

PENARTH

MARINA

Marina Pilotage

Pilotage – approaches to Cardiff

The busy commercial Port of Cardiff, owned and managed by Associated British Ports (ABP), lies approximately half a mile to the north of the Outer Harbour. All shipping for the port must use the narrow-dredged channel, known locally as the Wrach Channel, the entrance to which is marked by the Outer Wrach cardinal buoy.

Whilst in the approaches to the channel and in the channel itself commercial vessels are constrained by their draft and will be unable to manoeuvre freely. ABP's Harbour Master therefore recommends that leisure users keep close to the Penarth side of the harbour. If a crossing of the Wrach Channel is unavoidable it should only be attempted when the channel is clear and at right angles. ABP's Harbour Master further recommends that leisure users maintain a listening watch on VHF Channel 69 to hear safety of navigation broadcasts made by Severn VTS, an Information Service Vessel Traffic Service based in Cardiff.

Information on expected and actual shipping movements for Cardiff and all other ABP ports in South Wales together with other safety information for marine users can be obtained by reference to Severn VTS's website on www.severnvts.co.uk.

Pilotage - Cardiff Bay Barrage

Passage into Cardiff bay from the Bristol Channel is relatively simple. Vessels are required to lock in through one of three locks which are located in the Outer Harbour. The Outer Harbour is dredged twice a year to Chart Datum which facilitates 24-hour access into the bay dependant on draught on all but the lowest of Spring Tides.

Inbound vessels should pick up the main shipping channel (Wrach Channel) which leads to ABP Cardiff Docks. The Barrage Channel is marked by a series of lateral buoys which lead off to port from the main channel.

Communications

The Barrage locks are operational all the year round on a 24-hour basis. Barrage Control operates on VHF Channel 18 and can be contacted on 02920 700234. An initial call should be made when vessels are in the vicinity of the Outer Wrach Cardinal Buoy to arrange to enter the outer harbour and lock into Cardiff Bay. Vessels should not enter the Outer Harbour without obtaining permission from Barrage Control.

Locking times

Outbound locks are on the hour and half hour, whilst inbound locks are quarter to and quarter past the hour.

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Safety

- Do not enter the outer harbour or lock until instructed to do so.
- Always moor securely to the lock pontoons as far forward as possible.
- In the event of an emergency, contact Barrage Control immediately.

Barrage traffic signals

Traffic Lights are located on each of the three locks and on the Northern breakwater which coordinates entry to the Outer Harbour. Light Signals are as follows:

Red flashing Red flashing Red flashing	Emergency: Stop and Contact Barrage Control
Red Red Red	Do not enter lock
Green White Green	Enter Lock on instruction from Barrage Control

Berth holder's tip

Berth Holder Neil Cunningham has passed on this handy bit of local knowledge that he uses each time he approaches the Barrage aboard his yacht "Synergy". Thanks Neil.

"Are the Barrage approach buoys out of position for dredging? Do you need to find the barrage approach channel? If so, stay in the white sector of the Wrach channel until the sector light to the far left of the barrage wall lines up with the centre of the end wall of the (derelict) building to seaward of The Custom House. Make your turn and maintain this transit before turning to starboard (guided by the Chevrons on the barrage wall) for your final approach. Simple!"

"This works well even when the buoys are in position and is useful on a falling tide. I teach all my crew to take this approach on each and every occasion and they find this greatly reassuring. It works - try it and see".

Charts and waypoints

Admiralty No 1182

Large Scale Cardiff Bay and Approaches

Admiralty No 1176

Small Scale Steep Holm to Avonmouth