

Introduction

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Barmouth lies in Cardigan Bay to the South of Porthmadog and the North of Aberdovey. As with the other harbours on this coast it has a shifting bar at the entrance to the bay and, mostly, dries at LW. There has been a record of a small port here since the sixteenth Century and may well have been in existence well before that. Today there are a few inshore fishermen harvesting crustaceans but the main traffic in the bay is us yachties and other leisure craft.

It has Snowdonia as a backdrop and, should you wish to mix hill walking with sailing, this would be a nice place to stop. Once a year this mix becomes serious and Barmouth is host to the Three Peaks International Yacht Race; that's the one where one crew member has to run up Snowdon, Scafell and Ben Nevis and the rest of the crew ferry him from one to the next in their yacht!! You can find all the gen at:

<https://www.threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk/>

The town/village is also a popular holiday destination and, along with a long sandy beach to the north of the harbour, has many small tourist businesses, restaurants etc.

The [Merioneth Yacht Club](#) has its home here in a club house which looks out over the harbour. During the summer months they are open every evening except Mondays and Tuesdays and welcome visitors from other RYA affiliated clubs.

Approach

Your approach to this harbour is complicated by the sandbars....

..... to the North and South of it; it's not so bad if you are coming around Bardsey or up from Fishguard as a small dogleg will take you outside the shoals but, if you are coast hopping you will have to go out into the middle of Cardigan Bay to get round the shoals and that will turn a 10 mile trip into the best part of 25 miles. There is a passage inboard of the shoal to the North of Barmouth but you would need to take advice from local sailors about that because that is a shifting, unbuoyed passage.

Once clear of these shoals the estuary of the Mawddach should be fairly easy to identify as it lies between Cadair Idris to the South and Diffwys to the North and, as you aim for that you will pick up the Barmouth Outer Red & White SWM.

The approach into Barmouth should be made two and a half hours either side of local HW, and given that there is a fair old tide ripping through here on the ebb (3 to 5 knots) it's probably best to make it before HW.

Thereafter you need to look for the buoyage laid out by the harbour and changed by them as required; Click on the image below to enlarge it. It's dated July 2025 and clicking on it will load full sized image.

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There is the Y perch SCM marking a shoal to port of the main channel and this should be given a wide berth to your port as it generally lies outside the main channel. Once you have passed the last red PHM you can turn to port and make for the quay or the pontoons.

Berthing

This is a drying harbour so your options if fin keeled are limited.

There are a few deep water moorings but you would need to contact the HM to check their availability at the time of your intended visit. The pontoons dry at half tide onwards and you will have the usual problems of the respective heights of those and your yacht, so will need sausage fenders as opposed to round ones.

They can accommodate vessels up to 50ft, with a draught of at most 2.5m. All larger vessels need to declare weight to ensure our moorings are suitable.

Visitors fees are £15 per night for Gwynedd Vessels, and £20 for any other visiting vessels.

The harbour has silted up considerably over the last few years. Therefore they ask that all vessels make contact prior to their arrival in the harbour to ensure we have availability and room for manoeuvring.

You may be able to find space to berth against the quay but you need to check with the HM in advance for that.

Facilities

There are toilets in the building above the pontoons and showers are available in the Yacht Club; although the YC Bar is only open in the evenings. You can gain access to the showers and toilets throughout the day using an entry code which can be obtained from the Bosun on 07470 447359

Diesel is available from the harbour – 2,500 ltr tank. Nearest Petrol Station is 5 miles North by road . Calor Gas and Camping Gaz refills can be found at one of the hardware shops (the garage does Calor and propane) as can minor chandlery. We are informed they can order other chandlery for next day delivery.

Shore power and water is not supplied to the pontoons but, if you are desperate, the HM can run a line (or hose) down to your berth. There are no plans to have this fitted at the moment.

You have to remember that this little harbour and yacht club is host to one of the major endurance sailing/cycling/running events in the world - the race starts in early June and things will be pretty crowded then; the good news to the rest of us cruising yachties is that as a result of the support the harbour gives to this event there will be very few problems that they cannot help you with.

For restocking there is Coop shop/minimarket.

What To Do

This being a holiday destination (it has a fabulous beach) there is little you can't find here; there are plenty of bars, restaurants, hotels and fast food outlets.

There is a local museum, a small theatre which stages various entertainments and, believe it or not, a night club (but we suspect that may be for the younger members of your crew!)

History