



## **LOCAL NOTICE TO MARINERS**

### **No.02 of 2026**

### **GENERAL INSTRUCTION AND ADVICE**

Weymouth Harbour, as a municipal port of Dorset Council, is responsible for managing the risks associated with marine operations to ensure they remain as low as reasonably practicable. Going afloat can never be free of risk and everybody who uses the Harbour, especially those in control of vessels, has an important role to play to ensure the Harbour remains safe.

There may be times when it is not safe to participate in a particular activity. Before taking to the water those in charge of vessels, adults responsible for children and those organising events and races need to carefully consider the prevailing weather, tidal and traffic conditions. For the latest information regarding harbour operations please visit [www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk](http://www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk).

Harbour users are advised of the following measures to facilitate the safe use of the Harbour:

#### **1. Weymouth Harbour**

Weymouth Harbour recognises the right of all craft-users in the harbour to enjoy their recreation in peace and safety. Navigation within the areas shown at Annex One, as defined in the Weymouth Harbour Revision Order 2021, is subject to the Weymouth Harbour General Directions 2024, the Harbours, Docks & Piers Clauses Act 1847 Section 52, and the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

It is an offence to navigate a vessel in a careless manner or in such fashion as to cause damage to other vessels or property, or which might cause injury to persons.

#### **2. Weymouth Harbour General Directions**

In exercise of its powers under the Weymouth Harbour Revision Order 2021, the Weymouth Harbour General Directions 2024 have been given by Dorset Council, as the Harbour Authority for Weymouth Harbour. The General Directions came into force on the 25th of March 2024 and apply to the entire harbour, including the Harbour Premises, as stated in the General Directions and shown on the plans annexed to or published with the General Directions.

The General Directions have been given for the purpose of promoting or securing conditions conducive to the ease, convenience or safety of navigation, the safety of persons and the protection of property, flora and fauna in Weymouth Harbour as prescribed in article 21 of the 2021 Order.

In respect of vessels, it is important that Masters and Officers are also aware of current Byelaws (including the Weymouth Harbour Byelaws 1976 and Seaside Pleasure Boats 1966) and Local



Notices to Mariners, as well as any Special Directions applying to their Vessel. It is therefore vital that owners and agents ensure all such relevant information and publications are promptly distributed to Vessels as appropriate.

Note should also be taken of broadcasts from Weymouth Harbour Radio on VHF Channel 12.

It is the duty of the Master of a vessel to which a General Direction or a Special Direction applies to comply with that Direction. However, the giving of a General Direction or Special Direction shall not diminish, or in any other way affect the responsibility of the Master of the vessel to which the Direction is given in relation to their vessel, persons on board, its cargo or any other person or property.

A copy of the General Directions has been deposited at the Weymouth Harbour Office, 13 Custom House Quay, Weymouth, DT4 8BG and may be inspected between 09:00 – 17:30 hours. A copy of the General Directions can also be obtained by calling 01305 838423 or by emailing [weymouthharbour@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:weymouthharbour@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).

A copy of the General Directions is also available online at <https://www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk/Harbourlegislation/>.

### **3. Safe Speed of Vessels and Care**

Attention is drawn to the speed limit of 4 knots which is in force for Inner and Outer Harbour areas and the demarcated areas in Weymouth Bay, in accordance with General Direction 5. The observance of harbour speed limits and maintenance of a safe speed appropriate to conditions will reduce the risk of an accident and the extent of damage or injury. An important factor in assessing appropriate speed is the effect of wake on other harbour users.

It is essential that a good lookout is always kept when underway. A vigilant watch will reduce the risk of conflict with other vessels and will help to ensure that assistance is rendered to vessels in difficulty without delay.

### **4. Safe Navigation**

Mariners are reminded of the importance of navigating their vessels with utmost care and caution within all areas of Weymouth Harbour. This reminder is in accordance with General Direction 11, which emphasizes the necessity for all vessels to navigate in a safe manner.

