



## Welcome

Harwich Haven Authority is a Trust Port, wholly owned by commercial users, with statutory responsibilities for conservancy and safety of navigation in an area of some 150 square miles covering one of the UK's major strategic trade gateways, including the ports of Felixstowe, Ipswich, Harwich International, Harwich Naryard and Mistley.

In addition to being home to one of the UK's largest and busiest port clusters, the Harwich Haven is also a area of high environmental protection, mainly due to the bird population that it supports. Both estuaries are part of the network of European conservation sites known as Natura 200, are recognised as important wetlands under international conventions (Ramsar) and are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under UK legislation. The shores and surrounding areas include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and local nature reserves.

In producing this guide the Authority welcomes visitors to the Haven, and hopes that the information contained within will add to your safety and enjoyment whilst in the area.

**VHF Radio**  
The Harbour Operations frequency, Channel 71 is extremely busy with commercial shipping. The radio call sign is "HARWICH VTS".

Yachts are requested not to use this Port Operations Channel except in an emergency, although it is beneficial to monitor this frequency in order to obtain information on commercial vessel movements.

**Reporting**  
All vessels of more than 50 G.T. entering or leaving the seaward approaches to Harwich Harbour by the Approach Channel must report by VHF Ch 71 to VTS, when passing the appropriate reporting points indicated on Admiralty charts, and report to Ipswich Port Radio Ch 68 on entering the River Orwell.

**Navigational Safety**  
The principal deep-water navigational channels within Harwich Harbour are well marked by buoys and lights. These channels are constantly used by large, dredged-vested yachtsmen advised to keep clear of these where possible and use the recommended yacht tracks. When main channels have to be crossed, this should be done as nearly as practicable at right angles. Avoing crossing the bows of on-coming commercial traffic. Large container ships, in particular, have very restricted visibility for quite a distance

when carrying a deck cargo of containers. (You may be able to see her clearly, but can she see you?) Most yachtsmen take a justifiable pride in the responsible manner that they conduct themselves. This is a matter of mutual respect, but dangerous danger to themselves and their crews. Yachtsmen are particularly requested to remind themselves and observe the content and spirit of Rules 9(b) and (d), 18(b) and 18(d)(i) of the Collision Regulations and also the Harwich Haven Authority Byelaws.

### Anchoring

Except in emergency leisure vessels should not anchor within, or near to, navigational channels and commercial anchorages. Where necessary to do so, they should comply with the requirements of Collision Regulation Rule 30 and exercise heightened navigational awareness.

### COLLISION RULES

Rule 9(b) A vessel of less than 20m in length or sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway.

Rule 9(d) A vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within such channel or fairway. The latter vessel may use the sound signal prescribed in Rule 34(d) if in doubt as to the intention of the crossing vessel.

Rule 18(b) A sailing vessel underway shall keep out of the way of:

(i) a vessel not under command;

(ii) a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre;

(iii) a vessel engaged in fishing.

Rule 18(d)(i) Any vessel other than a vessel not under command or a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid impeding the safe passage of a vessel constrained by her draught, exhibiting the signals in Rule 28.

### GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATION

No.12, Harwich Traffic System  
12.2 (i) The Master of every small vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within the Harwich Traffic System.

12.2 (x) The Master of every small vessel shall not navigate or manoeuvre within the anchorages, Harwich Traffic System or approach to wharves, piers and jetties in such a way as to cause obstruction to other regulated vessels.

12.2 (xi) The Master of every small vessel shall maintain a minimum distance of 100 metres from any vessel berthed alongside or at anchor and engaged in loading or discharging dangerous substances as indicated by the vessel displaying an all round red light by night or a red flag by day in accordance with the Dangerous Goods in Harbour Areas Regulations 2016.

12.2 (xii) The Master of every small vessel shall make use of the Recommended Track for Yachts and channel crossing positions whenever practicable when transiting the Authority's area.

