

Introduction

Contacts: HM through Buckie on 01542 831700

The first thing to note about Findochty is that it is pronounced "Finnechty" with a soft "ch" as in "loch" (Scottish); goodness knows why, something to do with the Gaelic we believe! Anyway, Finnechty is about four miles east of Buckie and just round the corner from Portknockie to its east. The presence of [Buckie](#) is a boon to yachties who miss the tide when returning from far afield as one can dive in there and await the tide to get into Finnechty.

On the other hand the development of Buckie as a 24 hour fishing port as early as the 1880s was the downfall of Finnechty harbour as, when other harbours were reaping the benefits of the herring industry, the local Finnechty herring boats migrated to Buckie and have stayed there to this day.

Nowadays all that remains of the fishing fleet are a few creel boats and long-liners catching mackerel when they are running. The Moray council have installed a couple of tidal pontoons on the inshore wall of the inner harbour which are fully occupied by local boat owners, so visitors have to take an alongside berth on the West wall.

Update 2022 The pontoons were removed in 2020/21 and new ones were installed over the winter of 21/22

There is no Harbour office or Harbour Master at Finnechty but one of the Buckie Harbour watch-keepers has special responsibility for the harbour.

There is a very active Watersports Club which runs yacht races and has social and racing intercourse with the Moray coast sailing clubs (mainly Lossiemouth and Banff which lie about three hours sailing East and West of here – or two and a half hours if you are clever!). When the Council closed the Harbour "Office", the Watersports club took over the building which is next to their own wee "cuddy", and at one stage the Council tried to enlist them to collect visiting dues; they declined and today Moray Council relies on visiting yachties to phone the Buckie office (though there is a telephone number for the "harbour master" displayed on a board at the root of the West pier) It's up to you if you ring him; you'll get an answering machine and he'll drop by at some time to collect your money. If you do have to drop in to Buckie to await the tide they will combine the harbour dues for Buckie and Finnechty anyway.

The harbour itself consists of an outer pier which provides shelter from the east through to the South in settled weather, an outer harbour (inside the harbour entrance proper) which is strewn with rocks on its Southern side and an inner harbour which is very well sheltered from all weathers; so much so that, once inside and with onshore winds, you'd be well advised to climb up on to the wall to check the seas outside before making a decision on whether to go or stay! The beach in the inner harbour shelves towards the West so that the deeper water is near the entrance to the inner harbour and a keel boat could well stay afloat at neap Tides. You need longish warps as the range is about 3 meters.

The village is mainly residential and most of the inhabitants do their shopping in Buckie; it's a very pleasant spot, especially in balmy southerly winds when it is a heat sink, the houses are well maintained so the aspect from the harbour is especially picturesque.

Approach

There is only one approach and that is from the NNW.....

.....on a heading of 166°T; from both the East and the West the harbour entrance is difficult to pick out although the village itself is easy enough to identify. There is a prominent church about a quarter of a mile to the East and a war memorial atop the cliff the same distance to the West, so make for a spot between the two until things become more obvious.

The rocks to the west of the approach, close in, are huge and become more obvious as you run in from the north. If you have a chart plotter then our way point is quite close in so make for that and you should be able to see your way in from there. One very important point is that the leading lights are not, repeat not, day marks visible to the naked eye from anywhere in the approach; there is a very obvious (from a distance) red speed limit notice and an even more obvious red life-belt holder further to its left, both of which are mounted on the middle pier and neither of

which have anything to do with safe navigation!!

The author managed to locate the leading lights during his stay there; they are 4 inch by 8 inch garage lights taped to the lampposts with green and yellow electrical tape and only of use at night and then, apparently, only if you know where to look. There are photos in our gallery for this port which amply illustrate this point!!

The entrance to the harbour is very exposed to seas from the northerly quadrant. The aspect of the harbour in these conditions is daunting with the waves breaking over the rocks to starboard and port and reflecting off the inner walls to form a maelstrom in the entrance. The pier to the left of the entrance (inside the outer pier) is mounted on piers (see our photo) and, if you can see those, there is not much water beyond them, so retreat to Buckie.

Our photo, "Looking for the leading lights" turned out to be pretty much on line, once you are past the white pierhead light on the West pier you need to turn fairly sharply to starboard for the inner harbour and be ready to avoid outbound boats cutting the corner; the problem is that you won't see them (either with or without masts, that wall is very high) until the last minute.

Berthing

You are very unlikely to find a pontoon berth....

as they are all allocated so you should tie up alongside the west wall; there are plenty of ladders, the first two of which are very obviously favoured by creel boats. The berths against the middle pier are also occupied by creel boats. Don't look for anywhere in the outer harbour, the bottom is rocky. If there is not enough water to enter the inner harbour you can lay next to the very outer pier but only in settled conditions as reflection from the main harbour walls tends to make it extremely choppy.

Harbour dues for visitors are set by the Moray council and for 2021 are £20.46 per night per boat. It's up to you to notify them that you are there. You can always pay on line [HERE](#) but you'll have to go to the hotel for Wifi to do that.

Facilities

The toilets are in a building at the root of the West pier as is a water tap (in a box outside the Watersports Club Building). There are no showers or shore power provided by the harbour though, if you have a polite word with the caravan site (Tel 01542 835303) behind the pub they may allow you to use their showers and laundrette, depending on how busy they are and how many in the boat need to be scrubbed!!

Finnechty is on the shore bus route between Aberdeen & Inverness so there are buses in either direction every hour (but, in 2012, no timetable on the bus stops!) – They cross in Findochty at between ten to the the hour and the hour. Other than that there is a small mini market up on the road overlooking the harbour with a Post Office and Pharmacy next door.

The main library, which did have a www connection, and is mentioned in some other publications, closed recently.

The Post Office which used to be on Station Road is now on Seaview road near the bustop and there is no longer a library at all. No fuel, I'm afraid, your nearest recourse for that is Buckie

What To Do

There is a very hospitable pub/hotel/restaurant at the end of the West pier which has Wifi and a couple of tables close to a 240v socket which could be very useful as internet and mobile connections are difficult in the harbour. No fuel or Gas/Gaz, I'm afraid, your nearest recourse for that is Buckie.

History