



ROYAL
LIFE SAVING
SOCIETY UK

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)

Beach Risk Assessment

For the attention of: Stephen Collis

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Introduction

Project Brief

RLSS UK was contracted by Colchester City Council to risk assess a stretch of beach along Victoria Esplanade in West Mersea. A site visit was undertaken on 02/03/26 by RLSS UK Consultant Vincent Pank.

The scope of the project was:

- Conduct background research
- RLSS UK consultant to conduct a site visit, to:
 - Meet with Council representatives
 - Focus on areas of heightened risk
 - Gain understanding of the beach from high to low tide
- Develop a water safety risk assessment and report with recommendations on practicable control measures, including:
 - Signage
 - Barriers (natural, fencing)
 - Public Rescue Equipment (PRE)
 - Personnel requirements
 - Community education
- Submit documentation to the Council for review

Executive Summary

There is inherent risk associated with being in/around water, but CCC is taking a reasonable approach to mitigate the risks associated with the beach. Conflicting activities are being separated (there is a sail launch area, a speed restriction and CCC are looking-into a PSPO for launching PWC). Playgrounds for young children, where seen close to the water have been enclosed with vertical pale barriers and gates which appear (although these were not inspected) to comply with BS 1722 and EN 1776 as recommended by [RoSPA](#). Signage has also been installed, although this could be improved.

Beaches are dynamic environments; the locations of the spits/banks and subsequent water movement/rips may change over time. This beach has strong tidal currents and as such the risk posed by the spits/water movement cannot be eliminated without preventing access to the beach/water completely. The risk of drowning can be mitigated by educating visitors (through signage and including water safety information on the website), however it is foreseeable, even if CCC install new signage at main access points that some members of the public will enter the beach without passing these (this is an 'open' beach which can be accessed by walking along the coast or by walking in between the beach huts along the length of Victoria Promenade). Due to the complexities of tidal/water movements in this area it remains foreseeable that visitors in particular (who are less likely to understand the water movements than locals) may get into trouble despite the provision of signage.

The Royal Life Saving Society UK

With over 130 years of experience, The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK) is a leading authority in water safety. Our extensive history and expertise uniquely positions us as one of the most trusted and experienced advisors in the field of water safety in the UK and Ireland. Offering clear, impartial, and practical water safety advice, using balanced, risk-based thinking, to anyone with liabilities to visitors and staff around water, including local authorities, construction companies, leisure operators, schools, and private landowners.

As a charity, our primary interest lies in water safety. Our honest, practical, and competitive service means our consultants support you through identifying options, looking for the most cost-effective solutions that best suit your specific water safety needs and building and creating a safer environment.

By instructing RLSS UK Consultancy Services, you will not only benefit from our wealth of knowledge, but you'll also be making a significant contribution to our vision of nations without drownings where everyone can safely enjoy being in, on, or near water. 100% of all profit goes into helping us educate more people to enjoy water safely, including our free educational resources which reached over 2,265,000 children across the UK and Ireland in 2023. This means that your investment in water safety not only safeguards your organisation and its stakeholders but also helps empower the next generation with essential life skills.

**RLSS UK Charity Impact Report 2023*

Conditions of Service

RLSS UK's water safety consultancy service provides open water risk assessments and recommendations based on professional expertise and industry standards. While every effort is made to accurately identify and mitigate risks, it is important to note:

- Assessments are based on information available at the time of evaluation and may not account for unforeseen changes or events.
- Recommendations are provided as guidance and should be implemented at the discretion and responsibility of the client.
- RLSS UK will provide health and safety recommendations based on current best practices and regulatory requirements. However, the client is responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations.

Location

Address: Victoria Esplanade, West Mersea, CO5 8XB

Classification: Beach

Designated Bathing Water: Yes, [West Mersea](#)

Awards: N/A

Known Activities: Walking, Dog Walking, Jogging/Running, Paddling, Swimming, Kayaking/Canoeing, Stand-up Paddleboarding, Windsurfing, Wing Foiling, Kite Surfing, Fishing (Commercial), Fishing (Leisure), Bait Digging, Motor Boating (Commercial), Motor Boating (Leisure), Sailing

Restrictions: River Byelaws, 8kn speed restriction for pleasure boats within 250m of high-water mark

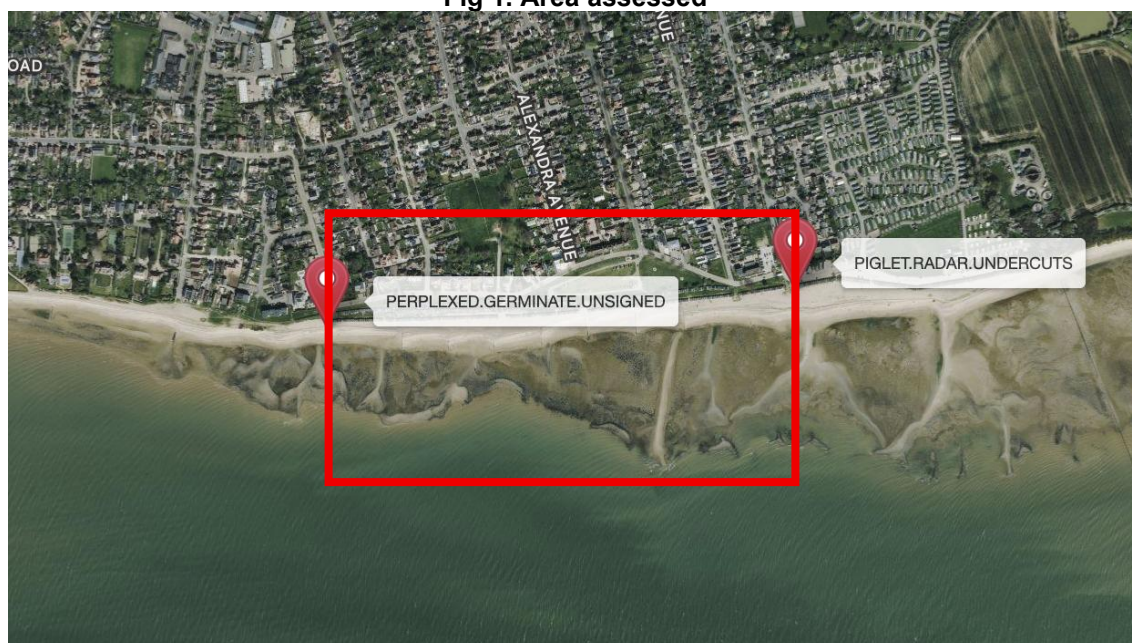
Lifeguards: No

Closest Lifeboat Station: West Mersea approx. 2km to the NW (B Class)

