# Repairs to Weymouth harbour walls delayed to protect nesting seahorses



Essential repair works on the harbour walls at Weymouth Peninsula have been postponed due to the discovery of seahorses nesting in the area. This major infrastructure project, aimed at addressing the deteriorating condition of the harbour and protecting it from rising sea levels, was slated to commence this autumn. However, the presence of these tiny marine creatures, which are classified as a protected species under UK law, has necessitated a delay. Disturbing seahorses, particularly during their breeding season, is illegal, prompting a need for a careful reassessment of the project's timeline.

Seahorses are typically found in shallow, sheltered waters along the southern coast of England, particularly in estuaries and seagrass meadows, where they inhabit for breeding during the summer months. Weymouth's coastal waters are particularly attractive to these creatures, making the area a significant breeding ground. According to experts, they will leave these shallow waters for deeper ones as autumn arrives, creating a window for the harbour works to proceed.

Contractors have already begun preparations, with machinery and materials accumulating in a nearby harbour-side car park. Dorset Council, which oversees the harbour area, has expressed its commitment to balancing economic development with environmental protection. Cllr Jon Andrews, the Cabinet Member for Place Services, emphasised the importance of these repairs, stating, “Repairing and replacing the harbour walls around the peninsula is a crucial investment in Weymouth’s future.” He acknowledged the challenges of maintaining this balance, noting that the peninsula is not only a cherished community asset but also essential for the local economy, especially against the backdrop of climate change and the associated risks of sea-level rises.

Local residents and businesses are keenly aware of the implications of these delays. The harbour is pivotal for tourism and local trade, making the rescheduling of repair works a pressing concern for many stakeholders involved. While the delay is regrettable, community members seem to support the cautious approach taken by the council, favouring long-term sustainability over short-term gains.

Officials remain hopeful that once the seahorses have completed their breeding cycle, work can swiftly resume, allowing Weymouth to enhance its crucial coastal defence infrastructure while ensuring the conservation of its unique marine life. The community's patience will be tested in the coming months as they await the return of normalcy to both the harbour operations and the natural cycle of its marine inhabitants.

### 📌 Reference Map:

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2066955/weymouth-harbour-works-seahorses> - Please view link - unable to able to access data