

Introduction

Contacts

Tayport Harbour Trust Berthing Master 07434 826536

Barry Buddon Range Control 01382 534839

Tayport harbour is seven miles up the Tay Estuary on the Southern Bank opposite the prominent Broughty Castle on the other side of the narrows. There has been a harbour/ferry terminal here since the twelfth century when the surrounding lands were granted to Arbroath Abbey. In those days there was a ferry, mainly used by pilgrims travelling between St Andrews and Arbroath Abbey and the Abbey set up accommodation here for the pilgrims waiting to cross over.

The village/town around the harbour expanded during the clearances and then, again, in the middle of the nineteenth century the arrival of the Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee railway, which had a route through here to Aberdeen, there was further expansion. The ferry became a version of the, now familiar, ro-ro ferries; the foreshore became a shunting yard for the carriages which were rolled onto the ferry and off on the other side. Eventually, after the building of the first railway bridge over the River Tay at Dundee and then the second bridge (when the first collapsed) the ferry became financially moribund so now the harbour has taken on the role of a marina with the recent addition of drying pontoons.

The development of the marina is an ongoing project limited by funds and at the moment the income from berthing fees only just covers the dredging. There is no harbour master as such and access to the pontoons is through the gates at the Eastern end of the East pier; berth holders have a key and the gates remain open during the day until the last berth owner leaves, and he will lock the gates behind him. The berths on the West wall are open to the public and have no security measures in force. You will need to start well in advance to establish contact and, because of the ad hoc arrangements for access to the harbour and its facilities, you would be advised to do this otherwise you could end up being locked in/out at the end of a run ashore!!

Approach

Tayport is tidal and access is about 3.5 hours either side of High Water....

.... except for shallow draft boats. When this and the currents outside in the Tay Estuary are taken into account there is a fairly narrow time window open to the visiting sailor to arrive at the outer buoys. If the wind is foul and you are using your engine then it will take about an hour to transit from the buoys depending on your speed through the water so basically you have to do your sums carefully. Currents on the charts are given as 1.9 kts on springs but that is out where it is fairly wide - nearer to Tayport you can expect 3+ kts at half flood. Outbound will be even more interesting as you will want to get out through the harbour entrance as soon as there is enough water; but that will mean pegging an adverse tide all the way down to the outer buoys to get round the sand spits which you will reach about the turn of the tide at HW.

You will notice that there is a Fairway Mark way out on the 20metre contour; that is there for the cargo vessels going up to the docks at Dundee and should not trouble the normal yacht skipper. You can aim to enter between the Abertay PHM and the Abertay ECM, though if you have very good navigation gear you could join the channel about halfway between that set of buoys and the next set in (the Inner PHM & the Inner SHM) always remembering that the soundings on the chart are all of thirty years old. Once in the channel it is just a matter of buoy hopping up to the entrance to Tayport. At night there is a sector light just to the West of Tayport to keep you within the channel as far as the Larick Pile (unlit)

There is also a much shallower channel to/from St Andrews Bay between the Green Scalp and the Abertay Sands which is used by shallow draft local fishermen but even they suggest that you don't use that as it calls for local and recent knowledge. (We looked at it at about 2/3 flood with an easterly 2 to 3 and there was white water all over the place even in those conditions so not recommended)

On a hazy day the entrance to the harbour can be difficult to pick out until you are quite close, though you will see the Larick Pile Light (marked on the chart as an obstruction and shown in our photo gallery) from quite far away. Broughty Castle on the North bank of the channel is prominent and can be a good indication of the location of Tayport; they have also painted the walls on either side of the harbour entrance white, to make them easier to pick out. As a further aid there is a red & white striped pole on the East pierhead and a green and white pole on the West side both of which carry flashing lights (Fl 5sec) of the appropriate colour at night.

Off the harbour entrance, and not shown on the Admiralty chart, is a small, unlit PHM which you should round before aiming for the harbour entrance. There are yellow, unlit triangular day marks, (aligned on 185°T) on the West side of the harbour entrance (one on the wall and one on a pole on the other side of the street) which will assist you on keeping to the channel. Beware, the current which has been favourable to you all the way up the channel will become a cross current here which means you should consider clearing away for harbour before the Larick Pile Light or risk being run aground whilst attempting to start the engine!! Seriously – 10 minutes at 3 kts is quarter of a mile unless you have enough crew for one to stay on the helm and motor into the current whilst you rig fenders and lines.

The Tayport website can be found at <http://www.tayportharbour.org.uk/>

Berthing

We would recommend that you contact the Berthing Master

.... on their mobile before departing for this harbour (there is also an email address given on the harbour website (above)) This will resolve the issue of where to clew up and also ease your way into the harbour facilities.

Once through the harbour entrance you turn to port and the pontoons appear on the port bow. If you have managed to contact a member of the Harbour Trust and obtained a vacant pontoon berth and directions you can proceed as instructed; otherwise tie up to the wall on the East side of the entrance (recommended if you are deep draft) or tie up on the wall on the West side. Because of the tidal range here (over 6m at springs) you will find the ramps from the pier wall to the pontoons are quite steep at low water and, equally, you will need to allow enough scope for the range if tied alongside the wall.

They charge(2022) a flat rate of £20.00 per night; You can pay on line on their website, cash to the berthing officer or by leaving it in an envelope in the Harbour post box by the Harbour gate.

Facilities

As has been mentioned there is no Harbour Master as such here and it can be a bit difficult to get organised. There is now a shower/toilet block on the North wall and you can get a key for that from the Berthing Master (another good reason to let him know you are coming) Shore power is available at various points on the harbour walls but you need to consult the Berthing Master on it's location and availability

Of course there are plans for the future as and when money can be found; the Tay Corinthian Boat Club (housed in a portacabin at the moment) hope to eventually have a building.

Diesel, petrol and Gas/Gaz are not available locally, the nearest petrol station being three miles away.

The local high street has plenty of shops for supplies and there is an ATM.

What To Do

The Bell Rock Inn is well recommended and there is a cafe; which does a good breakfast nearby.

Other eating places

[Restaurants & Places to Eat in Tayport Tripadvisor](#)

History