Closest Fire Station: West Mersea Fire Station approx. 1km to the NW (Essex County Fire and Rescue Service)

Victoria Esplanade in Essex forms part of the popular West Mersea coastline, known for its colourful beach huts, family-friendly play areas, and shingle beaches. Although the Esplanade is owned by several parties, Colchester City Council is responsible for approximately half a mile of the beachfront. This includes two spits adjacent to Victoria Esplanade Road.

Fig 1. Area assessed



Background

West Mersea is a south facing sand and shingle beach that looks out over the Blackwater Estuary from Mersea Island. The visitor profile changes throughout the year with a significant increase in visitor numbers in summer, particularly within the school holidays. During summer the coast is also host to events such as the West Mersea Regatta. Most beach visitors outside of summer will be locals, but in peak season the area attracts people from further afield. The beach experiences strong winds and tidal currents, it is a popular location for water sports year-round. Mersea Windsurfers and Kitesurfers Club is based at the eastern end of the assessed area. Members of the public also launch personal watercraft from the beach. Mersea is renowned for its oysters, as the tide drops, soft mud is exposed and shells pose a risk of cut feet.

There are residential properties close to the beach, there will be children close to/in the water particularly during the summer months. The Sandbank Pub and Restaurant is to the east of the assessed area so there may be persons under the influence of alcohol close to the water, but this is not believed to be a significant issue.

West Mersea is a Designated Bathing Water (sampling point is within assessed area), but there is no lifeguard or beach patrol service. There are river byelaws which include an 8-knot speed restriction for pleasure boats within 250m of the high-water mark. Dogs are permitted on the beach.

There have been water-based incidents at the beach in recent history including a [drowning on 11th June 2023](#). Recently concerns have been raised by CCC over the development of shingle spits on the beach due to their potential effects on water movement/currents.

Observations

Date of assessment: Mon 2nd Mar 2026

Time of assessment: 10:30- 17:30

Assessor: Vincent Pank, RLSS UK

High tide: 11:35, 4.9m

Low tide: 18:03, 1.0m

At the time of assessment, the weather was dry and sunny but footfall around the assessed area was low. Members of the public were seen walking/dog walking and windsurfers/wing foilers were seen using the water. There are 3 large car parks close to the beach, the Victoria Esplanade and Willoughby Avenue car parks are closed in the winter, but roadside parking is available along Victoria Esplanade out of season (no stopping on roadside 8am to 6pm 1st Apr to 30th Sept).

Photos 1 to 3. Car parks close to beach



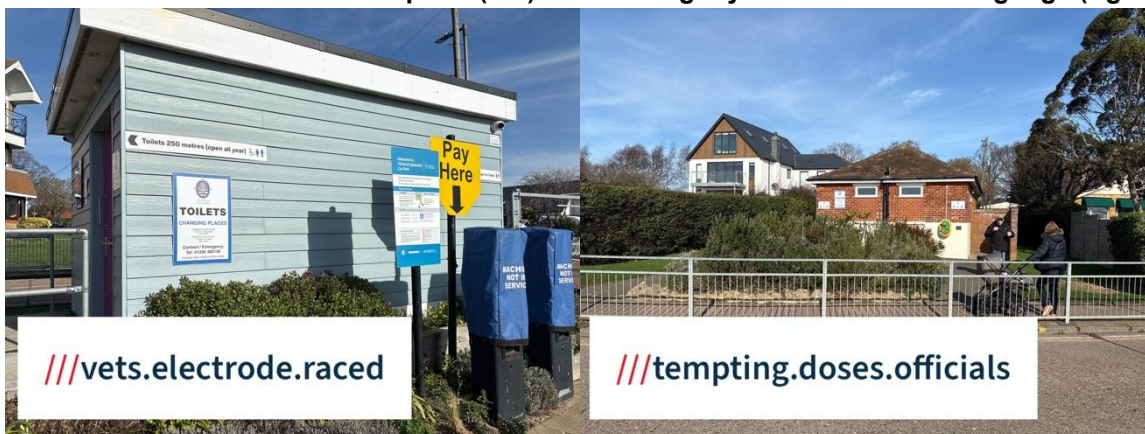
The gates to the Victoria Esplanade Car Park and a secondary access point were seen to be padlocked shut at the time of assessment restricting vehicular access to the beach. However, when the Victoria Esplanade Car Park is open it is possible for vehicles to access the beach. The assessor was informed that CCC is looking into a PSPO to restrict beach access and prevent the launching of Personal Water Craft (PWC) from within the assessed area. Although there is a speed restriction in place, the assessor was informed that there are sometimes issues with craft getting close to bathers and using excessive speed close to shore. It was noted that car park opening times listed on the CCC website are not consistent with information shown on the site signage. For example the Willoughby Avenue Car Park opening times are listed as 6am to 8pm, March to October subject to weather conditions on the [CCC website](#), but signage on site states 8am to 8pm 1st April to 31st October (see Photo 5 below).

Photos 4 and 5. Vehicle access point (left) and Willoughby Avenue Car Park signage (right)



There are public toilets close to the beach (only the Willoughby facilities are open out of season).

Photos 6 and 7. Vehicle access point (left) and Willoughby Avenue Car Park signage (right)



There are 2 cafes within the assessed area. Both were closed at the time of assessment, but these do not appear to sell alcohol.

