballycastle's tourism programme.

Red Bay Harbour

Red Bay Harbour is on the east Antrim coast. It is a small facility and you reach it through private land.





Dalriada Slipway

Dalriada Slipway is just outside Cushendall. It is used by swimmers, small boats and for water sports. serving primarily as a local launch site for swimmers, small craft and water sports users. It has a concrete slipway leading directly onto the beach.



Waterford Slipway

This slipway is home to Cushendall Sailing and Boating Club, Red Bay RNLI Lifeboat and Red Bay Boats. It is well used. slipway with minimal maritime infrastructure. The RNLI is there all year round but does move the vessel to other safe areas.



Christie Park, Coleraine

Christie Park is on the bank of the River Bann within Coleraine town centre. The park supports a mix of water sports including kayaking, canoeing and rowing. It is in need of maintenance.



Asset appraisal procedure

This procedure has been completed with information collected through study, inspections and asking the people who use the sites what they think.

CC&GBC want all facilities to be inclusive and everyone in the community should be able to take part and have their say in the appraisal procedure.

The assessment was broken down into 3 parts



1. Overall assessment.
2. Individual facility assessment.
3. SWOT Analysis which showed the strengths and weaknesses.

1. Overall assessment

In this procedure, everything has been assessed together in a group looking at the following:

- a) Marketing
- b) Cruise Ships
- c) Leisure opportunities
- d) Ballycastle to Rathlin Ferry
- e) Cost



- Marketing

This part of the procedure will assess the need for a marketing plan.

- Cruise ships.

Hosting cruise ships is an opportunity to make money. We should think about this for all facilities.





- Leisure Opportunities.

Leisure is another opportunity in the right facilities. We will look at this to find the best place.

- Ballycastle to Rathlin Ferry

This section will assess the Ballycastle – Rathlin ferry. We will do this separately as it is to do with transport.

- Cost

This section looks at the cost and how much money things will take. It will compare the costs to similar things in other places. It will look at things being value for money.



2. Individual Facility Assessment

In this procedure, we assessed the topics below and scored them using a traffic light system to show how good or bad the harbours and marinas are. We hope that the scores will help us to get better with Tourism.

- a) Leisure boats
- b) Visiting boats
- c) Facilities on land
- d) Small boats
- e) How good the facilities are
- f) How we make things better for the future



3. SWOT

SWOT looks at Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It helps us make decisions.

Consultation and Strategy Development



Consultation – asking people what they think about our plan

McCarthy Browne & CC&GBC talked to people about our plan. We did this through research, talking to everyone involved with harbours and marina and we did a survey where we asked questions.

The survey was on the internet and also on paper forms. We met people in Portrush, Ballycastle and Rathlin Island. We also had a meeting on the internet.







The things we asked people were




- What is working well? What is good?
- What requires change? What could be better?
- What are the upcoming challenges and opportunities?
What will be difficult and what good things could we do?

Results from talking to people below.

Pre Consultation Workshops

 Rathlin	19/11/25 7 people
 Ballycastle	19/11/25 20 people
 Portrush	20/11/25 20+ people
 Online	12/11/25 15 people

Questionnaires / Surveys

 Visiting Vessels Hardcopy	Live from 12/09/25 No responses
 Visiting Vessels Online	Live from 09/09/25 No responses
 Pre-Consultation Online survey	Live from 12/11/25 24 no. detailed responses

Other

Written submissions - 3
External interviews and meetings - 3
Internal interviews and meetings - 4

What people told us



People feel interested about harbours and marinas and they want them to be the best they can be.

Council staff do a good job.

Management needs to do a better job.

The community want to be involved

People are worried that the assessment will only look at money

People do not want to have to pay more

People are worried that our harbours and marinas are not big enough and would like them to grow.

Council will speak to more people about this plan before they make any decisions.

Looking at our harbours and marinas and assessing how good they are

Marketing – How good are we at telling people about our harbours and marinas?



CCBGC is a place that visitors and tourists come to. Our marinas are full. We need extra space to make things bigger and better.

We need to have a plan about how we tell people about our harbours and marinas. This is called marketing. We should do a report every year and collect information for the report to help us make decisions about marketing in the future

There is not a plan in place for harbours and marinas. There is a plan for visitors and tourists.



Recommendations – Things we should do

1. Add information about our harbours and marinas on www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com
2. Work with the tourism team to tell more people about our harbours and marinas.
3. A report every year which tells us how we are doing and what people think about our harbours and marinas.
4. Help groups with water sports.



Cruise Ships

There are 3 types of visit by cruise ships.

