

# Cruising Anglesey and adjoining waters

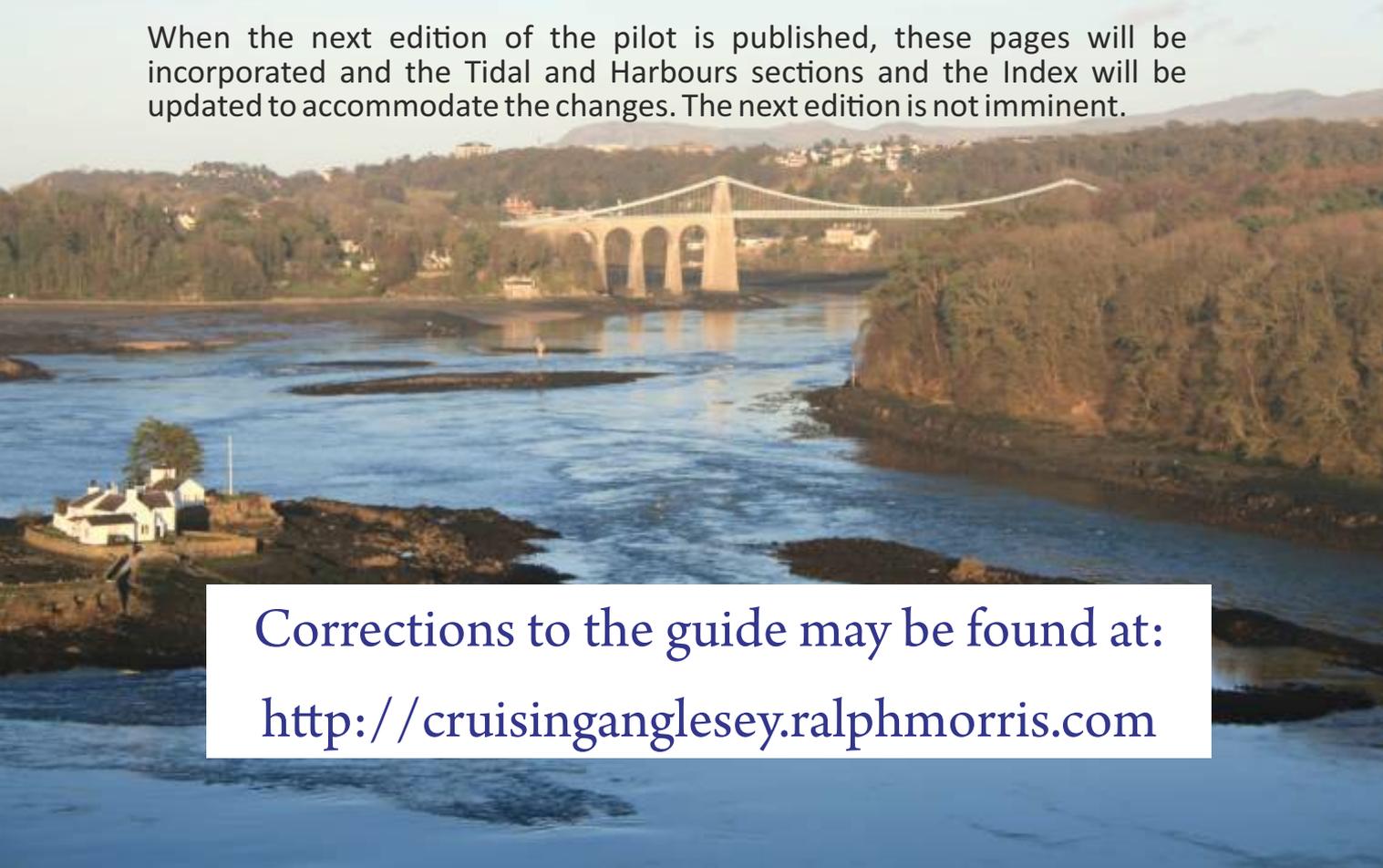
## EXTENSION OF AREA FROM PORTHMADOG TO ABERDOVEY

The following pages may be added to the cruising guide to provide:

