

Minutes of a Meeting of the **COASTAL CHANGE & BEACH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
held at the Town Hall, Swanage, on **WEDNESDAY**
22nd APRIL 2026 at 2.15 p.m.

In Attendance: Councillor M Bonfield – Chairman
Councillor C Tomes – Swanage Town Council
Councillor C Sutton - Swanage Town Council

Mr A Barton – Wessex Water
Mr R Brayshaw – Swanage Sailing Club
Mr R Eatwell – North Beach Representative
Ms T Netherway – Wessex Water
Mr D Picksley – Environment Agency
Mr H Potter – Swanage Pier Trust
Mr N Reed - NCI
Mr G Richardson – RNLI
Mr E Saloman-Carter – Dorset Council
Mr K Sheppard – RNLI
Ms E Wright – National Trust

Also Present: Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs S Layton-Kelly – Administration Officer
Mr C Milmer – Visitor Services & Business Development Manager (VSBDM)
Ms G Percival – Assets and Compliance Manager

There was one member of the public in attendance at the meeting, along with one member of the press.

Public Participation Time

There were no matters raised.

1) Apologies

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor T Foster (Swanage Town Council), Ms B Betts (Dorset Council), Mr P Palmer (Pier Head Water Sports), Mr T Greasty (Swanage Sea Fishing), Mr S Thompson (Cumulus), Mr I Brown (Coastguard), Mr S Hill (Swanage Boat Hire), Mr D Pratten (Swanage Beach Buddies), Mr C Wiggins (Beach Concessions), Mr A Steele (Dorset Council) and Mr M Turnbull (Founding Chairman of Swanage Coastal Change Forum). Ms E Snow, representative of Dorset Coast Forum, attended remotely.

2) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 1st October 2025

Proposed by Mr G Richardson, seconded by Mr N Reed and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-**

That the Minutes of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 1st October 2025 be approved as a correct record.

3) Wessex Water – Update from representatives

- a) A presentation was made regarding a proposal for the construction of a concrete flood water storage tank underneath King George's playing field adjoining Main Beach car park. It was reported that Wessex Water is currently monitoring water levels in a number of bore holes. Subject to the results of the monitoring, it was proposed that construction work would commence in winter 2028, with works anticipated to take approximately 12 months to complete.
- b) A presentation was given to Members informing them of a potential trial of new technology designed to provide continuous water quality monitoring at Peveril Point.

4) Dorset Council's Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Team

Further to Minute No. 6) of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 1st October 2025, the Committee received an update in which it was reported that the Swanage Town Centre Flood Protection Scheme remains paused at the present time. It was further reported that the Future Coast Swanage (CTAP) project had progressed to the delivery phase.

5) Dorset Coast Forum

The representative provided an update and informed the Committee that the full range of technical reports relating to the Future Coast North Swanage project, completed by consultants, Jacobs, are now available for public viewing at Swanage Library.

6) Visitor Services and Business Development Manager (VSBDM) Update

- It was noted that the Blue Flag application had been submitted in January and that new beach signage was expected to arrive shortly.
- The Committee was informed that the Punch and Judy shows on the beach would commence in mid-May and continue to early September this year, representing a slight change to the usual season.
- Recruitment of three Beach Wardens was underway, with two Wardens expected to be in post from May and the third in June.

7) Updates were received from representatives/organisations which included

- **RNLI** – The representative made a request for the use of the Broad Road carpark while carrying out their training exercises. The Town Clerk advised that he would look into the matter further.
- **Swanage Pier Trust** – It was reported that the initial stage of a funding application process to the National Lottery Heritage Fund had been completed.
- **Swanage Sailing Club** – It was reported that a concern regarding the ability of sailing boats to control their speed in windy conditions had been raised with Dorset Council in relation to the proposed changes to the Watercraft Bylaws.

8) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

There were no matters raised.

9) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee was yet to be confirmed.

The Chairman thanked everyone present for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 3.25pm.