Mariners should adhere to General Direction 11 by:

- Navigating at a safe speed, adjusting to suit the conditions, visibility, traffic density, proximity of hazards, and speed restricted areas.
- Maintaining a proper lookout and using all available means, for example radar or AIS, to ensure safe navigation.
- Adhering to all navigational aids and signals as per the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs).



Special attention is drawn to the Inner Harbour Approaches Plan, where vessels should exercise extra caution:

- A higher density of vessels can be expected at the harbour entrance and in the approaches.
- Navigating in a restricted channel, or in narrow and confined waterway areas requires precise manoeuvring. Upon preparing to enter the harbour, all vessels should slow down well in advance and not make sudden and unexpected changes to their course.
- There is an increased chance of encountering smaller vessels around the harbour entrance, including Gigs and sailing dinghies, and excessive wash can easily capsize small craft.

All mariners should ensure that their navigation does not compromise the safety of others or the integrity of harbour infrastructure. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in enforcement action.

Mariners are urged to consult the latest harbour charts and notices for the most current navigational information.

## 5. Restricted Speed Areas

The zone segregation/demarcation buoys which mark the limits of the various water-based activities in Weymouth Bay are included in the Weymouth Harbour Marine Safety Management System.

In view of the changing nature of and increase in water sports activities, for the safety of all users of Weymouth Bay, a line of white marker buoys delineates a safe area for beach users, away from the dangers presented by water craft. All such white spherical buoys are normally laid from April to September inclusive and define an area between the beach foreshore and the line of white spherical buoys laid from:

- a. Position 052° (T) St. John's Church spire dist. 0.67nm to the end of North (Pleasure) Pier. This line is approximately 400m from the metropolitan shoreline  
to  
b. Position 050° (T) St. John's Church spire dist. 0.88nm to position 211° (T) Bowleaze Cove Hotel white tower dist. 0.2nm. This line is approximately 400m from the metropolitan shoreline

This white buoy line designates a 4-knot restricted speed limit within approximately 400m of the metropolitan shoreline. This restriction applies at all times of the year, irrespective of whether or not the white marker buoys are in place. The speed restriction for vessels is important within this area, in order to keep a good lookout for other vessels, hazards and particularly swimmers who may be hidden from view by waves and swell.

Mariners are warned against mooring to any moored marker buoys or swim raft. The anchoring of any vessel is not permitted in the defined area except within the area established at Overcombe (far NE end of Weymouth beach) and marked by blue buoys (adjacent to and close west of the boardsailing access channel). Vessels anchoring outside the Restricted Speed Area with tenders and any other small craft should avoid landing on the beach.



## 6. Designated Operating Areas for Water Sports

The operating areas in Weymouth Bay, as defined in Annex Two, were established to take a proactive approach in the management of Weymouth Bay and to provide opportunities for all users to enjoy themselves without risking the safety and enjoyment of others.

### a. Personal Watercraft (PWC)

Launching of PWCs in the Weymouth Harbour Statutory Area is restricted to the Weymouth Harbour slipway at Commercial Road. Launching of PWCs elsewhere is prohibited. All PWC activities should take place seaward of the white spherical buoys located approximately 400 metres from shore.

All PWCs require a permit for use and must observe Harbour Byelaws (see Point 14 Use of Personal Watercraft for further information) and keep clear of the Boardsailing and the swimming/non-motorised vessel areas between Weymouth Harbour North Pier and Bowleaze.

### b. Boardsailing/Kitesurfing (Overcombe Corner)

Access for all sailboards (including kitesurfs) to/from the beach foreshore shall be between the area marked by four (4) yellow spherical buoys laid close inshore from the beach to the outer limit marked by the white seaward spherical buoys in the Overcombe Corner area. Sailboards are restricted to areas clear of navigation channels, to seawards of the white marker buoys and must not use channel access areas designated for use by either Personal Watercraft, speedboats/water-skis or in areas used by swimmers.

### c. Speedboats, Water Skiing and PWC (Lodmoor)

Access to/from the beach foreshore for all speedboats, water-skis and PWCs shall be within a channel marked by red and white spherical buoys, red and white dan buoys and the outer limit defined by the white buoys.