Photos 8 and 9. Vehicle access point (left) and Willoughby Avenue Car Park signage (right)



Within West Mersea Coastal Holiday Park (immediately east of the assessed area) there is another café plus Sandbank Bar and Restaurant which does serve alcohol. However, there are not believed to be significant issues related to alcohol consumption and water-based activities/incidents in this area.

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

West Mersea is a Designated Bathing Water. Water quality test results are displayed on the side of the Two Sugars Café. However, the data displayed is out of date, at the time of assessment the 2024 data was displayed (2025 classification is Good).

Photo 10. Out of date water quality information



There are lampposts beside the road along Victoria Esplanade, but no artificial lighting on the beach itself. Litter bins, dog waste bins and BBQ disposal pits are present close to the beach. Handrails are present beside beach access steps/slopes.

Photos 11 to 14. Beach access steps/slopes



Children will be close to the water, particularly in the summer holidays. Beach huts line the beach and West Mersea Coastal Holiday Park is nearby. There is a playground close to the water, but this is

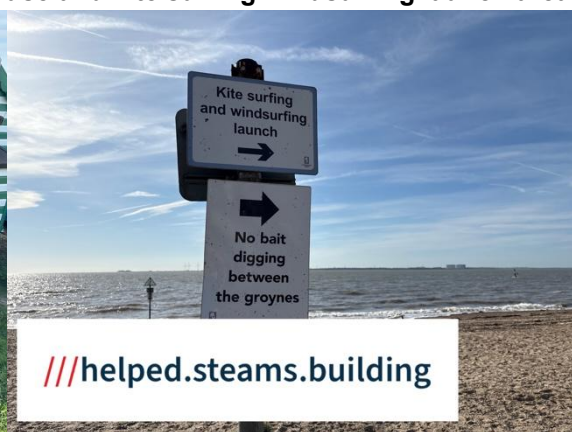
enclosed with barriers which appear (although these were not inspected) to comply with BS 1722 and EN 1776 as recommended by [RoSPA](#).

Photo 15. Playground



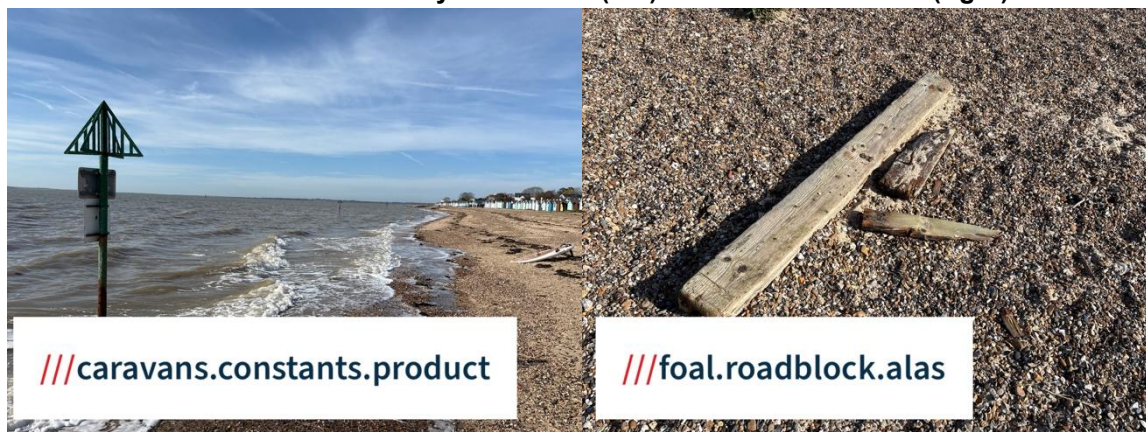
At the eastern end of the assessed area is the Mersea Windsurfers' clubhouse. The kite surfing/windsurfing launch area is marked by signs on the beach.

Photos 16 to 19. Mersea Windsurfers clubhouse and kite surfing/windsurfing launch area



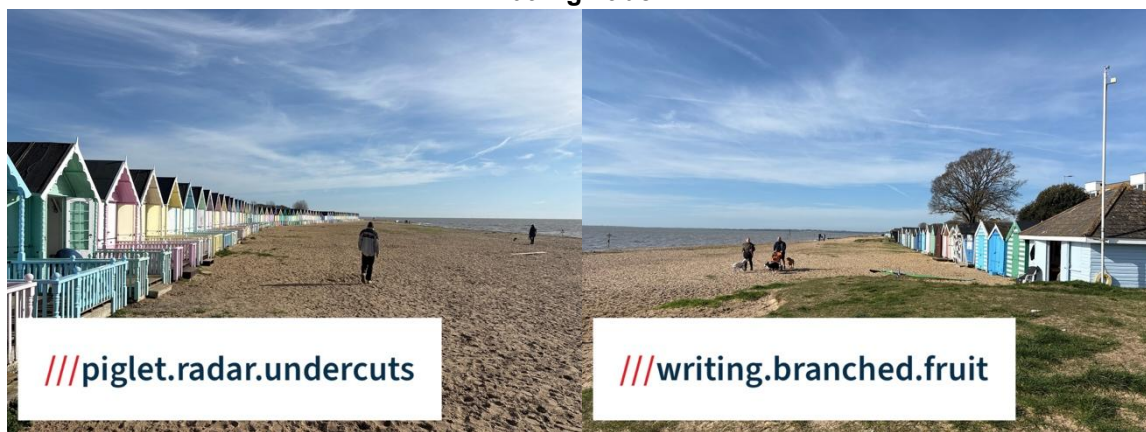
There are timber groynes on the beach. The ends of the groynes are marked as they are submerged at high tide. The beach was generally clear from waste, but large debris may be present in the water/be deposited on the beach by the tidal movements.

