

Introduction

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This has to be one of the most renowned scenic spots in Northern Ireland, especially from seawards coming across Dundrum Bay as Newcastle nestles under the Mourne Mountains which "...sweep down to the sea.."(according to the famous song by Percy French). The proximity of these mountains and a good beach makes Newcastle a popular watering hole for holiday makers and day trippers from Belfast.

The harbour itself was originally created to export Mourne granite world wide but that trade is now carried by road and the harbour has become populated by angling boats and leisure craft. It is quite crowded and dries completely at low tide.

The best place for an alongside berth is on the North Wall but you will be in competition with the local pleasure cruisers who need to make maximum use of the tide to ply their trade and if you intend to stop a while (and why not?) you'll probably be better off on the South wall. Unfortunately, if the wind develops from the East (NE to SE), the harbour becomes quite rough so keep an eye on the forecast and get out early if necessary as the entrance also becomes unegotiable in those conditions.

Newcastle is like Portrush on the North coast, it has a lovely beach and all the amenities to cater for the tourist trade which, depending on one's bent, can be a blessing or a curse for the visiting yachtsman; definitely a place for a "Good run ashore" but make sure of the way home before you set out. The good thing is that, if you have taken the ground, the bottom is hard sand so, if you are away from the wall, you'll be able to walk out to the boat without getting muddy.

Approach

The approach is simple; there are no hazards in the offing; just come in....

.... between the yellow danger area (D401) buoy and the shore and stay out a bit from the South Wall as its outer armour slopes away from it. There is also a sewage outlet which extends about 1.5 cables out from the SE corner of the harbour and is awash at LW.

Berthing

As has been said, the favourite spot is against the....

..... outer end of the North Pier but the guys running the "trips round the bay" have only got half the tide to make their money from the steps and the local fishing boats also like to be tied there so that they can catch the tide out early.

The HM here was also the HM for Annalong and his office was in the museum in that harbour (6 miles South) but we cannot find any evidence of an HM here or at Annalong and we assume that the Council has failed to appoint one. So it's basically up to you where you park but as we have said, it's a crowded wee harbour and it would be best to be considerate to those trying to make a living in the short UK "summer"

There is an upside to this; there's never a Harbour Master here to collect any money but if one is there it'll probably only cost you a £10 note.

Facilities

Water and toilets are available. Showers can be had at the Newcastle Sailing Club when it is open. They have a website with a link below

[The Harbour | Newcastle Yacht Club](#)

Fuel is available in cans but (as usual) it's at the other end of the beach, in fact the town is about three quarters of a mile along the shore from the harbour so any shopping will involve a bit of a hike; the good news is that there is a pub just outside the harbour gates so you can fortify yourself before setting out or refresh yourself on your return!!

What To Do

Pubs, restaurants, cafes and fast food outlets abound. Indoor recreation can be found at the Newcastle Centre and Tropicana Complex on the promenade; the whole place is a "Kiss-me-quick-hat and sticks of rock environment". On the other hand, on the doorstep is Slieve Donard which is an 848m (that's 2700ft in old money) high mountain with a footpath right to the top and if you are lucky enough to get a fine day then it begs for a day out with a picnic box, but you won't be on your own.

Before selecting a pub for the evening have a look at the web site below and the reviews

[newcastle pubs and bars; pubs in newcastle # beerintheevening.com](#)

On the other hand the Harbour House Inn is a stone's throw (really) from the harbour and is well reviewed at

http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g186478-d602093-Reviews-Harbour_House_Inn-Newcastle_County_Down_North

History