

Introduction

Ardrossan is a ferry port and railway terminal....

... with a separate dock housing Clyde Marina. Access to the Marina is by passing through the ferry terminals, and also through a 10 m gate which can be closed off during very bad weather. This normally only happens midwinter. Access to the Marina will be restricted during ferry movements.

The Marina offers all the normal facilities including diesel alongside, the town has a good array of shops for provisioning, while transport connections are excellent.

Approach

There are various dangers in the approach that are best seen on the chart.

Horse Isle lies half a mile to the WNW of the harbour entrance. It is unlit but has a stone beacon...yachts have come to grief here, so give it a good offing.

Closer in the drying West Crinan Rock lies about 200 m to the West of the southern end of the detached breakwater. It is marked by a red can buoy (Fl.R.4s) which needs to be left on your port hand side when making your approach.

To the south of the harbour there are various rocky outcrops and the drying Eagle Rock. This is marked by a green conical buoy (Fl.G.5s) which needs to be left on your starboard side in the approach. All can be seen clearly in the aerial photos in the galleries.

It is best to leave all the dangers a good distance away and this can be accomplished by keeping outside of the 20 m depth contour, and only making your final approach when the mouth of the harbour bears NE.

At night there is a sector light to guide you in, staying in the white sector on 55° T will lead you in. The arrangement is best seen on the chart. More pilotage information:

Approaching yachts and motorboats need to take notice of the blue and yellow control tower shown in photo gallery. It is situated just at the entrance to the Marina but is conspicuous from outside the harbour. It is from here that the traffic signal lights are displayed, again they can be seen quite clearly in photo gallery. The lights are on display 24 hours and the signals have the following meaning:

3R(vert) Harbour closed to all traffic.

3G(vert) Pleasure craft may proceed to or from the Marina, but commercial vessels requiring permission may not enter, leave, or manoeuvre within the harbour.

2R(vert) over G Pleasure craft must clear the outer basins, canting area, and approach channels immediately.

The Ardrossan Control Tower is manned 30 minutes before the scheduled arrival time of a ferry, up to the departure time. They work on VHF channels 12 and 14. Outside of these times mariners can contact Clydeport Estuary Control.

Pleasure craft should contact the harbour control on VHF before entering, and not enter the harbour unless they can see 3G(vert) displayed from the control tower.

Clyde Marina (as opposed to the control tower) operate on VHF channel 80.

Upon passing between the pier and breakwater the old tidal basin will be seen to starboard, followed by Eglington Tidal Basin. This is entered and dead ahead you will see the 10 m wide gateway into the Marina.

There is a good video of the approach on the marina website which can be accessed [HERE](#) (They are having problems with that video at the moment, but I've left the link in for when they've sorted it)

Berthing

Contact the Marina on VHF channel 80, or telephone 01294 607077.

They are open Monday to Friday 9am - 5.30pm and Saturday and Sunday 9am - 5pm in the summer with the winter hours Monday to Friday 9am - 5.30pm and Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm. A link to their website is provided below:

<http://www.clydemarina.com>

There is no specific visitors pontoons so you need to be in contact with the marina to be allocated a berth (pontoon A is nearest the Office!)

Prices here(2022)work out at £3.10 per metre per day up to 25 metres, with a flat rate of £10 for a short stay.

Facilities

Full Marina facilities are provided here, with water and electricity (prepaid cards but check the pillar to see if there's any left on it!) on the pontoons. Showers and toilets are in a block ashore while broadband Internet is available throughout the Marina.

It is of note that the laundrette facilities are free, just supply soap.

There is good security with swipe card access and CCTV.

Fuel is available alongside as well as Calor Gas & Camping Gaz exchanges.

Full boatyard services are provided here, with a 50 tonne travel lift, mobile crane and boatmover. There is plenty of hardstanding with power and water as well as undercover secure storage.

Marine tenants provide all the services a boat owner is likely to need including chandlery, boat building, glass fibre repairs and painting, Marine engineering, valeting and sail cleaning and Marine Electronics. Charter operators work from the Marina too. They now (2015) have a rigging service on sight.

The town has supermarkets for provisioning, banks, post office, and very good transport connections with the railway station right in the harbour, with frequent trains to Glasgow, aided by its location on the Ayrshire Coast Line. Prestwick airport is not far to the south and offers national and international flights, whilst also being a Ryanair hub.

There are frequent bus services to Irvine, Kilmarnock, Ayr and Greenock and an extensive local network provided by Stagecoach Western.

All in all a useful port of call.

What To Do

Cecchinis Italian restaurant next to the Marina has a good reputation, and others will be found nearby, including an Indian and a Chinese take-away. There is a much bigger selection of pubs and restaurants in Saltcoats, about a mile to the South.

Eating Places:

[Restaurants & Places to Eat in Ardrossan 2022 - Tripadvisor](#)

Pubs

[beer in the evening ardrossan - Bing](#)

History

Ardrossan's roots can be traced back to the construction of its castle 'Cannon Hill'....

.... thought to be in around 1140, by Simon de Morville. The castle and estate passed onto the Barclay family (also known as Craig) and it passed through successive heirs until the 14th century. Then it passed onto the Eglinton family on the death of Godfrey Barclay de Ardrossan, who died without leaving an heir. Sir Fergus Barclay, Baron of Ardrossan was said to be in league with the Devil and in one of his dealings he set the task of the Devil to make ropes from sand; upon failing to do Satan kicked the castle with his hoof in frustration and left a petrosomatoglyph hoofprint.

In 1292, under the reign of John Balliol, the castle fell to the invading English army, who held it until 1296, when it was scene of the infamous event known as Wallace's Larder. William Wallace lured the English garrison out of the castle by setting a decoy fire in the village. He promptly slaughtered them, throwing their remains into the castle dungeon.

The castle stood until 1648, when Oliver Cromwell's troops had it destroyed, taking much of the stonework to Ayr to build the fort there. The ruins still stand, but are overgrown and in a dangerous condition.

Ardrossan developed quickly during the 18th and 19th centuries thanks to its position on the coast. Exports of coal and pig iron to Europe and North America were the main trade from the town's port, which became a centre for shipbuilding. Fishing vessels and small cargo boats were the mainstay of the shipyard until the 1950s, when the yard all but ceased to exist as a result of foreign competition. A smaller yard, McCrindle's, operated until the 1980s before it ceased trading.

Passenger services from Ardrossan harbour to Brodick on the Isle of Arran started in 1834, and services to Belfast in Ireland (later Northern Ireland) and the Isle of Man followed in 1884 and 1892 respectively. Clyde sailings were operated initially by the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company from Winton Pier and the Caledonian Railway from Montgomerie Pier. The Earl of Eglinton's ambitious plan for a canal link to Glasgow was never realised.

Between 1841 and 1848 Ardrossan was a part of the "West Coast Main Line" equivalent of its time. The fastest

route from London to Glasgow was by train to Fleetwood, and thence by packet boat to Ardrossan. After 1848 the entire journey could be made by rail, avoiding Ardrossan.

The harbour has been substantially redeveloped as a marina, and the passenger and vehicle ferry to Brodick is still operated by Caledonian MacBrayne.

Since 2006 Ardrossan has been part of a regeneration area, overseen by the Irvine Bay Urban Regeneration Company. Their vision for Ardrossan is as a gateway to Arran and a good place to live and relax next to the sea in a regenerated town centre serving the existing and incoming community. This will be achieved through renewal of the town centre and the future development of the harbourside in a co-ordinated and overall plan.

The text on this HISTORY page is covered by the following licence
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Text_of_the_GNU_Free_Documentation_License