Water skiing, aquaplaning, para-ascending or similar airborne/seaborne activities, are not permitted in a fairway used by commercial traffic, within the Inner and Outer Harbour areas, or within the area inside the line of white marker buoys extending from the end of the North (Pleasure) Pier to a position in Bowleaze Cove, except in the buoys approach channel for use of water ski craft.

## 7. Use of Propellers Shoreside of White Buoys

Mariners are advised that power-driven vessels (any vessel being propelled by machinery) with unguarded propellers are not permitted to use shallow water areas in Weymouth Bay between April and September inclusive (sunrise to sunset) when the white 4 knot buoys are in position. This is to avoid endangering public bathing or other waterborne leisure activities. Such craft are prohibited within the area west of the white 4 knot buoys' line, except for the allocated water sports access channels above.

## 8. Reporting Concerns Relating to Safety



Harbour users are requested to report immediately to the Harbour Master any reasonable concern they have regarding safety in Weymouth Harbour. Harbour users are also requested to report incidents and damage which may affect safety in the Harbour.

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

Or call SOLENT COASTGUARD on VHF Channel 16 or 67

To report incidents or damage call "Weymouth Harbour Radio" on VHF Channel 12 or telephone 01305 838423. You can also complete an [Incident Report](#) online.

Incidents and damage that should be reported include:

- damage to and collisions between vessels
- damage to navigation marks, harbour structures or facilities
- malfunctioning navigation marks
- dangerous near-miss situations between vessels
- vessels proceeding at an excessive speed or creating excessive wash, and
- any other dangerous occurrence

Weymouth Harbour complies with the Port and Marine Facilities Safety Code (revised April 2025) and has appointed a Designated Person to monitor compliance with the Code and report to the Dorset Harbours Advisory Committee. Any reasonable concerns regarding safety in the harbour may (in addition to being reported to the Harbour Master) be brought to the attention of the Designated Person by writing to:

James Hannon  
Designated Person (PMSC) Weymouth Harbour  
ABPmer  
Quayside Suite, Edina Chambers  
Town Quay  
SOUTHAMPTON  
SO14 2AQ

james.hannon@abpmer.co.uk  
02380 711889

## 9. Lifejackets and Lifesaving Equipment (including Flares)

The importance of routinely wearing both appropriate and suitably tested lifejackets cannot be overstated. This minimum precaution can dramatically increase both the chances of survival and the likelihood of rescue. Similarly, the carriage of distress flares and portable buoyancy equipment will ensure that assistance to the vessel or those overboard can be quickly provided.



## 10. VHF Radio Communications

All vessels whilst underway within Weymouth Harbour are advised to monitor Weymouth Harbour Radio on VHF Channel 12. VHF transmissions on this channel should be kept short and relevant. Emergency assistance is immediately available through the Coastguard via VHF Channel 16. To facilitate an early response in emergency, vessels without fixed radio installations are recommended to carry portable VHF sets and monitor Channel 12 or 16, or to download and use the RYA SafeTrx app, which can be found on the Apple App Store or for Android devices from the Google Playstore.

## 11. Use of Kill Cords in Powered Craft

Following a fatal accident in 2013, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) issued a safety bulletin highlighting that kill cords are a safety feature to stop an engine when the driver moves away from the controls. They emphasise that it is essential that operators of vessels fitted with kill cords:

- Test them regularly to ensure that the engine stops when the kill cord mechanism is operated;
- Make sure that the cord is in good condition;
- Always attach the cord securely to the driver, ideally before the engine is started, but certainly before the boat is put in gear;
- Stop the engine before transferring the kill cord to another driver.

