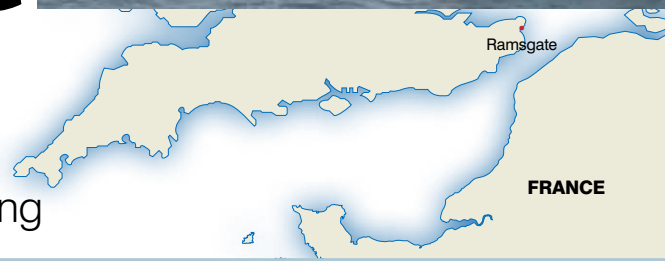




Ramsgate

Cameron Snell makes his way into the port of Ramsgate, with a harbour which can officially claim to have been fit for a king

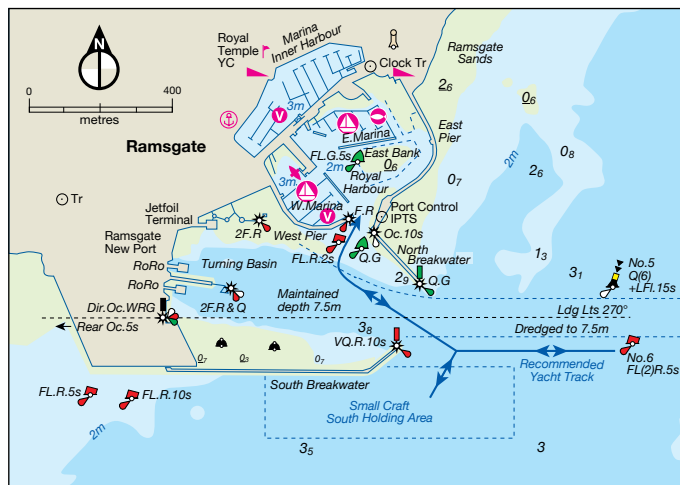


Ramsgate Harbour has the unique distinction of being the only harbour in the UK which has been awarded the right to call itself a Royal Harbour, with the honour bestowed by King George IV in 1821.

Ramsgate provides a gateway to the east and south coasts of the UK, plus Europe and its canal systems: the ports of Dunkirk,

Calais and Boulogne are all within a 50NM range of the port. The outer approaches to Ramsgate are clearly defined in the Port Of Ramsgate's website, www.portoframsgate.co.uk, one of the most informative and concise sites of its kind.

Ramsgate has a clearly defined approach channel which was once utilised by the Sally Line car ferry service to Dunkirk. This service ceased operation



Wind farm support boats buzz in and out of the harbour on a regular basis

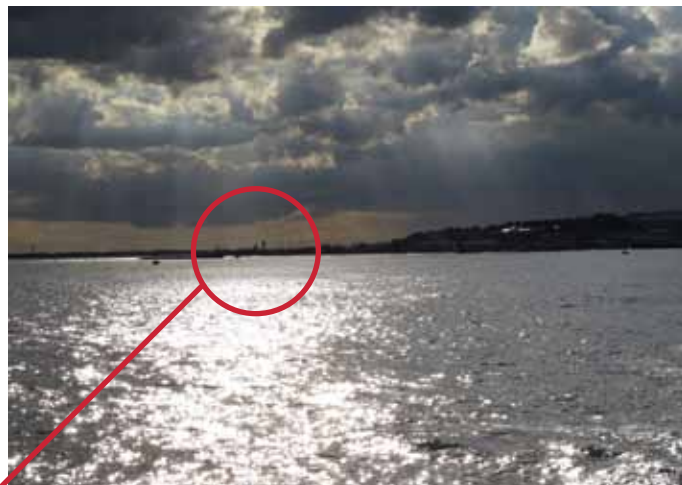
in 2013, but in contrast to this, high-speed wind farm support boats now buzz in and out of the harbour on an almost 24-hour cycle, making it crucial that small craft continue to use the recommended 'yacht track' that lies parallel to the south side of the approach channel.