Faillte Ireland completed a study about the costs and money connected to cruise ship visits.

Causeway Coast and Glens is not able to match Belfast for cruise ship visits.

CC&G should focus on making things better at Ballycastle, Rathlin and Portrush. .



Recommendations

1. We should ask passengers on cruise ships what they think.
2. We need to check the money needed to make the changes.
3. We need to work with the cruise companies



New water-based activities

CC&GBC look after the rules and licences for water based leisure including cruises, fishing trips, sailing and kayaking.

We should encourage the safe use of sailing and boating with our young people.



Recommendations

1. Space and safety assessment to be completed on each facility.
2. CC&GBC could promote water safety education by working with clubs to and helping them with kayaking, rowing and dinghy sailing.

Ballycastle to Rathlin Ferry

Ballycastle



Ballycastle has a good harbour with parking and harbour office. The site needs extra signage and lines marked out to make it better for passengers.

Rathlin

The access to the island is by a narrow road which is dangerous for people walking

The pontoon for the Ferry needed fixed at the time of inspection.



Recommendations

1. Review of passenger control at Ballycastle.
2. Review of access at Rathlin.
3. Review of separating the harbour in two.

Looking at costs and the amount of money charged

It is costing CC&GBC £66,913 every year and an extra £607,464 for buying new things over the last 4 years. It has had 1658 cruise passengers, 1308 visiting boats, helped lots of towns, villages and communities with tourism and supported Rathlin Island.



Tourism

CC&GBC is the most important tourism place outside of Belfast.

More than half of visitors came to CC&GBC because of the Causeway Coastal Route with The Giants Causeway being rated the best. 24% of visitors said they visited the area because of Ballintoy harbour. 4,317 visits were made by sea.

Businesses that use the harbours and marinas

Other businesses can also benefit from the harbours and marinas such as shops selling equipment.



Clubs and social groups that use the harbours and marinas

The table below shows the clubs and groups that use the harbours and marinas.



	Volume
Coleraine Marina	L
Portstewart Harbour	L
Portrush Main Harbour and Pontoon	H
Portrush, Portandoo Harbour	M
Portballintrae Harbour	M
Ballintoy Harbour	M
Rathlin Island Harbour	M
Ballycastle Marina & Harbour	H
Red Bay Harbour	L
Dalriada Slipway	M
Waterford Slipway	H
Christie Park, Coleraine	L

We would like to understand this more and will do a study to help us understand.

Understanding fees

CC&GBC has a list of fees for the harbours and marinas. It is not online. Costs are different across the Borough. We compared the fees to other places to help us understand our costs.

Discounts will help more people to use the harbours and marinas.

Costs of running the harbours and Marinas and the money we make from the Harbours and Marinas

The costs for the last 4 years are shown in the table below.

We are operating at a loss of £66,913 per year.

It has also cost £607464 over the last 4 years for buying equipment and materials.

Table 0-1 Financial summary (2022-2025)

	2025 (£)	2024 (£)	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
Income	524,718	483,070	496,940	495,025
Expenditure	511,756	634,566	560,958	560,125
Net margin	12,962	-151,496	-64,019	- 65,099



The money we make is 90% from boats which stay in the harbour or marina or visit. The money we make is shown below.

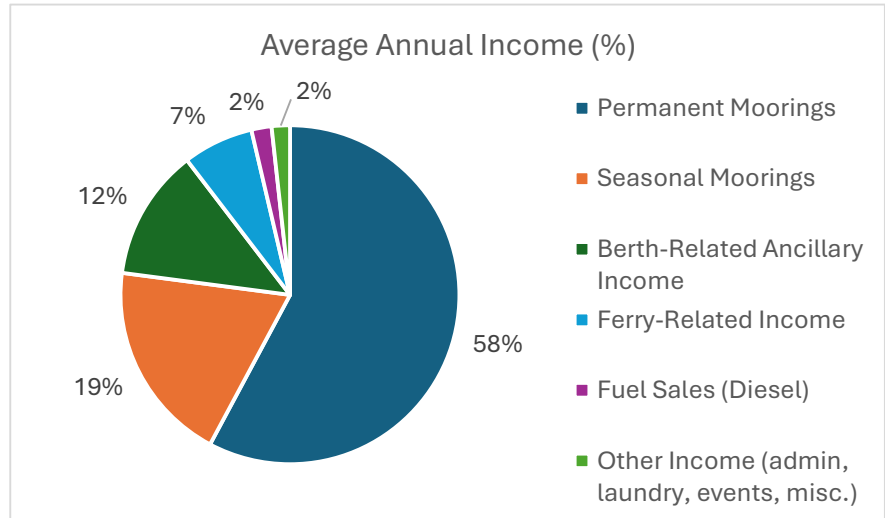


Figure 0-1 Income streams (4-year average)

Ballycastle, Coleraine and Portrush harbours and marinas make the most money.