The full MAIB Safety Bulletin is available at:

[http://www.maib.gov.uk/publications/safety\\_bulletins/safety\\_bulletin\\_2013/safety\\_bulletin\\_1\\_2013.cfm](http://www.maib.gov.uk/publications/safety_bulletins/safety_bulletin_2013/safety_bulletin_1_2013.cfm)

## 12. Swimming

Weymouth Harbour is concerned that some swimmers expose themselves to unnecessary risk. The parents of young swimmers, and swimmers themselves, are reminded of the following basic precautions:

- Swimming in the Inner and Outer Harbour, and jumping or diving from quaysides, bridges, piers, pontoons, or other harbour infrastructure is **strictly prohibited**
- Never dive or jump into water of an unknown depth
- Never dive or jump from any structure
- Never swim near moving boats, boats running their engines, or boats which may depart their moorings
- Never swim in strong currents and/or tides
- Never swim after consuming alcohol or soon after a meal
- Be aware of the temperature; hypothermia and cold water shock can kill
- Be aware of fishing activities. Nets deployed close to shore can pose a risk of entanglement to swimmers. Avoid swimming in areas where fishing vessels are operating.
- It is not advisable to swim alone



- Always tell someone on the shore where you are swimming and when you expect to return to the shore

### 13. Diving

All diving for favour or reward (i.e. "at work") is subject to the Diving at Work Regulations 1997 (DWR 97) and the associated Approved Codes of Practice (ACOP). Diving at work may only be carried out by a diving contractor who has notified the Health and Safety Executive in compliance with the provisions in DWR 97 and dives may only be carried out in accordance with the legal requirements. Additionally, Weymouth Harbour requires that divers at work apply for prior consent from the Harbour Authority before undertaking a dive.

Weymouth Harbour strongly recommends that all diving (whether the diver is at work or not) should meet all the above requirements.

### 14. Use of Personal Watercraft

This Notice is given to any person having or taking command, charge, management or conduct for the time being of any Personal Watercraft (PWC) operating in or being launched into Weymouth Harbour Sea Area Jurisdiction (as defined in Annex One).

National legislation which came into force on 31 March 2023 puts the responsibility on users, operators and owners of powered watercraft to make sure they protect not just themselves but other water users from harm. If someone on a powered watercraft causes serious injury or death they can be prosecuted. There are also provisions allowing prosecution for other dangerous uses of a powered watercraft.

Under the new law, the parts of the Merchant Shipping Act designed to keep all those on the water safe from accidents now apply to powered watercraft as well as to fishing vessels and larger ships. The new law also mean powered watercraft must obey the 'rules of the sea', which are designed to prevent collisions.

For the purposes of this Notice a "Personal Watercraft" or "PWC" means any watercraft propelled by a jet engine or other mechanical means of propulsion and steered either: a) by means of a handlebar-operated linkage system (with or without a rudder at the stern); or b) by the person or persons riding the craft using his or their bodyweight for the purpose; or c) by a combination of the methods referred to in (a) and (b) above, and includes (but not limited to) watercraft generally referred to as jet-skis, wave runners, wet bikes and PWC's.

#### Motorised Water Sports Permit

Before operating any PWC in Weymouth Harbour, operators will be required to obtain a Motorised Water Sports Permit. Persons wishing to obtain a permit should telephone 01305 858423 or apply online through our website at [www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk/PricesandOnlinePayments](http://www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk/PricesandOnlinePayments).

Permits will be issued on acknowledgement and confirmation of the following:



- 3rd Party insurance has been obtained (£5M proof required)
- The PWC is registered with Data Tag and the applicant's details match those recorded on the Data Tag database
- The Data Tag number is clearly displayed on both sides of the PWC
- That no person under the age of 12 will be allowed to operate the PWC
- That operators between 12 and 16 years of age will not be permitted to operate the PWC unless under direct supervision (being present on PWC) of the permit holder
- In order to tow a person behind the PWC a second person is required to be onboard to act as a look out astern
- The PWC will only be operated between 8 am and sunset or 8 pm (whichever is the earlier) on any day
- That the PWC operator understands the areas of water for PWC usage:
  - PWCs only to operate to the seaward side of the white marker buoys
  - Access to the anchoring zone and ski vessel pick up is subject to the restricted speed of 4 Knots
  - Entry to the marked bathing, non-motorised vessel zone and Sailboard/Kitesurf approach is strictly prohibited

When Weymouth Harbour receives a permit application it will share personal data including the applicant's name, address, and date of birth with Data Tag for the purpose of checking the applicant:

- a. is the lawful owner of the PWC
- b. has a valid registration
- c. has provided accurate contact details.

