

## Introduction

### Contacts

Secretary of the Plockton Harbour Association (Kevin Baird) 07801 951938

Plockton came into being at the beginning of the nineteenth century and Duncraig Castle was built near the end of that Century. Its original raison d'être was as a fishing village and it did well until the bottom fell out of that market. Its problem was that the hinterland was very poor for agriculture and they had a very hard time of it after the end of the nineteenth Century.

The plus side of things was they inherited a very good school and rail connections, both built during the fishing boom, which has stood them in good stead until this day. The first half of the twentieth century was not a good time for the village with war casualties and emigration drastically reducing the number of young men in the village; this wasn't helped by the excellent education they got in the school enabling even more of them to leave. Since then Plockton has slowly reinvented itself as a tourist destination and has managed to get itself a reputation in the yachting world as one of the "must see" places on this coast. It's easy to see why; the Kyles to the South were content to rest on their laurels as ferry termini and now are still trying to catch up since the Skye Bridge turned them into backwaters under the management of the Highland Council.

In real terms there is not much here to attract the cruising yachtsman apart from sheltered moorings or room to anchor in shelter, but that somehow does not seem to matter; we flock here. The moorings are run by the Harbour Association and, unfettered by the Highland Council layers of administration, it would not be surprising if this go ahead community decided to enlarge the pontoon facility to attract even more passing trade but that would be another story.

We have an article on Cruising on the West Coast much of which applies here

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

Had it not been for the Laird who inherited the land and decided to try to make some money out of it, back in the day, Plockton would probably not be here; as it is, it nestles in a small cove at the entrance to Inner Loch Carron with astounding views of the lochs and mountains to the North and North East, has morphed itself into a new life to make good use of its assets.

They have a Regatta fortnight here starting on the last Sunday of July but the Plockton Small Boat Sailing Club has a very full racing calendar throughout the summer details of which can be found on their website

<http://www.plockton-sailing.com/>

There is also a webcam which covers the whole bay and worth a look if you want an overview

<http://www.calums-sealtrips.com>

**Harbours nearby:** [Portree](#); [Kyleakin](#)

## Approach

You will have fun with this, especially on a grey day when....

.... the islands and headlands merge into each other and refuse to be identified. You would be advised to use a good pair of bins and a crew with good, young eyesight; especially if coming round from the Skye Bridge.

There is a scattering of rocks both off the shore and in the middle of the main loch to be negotiated but, with the aid of the chartlet in the CCC notes, it proved not to be too difficult to make an entry between Cat Island and High Stone; we found that frequent reference to the Sea Clear charts and plotter helped quite a bit to confirm what we thought we were looking at!!

We have provided a Way Point which works for approaches from both the North and the South though you could cut the corner a little from the South to pick up the transit between Eilean Beinne and the perch on Sgeir Golach. The difficulty is where to come off that transit and make for the gap between Hawk Rock and High Stone, especially as the Hawk Rock SHM is no more. We were lucky and managed to identify the beacon on Bo Dubh Sgeir and turned towards that when it was roughly in the middle of the gap between the beacon on Sgeir Golach and the lighthouse

on Eilean a Chait (Cat Island).

There is a back bearing (High Stone and Sgeir Bhuidhe on 330°T) to take you clear of Hawk Rock but basically, once the anchorage opens before you on the starboard bow and you can see the pontoon it's safe to turn in, not forgetting to give the perches on Plockton Rocks a miss (you won't pick those up until quite close in)

If you have a deep draft and are unhappy using this approach, just keep the initial transit between Eilean na Beinne and Sgeir Golach open to pass a couple of cables North of Sgeir Golach and when Duncraig Castle opens beyond the High Stone on a bearing of 160°T or more you can turn SSE and run in towards the castle until the pontoon opens and you can turn into the anchorage.

Remember that these directions are a only a guide; you really must ensure that you are aware of your position throughout the approach and a good old fashioned look at a large scale chart of the entrance before you set out works wonders.

## Berthing

There are two or three trots of yellow visitors buoys....

.... with pick up buoys and you can tell which they are because they all bear a yellow sticker advising you of their tonnage and the cost of picking one up.

They are laid and surveyed by the Plockton Harbour Community Interest Company and have a website at [Plockton Harbour - Visit Plockton](#)

When you initially come into the bay it looks as though the whole of it is taken up with moorings with numerous yachts in the little bay to the North of the pontoon and then buoys and yachts all the way round the 2 metre depth contour into the shallows at the head of the bay. You will find that an area just to the SE of the end of the pontoon stretching out towards the anchor mark on AC 2528-2 is clear of moorings and you can drop your anchor there if you wish. If you opt for anchoring rather than picking up a buoy they ask that you drop a £5 note in the honesty box at the pontoon if you tie your dinghy up there.

Use a tripping line and make sure that your anchor is well bedded in as, if it comes on to blow from the SW, it can funnel quite strongly down through the anchorage. They are still (2021) charging £15 a night for a mooring irrespective of the size of boat.

There are, in fact, two pontoons; one at the northern end of the village opposite the Plockton Rocks which features in our picture gallery and another in the shallows off the main village. You can use the northern one for embarking stores and personnel at HW but they ask that you drop a fiver in the honesty box for that. Skippers leave their tenders here whilst ashore but space is limited as much of the pontoon is allocated to regular users.

If you do not wish to go all the way round to Plockton there is a bay to the SW, on the other side of its promontory, called Bagh an Strathaidh which would give shelter in winds from NE to South and Antares has surveyed it and has provided a chart.

## Facilities

There is water available at the top of the yacht pontoon but you may have a job finding it as it is inside the gate into the grounds of the house at the top of that pontoon. You would need a mile of hose to connect to it and bunker a yacht on the pontoon otherwise you need containers. They ask that you don't use the hose between 0900 and 1100 as it supplies the house and affects the supply to their showers etc.

There is no fuel here.

There is a laundrette in the village and the toilets are located at the end of the dinghy pontoon. **The Post Office is now closed and newspapers can be obtained at the shop.**

Although they do have a shop here it is very small and carries a limited stock of essentials (it's so small that we missed it on our first pass through the village!!)

There is a good rail connection to Inverness and Kyle of Lochalsh but the station is the best part of a mile away so for a crew change you'd need a taxi. The nearest big shop is the Co-Op at Kyle so that would be an afternoon "expedition" by train for a restock and of course you could combine that with other requirements &ndash; but take a rucksack for the walk back from the station.

There is an unmanned airfield about 20 minutes walk from the village. Runway is 02/20 tarmac and 2000 feet long. Can be difficult in windy weather with wind shear near the threshold of 20.

## What To Do

There is a selection of pubs, restaurants and hotels and there are traditional music sessions where you can join in with your own instrument or just listen; one on Wednesdays in the Plockton Hotel and more on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Plockton Inn.

## History