On site audit report - 2026 Bathing Season

Participation Details

Started on: 05/08/2026 15:22:37

Last updated on: 05/08/2026 15:54:44

Status: Completed (reopen?)

Duration: 32:07 min

Collector: 2026 Blue Flag and Seaside Award Surveillance Audit Report

IP address: Anonymous

Name of the beach:

Swanage

Please tick the type of award this beach has:

- ☐ Blue Flag
- ☒ Combined Award
- ☐ Seaside Award - Bathing Beach
- ☐ Seaside Award - Non-Bathing Beach

Please enter the date this beach was inspected:

2026-08-05

Please state the time the inspection started:

11:37am

Which flag(s) did you see flying at the time of your visit?

Please select one option

- ☐ Blue Flag only
- ☐ Seaside Award only
- ☒ Both Blue Flag and Seaside Award flags
- ☐ Neither

Did you see the 2026 Blue Flag and / or Seaside Award plaques on display?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Information about bathing water quality should be displayed at the beach. This information can be:

A notice / poster posted by the beach operator / Council
A QR code
Environment Agency water quality poster
On the beach map

Information about bathing water quality displayed at this beach.

☒ Annual bathing water classification

☒ Location of bathing water sampling point

☒ Location of river and stream inlets

☒ Location of storm and Emergency Overflows (CSO's)

☐ Notice advising people not to bathe / swim

☐ Notice explaining the beach is not a bathing beach

☒ Regular water sampling results

Feedback about the information available at the beach about bathing water quality.

All the information clearly displayed in multiple areas.

QR code link to latest results.

Last sample July 14th 2026

Does the beach map, or information displayed on the main noticeboard, explain that there is an area / zone in the water for swimming only?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the beach have at least one main information board displaying current information about the Blue Flag and / or Seaside Award?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is information displayed easy to read and understand?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there an RNLI information board?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Did you see an emergency telephone number (e.g. 999) clearly displayed at the beach (most often on RNLI signage)?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there a beach user code of conduct on display?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there an explanation of the safety flags?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is information about public transport and / or sustainable transport available at the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Are environmental education activities / events advertised on the main information board?

Please note: environmental education activities / events do not need to be beach related.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Coastal Change & Beach Management Advisory Committee 7th October 2026
Is there information on display which explains where to find out more about getting involved / taking part in environmental education activities / events?

Please note: environmental education activities / events do not need to be beach related.

✓ Yes

— No

Please use this space to comment on the information available about environmental education information / opportunities / events / activities.

Lots of activities and information available. Most I have seen from a single operator. Well done.

2 minute beach clean available.

Ranger led activities such as nature journalling.

Meadows trail

RSPB Arne Nature reserve events including guided walks and reptile survey.

Please upload:

A photo which clearly shows all the main information board.



Swanage

999 in an Emergency
ask for the Coastguard and
state the code below

factor.ribs.lightens



Beware of strong
offshore winds



Beware of
powered
watercraft



Keep clear of
groynes



Boats 5 knots
within buoys



Beware of
sailing craft



Do not use
inflatables when
windy



Do not launch
powered watercraft
from beach



Do not dive
or jump



Barbecues are not
permitted



No dogs
1st May - 30th Sept
except assistance dogs



Lifeguard Service

RNLI Lifeguards operate on this beach from
10.00am to 6.00pm

Lifeguards on duty when red and
yellow flags are flying

Swim in Lifeguard patrolled area



Do not swim
when red flags are
present



Do not use
inflatables



Beach Information

factor.ribs.lightens



Powered watercraft are
not permitted to launch
from the beach or to
approach the beach from
the sea



Horse riding or vehicles are
not permitted



No dogs on the beach
from 1 May to 30 Sept
(except assistance dogs)



Metal detecting is not permitted between 9.00am and
6.30pm from 1 May to 30 September. A permit must be
obtained from the Swanage Information Centre



Radios
should be kept to a volume
so as to not cause
nuisance to other beach
users



Barbecues
are not permitted

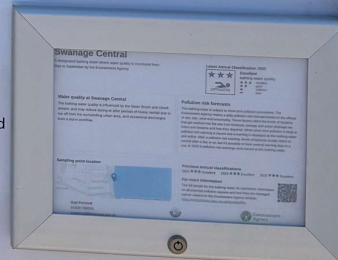


Thank you
for taking your litter home
or disposing of it in the
waste facilities available

Water Quality

Water quality is affected by a range of factors, including farm and
road runoff, natural contaminants, pollution from marine craft and
combined sewer overflows.