The launching of PWCs in Weymouth Harbour Statutory Area is restricted to the Weymouth Harbour slipway on Commercial Road. The launching of PWCs anywhere else in Weymouth Harbour is prohibited.

### Safe PWC Operation

- Ensure all operators & passengers are wearing an approved lifejacket or buoyancy aid
- Always operate to the seaward side of the white marker buoys
- Do not operate PWCs within marked bathing zones
- Adhere to the 4 knot speed limit within 400m of the metropolitan shoreline, at all times of the year, irrespective of whether or not the white marker buoys are in place
- Adhere to 4 Knot speed limit within 50m of a swimmer, non-motorised craft, or moored vessel, and to not cause any wash
- Adhere to the 4 Knot Speed limit within the Inner and Outer Harbour and approaches
- Comply with COLREGS, including giving way to sailing vessels, larger vessels operating in confined channels and other vessels crossing from your starboard side
- Navigate on the starboard (right) of a confined channel in the direction of travel
- When towing a person behind the PWC a second person is required to be on board to act as a look out astern



- Keep a good lookout for other vessels, people, and hazards in the water at all times
- Wherever you operate, swimmers may be hidden from view by waves and swell, so keep well away from, or slowdown in areas where swimmers are likely to be
- Slow down or stop if your vision is affected by sun or spray
- Keep clear of anchored and moored vessels
- Always use the Killcord
- Consider suitable footwear, goggles and gloves

## 15. Licences for Passenger Vessels & Watermen

Regulations apply for the licensing of Commercial Passenger Vessels and Watermen letting vessels for hire or to be used for carrying passengers under Section 94 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907.

These regulations concern the safety of craft and their passengers and are limited to vessels carrying no more than 12 passengers (not including the crew) that do not go beyond MCA Category D waters. Category D is an Inland Water category where the Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code applies. Some of Weymouth's waters have been given a dispensation by the MCA to be classed as Category D for specific times.

All commercial vessels carrying passengers in Weymouth Harbour waters are to be licensed. A licence under these regulations shall not be required for any boat or vessel duly licensed by or under any regulations of the Marine & Coastguard Agency or other approved body (or for a person in charge of or navigating such a boat or vessel).

For further information, please [visit our website](#) or contact the Harbour Office.

## 16. Restrictions on the Deployment of Fishing Gear

Unattended fishing gear can be hazardous to harbour users. It is often hard to see, particularly at night, and can be difficult to manoeuvre clear of when in confined waters. The higher risk at the harbour entrance should not be increased by obstructions in the water. Damage to vessels caused by snagged gear can be costly to repair.

Under section 52 of the Harbours, Docks & Piers Clauses Act 1847 and General Direction 49 of the Weymouth Harbour General Directions 2024, the laying of nets, pots, traps or any other commercial or private fishing equipment is not permitted in certain areas.

## 17. Towage

Masters of Vessels are reminded that no towage should take place in the harbour unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Harbour Master. All planned towage operations should submit a towage plan, including Risk Assessment, for approval prior to any tow taking place.



This does not apply to the towage of a vessel in immediate danger, the towage of vessels by RNLI Lifeboats, or the towage of dinghies and sailing boats by Weymouth Sailing Club, the Sea Cadet Training Centre, and the Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre.

## **18. Prevention of Oil Pollution**

Owners and operators of all vessels, and those persons in charge of waterfront installations, should be aware that it is an offence under the Prevention of Oil Pollution Act 1971 (as amended) to discharge oil, or a mixture containing oil, into the waters of the Harbour or any sea area.

Owners and persons in charge of vessels must follow the procedures and requirements laid down in the IMO manual on oil pollution and should ensure that they are being fully complied with.

The discharge of clean bilge and ballast water, as specified in the regulations may only be carried out with the prior permission of the Harbour Master. Reception facilities are available in the port for disposal of oily wastes and arrangements should be made through the ship's Agent or through the Harbour Master.