### Harbour Patrol

The Harwich Haven Authority maintains a regular patrol of the Haven throughout the year. In addition, during the summer months weekends, between the hours of 0800 to 1800, these patrols are maintained to provide assistance and rescue yachtsmen and to ensure that the marine channel is kept clear for the transit of commercial shipping. The weekend Harbour patrol maintains a listening watch on VHF Channel 71. The crew will be pleased to offer advice and information on the Harbour and its approaches.

### FOG

**Recommended procedure for small craft visibility of half a mile or less**

1) All craft with VHF radio maintain a listening watch on channel 71.

2) Provided you are aware of your position and you intend staying on the yacht track, just monitor the commercial activity in Harwich Harbour as reported on channel 71, or Ch 68 in the River Orwell.

3) If you are uncertain of your position, it may be prudent to anchor well clear of the shipping channel until visibility improves. Do not anchor close to a channel buoy.

4) If you do not have radar and intend crossing any shipping lane, make sure you are in seeing distance to the commercial movements, call for a VTS on channel 71, or Ipswich Port Radio Ch 68 whilst in the River Orwell. In summer time or at times of peak commercial activity, you will probably be directed to a working channel.

5) If you pass a craft without radio which asks you for guidance, you should advise Harwich VTS of the details. If the craft is going in your direction it is hoped that you will give support in the spirit of co-operation that should prevail at these times.

**Prevention of Pollution by Garbage Regulations (1993)**  
The North Sea, including its Estuaries and Rivers, is designated a Special Area under Annex 5 of MARPOL. Within this area the disposal of all garbage is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**. Food waste may only be put overboard outside the 12 mile limit in compliance with the Regulations, otherwise all garbage must be retained on board until it can be deposited on shore in approved receptacles.

**Dangerous Goods in Harbour Areas Regulations 2016 (DGHR)**

A vessel alongside displaying an all-round red light by night or a red flag by day indicates that she is carrying dangerous substances. Under these Regulations an exclusion zone of up to 200m is to be enforced around any vessel loading or discharging explosives. Tankers alongside the oil jetties at Harwich, Felixstowe and Ipswich should also be given a wide berth.

If you are not visible on radar you will be beyond shore assistance. Always carry a radar reflector, flares and suitable emergency equipment. Remember your obligations under the prevention of collision regulations, particularly the ability to make an efficient sound signal.

### SOUND SIGNALS used by vessels in the area

Signal	Meaning
One prolonged blast	I am leaving a dock, quay, or anchorage
One short blast	I am altering my course to starboard
Two short blasts	I am altering my course to port
Three short blasts	I am operating astern propulsion
At least five short blasts	I am intent of your intentions or actions
Four short blasts followed by one short blast	I am turning short round to starboard
Four short blasts followed by two short blasts	I am turning short round to port

### Water-skiing, Jet-skiing & Sail-boarding, etc.

These activities are not permitted in or near any navigational channel used by commercial vessels. Power craft are only permitted within the designated areas shown on this chartlet. Sail-boarding is not permitted in the racing areas or any beaches where danger could be caused to swimmers. Local Authority constraints also apply to launching and recovery at certain shore locations.

### Speed Limits

Other than within the specified areas referred to above, the speed limit for power boats, cruisers, or yachts is 8 knots within Harwich Harbour, the River Stour and the Walton Backwaters. The limit is 6 knots within the River Orwell. The need to avoid wash damage to the banks of the River Orwell is stressed. Further information is contained within the relevant Harwich Haven Authority Byelaws.

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## IMPORTANT RADIO CHANNELS AND HOW TO SEND A MAYDAY

Channel 16. The distress channel. Monitor this channel at all times. Use for routine calling only if there is no alternative, such as DSC or mobile phone.

Channels 6, 8, 22, 72, and 77. The intership channels, used to talk to other boats.

Channel 13. Used by ships for bridge to bridge communication on matters of navigational safety, useful to monitor in shipping areas.

Channel 67. Used by HM Coastguard for safety communications. Vessels are requested not to use this channel for intership traffic.

Channel 80. The marina channel.</p