Skippers are required to call

Ramsgate Port Control on Ch14 for permission to enter the harbour. You may be instructed to proceed to the waiting area at the south of the southern breakwater prior to entering the harbour. A pair of triangles with a central white line create a transit on 270°T if you enter using the main channel.



1 The outer breakwaters are marked with an Oc.G and a VQ.R on distinct beacons at the end of each wall.



2 The walls are quite low-lying, which makes them difficult to spot when the sun is low in the west or if the sea has built up. This view is approaching directly from the main channel on 270°T.



3 The shape and light of the transit triangles can be distinguished from the background of commercial port lighting and posts. At night, the forward light is sectored WRG.



4 Once inside the outer harbour, single red and green buoys (No5 and 6 on your starboard side) mark the route into the Royal Harbour. Two distinct harbour walls complete the approach line, with the tall lighthouse on West Pier displaying a fixed red at night. Call Ramsgate Port Control on VHF Ch14 for permission to enter Royal Harbour.



5 Traffic lights are displayed on top of the cream-painted port control building at the base of the northern breakwater ('3VG' to enter, or '3VR', no entry). If a flashing orange light is displayed, it means a ship is manoeuvring and you must not enter or leave harbour.



6 Meandering around the outer harbour away from the recommended yacht track, as detailed on the harbour chart, may result in grounding, as this yacht discovered! The port regularly conducts surveys, and these can be found on the 'hydrographic surveys' link on their website.

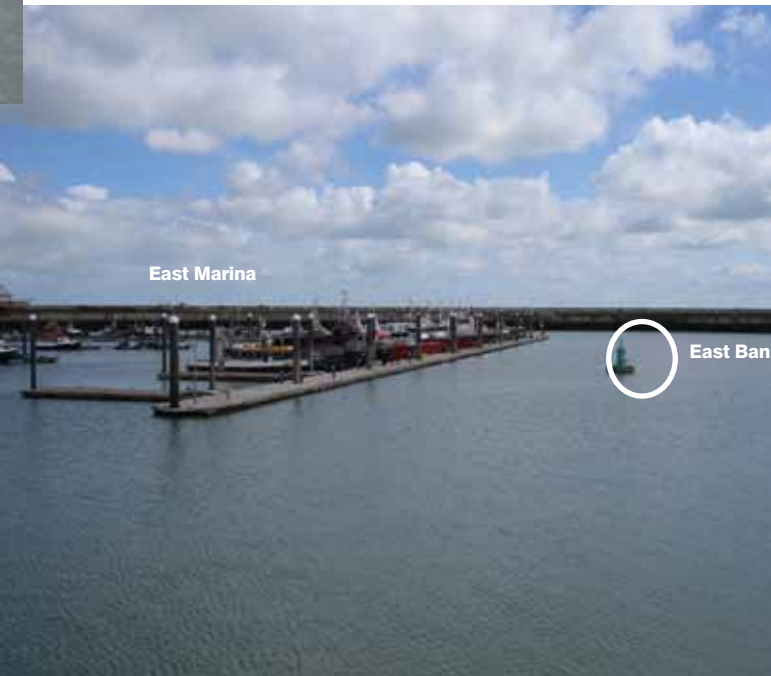




7 Passing between the harbour walls will bring you into the Royal Harbour. This was once the original harbour, prior to the construction of the outer breakwaters and the ferry terminal. From here, call Ramsgate Marina on Ch80 for berth allocation. The Royal Harbour is divided into three sectors: West Marina, East Marina and the Inner Marina. All three are controlled by Ramsgate Marina (Ch80). Ramsgate Marina is owned and operated by Thanet District Council, a unique feature nowadays considering how globalised marina ownership has become.



8 It is most likely that you will be directed to West Marina, which lies sharply to port inside West Pier. Visitors' berths will be found on pontoons G and H, which are the first row as you enter. During the winter you may be instructed to take any vacant berth, unless they are marked 'reserved'.



