

## Introduction

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The Port of Arklow sits astride the entrance to the River Avoca with the main town on the SW bank, industrial development along the North bank and an expanding residential town (Ferrybank) outside that. There are built up quays along both banks, a dock on the south bank and a small busy marina on the North bank; the old industrial area on the North bank has been redeveloped into a residential area and the marina is now overlooked by modern housing.

In the past this was one of the busiest ports in Ireland; it dealt with a lot of cargo, had a large fishing fleet and possessed a strong boat building industry where several very famous yachts started their illustrious lives. The port no longer deals with cargo ships but it is still used by a lot of fishing vessels; Although no longer handling major cargo vessels Arklow is the base for Arklow Shipping which has, at the moment, 44 bottoms carrying cargoes throughout Europe and the Med and has its Head Offices on the North Quay adjacent to the Marina.

In addition to the marina there is a long pontoon on the North bank up river from the marina which is a far better place for longish boats to tie up; it really is very tight in the marina (see photograph).

In recent years the harbour has installed an additional pontoon for yachts inside the fish dock on the South Quay which has come under the control of the Marina.

If the weather is coming on to blow this is a very good place to run for but you need to make the decision early because in strong winds from the NE, East and SE the entrance can become very difficult and especially so in wind from the NE when the sea penetrates into the entrance and it becomes impassable. Once in and around the bend into the dock area it becomes really well sheltered and the maelstrom outside a distant memory.

It's a point to note; the conditions inside do not reflect those outside and it would be a good idea to have a look before venturing back out in your pride and joy!!

Off the pontoon and continuing up river there are yacht moorings either side of the fairway until it become too shallow and it should be note that the river becomes very shallow up towards the bridge where it dries out from the South bank. In passing, that bridge is possibly one of the longest stone built bridges in Europe boasting nineteen arches.

All told this is a pleasant spot, the town is attractive and has plenty of services and would be a good destination from the UK mainland from which to start one's Irish cruise.

If you are on line have a look at this [Street View](#) link for an overview of the harbour.

[Street View](#)

## Approach

We have been warned that there is a scattering of pot buoys (some submerged at HW) in the offing to this harbour so a good look out is advised and it would be risky approaching in the dark.

If you are coming down from the North watch out for the Horseshoe Bank...

..... just to the South of Wicklow Head; there is a PHM buoy quite far out but if you are happy with the nav there's no need to trog all the way out round it, but certainly keep out towards it. Further down there is the Wolf Rock but it is fairly obvious and unless you are really close inshore it will not cause you any problems. From a good long way away you will be able to see the Arklow Bank Wind farm which is a good indicator of where Arklow is (dead opposite). Don't be fooled by the huge buildings and jetties associated with Arklow Rock Quarry; the harbour is nearly a mile North of that.

Once you have identified the harbour entrance there should be no problem getting in but err towards the Northern pier if the tide is ebbing so as not to be caught out by the cross current.

As you proceed up river look out for the tall and very prominent Red mast light at the Marina entrance. If you have been able to contact the marina and have a berth inside then go on in otherwise you should be able to tie up on the long pontoon beyond that and walk back to the marina office and make your number with them.

**The biggest problem in approaching Arklow, especially from the UK mainland is the Arklow Bank** and its associated wind farm. It is really only a problem if you are coming over from somewhere like Pwllheli, when it lies directly across your track, otherwise it's not going to add much to go outside its Cardinal Marks.

The wisest option in any sort of weather is to go round; there is some very shallow water in places (less than six feet at LWS) and that's if you are prepared to trust soundings taken thirty years ago (and in some places back in Victoria's time with a lead line). Be aware also that some of the old buoyage that was here back in the middle "noughties" has been removed and the old Lamby at the South end has been replaced with a RACON and repositioned; so make sure your charts are up to date. (Ed's note; the charts in the Members area of this site are renewed every 9-12 months)

If you are running up on the flood from the South it's up to you whether you come up inside or outside the Glassgorman Bank; just be aware that it is there.

And finally, in dry weather and offshore winds, give the Roadstone jetty, a mile south of the harbour, a good offing unless you want to get a coating of fine dust on your topsides!!

## Berthing

The main berthing area is in the marina or on its long pontoon on the north bank. The marina may put you on the pontoon in the fish dock but you will be well aware of the commercial nature of that area from the smell of rotten fish.

You could make a temporary stop against the South wall near the entrance but you'll have a long walk to get to the town.

The marina is charging 30 Euros a night in 2019 (which includes shore power and showers) and if you go into the fish dock it is also 30 Euros per craft. For

subsequent nights they charge 20 Euros.

Arklow Sailing Club [www.arklowsc.com](http://www.arklowsc.com)

## Facilities

Water and electricity are available in the Marina and on the long pontoon. Showers and toilets are available there and, if on the South bank or in the Dock, in the Life Boat shed. The Marina Superintendent will get your diesel cans filled for you and if you need a significant amount he will organise a tanker.

There are plenty of shops in the town on the South side and, recently, an Aldi store just along from the pontoon on the north side along with the new Bridgewater shopping centre

## **What To Do**

Arklow has a wide range of restaurants, pubs and fast food outlets.

For the younger members of your crew there is a nightclub called Tunnel and, for the more esoteric, a maritime museum. We're still in the County of Wicklow here so the mountains in the interior will be beckoning; that really is beautiful country.

## **History**