

Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club

Guidance for Club Users of Newhaven Port

Hoot! Hoot! Hoot!
(I am operating astern propulsion)

We recently had a safety incident report by Newhaven Port Control when a couple of our boats were in the way of the 'Arco D' (dredger) as she was starting to leave the East quay to go up river astern. Whilst the key details of Newhaven Port Control are already on the Club website (see Port Control), this is an opportune moment to circulate further guidance, particularly for those who are only occasional users of the Port.

Port Signals and VHF Radio

Vessel movement within the Harbour limits is controlled by Newhaven Port Authority – call sign "Newhaven Radio" on VHF channel 12 (or telephone port control on [01273] 612926). In addition to observing the light signals you should use the radio to ask permission to leave the harbour (before you leave the marina berth) and, on returning, ask permission before re-entering the harbour limits. I would suggest you also keep a listening watch on Channel 12 whilst within the harbour in case there is any change in instruction.

In certain conditions it may be difficult to see the white light on the West Pier Signal Station. I have spoken to Port Control about this and am assured it is working but they do understand it can be difficult to see. Whilst this may not be ideal, it does reinforce the point about using the radio.

Full details of the vessel traffic signals for the harbour will be found in 'Notice to Mariners No.5 – 2009' on www.newhavenportauthority.co.uk – see the Port Authority section of the website and then the Local Notice to Mariners. This Notice can also be viewed on our Club web-site. I have extracted details of the traffic signals from Notice to Mariners No. 5 – 2009 as follows:

West Pier Signal Station

Colour	State	Meaning
Red Red Red	Flashing Flashing Flashing	Serious Emergency – all vessels/craft to stop or divert according to instructions issued by Newhaven Port Control VHF Ch 12.
Red Red Red	Fixed Fixed Fixed	No vessels/craft, either pleasure or commercial, shall proceed contrary to this signal
Green Green White	Fixed Fixed Fixed	Small vessels/craft may proceed. Two-way traffic
Green White Green	Fixed Fixed Fixed	A vessel may proceed ONLY when it has received specific orders, from Newhaven Port Control, to do so. All other vessels/craft must keep clear of the navigation channel.

Newhaven East Quay

When red lights are showing on the signal mast, situated at the East Quay (southern end of Ferry Berth), **NO VESSEL** may leave any part of Newhaven Marina.

No 2 RoRo Berth (North End)

When red lights are showing on signal mast, situated at the North West corner of No 2 RoRo Pontoon, **NO VESSEL** may proceed South of these lights.

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Details of these lights will also be found at the back of the Club Sailing Programme (but note the correct Port telephone number shown above). I am going to get a supply of cards showing these details from Port Control. I also hope it will be possible to organise a small group visit to Port Control.

Since club activities do not involve members proceeding upstream of the Marina, I have not included here details of the light signals etc for Newhaven Swing Bridge itself.

Commercial Vessels – (Car Ferry, Cargo Ships, Tugs, Dredgers and Large Trawlers)

Vessels of this type must be given right of way in Newhaven Harbour and its limits. Small vessels in particular must not impede or attempt to pass any commercial vessel that is underway or manoeuvring in the Harbour.

Speed Limit

This is maximum 8 knots from the Breakwater end to the West Pier corner. In the Harbour area north of the West Pier corner and the River Ouse beyond, it is maximum 5 knots.

Sailing in the Harbour

Port Control is not keen on sailing within the harbour limits, particularly tacking. They recognise that sailing boats proceeding under engine may have sails raised.

Debris

The location/position of any floating objects/debris seen in or around the Harbour area, which may constitute a danger to safe navigation, should be reported to Newhaven Radio on VHF Ch 12.

Sound Signals made by Vessels

If you have followed the port signals and radio instructions you should not find yourself on the receiving end of sound signals made by another vessel. Some of the signals you may hear in the harbour (this is not an exhaustive list) are:

- Ø One short blast – I am altering my course to starboard
- Ø Two short blasts – I am altering my course to port
- Ø Three short blasts – I am operating astern propulsion (in the incident in question ‘Arco D’ was making this signal)
- Ø At least five short blasts – an **emergency** signal – I am unsure of your intentions (for example, a signal made by the ferry when there are craft which should get out of her way immediately)

Do remember that some commercial vessels using the Port may proceed astern.

Making sure we all understand the basic rules of the harbour is vital for its safe operation and I hope these notes are helpful.

Do let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Ricky Smith – RC Newhaven - July 2010

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