

THE SAFETY OF NAVIGATION WITHIN WHITBY HARBOUR

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At meetings with representatives of Whitby Harbour Users Group during 2015 the following acts of normal and best practice were reviewed in line with the Port Marine Safety Code guidance and agreed to be applicable within Whitby Harbour.

If all harbour users apply the following examples of good and proper practice then the existing safe situation should be preserved within the harbour.

All vessels should proceed at moderate safe speed. Maximum speeds of 8 Knots between the entrance and Scotch Head and 5 Knots in all other areas will shortly be set by byelaw. The skippers of all craft should be aware that they are responsible for the wake caused by the passage of their vessel and should proceed at such a speed as to minimise any effects to other vessels operating within the harbour limits or to vessels moored alongside. A sign is erected at the harbour entrance to direct the skippers of vessel accordingly.

When transiting the bridge craft upstream should give way to vessels proceeding from seawards. Precedence should be given to larger vessels and no vessel should attempt to transit the bridge when a cargo vessel, under pilotage, is entering or leaving. Both leaves will be opened to smaller craft at busy periods and they will be expected to proceed through simultaneously upstream and downstream in an orderly line keeping to the starboard side of the channel. VHF communication should be established on Ch 11 with the bridge operatives prior to transit.

All craft equipped with VHF should maintain a listening watch on Channel 11 when approaching and within Whitby Harbour limits.

Sailing vessels should not proceed under sail power alone within the harbour unless it is as its sole means of propulsion. The practice of leaving the helm to adjust, raise or lower sails should only be carried out outside of the navigation channel and when no obstruction will be caused to other vessels under way.

Safe operating information is available to all day launched craft both on safety notices distributed by harbour staff and is available on the harbours website www.yorkshireports.co.uk. Dangerous sea conditions can occur at the harbour entrance during strong North to East onshore winds. Entry in to Whitby Harbour for smaller vessels is not recommended at this time.

The harbour watch keepers can be contacted on VHF Ch 11, the port working channel, in order to provide information on tidal heights, weather conditions, the availability of berthing and the movements of other vessels within the harbour.

Any instruction which may be given by the watch keeper regarding safe navigation, berthing and safe speed must be observed.

When cargo vessels are moving within the port, under pilotage, all other craft must give way and when directed should hold their position or remain alongside until such vessel has passed.

Vessels waiting to transit the swing bridge may remain on the fish quay/waiting pontoon as long as they remain manned and do not cause obstruction to other harbour users.

Small passenger carrying vessels should not deviate from the proper side of the channel or swing across the navigation channel until they are absolutely sure that their actions will not conflict with the safe passage of all other vessels.

THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF COLLISION AT SEA APPLY WITHIN WHITBY HARBOUR AND THE OPERATORS OF ALL VESSELS ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THEM.

It is expected that new Byelaws will be introduced to assist in the control of navigation within Whitby Harbour, these will cover such areas as operating vessels under the influence of drink or drugs, proceeding at a safe speed, the movement and operation of large vessels, proper mooring within the harbour and other safety related issues.

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