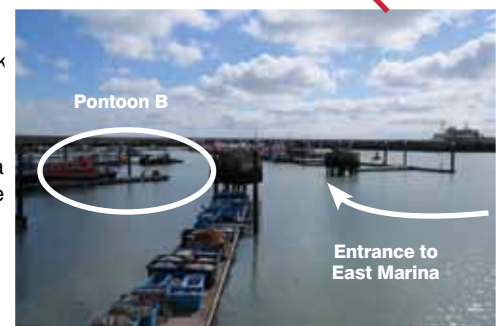
9 At the top of the bridge is a small Portakabin: this is a secondary 'staging post' for the marina office. The main office is further along the quay, next to the lock. During busy periods you may be directed to East Marina: this looks and feels like the commercial berths for the locals.

You may spot a solitary green buoy (circled in photo) that lies in a large open expanse. Do not be drawn toward it. The buoy marks the edge of a drying bank called East Bank. It is unlikely that you will need to take this route, as it only leads to commercial berths and the slipway. If you take this route, pass between the buoy and the pontoon.



10 For East Marina, proceed toward the lock entrance until you see a pair of concrete dolphins to starboard. Pass between the dolphins to enter East Marina. Visitors' berths are on 'B', the second pontoon to port.

Many commercial vessels and fishing boats occupy this marina, so beware of the traffic.



Inner Marina

The Inner Marina is accessed via a lock which opens 2 hours either side of HW. This marina is primarily

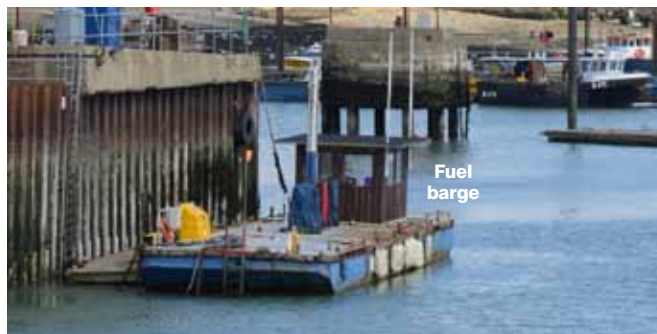
for permanent berth holders. However, special arrangements may be available for long-term visitors via the marina office.



1 A traffic light system controls the lock, in addition to communications with Ramsgate Marina on Ch80. The wooden building on the port side of the lock is the marina office.



2 A modern building, housing the comprehensive amenities, is located in the western corner of West Marina. There are additional, smaller toilet blocks on West and East marinas.



3 Petrol and diesel is available all year round from the fuel barge (pictured above) on the end of Commercial Quay, beneath the RNLI station in West Marina. Don't make the mistake of trying to refuel at the commercial fuel berth (pictured right) next to the lock!



Getting out and about in Ramsgate

The port of Ramsgate is an individual and vibrant place: its intoxicating atmosphere envelops you as you meander around the quayside arches directly outside the marinas.

Visiting yachtsmen are welcomed at the Royal Temple

Yacht Club, prominently located above the harbour. The club plays host to the annual Ramsgate Week regatta, which is widely recognised as the 'friendly regatta' and which provides an alternative to Cowes Week.

There is an abundance of eateries throughout Ramsgate,



catering for all tastes. If you're prepared for a long walk, the Royal Harbour Brasserie, located beneath the port control building at the end of East Pier, offers a comprehensive menu combined with stunning views in all directions.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Port Of Ramsgate
www.portoframsgate.co.uk

Marina office
Tel: 01843 572110, VHF Ch80

Ramsgate Port Control
Tel: 01843 572112, VHF Ch80

Royal Temple Yacht Club
www.rtyc.com,
Tel: 01843 591766

Ramsgate Week,
26-31 July 2015
www.ramsgateweek.com

■ The entire range of Cameron Snell's video pilotage guides is available to view online or buy on DVD from www.harboursonfilm.com