All harbour users are requested to report all sightings of oil pollution, or any discharge of oil or oily mixture into the harbour waters, immediately to Weymouth Harbour Radio on VHF Channel 12 or by telephone on 01305 838423. Failure to report a discharge is an offence under the above Act. At times when the Harbour Master's Office is unmanned, reports should be made to Solent Coastguard on VHF Channel 16 or 67, or by telephone on 02392 552100.

## **19. Vessel Landed Waste and Pollution**

It is an offence for any vessel, including recreational vessels, regardless of size, to discharge any refuse overboard within specified distances from land, and in the case of plastics and other persistent rubbish, in any sea area surrounding the UK (International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78).

Mariners are advised that reception facilities for vessel landed waste are located at, or close to, all mooring areas and marinas within Weymouth Harbour. Weymouth Harbour maintains a Port Waste Management Plan (PWMP). This document can be viewed [on our website](#).

The PWMP details the location and types of waste collection facilities including recycling, and vessel pump-out facilities. Any enquiries relating to waste facilities should be directed to the local mooring provider or to the Harbour Office. It is a serious offence to discharge waste at sea or into harbour waters.

## **20. Management of Events**

Organisers of events that may impact normal harbour activities must contact Weymouth Harbour at an early opportunity prior to any event taking place. All events taking place on the Harbour Statutory Land Area or within the Harbour Sea Area Jurisdiction will require the permission of the Harbour



Master. For most types of events a formal risk assessment will be required. The content of this assessment will need to be proportional to the event/activity.

The risk assessment and the safety management of a particular event will be the responsibility of the event organiser. The event risk assessment should identify all risks concerned with the safe and efficient use of the harbour by all harbour users. Details of how the risk is to be controlled will be part of the assessment.

The formal risk assessment should be submitted prior to the planned event, giving sufficient time to enable Weymouth Harbour to comment and consult on the assessment. Weymouth Harbour will need to be satisfied that the risks to harbour safety have been effectively mitigated, before consenting to an event.

This notice is to be read in conjunction with: A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (Section 8 Management of Navigation – Event Planning) DfT (last update 4 April 2018). Attention is also drawn to the advice given in the preparation of risk assessments issued by the Royal Yachting Association ([www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk)).

## 21. Town Bridge Lifting Times

Weymouth Harbour operates the Town Bridge, a Bascule bridge with a charted vertical clearance of 2.75 metres, which is opened periodically to allow vessels to transit to and from the Inner Harbour.

Mariners must observe and conform to bridge navigation lights and the instructions of bridge operators. Town Bridge navigation traffic lights are different from and should not be confused with Pierhead traffic signals. Mariners requiring bridge lifts should be in sight of the Town Bridge operator by the scheduled time listed and listen on VHF Channel 12 for town bridge information at least 5 minutes before the scheduled opening time.

Mariners are advised that the Town Bridge is opened to the following schedules:

### SUMMER – 15 April to 15 September Inclusive

APRIL (15 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> )	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER (1 <sup>st</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> )
08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00
10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00
12:00	12:00	12:00	12:00	12:00	12:00
14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00
16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00
18:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	18:00
20:00	20:00	20:00	20:00	20:00	20:00
		21:00	21:00	21:00	



**WINTER – 16 September to 14 April Inclusive\***

<b>DAILY</b>	
08:00	<b>Christmas &amp; New Year Bridge Lifts:</b>
10:00	Christmas Eve – Last lift 14:00
12:00	Christmas Day – NO LIFTS
14:00	Boxing Day – Last lift 14:00
16:00	New Years Eve – Last lift 14:00
18:00	New Years Day – NO LIFTS

**\*During the winter period, a minimum of 1 hours' notice is required for all lifts.** Bookings for bridge lifts can be arranged by calling Weymouth Harbour on VHF Channel 12, by telephoning 01305 206423 (answerphone when not manned), or by [visiting our website](#).

