

Introduction

Margate Harbour is a small drying site with limited protection, lying a couple of miles to the west of North Foreland.

It is only suitable for boats that can take the ground and sit reasonably upright as the bottom consists of fairly hard sand. (And the walls aren't yacht friendly). It is also really only suitable for shallow draught boats as parts of the harbour dry to around 3 m. It is protected by a large stone breakwater and can give protection from the Northeast, East, South and South West. There is no real protection from the West or Northwest, and shelter from the North is marginal.

For a quick stop off at high water it is suitable. If intending to dry out overnight a careful eye will be needed or the weather to make sure the wind doesn't swing round to the North West.

The harbour is mainly used by small launch type craft, who can probably get their boats on trailers and out of the way during bad weather. To this end there are slipways.

The town of Margate used to be a major day trip destination, mainly for Londoners. Nowadays it seems to have a bit of a rundown air about it, but apparently there are regeneration plans.

Approach

If coming from the East and passing or rounding the North Foreland....

.... the Mariner will most probably leave the red can Longnose Buoy on his port side. It is simply then a matter of heading West perhaps with a touch of South, (keeping well offshore to avoid rocky ledges), and locating and identifying the large and conspicuous northerly cardinal mark(Q) lying to the north of Margate. This marks the ruins of a pier that was wrecked by storms. To avoid the hidden remains lurking under the surface keep well to seawards of this mark before turning in and aiming for the end of the breakwater with its conspicuous lighthouse (F.R).

From all other directions it is basically the same, keep a good distance offshore locate the northerly cardinal mark and make your way in... having done your tidal calculations first.

Note the drying rocky ledges to the west of the harbour.

Berthing

The inside of the breakwater is not really suitable for laying a keelboat alongside.....

..... so the only other option for boats able to take the ground and sit upright is to anchor. Using the chart as your guide nose in and find your spot. The bottom is clean hard sand, but if anchoring anywhere near moored boats it would be wise to buoy the anchor to avoid foulings.

As mentioned before shelter is less than perfect so a good check of the weather would be prudent before committing yourself to drying out.

There is no harbourmaster here as such, and likewise you are unlikely to be bothered for charges of any kind. Should you need to contact an authority, local officials are on 01843 221704.

Facilities

Basically no facilities are available here for a visiting boat.

There are two slipways, one inside the harbour and one just outside. The inside one can't be used by speedboats or jetskis, but the outside one can. To use either of these slipways it is necessary to register with Thanet District Council and show proof of £2m insurance. You pay a £15 one off fee and get a boat sticker, car windscreen sticker, and the key to the facilities.

Council employees are likely to be around during the summer unlocking gates, checking insurance, and issuing permits.

Margate Yacht Club is adjacent to the slip just outside the harbour, they can be contacted on 01843 292602, and a link to their site is provided below:

<http://www.margateyachtclub.org/>

If you do walk ashore from your dried out boat, you will find that the town of Margate can offer all the usual shops and banks. It also has good rail links to London.

Just watch the tide times carefully....

What To Do

If staying in Margate Harbour during settled weather, you may get a chance to get ashore to sample the delights of the town. There are plenty of pubs and restaurants to choose from, and you may well be able to find one overlooking the harbour so you can keep an eye on the boat. A couple of links are provided below for further investigation:

Pubs.

<http://www.beerintheevening.com/pubs/results.shtml/el/Margate%3BKent/>

Eating out.

[THE 10 BEST Restaurants & Places to Eat in Margate 2021 - Tripadvisor](#)

History

Margate is a seaside resort town within the Thanet district of East Kent, England. It lies 38.1 miles (61.3 km) east-northeast of Maidstone, along the North Foreland of the coastline of the United Kingdom.

History

Margate was recorded as "Meregate" in 1264 and as "Margate" in 1299, but the spelling continued to vary into modern times. The name is thought to refer to a pool gate or gap in a cliff where pools of water are found, often allowing swimmers to jump in. The cliffs of the Isle of Thanet are composed of chalk, a fossil-bearing rock.

The town's history is tied closely to the sea and it has a proud maritime tradition. Margate was a "limb" of Dover in

the ancient confederation of the Cinque ports. It was added to the confederation in the 15th century. Margate has been a leading seaside resort for at least 250 years. Like its neighbour Ramsgate, it has been a traditional holiday destination for Londoners drawn to its sandy beaches.

Margate had a fine Victorian pier which was destroyed by a violent storm in 1978.

The Thanet Offshore Wind Project was constructed in 2008 and is now visible from the seafront.

Tourism

The Clock Tower on Margate Seafront in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897

For at least 250 years, the town has been a leading seaside resort in the UK, drawing Londoners to its beaches, Margate Sands. The bathing machines in use at Margate were described in 1805 as "four-wheeled carriages, covered with canvas, and having at one end of them an umbrella of the same materials which is let down to the surface of the water, so that the bather descending from the machine by a few steps is concealed from the public view, whereby the most refined female is enabled to enjoy the advantages of the sea with the strictest delicacy."

Like Brighton and Southend it was infamous for gang violence between mods and rockers in the 1960s, and mods and skinheads in the 1980s.

Margate faces major structural redevelopments and large inward investment. Its Dreamland Amusement Park (featured in "The Jolly Boys' Outing" extended episode of the television series *Only Fools and Horses*) was threatened with closure because of the increase in value of the site. In 2003, one of the arcades on the seafront was destroyed by fire. This has created a new potential entrance point to the Dreamland site. In the following years, 2004–2006 it was announced that Dreamland (although somewhat reduced in its amusements) would reopen for three months of the summer; a pressure group has been formed to keep it in being. The group is anxious to restore the UK's oldest wooden roller coaster, The Scenic Railway, which is Grade II Listed and the second oldest in the world, and which was severely damaged in a fire on 7 April 2008. It was planned that the Dreamland site will reopen as a heritage amusement park in the near future with the Scenic Railway at the centre. Classic rides from the defunct Southport amusement park have already been shipped in as well as parts of the now-demolished water chute at Rhyl. More details on Dreamland's future can be obtained from the Dreamland Trust website. Today the Dreamland roller coaster is one of only two early-20th century scenic railways still remaining in the UK; the only other surviving UK scenic railway is located in Great Yarmouth and was built in 1932. If the Dreamland Scenic Railway is not rescued the Great Yarmouth coaster would then be the last of its kind in the country. The Margate roller coaster is an ACE Coaster Classic.

In more recent years, as tourists have travelled further afield, Margate's unemployment rate has become higher than much of the rest of south eastern England.

Other attractions - Cliftonville next to Margate has a classic British Arnold Palmer seaside mini golf course.

A controversial gallery, the Turner Contemporary, has been proposed, as an alternative to Margate's traditional tourist trade, and when built it would have formed part of the harbour itself. Some critics, however, questioned the prudence of placing part of Britain's national art treasures in a spot that is exposed to the full fury of the North Sea. Thanet District Council have now moved the building from the harbour wall, to a plot of land adjacent to the harbour because of the spiralling costs for a sea born building. Construction work on the project has a projected completion of December 2010. The scheme had been supported by the artist Tracey Emin, who was brought up in Margate. It is hoped the gallery will help regenerate the town in the same way St Ives has benefited since the introduction of the Tate Gallery.

An annual jazz festival takes place during a weekend in July.

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