

Introduction

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News October 2013. The surge gates into the inner harbour collapsed in the spring of 2013 and it is not certain when they will be restored. Boats are still using it but the Harbour's insurance is void and they are not charging any harbour dues. You use this harbour at your own risk considering the surge that can be experienced in strong onshore conditions.

News June 2021 The storm gates have been dismantled and there are no plans for renewing them. The North Wall Pier has been damaged through last winter and they are mending that but the official line is that this harbour is "closed to visitors"

This was a gem of a place but unfortunately, if you have a 30ft+ boat with a four or five foot draft, you may prefer to give it a miss. It's quite a small harbour with a busy fleet of small fishing boats so manoeuvring is quite tight and the water at the entrance is only 0.9 with down to 0.5 to starboard inside the entrance to the inner harbour. The East end of the inner basin, where there is a small pontoon, is dredged to 2.5 meters so, if you can get in a couple of hours either side of HW, you will remain afloat throughout the cycle. (Careful though, if you just scrape in at HW and the tides are neaping you could be here longer than you planned!!)

The inner harbour was equipped with storm boards because, in strong onshore winds, there can be quite a surge in the inner harbour; In settled weather it is possible for larger yachts to take up an alongside berth against the outer harbour wall, just inside the entrance and short of the entrance to the inner harbour but you could ground here at LW. Obviously this berth is not suitable in anything other than settled conditions; in any developed onshore conditions you should not attempt this harbour in any boat.

Have a look around Annalong Harbour as it was in 2008. [Google](#) Street view of Annalong

On the other hand, assuming you have gotten in safely, you will find that this is a lovely spot; it has everything you might need as a cruising yachtsman and there can only be you and a couple of other boats on the 20 metre pontoon; what could be better?

The harbour was engaged in the granite trade in its early years and then became useful when they were building the Silent Valley Dam up in the mountains but now its main use is for the fishing trade. Today its main attraction is the cornmill at the back end of the harbour which has been restored as a working watermill and museum. This is well worth a visit.

Links to nearby harbours: [Kilkeel](#)

Approach

The approach to the harbour is very simple;

the only danger is the rocky shoal extending out from the East end of the pier under the sector light. If you are using that sector light in the approach you need to borrow to starboard almost into the green sector of the light to be sure of being safe, but in good visibility just keep the north side of the harbour wall open and you'll be OK. Reduce speed as you approach the entrance because there's not a lot of room for boats to cross here and you could meet someone coming out. You should also check the pierhead for indications that the surge barrier is closed (3 vertical reds). Once through the outer harbour entrance err towards the south side of the channel to stay clear of the rocks on the north side but remember that you'll need a continuous 180° turn in through the inner harbour entrance. Then it's up to you whether you do a handbrake turn to come alongside port side to on the pontoon or just drop on starboard side to and leave the turning bit until departure!!

As there are no large scale charts of this harbour we have produced a free-hand sketch plan which is absolutely not suitable for navigation.

Berthing

Most berthing options have been discussed above

In settled weather it is possible to anchor off the harbour mouth but if you have a draft of more than 1.5m it would be unwise to anchor outside 2 hours either side of HW. The Spring range is 3.9m and Neaps 2.6m.

Facilities

The harbour has a launching slip but it is on the beach to the North of the harbour entrance.

The town has all the supplies you could need. Probably the best bet is to walk up the town to the Kilkeel Road; about 100yds along there is a Centra outlet which has an ATM, fuel, a Post Office and an Off Licence open until 10pm, seven days a week. You will come across other stores on the way.

What To Do

You won't have far to look; the Harbour Inn overlooks the harbour; tel 028 4376 8678 and if you can't get hold of the HM in the approach you could always ring here and ask them to look out at the pontoon to see if there is room!!

History