Swanage Beach, from the
Mowlem to Ocean Bay, is
designated as 'bathing water'
by the Environment Agency.
Regular water quality sampling
is undertaken on this beach, and
the results are available on the
Environment Agency website.
More information can be found
on the notice here.



Blue Flag



A beach may fly a Blue Flag when it meets strict criteria dealing with
water quality, environmental education and information, environmental
management, safety and services.

The Blue Flag is only awarded for one season at a time.

Swanage Beach is proud to fly the Blue Flag. More information can
be found on the Blue Flag noticeboard located outside the Swanage
Information Centre.

Further Information

Swanage Town Council is the beach operator at this location.

Regular feedback is vital to maintain standards. Please feel free to contact
us at the Swanage Information Centre.

For more information about beach accessibility and beach safety please see
swanage.gov.uk/beachbay



Welcome to
SWANAGE

Swanage Information Centre,
Shore Road, Swanage BH19 1LB
Tel: 01929 766018

Email: welcome@swanage.gov.uk
Website: www.swanage.gov.uk

Please upload:

A clear close up photo of the beach map.



Swanage Beach Map 2026.jpg (3 MB)

Are the 2026 Blue Flag and Seaside Award posters displayed?

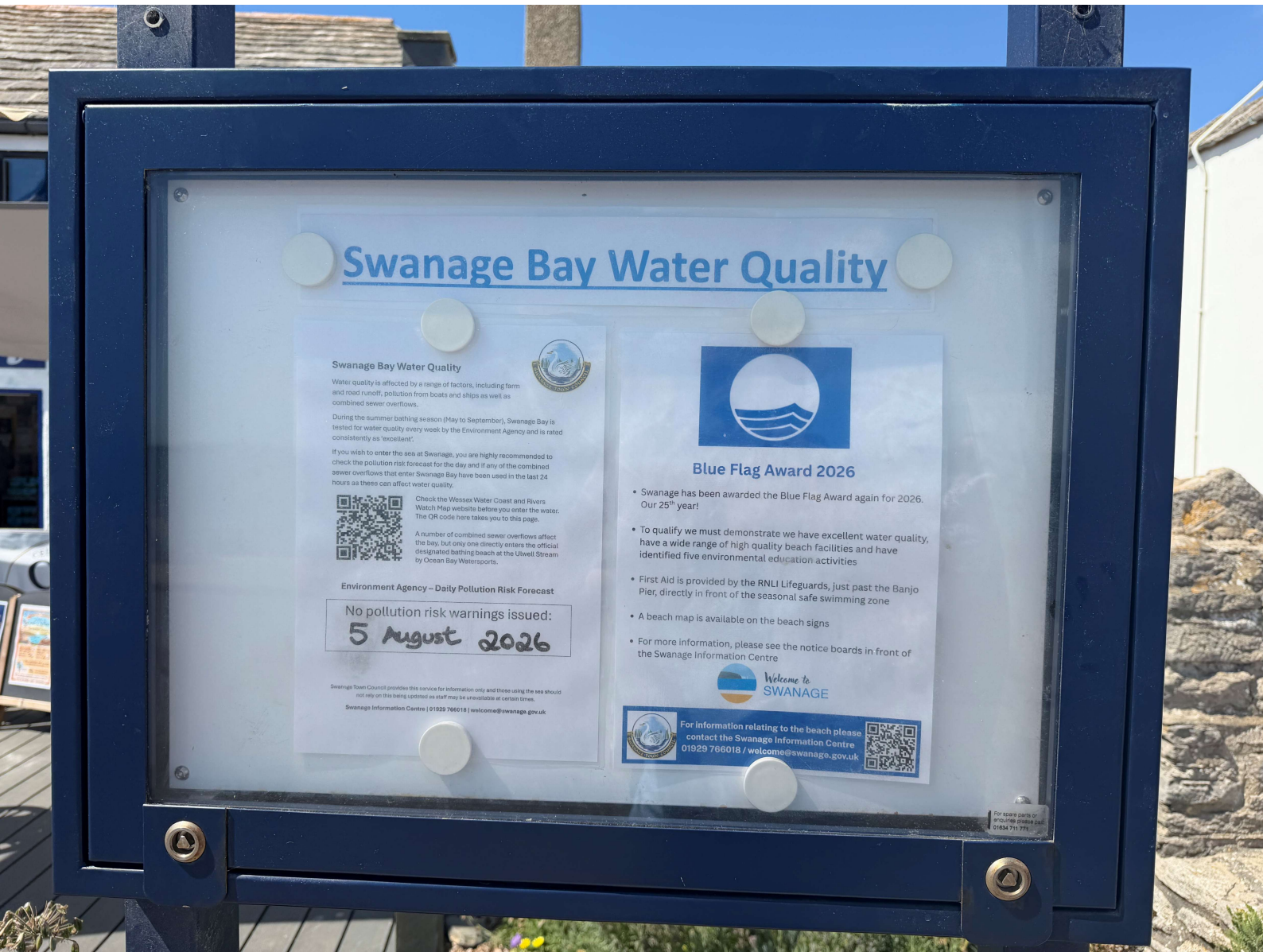
☒ Yes - all

☐ No - none

☐ Some

Please upload:

A clear close up photo of the Blue Flag / Seaside Award information on display.



Blue Flag Information.jpg (3 MB)

Is the map clear and easy to understand?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is the award area marked out on the map?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the beach map show an area / zone in the water for swimming only?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the main beach map clearly show where lifesaving equipment and / or the lifeguard station can be found?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is First Aid shown on the beach map and / or is there information on the main information board explaining where to go for the First Aid?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please use the box below to provide feedback about the map.

Please include positive feedback as well as where improvements are required.

Very clear and new signage. Displaying above and beyond the necessary information. No difficulties in reading or following instructions.

Very good.

Was the Annual Bathing Water Classification displayed at the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Were up to date water quality sampling dates and results displayed?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please provide feedback in the box below about information available at the beach about bathing water quality.

If you experienced any difficulties with finding or accessing information about bathing water quality, please provide details here.

What quality was easily located and available in multiple areas. QR code working.

