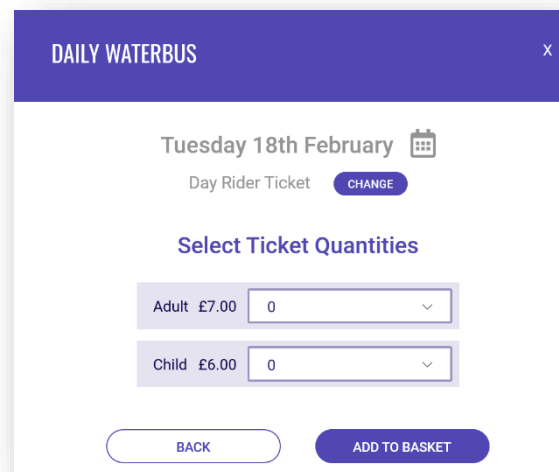


BRISTOL FERRY BOATS

What a first year it has been! Straight off the bat I was keen to work with the ferry family team to learn from their first-hand experience what challenges and opportunities they identified for the company. My initial intentions had been to spend my first 12 months in post observing operations, and this worked well initially over the first 6 months as I learn the ins and outs of the organisation. However, in August it became clear that sales for the year were lower than expected following the summer season, and that coupled with necessary maintenance costs during the winter of 2018-2019, left us on course for our first financial loss. In response, I worked with the team to establish working groups to tackle the challenges and grasp some of the opportunities they had identified when I first started. Certain challenges were out of our control (the impacts of the weather and Brexit, and the decline of the retail market, the increase in MCA requirements and costs) but there was still plenty to get our teeth into!

- Starting with our website! Accessibility is key to sales, so we redesigned the website so that customers could more easily find what they were looking for and purchase or enquire about it. In addition, we took the bold step of selling waterbus tickets online. We are very excited to see this impact of this change over the peak season!
<https://www.bristolferry.com/>

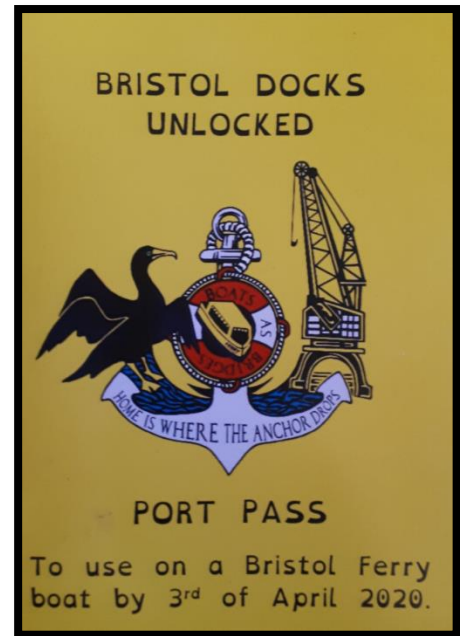


FARES*	Adult	Child
Up to 4 Stops	£2.00	£1.50
Up to 8 Stops	£3.00	£2.50
Up to 10 Stops	£4.00	£3.50
Up to 14 Stops	£5.00	£4.50
Day Rider	£7.00	£6.00
Under 5s travel FREE	Buy	

- Keeping with the theme of accessibility we then turned our attention onto our marketing materials and pricing structure. We needed to increase our day ferry prices and also wanted to make the pricing structure easier to understand by basing calculations on the number of stops travelled, rather than segments of the harbour and simplifying the cost price accordingly.

- Next, we looked at our organisational infrastructure. Keen to increase efficiency and reduce costs we have redesigned the online diary/ booking system to streamline processes. In addition, we have set up in-house accounting software enabling better access to financial data, track what's selling well, set more accurate budgets and monitor cash flow effectively.

- Many of the team felt that being more utilised as a transport link was a strong opportunity for the organisation: Thanks to BCFB member David Ridgewell we were invited to be on Bristol City Council's Transport Board, bringing us into political conversations around transport needs for the city. As a result, we have been approached by the Greater Brislington Together Community Partnership and local Councillor for Brislington East, to run a trial commuter service from Netham – Temple Meads – City Centre. This pilot will be running weekdays from the 14 – 25th April and tickets are available from the website! Should the pilot be successful we shall seek to incorporate this service into our regular timetable.
- Finally, we have been seeking to increase engagement! With this intention we have embarked on a period of community consultation running across our off season. Through a project called *The Port Pass* we have opened up a conversation with the wider Bristol community on how we can best serve all the city's residents and develop our services. Through our *Community Working Group*, we identified disengaged groups across the city with the offer of a Port Pass allowing them to sail the harbour all day for £1 each. During this time participants spoke with our crew about how they found their trip, what benefits they got from being on the water and how we might improve our service to be more inclusive. Our outreach worker Kim Fielding will be sharing some of the outcomes to date from this work at the meeting.



Whilst it has been a year of challenges and changes, it has also been a year of development and growth. I would like to thank all members for their continued and unwavering support. I look forward to meeting you all on the 19th March and sharing these developments with you in more detail.