Photos 20 and 21. Groyne markers (left) and debris on beach (right)

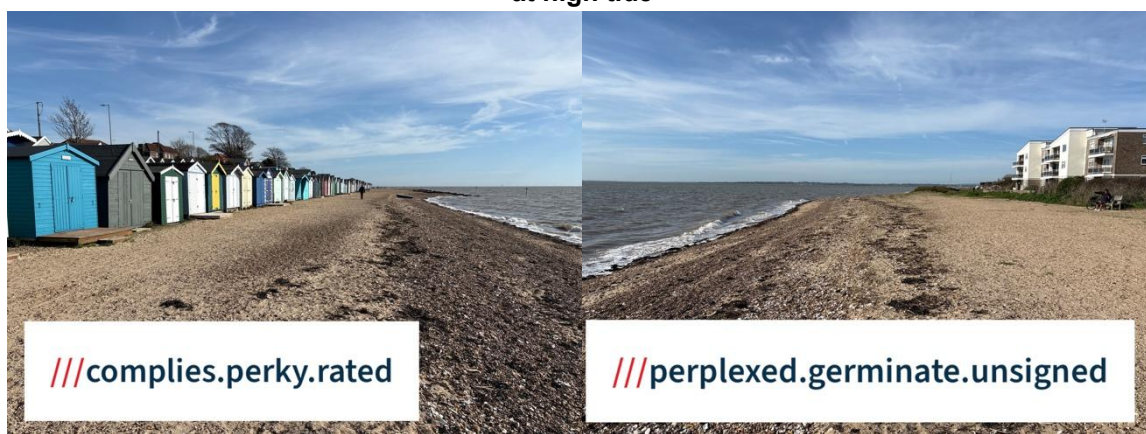


The area was assessed as the tide ebbed. Photos were taken from the eastern and western ends of the assessed area at both high tide and low tide.

Photos 22 and 23. Looking east (left) and west (right) from the eastern end of the assessed area at high tide



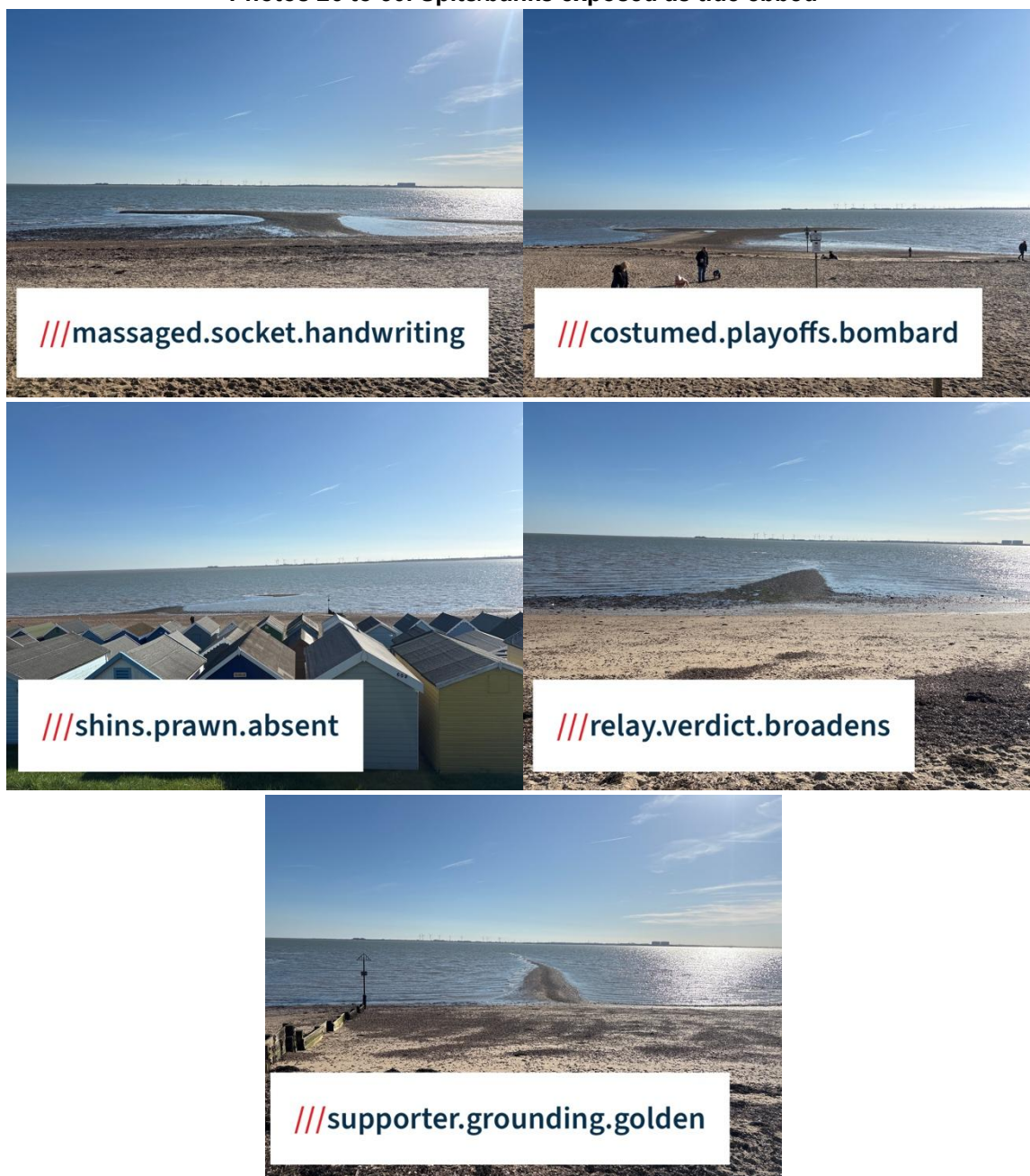
Photos 24 and 25. Looking east (left) and west (right) from the western end of the assessed area at high tide



As the tide drops sand/shingle banks and spits emerge from the water. These features are semi-permanent, they are always present, but positions and shapes may change. These features affect water currents during both ebbing and flooding tides. At the time of assessment members of the public were seen walking out to the ends of the spits as they emerged from the water. Whilst it would theoretically

be possible to get cut-off by an incoming tide whilst standing on one of these features, it is currently unlikely that a person will become trapped due to the profile of these features (spits are generally higher at the beach end) and the speed of tidal movement (which is less rapid than other areas on the east coast e.g. Wells-next-the-sea where alarms and patrols are used to clear the beach as the tide floods due to the speed of tidal inundation).