Latest result from 22 days previous on the 14th July 2026.

Coastal Change & Beach Management Advisory Committee 7th October 2026
Are there interpretation / information / notice boards which provide information about the local environment, wildlife, environmentally sensitive areas, protected species or unique habitats nature?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does this beach have lifeguards?

☒ Yes

☐ No

When at the beach, is it easy to know whether or not this beach is lifeguarded?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Are the times when lifeguards are on duty clearly displayed at the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Were lifeguards on duty when you inspected the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Were the lifeguards easily recognisable?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please provide feedback about the lifeguarding service.

A number of lifeguard on site during visit. Times clearly displayed. Flagging system in operation.

Were you able to easily locate public rescue equipment e.g. lifebuoys, hooks, lifejackets etc?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the lifesaving equipment appear to be fit for purpose and in good working order?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please provide evidence based feedback about the lifesaving equipment.

Throwbags present in the Life ring housing.

Is there clear information displayed about where First Aid is available from?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is information displayed explaining when First Aid is available?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there drinking water available at the beach free of charge?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there public transport available to / from the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Are there pedestrian directions to the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

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Are there dedicated accessible parking spaces within a reasonable distance of the award area (e.g. for people with a Blue Badge)?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is access to the beach (including the parking area) safe and well maintained?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is the beach accessible for people with different abilities?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the beach have accessible toilets (also called disabled toilets) and changing facilities within a reasonable distance of the award area?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Were the toilets clean and were soap and hand drying facilities in working order?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Comments / concerns regarding accessibility, and cleanliness of toilets

All facilities and beach accessible, with wheelchair matting on the beach, and wheelchairs available for hire. Public facilities well maintained and clean.

