

Introduction

Contacts

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If it weren't for the CalMac ferry and previous generations of ferries this little village at the Southern end of the Sound of Sleat would probably not exist. As it is, for many years before they built the Skye Bridge (and what a furore that caused!) the ferry from Mallaig to Armadale was the quickest way from Fort William to Skye, the other being the Kyle Akin ferry which entailed much winding through the glens. Even so, the roads to either end were poor affairs (the road from Armadale to Broadford still isn't all that special, particularly if you get caught behind a camper van)

Anyway, what we have is a small bay dominated on the South side by the CalMac pier and an anchorage in which Isle of Skye Yachts **had** established moorings for their own and visiting yachts which were serviced from the small pier and pontoon on the North side of the bay.

Alas everything has changed here since Isle of Skye Yachts owners retired and sold their boatyard in Ardvasar Bay. The new owner of the boatyard no longer operates the moorings in Armadale Bay. Two of the buoys are now looked after by the Armadale Moorings Committee. The rest of the buoys are now owned by private individuals. Of the two moorings belonging to the committee, one is under long term hire and one is spare for visitors.

Without the ferry terminal and the moorings there would be nothing here for the visiting yachtsman but the combination of the two mean that this is a pleasant place to restock, have a wander or simply batten down to shelter from a Sou'westerly gale.

For general notes on cruising in these waters we have compiled an article which you can find on this site at:

<http://www.visitmyharbour.com/cruising-west-coast-scotland/>

Approach

If you are coming from the South you need to be wary of the rocks and reefs

a couple of cables off the shore to the south of Armadale; you need at least a couple of cables offing from the headland to avoid them.

As you are also going to have to make room for the ferry you are probably best to make your approach from somewhere near the way point we have given. Making for the middle of the bay from there you will avoid the ferry fairway and the yachts moored on the northern side.

If you want to pick up a visitors buoy you need to contact the Mooring Committee in advance to ascertain which are free. Anchoring for a deep draft boat might be a bit of a problem as the most convenient spots have a mooring on them; on the other hand if you have a bilge or lift keeler then you can go right in, past the trots and the end of the pier/pontoon to starboard and drop your pick on a sandy bottom to the WSW of the pier head.

It may be an idea to put out two anchors on a yoke to limit your scope but there is a metre of water here at low tide.

Berthing

The Mooring Committee will charge you £15 (2022) to use one of their buoys. **They do not have a roaming moorings boat but there is an Honesty Box on the small pier for you to leave your mooring fee.**

Otherwise, anchor as described above; a point to note that inshore of the stone pier the bottom is hard sand and you may have trouble getting a CQR to dig in. This is one of the places where the topography of the land is such that a SW wind can be "funnelled" into the loch from the land side so be sure of veering sufficient cable. We think it may be possible to anchor in Ardvasar Bay but take advice from the Skye Yachts before attempting this.

Facilities

Whatever you need, be it a shower or provisions you are going to have to walk a fair way to get it. Petrol and Auto diesel is available at a garage out on the main road about half a mile away (you have to go round from the stone pier as we could not find a short cut through from the foreshore); This garage has now expanded and now houses a well stocked general groceries section.

The boatyard will be able to help on diesel if you are on one of the moorings and they have showers. The garage has a few consumables but further south at Ardvasar there's a shop/Post Office where you can get most of the basics. Gas and Gaz can be got from the Skye Yachts boat yard and they also have showers there.

Water is available on the small pier but the long floating hose that used to be used to bunker the charter yachts is no longer in existence so you have to row ashore with your own burmails to collect water.

There is a good bus service to Broadford which drops you right outside the large Co-Op there and you will find an outdoor market there as well (good fish stall and a butcher supplying locally sourced game) Note that there is no evening service.

Failing that there is the Ferry across to Mallaig; the return fare (summer 2017) is £6.40 which is cheaper than a four hour stop in the Mallaig marina with your boat!

What To Do

The Ardvasar Hotel is a must if you wish to eat ashore (there is a local taxi service if it's raining!) and for a day trip walk along to the Clan Donald centre which is well worth a visit

History