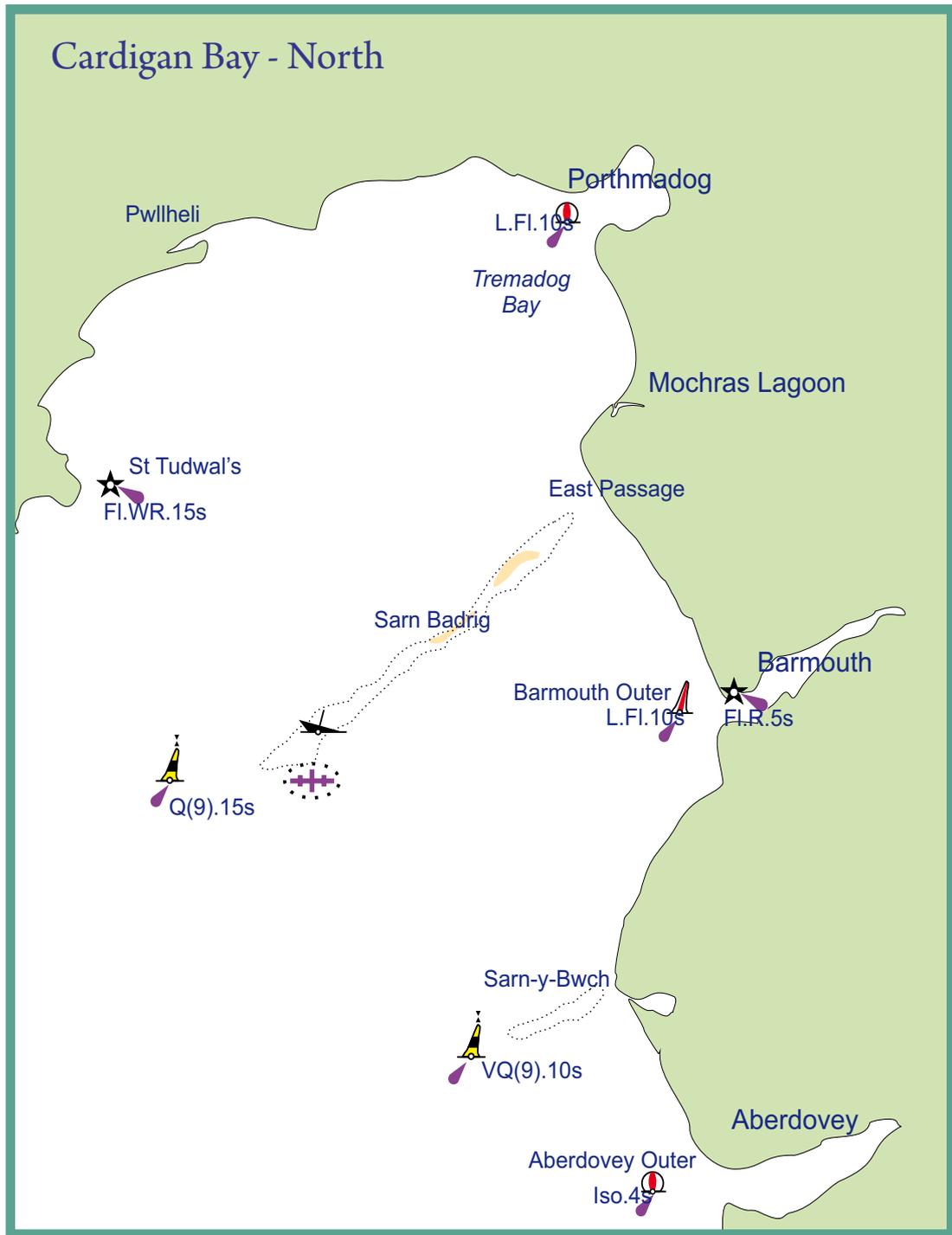
- Basic pilot from Porthmadog to Aberdovey
- Berthing information for Mochras Lagoon, Barmouth, Aberdovey
- Aids to navigation in the area, including Sarn Badrig

Some guidance on the placing of the pages has been included.

When the next edition of the pilot is published, these pages will be incorporated and the Tidal and Harbours sections and the Index will be updated to accommodate the changes. The next edition is not imminent.



Corrections to the guide may be found at:  
<http://cruisinganglesey.ralphmorris.com>



### *Porthmadog to Aberdovey*

This stretch of water enjoys a backdrop of the Cambrian Mountains. The beaches form a holiday paradise for caravan parks and sunbathers. The Cambrian Railway line runs parallel to the beach. The views en route to Mochras Lagoon (Shell Island), some 4nm S of Porthmadog are further enhanced by Harlech Castle. The shore is not, however, particularly attractive for yachts due to the gently shelving beaches. Rocky outcrops start to appear when abeam of Harlech and come to dominate the foreshore when the coast trends SW until the entrance to Mochras is reached. For approximately ½nm north and south of the entrance, the shore is encumbered with boulders.