Throughout the award area, are there handrails, guard rails etc where needed?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is there more than a 2 metre drop to the beach from the promenade?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Are there warning signs, painted lines and/or a guard rail?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please provide a brief description of any health and safety issues identified during your audit.

No health and safety issues identified.

Do different types of water sports / activities take place at this beach, for example swimming, paddleboarding, kayaking, surfing, sailing dinghies, motor boats?

☒ Yes

☐ No

How are bathers / swimmers protected from all types of watercraft?

You can select multiple options.

☐ There is no protection for bathers

☒ Buoys

☒ Flags

☒ Signage

☐ Beacons

☒ Powerboats and powered craft are required to operate at least 100 metres away from the swimming area

☒ Information on main notice board about different water activities using different areas of the water

☒ Code of Conduct displayed which covers different water activities using different areas of the water

Please provide feedback about protection of bathers / swimmers from watercraft.

Please record any issues / concerns you observed / identified during your inspection.

No issues or concerns identified . Designated areas clearly seen and being adhered to. Bouys, flagging and signage clearly visible.

Are buildings and beach equipment in the award area clean and properly maintained?

☒ Yes

☐ No

During the inspection, were any of the following identified:

Construction work affecting the award area?

Hazardous area?

Hazardous equipment?

☐ Yes

☒ No

During your visit, was there algae (seaweed) or natural debris on the beach?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Did algae or natural debris appear to be creating any kind of hazard to the public?

☐ Yes

☒ No

During your visit, was the beach litter free and clean?

☒ Yes

☐ No

During your visit did you notice any waste in bags next to bins, fly tipping or accumulation of litter?

☐ Yes

☒ No

During your visit did you see any hazardous waste in the award area?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Are there recycling bins at the beach?

— Yes

✓ No

Is information displayed at the beach which explains that waste is sorted at waste management facility, and recyclable materials are separated from general waste?

✓ Yes

— No

Is there dog ban / dog control signage at the beach?

✓ Yes

— No

During your inspection, did you see any dogs in the award area?

— Yes

✓ No

General feedback / comments about dog control / dog ban signage, and how well dogs under control / dog bans were being enforced on the day of the audit.

More than enough dog control order signage present. No dogs seen in the award area.

Overall, based on your observations during your inspection, how well is this beach meeting the standards required by the flag / award?

✓ This beach is meeting the standard expected and there are no issues or concerns.

— Overall, the beach is meeting the standard required. However, there are some minor non-compliances which need to be addressed.

— The award area does not meet award / flag requirements and there are multiple non-compliances.

— There are serious concerns regarding health and safety / the natural environment / the reputation of the award / flag.

Coastal Change and Beach Management Committee – 7th October 2026

Item 6)

Beach Access Vision

The Town Council is currently developing a draft vision for Swanage beach in regards to accessibility. A Beach Access Vision Task and Finish Group has been set up to consider in detail what options might be available to help formulate a vision for the future.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a slightly updated draft vision which was considered by the Tourism and Local Economy Committee on 15th July 2026. While work has been undertaken in the background, a revised version of this vision has not yet been produced and will be updated in advance of the Tourism and Local Economy Committee on 4th November 2026.

The Task and Finish Group are keen to hear from the Committee in relation to any comments or suggestions that may help to improve the vision.

Action Required

To consider the draft Beach Access Vision.

Culvin Milmer
Visitor Services and Business Development Manager
October 2026

Beach Access Vision – Task and Finish Group

DRAFT DISCUSSION PAPER – v2 (29/09/26)

The group consisting of Councillors Tomes and Bonfield, Culvin Milmer and Anna Hinsull (Accessible Swanage), met on 27th May 2026.

