

My Lord and Chancellor,

As Chief Executive of Poole Harbour Commissioners, Jim Stewart oversees the management and development of Europe's largest natural harbour.

Having graduated with a languages degree from Portsmouth University, Jim was set to take up a job in advertising when a chance encounter on a train journey led to a change of career. Jim impressed his fellow passenger so much that he was offered a position as a ship-broker at London's Baltic Exchange, the world's largest ship chartering centre. Over the next 15 years, Jim relished the buzz of brokering deals between ship and cargo owners from across the world.

After working round the clock to meet the demands of international trading, Jim took up a new position as Managing Director of a Southampton-based shipping company. The move reignited Jim's love for the south coast and after four years he joined Poole Harbour Commissioners, an organisation responsible for managing the town's natural harbour and commercial port. During his time in charge, Jim is proud to have diversified activities and launched a new quay for cruise and cargo ships, which will ensure the harbour's long-term success.

Since joining Poole Harbour Commissioners, Jim has taken an active role in representing the interests of both the maritime sector and the region. Having been a Member of the British Ports Association Council since 2002, he became the organisation's Chair in 2010. Jim has championed UK ports, which handle 95% of all goods coming in and out of the UK and, as Chair of Maritime UK, has increased government recognition of the importance of the British maritime sector.

Within the region, Jim has served as President of the Dorset Chamber of Commerce and Industry and has been a member of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership for the last five years. He took up the position of Chair in 2017. The organisation promotes inward investment and is supporting the vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as a 21st century 'city by the sea'.

Jim's advice to today's graduates is to grasp opportunities whenever they arise. This includes exploring interests outside of your own sector, investing in your own learning and not being afraid to take on new challenges, even if they require new skills.

My Lord and Chancellor, I have the honour to present Jim Stewart, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Business Administration, *honoris causa*.