



Port information notice

Number: 01
Year: 2023
To: All marina facilities, yacht clubs, race committees, and leisure craft owners
Issued: 06 April 2023
In force: **2010:** 04, **2013:** 04,06, **2015:** 01,04,05, **2016:** 04, **2017:** 01, **2018:** 02,03,04, **2019:** 02,03 **2020:** 03, **2021:** 01 **2022:** 01

Leisure User Guidance for the Harwich Haven

Your attention is drawn to Harwich Byelaws and General Directions below with reference to the use of the published yacht track (see attached excerpt from the [Yachting Guide to Harwich Harbour and its Rivers](#)) and obstruction of large vessels. See the Harwich Haven Authority website www.hha.co.uk for the full versions of these documents.

The Merchant Shipping (Watercraft) Order 2023 came into effect on 31 March 2023 which contains new legislation for the safety of powered watercraft. Users are recommended to familiarise themselves with Marine Guidance Notice - **MGN 684 (M)** published by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for further information.

This new legislation gives harbour authorities and the MCA further powers to regulate and prosecute non-compliant, dangerous or negligent craft.

William Barker
Marine Director (Harbour Master)



Excerpt from 'Harwich Guide to Harwich Harbour and its Rivers Guide'

Harwich Byelaws 2003 + 1994 - PART IV - RECREATIONAL CRAFT

Applicable to all small or recreational craft activities in addition to the General Byelaws contained in Part II

48. Notice of Regattas, etc. to be given to Harbour Master

a) The Secretary or other officer responsible for the management of any boat, yacht or sailing club or other organisation promoting an event likely to involve the assembly of more than 10 vessels in the Harbour shall give not less than 28 days' notice thereof to the Harbour Master.

b) No person shall organise or conduct any race, regatta, public procession or similar event within the Harbour except on such courses and at such times as may be previously approved by the Harbour Master on an application made for such approval not less than 7 days before the event.

49. Small Vessels to Keep Clear of Berths and Anchorages

A small vessel shall not obstruct or impede the movement of any other vessel in any anchorage or the approach to any berth.

50. Obstructions to Large Vessels

Yachts, cruisers and power boats shall not make use of the navigable channel or approaches to wharves, piers and jetties in such a way as to cause obstruction to large vessels using the Harbour.

51. Water-skiing, Aquaplaning, Paragliding, etc.

(i) No person shall engage or take part in water-skiing, aquaplaning, paragliding or any similar activity, or in water-biking, jet-ski-ing or the use of any other personal watercraft except with written permission of the Harbour Master, given either specifically or generally, and in such areas as may be designated and in accordance with such reasonable conditions as may be imposed.

(ii) A Master, whilst using his vessel for the purpose of towing a water-skier or a person aquaplaning, shall have on board at least one other person capable of taking charge of the vessel and of giving such assistance as may be reasonably required during the towing and in the recovery of the water-skier, and shall carry –

(a) two hand-held distress signals and a fire-extinguisher and, for each person on board, a life jacket manufactured in accordance with the appropriate British Standards Specification or a personal buoyancy aid of the Ship and Boat Builders' National Federation approved type;

(b) for each person water-skiing or aquaplaning, a rescue quito with line or other sufficient hand-thrown rescue device.

(iii) No person shall engage in kiting or parachute-towing in the Harbour without the consent of the Harbour Master, given either specifically or generally, and in accordance with such reasonable conditions as may be imposed by the Harbour Master.

52. Windsurfing and sail-boarding

No person shall engage in wind-surfing or sail-boarding -

(a) in a fairway, or

(b) in any part of the Harbour without care and caution or in such a manner as may result in damage to vessels or other craft moored in the Harbour or may endanger the safety of swimmers.

53. Craft to Keep Clear of Vessels Carrying Dangerous Substances

Without prejudice to the requirements of the Dangerous Substances in Harbours Regulations 1987 all small vessels and pleasure craft are required to keep a minimum distance of 100 metres from any vessel displaying an all round red light by night or by day a red flag in accordance with regulation 8 of those regulations.

Harwich Haven Authority General Directions 2022

12.5 Use of recommended track for yachts

12.5.1 The Master of every small vessel shall make use of the Recommended Track for Yachts and channel crossing positions whenever practicable when transiting the Authority's area.

12.5.2 Regulated vessels of suitable draft may use the two-way Recommended Track for Yachts with the permission of Harwich VTS but must not cross into the South Channel in a westerly direction without permission from Harwich VTS.