Beach Access is a part of the Swanage Seafront Masterplan – Zone C, Opportunity 5: Improve accessibility of the beach and seafront.

Context

Over the next few years, it is anticipated that Swanage Beach and the local area will see a number of changes, all of which could provide opportunities to improve access and facilities in this area.

Projects include:

- Green Seafront and Shore Road improvements (2027-2028)
- Beach Recharge and Mowlem Groyne (2028)
- Wessex Water Attenuation Tank at King George V Field (2028)
- Flood Alleviation Coastal Defence Scheme (2031)

Alongside this, Dorset Coast Forum are leading on a project to enhance access to blue spaces across Dorset, and this is developing significant traction. One outcome of this is the development of a 'Purbeck Access Forum' which first met in June 2026 and includes a wide range of key stakeholders from across the area.

The purpose of this document is to develop a 'Beach Access Vision' so that, as opportunities for construction and/or grants arise, officers in Swanage Town Council will be in a position to implement the vision of the Council.

The following key areas were considered by the group:

1. Designated accessible beach

After some discussion, the group felt that the Mowlem to Banjo Pier could be the designated accessible beach. This would envisage the primary facilities in regard to accessibility to be located in this section. It is noted that the Lifeguards are located on the beach further north. While it is good to have access across the whole beach, it is recognised that key facilities should be, where possible, located in the same area to ensure good access.

2. Changing Places

The group were keen to find a solution for a Changing Places toilet and the following locations were considered: upgrade Shore Road toilets or options within the Mowlem building. The new Green Seafront was considered but with difficult beach access at this location, it was generally felt that the closed section of Shore Road, or very nearby would make a better location.

It was felt that the Changing Places Toilet should ideally be located relatively close to the designated 'accessible beach' and include, if possible, an adjacent disabled parking space.

3. Improved access to the sea

The group were keen on a solution to enable access to the sea adjacent to the proposed Mowlem slipway and to include a railing. This can be considered as part of the beach recharge/Mowlem groyne project. If a permanent solution is not possible then a temporary solution that could be placed in the sea during the summer months might be possible. The purpose of both types of structure would be to allow safe and easy access into the sea across the beach. The two pictures below provide examples of what might be possible.



4. Beach wheelchairs

Agreed that space would need to be found for wheelchair storage which could be a beach hut or a dedicated shed. Pictures of shed ideas at Southwold and Lowestoft beaches can be seen here.



5. Beach mats and improved access points

The Council currently operates two forms of beach access matting. Following extensive trials, the matting has proven effective in providing access onto the beach, although it does not currently extend to the water's edge in a way that enables sea access. Achieving access into the sea remains an ongoing aspiration.

The group were keen to trial a 'Mobi-mat dispenser' (see picture). This would see the Council placing out the mat early in the morning and taking it in overnight, thus avoiding the beach vehicles running over the mat in the early mornings and the sea state affecting it overnight. A number of operational factors would need to be considered.

In addition, the group were keen to consider an additional temporary access point onto the beach created in the vicinity of the Information Centre and removed at the end of the season. A mat could then run from this to the sea. The current beach hire concession has 5 years left to run, but on renewal of this concession consideration could be given to including supporting the beach mat and/or wheelchair hire within this concession.



6. Drop off locations

A key element of access relates to drop off points. The following points were considered:

- Could a bookable parking space be provided for those using the disabled equipment?
- When considering future changes to the Mowlem Triangle, drop off points should be considered
- Opportunities around a 'park and ride' and/or community bus
- Mermond Place car park is short stay only so may be restrictive for longer stays in the disabled parking bays

Key steps

1. Develop this document into a 'vision'
2. Discuss at the 'Tourism and Local Economy' Committee on 15th July 2026
3. Develop a formal vision document – summer/autumn 2026
4. Approve at 'Tourism and Local Economy' Committee on 4th November 2026

✓ I confirm that this report has been completed to the best of my ability, and is a true and accurate record of my observations on the date / time stated.