Photos 26 to 30. Spits/banks exposed as tide ebbed



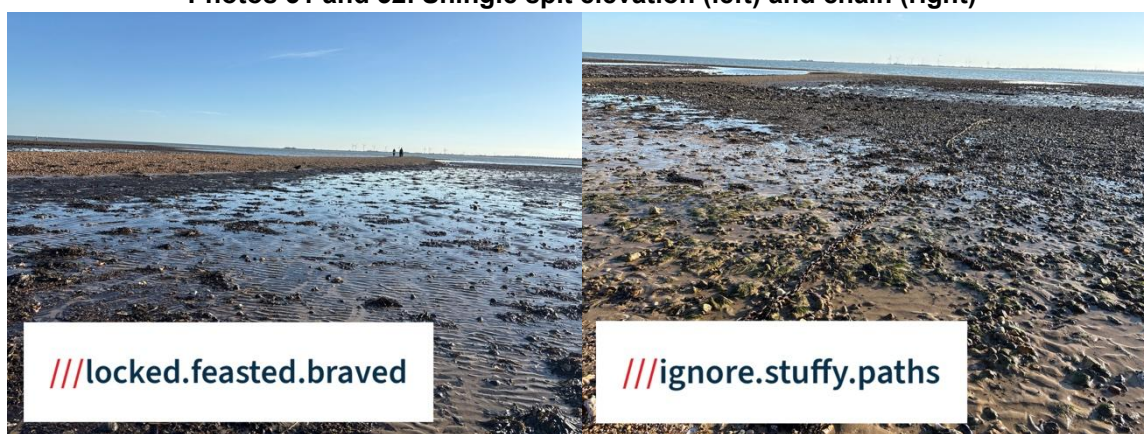
As the tide dropped further it was possible to see the height differences between the spits and surrounding beach/mud. If people are standing on a sandbank and it collapses then they may end up in the water and out of their depth. The collapse of a sandbank can also create a flash rip. These scenarios can occur quickly, without warning and result in a mass rescue situation. However, sandbank collapses are much more likely in large surf/storm conditions (although West Mersea may experience wind chop it is not considered as a surf beach) and where the features are primarily composed of sand or fine sediment (the spits at West Mersea are shingle and are likely to be quite resilient to rapid

collapse, particularly in times of fine weather when the beach will be most populous). The spits/banks are likely to pose the highest risk to members of the public who choose to enter the water as the tide ebbs or floods where the features interfere with lateral tidal currents creating rips (the features will create barriers to lateral tidal movement so bathers may be taken out to sea, as the water finds its way around the obstruction) and unseen depth changes (a person may unknowingly become out of their depth by stepping off a spit/bank or by remaining in the water as the tide floods/depth increases).

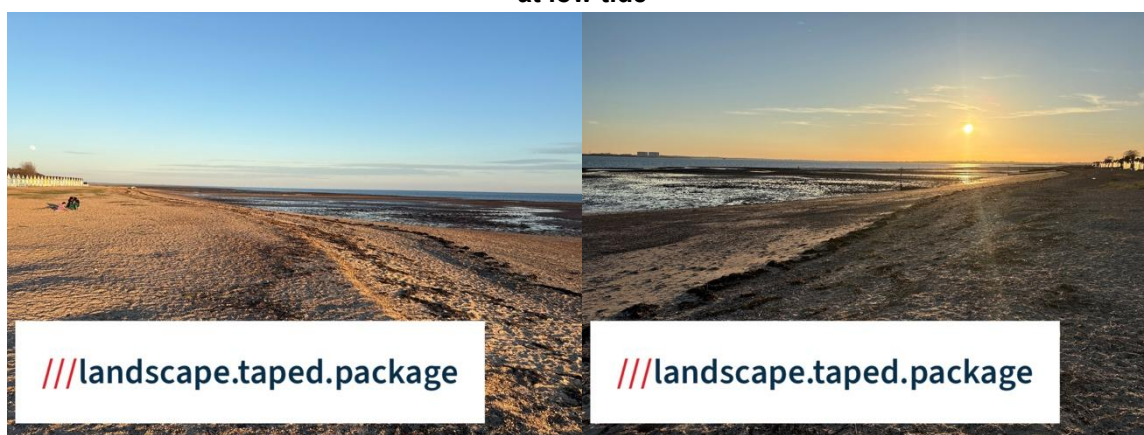
The high tide beach is composed of sand and shingle, but as the tide drops, mud and large numbers of shells are exposed. The tidal mudflats along this stretch of coast pose a risk of entrapment, but this is unlikely specifically within the assessed area as the substrate below the surface mud is generally firm. Mud holes created by bait digging may pose a risk, but bait digging is prohibited between the groynes. The shells exposed at low tide also pose a risk of cuts to feet.

Due to the turbidity of the water along the east coast, stinging jellyfish are unlikely to be a significant risk to water users. The assessor was informed that there is no significant history of stings from weeverfish in this area. It is possible that unexploded ordnance may be washed-up/exposed, but this is not thought to be a significant issue with no known incidents in recent history. A heavy-duty chain was observed (W3W:///ignore.stuffy.paths) anchored to the bed, but it wasn't clear at the time of assessment what this was for.