Recommendations

1. We need to put our fees and costs online.
2. Agree a costing structure.
3. Think about the cost of an annual slipway pass.
4. Think about a single use slipway pass.
5. Look at the costs on Rathlin Island.
6. Look at the waiting lists for Rathlin Island.
7. Look at having set fees to increase dinghy sailing.
8. Look at the extra costs for services at the harbours and marinas.
9. Think about other companies and organisations providing services at harbours and marinas.

10. Think about having more space for boats.

11. Individual asset appraisals – Assessing each site



We carried out an assessment for each site and looked at a number of areas including space for boats, facilities nearby and opportunities for growth. We used a colour code to give each site a score. Here is the complete summary of what we found after our assessment and the score we awarded to each site.



Site	Score	Rating
Coleraine Marina	2	Poor
Portstewart Harbour	4	Good
Portrush Harbour	4	Good
Portrush, Portadoo Harbour	4	Good
Portballintrae Harbour	4	Good
Ballintoy Harbour	4	Good
Rathlin Island Harbour	3	Fair
Ballycastle Marina & Harbour	4	Good
Red Bay Harbour	4	Good
Dalriada Slipway	4	Good
Waterford Slipway	3	Fair
Christie Park, Coleraine	3	Fair

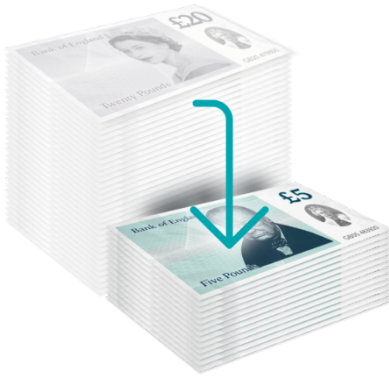
Summary of financial performance



A small number of marinas make money while many harbours lose money.

Here is the summary about costs and money.

Table 0-2



	Average revenue (£)	Average expenditure (£)	Total (£)
Ballycastle Harbour & Marina	218,779	113,188	105,591
Rathlin Ferry Company	50,792	-	50,792
Coleraine Marina	83,009	37,397	45,613
Portrush Harbour	97,960	60,017	37,943
Portballintrae Harbour	7,623	2,279	5,345
Red Bay Harbour	3,502	3,233	269
Portandhu Harbour	-	110	110
Portstewart Harbour	7,791	8,664	873
Slipways and Jetties	-	1,225	1,225
Dunseverick Harbour	-	1,390	1,390
Harbours & Marinas General	25,235	28,884	3,649
Ballintoy Harbour	1,654	5,683	4,029
Cushendall Harbour	-	4,230	4,230

Magilligan Ferry Terminal	3,143	15,108	11,965
Portnagree House	-	12,713	12,713



Recommendations

Summary of recommendations.

1. Harbours and marinas need to be included on www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com
2. Different teams at council need to work together.
3. We need to ask people who use the harbour and marinas what they think and write a report every year.
4. Work with other groups to support water based activities
5. Do a cruise survey and have a plan for cruise ships.
6. Look at how much space there is at each site
7. Look at safety at all sites
8. Provide education to other groups about water based activities
9. Making passenger control better at Ballycastle
10. Look at the ferry site at Rathlin Island.
11. Put fees and discounts online.
12. Having a clear price list.
13. Look at annual passes.
14. Advertises for younger people.
15. Offer extra services at our harbours and marinas.
16. Have other companies at our harbours and marinas.
17. Make more spaces available.
18. Do a report on social impact for each site.
19. Talk to main stakeholders – people who use the harbours and marinas



Conclusion

The actions from the assessment will be included in our plan.



Strategic Goals and Actions

1. To have safe harbours and marinas.
2. To have better relationships with all the people who use the harbours and marinas.
3. To be better as a destination for tourists and visitors.
4. To do better with our money and balance our budget.
5. To celebrate our harbours and marinas.
6. To protect the environment connected to our harbours and marinas.

Monitoring and indicators

This is a ten-year plan starting in Spring 2026. We will review it on a regular basis.

The Team will update the CC&GBC on how well they are doing and if they are achieving their goals.

They will keep talking to people who use the harbours and marinas to ask them what they think.

For more information on this plan, please contact the Harbours & Marinas Office by email below.

harbours@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk