

Whitstable Harbour Passage Plan

Ships inbound for Whitstable Harbour should arrive at the Whitstable Street Light Buoy not later than one and a half hours before high water where further information and berthing instructions will be conveyed to the ship by the Harbour Master or Deputy Harbour Master.

Ships to shore communication is by VHF channel 9.

The first inward passage by a ship's master who has not visited Whitstable Harbour before must be conducted during daylight hours.

In adverse sea, tide or weather conditions the Harbour Master or the Deputy Harbour Master may suspend a ship's arrival or departure.

Ship arrivals or departures are not to be conducted after the time of high water. Any variation in this recommendation should only be undertaken following very careful consideration of sea, tide and weather conditions.

An under keel clearance of 0.3m is recommended for all shipping movements.

The ship's master must declare any mechanical, structural or navigational defects before entering the harbour.

Ships are subject to unpredictable tidal influence from ebb & flood tides at the entrance to the harbour. The goal should be to enter and depart during slack tide. For arrivals, all way should be taken off the ship at the Oyster Buoy and a final approach made at dead slow speed. Ideally, the ship should just maintain steerage speed so that the master can counteract any leeway the ship might make in its final approach and yet still enter the harbour slowly so that it can stop in good time once inside the harbour entrance.

All arrivals are to be conducted bow first and all departures stern first.

Due caution should be exercised at all times due to the large number of fishing vessels, sailing yachts, leisure craft and swimmers who may be encountered in the harbour and its approaches. The ship's horn should be used to clearly indicate the master's intentions.

Whitstable Harbour is classed as a Secondary Port. The Standard Port is Margate. Tidal information for Whitstable Harbour is available in the Admiralty Tide Tables Volume One. Be aware that the harbour dries at low water.

For navigational purposes Admiralty Charts 1607 and 2571 should be used.