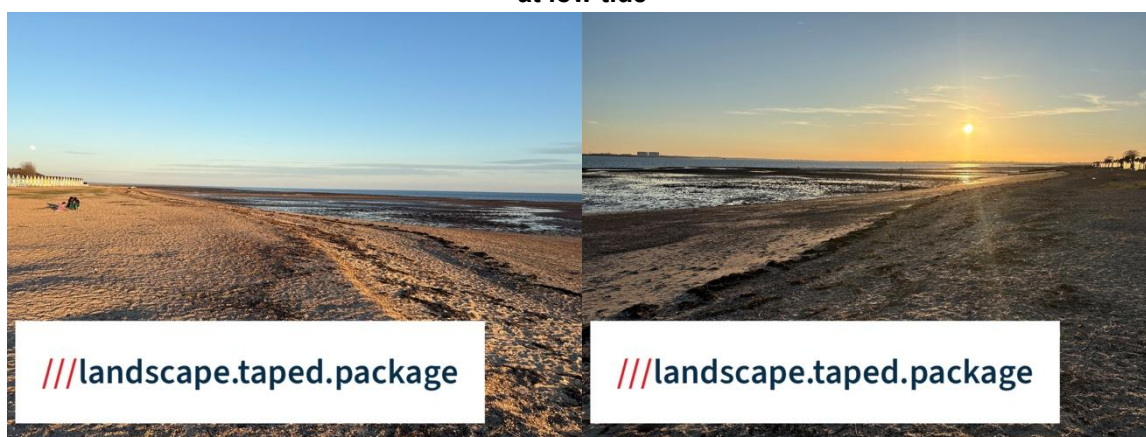
Photos 31 and 32. Shingle spit elevation (left) and chain (right)



Photos 33 and 34. Looking east (left) and west (right) from the eastern end of the assessed area at low tide

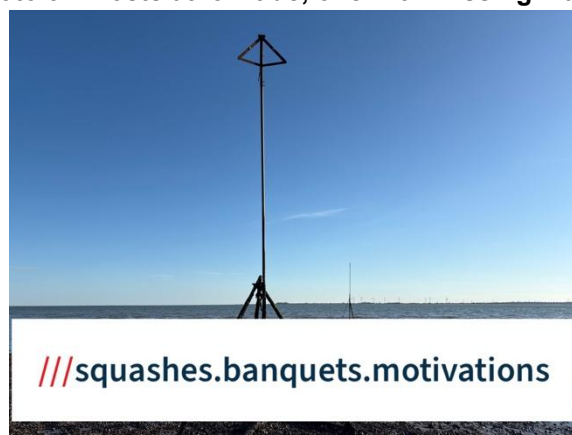


Photos 35 and 36. Looking east (left) and west (right) from the western end of the assessed area at low tide



In addition to the markers on the ends of the groynes, there are two posts at the low tide mark (these are partially submerged as the tide rises). One of the posts has a marker on top, but the post furthest from the beach has no marker on the top and as such poses a higher risk of collision. These structures are not believed to be the responsibility of CCC, but RLSS UK recommends that the Council raise this to the relevant party.

Photo 37. Posts at low tide, one with missing marker



Public Rescue Equipment

There is no specific law that requires Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) to be installed on beaches. PRE should not automatically be installed around water, instead requirement should be based upon risk assessment. If it is deemed necessary and suitable to install PRE, the type of equipment chosen should be based upon the site-specific risks, considering factors such as water profile, distance to casualty, overhead obstacles etc. Lifebuoys are traditionally used in areas where the casualty will be close to the edge (for example where there may be falls into the water from a quay heading or bank), throwlines are traditionally used where deployment is required over a greater distance, and the edge/bank has a shallower profile.

It should be noted that public rescue equipment has significant limitations, not least that someone must be close to the casualty at the time of incident to deploy it. In most cases the casualty must be conscious and cooperative for equipment to be effective and if weak/non-swimmers require rescue there may not be time to retrieve and deploy PRE before the casualty is submerged. At locations where entry to the water is not advised, the primary focus should always be on removing or reducing the risk of water entry in the first place.

No PRE has been installed on the beach by CCC (there is a piece of equipment attached to the outside of the Mersea Windsurfers clubhouse) within the assessed area. RLSS UK does not recommend installing PRE within the assessed area as, due to the beach profile, lateral currents and tidal range it is unlikely that it would be deployed effectively in an emergency. The highest risk of drowning is likely to be associated with the spits/banks when a person may find themselves out of their depth and/or in a rip. This situation is most likely to occur when the tide ebbs or floods, but PRE would have to be installed above the high tide line to ensure it was not lost or damaged by the elements. In the event of an incident a member of the public would have to identify the casualty in trouble, leave the incident to retrieve the PRE (which is likely to be a significant distance from the incident) and return to deploy the equipment accounting for casualty movement (the casualty will likely be drifting parallel to the beach). If the casualty has entered the water from a spit/ bank but drifted with the tide or been caught in a rip it may not be possible for the rescuer to reach the casualty without entering the water themselves anyway. Spits/banks are present all along the beach so numerous pieces of rescue equipment would be required to cover the entire area.

There is a publicly accessible AED on the toilet block close to the beach.

Photo 38. AED



Note that if there are employees working around water safety should be considered within job specific risk assessments.

Signage

The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 requires employers to ensure that safety signs are provided (or are in place) and are maintained in circumstances where there is a significant risk to health and safety that has not been removed or controlled by other methods. Further information can be found in the HSE's [Safety signs and signals](#) document. These Regulations do not place any duty on employers to warn other people (e.g., visitors, neighbours) of risks to their health and safety. However, in both these cases employers will have duties under section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and regulation 12 of the Management Regulations regarding the health and safety of non-employees. Under the Occupier's Liability Acts 1957 and 1984 a 'common duty of care' is owed to visitors and trespassers, installing signage may be useful to highlight risks posed by the water and associated structures.

There are numerous signs installed within the assessed area, but these are 'text only'. RLSS UK recommends that if water safety signs are installed, they comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 and conform to BS EN ISO 7010. Where existing signs could be upgraded to this standard, symbols have been listed below.