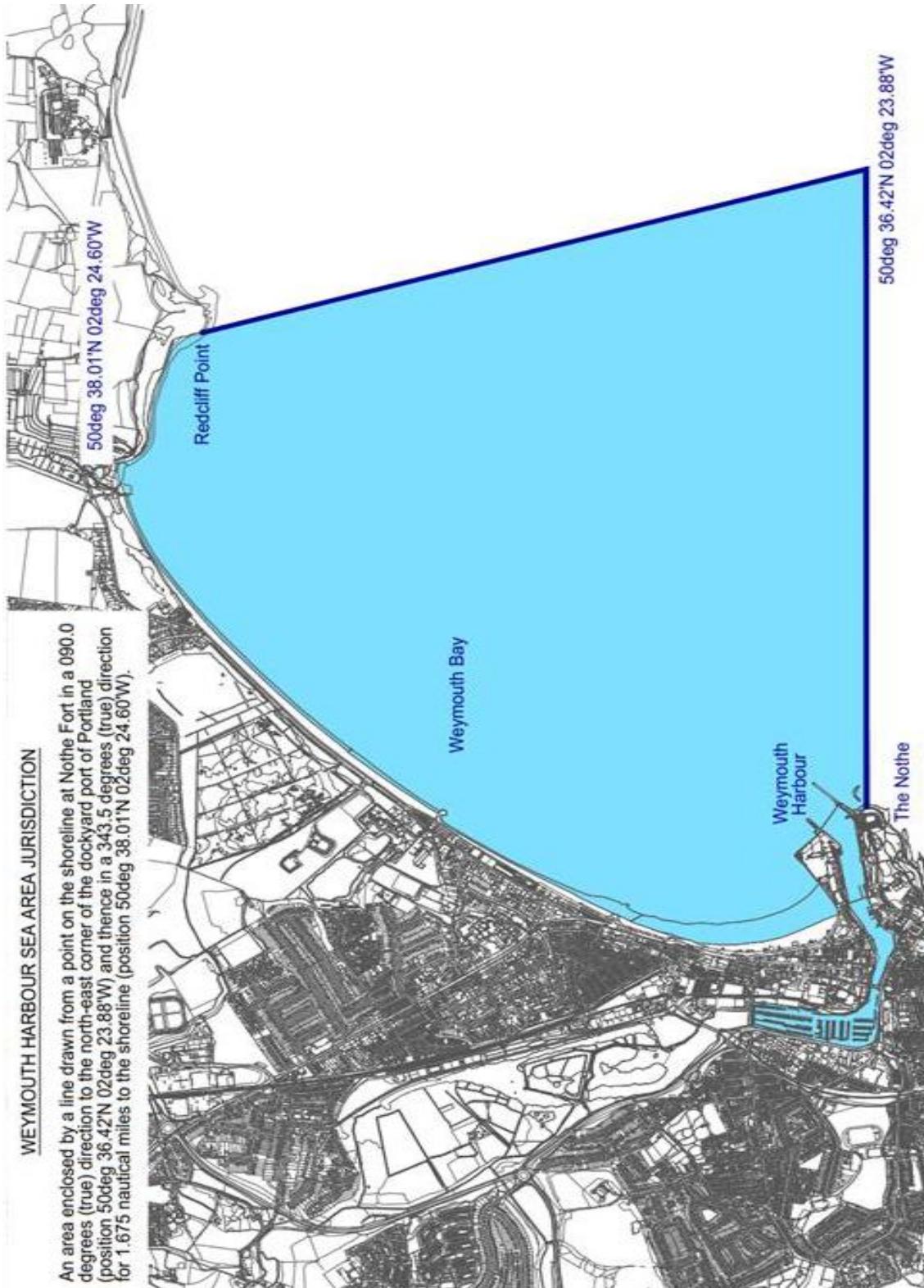
22. Owners, Agents, Charterers, Marinas, Yacht Clubs, Recreational Sailing Organisations and Water Sports Associations should ensure that the contents of this notice are made known to the Masters, or persons in charge of their vessels or craft.

**Ed Carter**  
**Weymouth Harbour Master**  
**05 January 2026**



# Weymouth Harbour

## Annex One





# Weymouth Harbour

## Annex Two

