

Introduction

The first thing to note about Dun Laoghaire is its size;

.....you will still have half a mile to go to the marina after you've passed through the harbour entrance. This is the home to three sailing clubs, a motor yacht club and sailing school as well as an 820 berth marina. The detached pontoons just inside the Western Marina Breakwater belong to the Marina but are not for use by visiting boats.

This used to be a very busy harbour when they operated HSS ferries from the central pier but now, **since the withdrawal of that service**, it is still home to just about everything else that can float (though wind surfing and kiting is banned) and you will have to pick your way through carefully and be aware that an anguished yell of "Starboard" may not have the desired effect on a youngster (or oldster) in a Topper.

Whilst there is no rule against proceeding under sail in the harbour you have to bear in mind that in light winds you may have to move out of the way of a commercial vessel at short notice so act accordingly. There are three types of large power boat using the harbour all of which have right of way over other users; vessels working with the Commissioners of Irish Lights, ships of the Irish Navy and the Lifeboat.

Having said that, this harbour is enviable in all the services available; it is well sheltered in the marina. The town is blessed with pubs and restaurants, several supermarkets, a multiplex cinema and outside the harbour area to the south there are some nice beaches and interesting villages. There are walks and cycle routes in the hinterland, car and bike hire - even a Ferris wheel (have you got an aerial photo of your boat?); you'll definitely run out of time before you run out of ideas for things to do

Update 2021 The plans for building a berth for Cruise Ships here have been dropped.

Approach

The approach and entry to this harbour could not be simpler,

..... you can see it from miles away, the entrance is 1/4 of a mile wide with two large stone built lights on each breakwater.

After entering the harbour (on the starboard side of the channel like all good yachties) you must continue on a SSW heading and round the SHM before heading in for the marina. You will have been allocated a berth on #37 on the way in and there are several diagrams of the pontoon layout available in the publications and on the marina website.

If you choose to sail down to the marina you do not have right of way over large power driven vessels; they will tromp on and assume you intend to get out of the way. The full text of this restriction is available in the harbour company's Notice to Mariners 02 of 2022. That text is ambiguous, as it does not define "Larger" and "Smaller". It further claims that smaller powered vessels are restricted in their manoeuvrability; which is rubbish - just don't get in the way of power driven boats which look as if they are in a hurry. (They quote as examples cruise ship tenders, passenger ferries and MFVs)

Berthing

Visitors usually berth alongside at the marina. It should be noted that there is about half a mile of pontoons to negotiate between the visitors pontoon and the shore!

In 2022 the marina is charging 4.00 Euros per metre per night They also offer a discount for returning visitors.

The club moorings have been removed so the old "who-you-know" rule which was valuable here is no more and most visitors go to the marina

If marinas and pontoons are not your thing there is an anchorage in Scotsman's Bay a cable SE of the East Pier wall. It's well sheltered from off shore winds and there are a couple of small slips at the root of the pier where it is possible to land.

We are indebted to "Cricalix" for his notes on the desirability of the anchorages in the vicinity of the harbour and worth reading in the "Have your say" section at the bottom of the page. It would be nice if skippers reading this could add their notes on this or on any UK/Eire harbours that they frequent.

Facilities

The marina has everything; water and power (prepayment cards required) on the pontoons, showers/toilets (included in the mooring fees) at their office building and on the amenities barge between Q & P pontoons. There is also a laundrette (coin op)

It has a boat hoist as do several of the yacht clubs; Most of the yacht clubs have bars and restaurants but you should check their web sites for times and dress codes.

The marina has a licence to retail both diesel and petrol. There are chandleries, electronic engineers, mechanical engineers, boatyard services, sail makers and if your G & T glasses get broken there'll undoubtedly be a retail outlet for Waterford Crystal ashore!

The **Royal St George** is equally well equipped but sadly much smaller so you might not be able get on a pontoon at the weekend but they do run a water taxi around their moorings in daylight hours. It does have a major advantage over the marina (apart from price!) in the distance between your boat and the shore if you are on the pontoon - a mere hop and a skip whereas it's the thick end of 3.5 cables in the marina visitors berths. There is a website link below for further details

The Royal Irish Yacht Club has an imposing building with great facilities as well as a haul out Boatyard facility. You need to arrange your visit in advance but I'm sure they wouldn't turn away last minute visitors as long as they are members of another RYA affiliated Club. We have provided a website link below.

Transport from here to Dublin is by their DART system and very quick; there are also air connections from Dublin airport - now there's an exercise - how to get all your crew gear into the cheapest options of hand/hold for Mr Ryan!!

What To Do

There are the usual restaurants and fast food outlets and plenty of pubs (with and without music). As has been mentioned, there is plenty to do ashore and if that is not enough you can always hire a boat!!

History