There is a 'C.B.C' text sign at the entrance to the beach at the eastern end of the assessed area. 'Warning kitesurfing' stickers have been attached to the sign, but these have faded (and display the incorrect symbol). This sign is likely to cause confusion; the launch area is actually marked on the beach by signs on posts. The assessor was informed that CCC put out buoys between Apr and Oct to mark the 250m speed limit restriction. These were not in situ at the time of assessment, but there were buoys visible offshore (which appear to be special markers and channel markers) which could be misinterpreted as the 'sailboard launch' markers.

Photo 39. CBC 'sailboard launch' sign



///reception.variously.passages

There are 'kite surfing and windsurfing launch area' signs on posts on the beach.

Photos 40 to 43. Launching area signs



To bring these signs up to BS EN ISO 7010 standard the following text/symbols could be used:

- Kite and windsurfing launching area, symbol W062
- No swimming in launching area (or similar text), symbol P049
- No bait digging between the groynes, symbol P001



There are 'text only' signs on the ends of the groynes

Photos 44 to 53. Signs on groynes



Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment



To bring these signs up to BS EN ISO 7010 standard the following text/symbols could be used:

- Warning bathers, symbol W001
Note it may also be useful to highlight that these are marking groynes (see no- ISO symbol later in this section that could be used)



There are 'River byelaws' signs.

Photos 54 to 58. River byelaws signs



Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment



There are several faded/illegible/missing signs. RLSS UK recommends these be removed or replaced (if necessary it wasn't clear what some signs were for).

Photos 59 to 63. Faded/illegible/missing signs





The Assessor was informed that CCC is considering installation of sign boards at the main access points to the beach. The design of the board would be at the Council's discretion, but RLSS UK recommends that a beach map be included (to show the launch area, where bait digging is allowed, location of groynes etc). The water quality test results (currently displayed on the café) could also be displayed here. Care needs to be taken not to clutter the area with unnecessary signage, if possible co-locate signage or combine onto one board. The following text/symbols would be suitable for primary signage boards.

- Warning, strong currents, symbol W057



- Warning, risk of tidal cut-off



- Warning, shingle banks and depth changes



- Warning, soft mud at low tide



- Warning, strong winds possible, symbol W046



- Warning, windsurfing, kite surfing and kite foiling, symbol W062



- Warning, boating, symbol W058



- Warning, sharp shells, footwear recommended, symbol W001



- Warning, groynes
(There is no ISO symbol so ensure it has intrinsic features)



- No bait digging between groynes, symbol P001



If a PSPO is introduced banning the launch of PWC from the beach, the following text/symbol could be used:

- Launching of personal water craft from beach is prohibited.
8 knot speed limit within 250m of high-water mark, symbol P057



Summary

There is inherent risk associated with being in/around water. CCC is taking a reasonable approach to mitigate the risks associated with the beach. Conflicting activities are being separated (there is a sail launch area, a speed restriction and CCC are looking-into a PSPO for launching PWC). Playgrounds for young children, where seen close to the water have been enclosed with vertical pale barriers and gates which appear (although these were not inspected) to comply with BS 1722 and EN 1776 as recommended by [RoSPA](#). Signage has also been installed, although this could be improved.

Beaches are dynamic environments; the locations of the spits/banks and subsequent water movement/rips may change over time. This beach has strong tidal currents and as such the risk posed by the spits/water movement cannot be eliminated without preventing access to the beach/water completely. The risk of drowning can be mitigated by educating visitors (through signage and including water safety information on the website etc), however it is foreseeable, even if CCC install new signage at main access points that some members of the public will enter the beach without passing these (this is an 'open' beach which can be accessed by walking along the coast or by walking in between the beach huts along the length of Victoria Promenade). Due to the complexities of tidal/water movements in this area it remains foreseeable that visitors in particular (who are less likely to understand the water movements than locals) may get into trouble despite the provision of signage.

CCC could consider patrolling the beach (with beach patrol or lifeguards) in the summer, but there is no legal requirement to do this. The drowning in 2023 occurred on 11th June, as such, even if CCC had provided a service in the peak season (during school holidays) the beach would not have been patrolled at this time. It would not be suitable to install PRE in this area.

CCC are considering implementing a PSPO to restrict the launch of PWC from the beach. Implementing the PSPO would likely reduce the risk of collision (between two craft, between craft and static objects or between craft and bathers. However, to completely prevent the launch of PWC in this area the PSPO will have to be monitored and enforced. The beach is not patrolled, so CCC should consider how this will be achieved.

Education is important to ensure members of the public enjoy open water safely and can assess the risks posed by open water. RLSS UK can provide free educational resources that can be used to engage with the local communities to enhance water safety knowledge. There is not much water safety information on the CCC website. The assessor was informed that the Council are looking to update the website, so RLSS UK recommends that a water safety page be created. CCC should include information specific to its area, but the Council can include links to the RLSS UK website for general water safety matters.

Recommendations

- Ensure continuity between car park signage and website
- Ensure up to date water quality data is displayed at the beach (Photo 10)
- Discuss posts (one of which has a missing marker) with relevant party (Photo 37)
- Consider water safety in job specific risk assessments
- Remove CBC sign (Photo 59)
- Upgrade kite surfing and windsurfing launch area signage (Photos 40 to 43)
- Upgrade signage on groynes (Photos 44 to 53)
- Remove/replace faded/illegible/missing signs (Photos 59 to 63)
- Take care not to clutter the area with unnecessary signage, if possible co-locate signage or combine onto one board
- Consider how to monitor and enforce PSPO
- Create a water safety page on website
- Review RA in 12 months or sooner following serious incident

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment

Project name:	Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea) Beach Risk Assessment	Date:	2/3/26
Written by:	Vincent Pank	Review date:	2/3/27

SEVERITY	LIKELIHOOD				
	1 Rare (Freak event - no known history)	2 Unlikely (Unlikely sequence of events)	3 Possible (Foreseeable under unusual circumstances)	4 Very Likely (Easily foreseeable - odd incidents may have occurred)	5 Certain (Common event – aware of incidents)
1 Negligible (No visible injury – minor pain)	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4	Low 5
2 Slight (Minor cuts bruises – no long-term effects)	Low 2	Low 4	Low 6	Medium 8	Medium 10
3 Moderate (Heavy bruising, flesh wound. Lost time accident)	Low 3	Low 6	Medium 9	High 12	High 15
4 Severe (Lost time accident and major injuries)	Low 4	Medium 8	High 12	High 16	High 20
5 Very Severe (Long term disability or death)	Low 5	Medium 10	High 15	High 20	High 25

