Welcome to Poole Harbour

THE 10-POINT GUIDE FOR SAFETY

- Keep to the speed limits and be particularly aware of the wash you are creating. This can easily cause injury or damage boats or property.
- Look out for large ferries and commercial ships. They are limited in their manoeuvrability, so keep well clear and make your intentions known.
- Don’t pass too close to other boats, whether underway or moored.
- Be very careful in the Harbour entrance. It’s particularly hazardous in this area with great potential for an accident – don’t let it be you.
- Move slowly around the Town Quay area. Don’t create wash to damage other boats moored at the quayside.
- Before you sail, check the tide situation and ensure your craft is in good seaworthy condition.
- Be very careful in the Harbour entrance. It’s particularly hazardous in this area with great potential for an accident – don’t let it be you.
- Anticipate the movement of sailing vessels, give them room to tack.
- Get to know the harbour, particularly the channels, the navigation marks and the areas designated for special use.
- Enjoy your leisure, but do it in the designated areas.
- Treat wildlife with care and consideration.

NAVIGATION HINTS

See Admiralty Chart 2611

APPROACH TO POOLE

If approaching from the Solent, the entrance is identifiable from the high cliffs of Anvil Point. When nearer, the rocks of Old Harry (Handfast Point) are clearly visible. The Swash Channel is clearly marked.

When leaving for, or approaching from west, beware of the race off Handfast Point on the ebb tide.

The Harbour is accessible at all states of the tide and is only dangerous in very strong S and SE winds, particularly on the ebb tide.

The entrance channel “The Swash” passes between the Training Bank, on the western side, and Hook Sands to the east. Be careful of the Chain Ferry, just at the entrance, as the ebb can run at 3 to 4 knots.

HARBOUR ENTRANCE

The Harbour entrance is a potentially hazardous area with strong tidal stream, particularly on the spring ebb. Small craft are recommended to approach the entrance using the Boat Channel to the west of the Swash Channel. The East Looe Channel, and passing south of Hook Sands should only be attempted when weather and tidal conditions are favourable. The East looe Channel is marked by buoys.

The entrance becomes very congested during summer weekend afternoons and extra care is needed. Sailing vessels must use their engines if fitted.

SAND BANKS CHAIN FERRY

The Chain ferry has right of way over other vessels, except those under compulsory pilotage. The Chain Ferry Byelaw and Local Notice to Mariners 14/2005 refers. The safe course of action is to keep well out of the way of the chain ferry, never cross ahead but remember the chains astern!

As a guide, ferry crossing times are on the hour; then 20 & 40 minutes past the hour; from the Haven Hotel (north side). From Studland (south side) the normal crossings are at 10, 30 & 50 minutes past the hour. The ferry normally runs from 0700 to 2300.

These schedules may be varied dependent on traffic.