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MATRIX RISK ASSESSMENT									
Hazard	Risk of	Population at risk	RISK RATING			Brief description of controls	ACTION TAKEN		Residual Risk Rating
			Likelihood of injury	Severity of injury	Risk		By	Date	
Walkways and boardwalks (beach access steps/)	Slips, trips and falls	Members of the public Staff	4	3	12	Current Handrails Proposed			Current 6 After proposed controls 6
Submerged/ partially submerged objects (craft striking objects such as debris carried by tide or infrastructure such as groynes or markers)	Spinal injury Head injury Broken bones Drowning	Members of the public particularly those using craft	4	5	20	Current Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby PSPO being investigated Proposed Investigate who is responsible for post with no marker Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 10 After proposed controls 5

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Groynes	Falls or jumps from structures -Spinal injury -Head injury -Broken bones -Drowning	Members of the public particularly children	2	4	8	Current Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 8 After proposed controls 4
Unexploded ordnance	Explosion -Injury -Death	Members of the public	1	5	5	Current Proposed Water safety on website			Current 5 After proposed controls 5
Dangerous litter (Glass, fishing paraphernalia, BBQs, sharps)	Lacerations Burns Needlestick injuries	Members of the public Staff	3	3	9	Current Bins Proposed			Current 6 After proposed controls 6
Sharp beach material (Stones and shells particularly low tide)	Lacerations Bruises	Members of the public	4	2	8	Current Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 8 After proposed controls 6
Soft mud and mud holes (Low tide)	Entrapment Drowning	Members of the public	3	5	15	Current			Current 10

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		particularly children and those bait digging				No bait digging between groynes Signage Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			After proposed controls 5
Sand/shingle spits and banks	Unforeseen changes in depth Changes in water movement as tide ebbs/flows -Drowning -Secondary drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	4	5	20	Current AED RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 15 After proposed controls 10
Open Water	Cold water shock Drowning Secondary drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	4	5	20	Current Designated Bathing Water/ water quality testing Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Investigate who is responsible for post with no marker Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 15 After proposed controls 10

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Waves (During strong winds and storms, not a surf beach)	Spinal injury Drowning	Water users, particularly those using craft	2	5	10	Current AED Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed			Current 5 After proposed controls 5
Tides (Large tidal range)	Bathers getting out of depth Tidal cut-off -Drowning -Near drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	3	5	15	Current AED RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 10 After proposed controls 10
Tidal currents (Lateral currents)	Drowning Near drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	3	5	15	Current AED RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 10 After proposed controls 10
Rips (Around groynes at high tide and around spits/banks as tide ebbs or flows)	Drowning Near drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	3	5	15	Current AED RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 10 After proposed controls 10

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Strong/offshore winds	Inflatables and craft being blown being blown along coast and/or out to sea -Drowning -Secondary drowning	Members of the public particularly visitors not aware of beach topography or water movements	4	5	20	Current AED RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 15 After proposed controls 10
Bonfires/ BBQS	Burns Fires	Members of the public	3	3	9	Current BBQ pits Proposed Water safety on website			Current 3 After proposed controls 3
Sun/ UV	Sunburn Heat stroke Dehydration	Members of the public Staff	3	3	9	Current Proposed Water safety on website			Current 9 After proposed controls 6
Vehicles and trailers (used for launch)	Collisions Crush injuries	Members of the public particularly those launching craft or children on beach	3	5	15	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing PSPO being investigated Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 10 After proposed controls 0

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Watercraft (Powerboats and jet skis)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Falling overboard -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	4	5	20	Current Beach access gates locked out of season AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby PSPO being investigated Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 15 After proposed controls 5
Watercraft (Windsurfers and wing surfers)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Falling overboard Being blown off/cross shore -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	4	5	20	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 15 After proposed controls 10

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Watercraft (Kite surfers)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Falling overboard Entanglement in lines Being blown off/cross shore -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	4	5	20	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 15 After proposed controls 10
Watercraft (Sailing boats)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Falling overboard -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	3	5	15	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 10 After proposed controls 5

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Watercraft (Kayaks and canoes)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Falling overboard Being blown off/cross shore -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	3	5	15	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 10 After proposed controls 5
Watercraft (Stand up paddleboards)	Collisions Impacts with bathers Impacts with structures (groynes and markers) Impacts with spits and banks Impacts with other craft Being blown off/cross shore -Spinal injury -Drowning	Bathers Craft operators Other craft users	3	5	15	Current Beach access gates locked out of season Signage AED Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Groyne markers Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) RNLI LB station nearby Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website PSPO			Current 10 After proposed controls 5

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Fishing	Entanglement in lines Injuries from hooks Impacts from weights	Members of the public	3	3	9	Current Designated launch area for kite/wind surfing Proposed			Current 6 After proposed controls 3
Biological hazards/ contaminated water	Illness from contact/ ingestion of contaminated water Skin/ eye irritation Sickness	Members of the public	3	3	9	Current Designated Bathing Water/ water testing Signage (out of date) Buoys (speed restriction) Byelaws (speed restriction) Proposed Upgrade signage Water safety on website			Current 6 After proposed controls 3
Dogs	Bites	Members of the public Staff	3	3	9	Current Proposed			Current 9 After proposed controls 9
Marine animals (Weeverfish at low tide)	Sting Pain Anaphylaxis (very rare)	Bathers	1	3	3	Current Proposed			Current 3 After proposed controls 3

Victoria Esplanade (West Mersea)– Beach Risk Assessment

Marine animals (Jellyfish)	Sting Pain Anaphylaxis (very rare)	Bathers	1	3	3	Current Proposed			Current 3 After proposed controls 3
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