South of Mochras Lagoon, Mochras Spit extends for 1½ nm SW from Mochras Point. Sarn Badrig extends in a SW direction from approx 52°47'N 004°09'W for some 10nm. The Causeway Buoy (W card FI(9) 15s) is approximately 1½ nm further out. East Passage is a narrow channel between Sarn Badrig and the shore with 9m at its inshore end. Bemar Bank (0,7m) lies close by the southern entrance to East Passage and alongside is the Historic wreck, Brass Bell, from which artefacts are still being recovered.

Passage though East Channel is safe at most states of the tide. It is 5nm to Barmouth Outer safe water buoy (RW (vert), RW LFI. (10s)) which marks the entrance to Barmouth Harbour.

The route around the causeway requires a diversion of some 12nm to the Causeway buoy with a similar distance on the return to the coast at Barmouth. Numerous wrecks, some drying, litter both north and south sides of Sarn Badrig (St

Patrick's Causeway) which should not impede prudent passages. A dangerous wreck lies on the South Prong at approx. position 52°41'.30N 004°20'.00W. It is on the direct route from the

Causeway Buoy to Barmouth Outer. It should be left to port by steering no less than 100° from the Causeway Buoy for 5nm.

South from Barmouth the coast runs S to Friog (Fairbourne) with a conspicuous quarry



Photo: Ian Warburton

Sarn Badrig

in the foothills and a small tourist railway running the full length of the peninsula. Friog marks the official southern limit of coastguard coverage by Holyhead MRSC. From here southward, the coordinating centre is Milford Haven. The coast turns SSW. to Pen Bwch Point, where the River Dysynni debauches into the sea. It is not navigable. The shore is strewn with boulders and drying patches and rocks extend up to 1nm offshore off the Point. Sarn-y-Bwch, a smaller version of Sarn Badrig, extends only 2nm from Pen Bwch Point with depths of 2m.

A W card. (Sarn-y-Bwch) marks the outermost extent of the spit (VQ(9) 10s) lying 3nm from the Point bearing 245°T.

The coast SE of the Point is encumbered with boulders before becoming a long sandy beach with no offlying dangers from just S of Y Con buoy marking a sewer outfall 1.2nm from Pen Bwch Point.

The run to Aberdovey Outer (RW Spherical, Iso 4s) is clear of all dangers. Care must be taken not to overrun Aberdovey as yet another Sarn, Sarn Wallog, lies less than 5nm S on the direct route to Aberystwyth.



Photo: J Ball

Causeway Buoy



River Artro

### *Mochras Lagoon (Shell Island)*

A bar guards the entrance channel restricting access to local HW  $\pm 2$ . The entrance channel should be approached from the North, running along the coast (186°T) inshore of a drying sand bank, turning to port between a red top post and G con buoy. This route provides some protection from breaking swell which may develop when a (up to) 4kn ebb meets an onshore wind. Two additional navigation gates are formed by G con buoys and posts. A sector light (RWG) aids entry at night.

Once within the lagoon, protection is absolute.

Turning to port within the lagoon opens up the River Artro, a small channel leading to Pensarn harbour, with some moorings and hardstanding. The buildings at Pensarn Harbour are used as a youth training centre. Immediately to port within the lagoon, is a slipway with access to the Llanbedr & Pensarn Yacht Club. The river is navigable by dinghy beyond Pensarn.

There is no vehicular access to the yacht club; a Pay & Display car park is less than ½ mile away in Llandanwg

To starboard of the entrance a drying buoyed channel leads to a pool with depths



*Mochras Lagoon looking south at HW*

of less than 1m and the Shell Island Sail & Power Club. A cill retains the water in this pool. The ground in both arms of the estuary is occupied by private moorings, most of which dry. Immediately to starboard on entering is a small quay with ladders which dries, to which vessels may secure.

The southern arm of the lagoon lies within land owned by the Shell Island Camp Site and in the season, the ground is covered by tents.

It is only accessible by land over a causeway which covers.

### *Barmouth*

Barmouth lies 11nm south of Porthmadog, but between the two harbours Sarn Badrig extends over 10nm SW from S of Mochre Lagoon. A route (East Passage) exists inshore of the causeway which is navigable with care and is the passage used by local sailors. The alternative is to sail along its northern edge to the Causeway buoy (W cardinal, Q(9).15s) then return to Barmouth avoiding South Prong with 2m on it and a dangerous drying wreck. In reasonable conditions, the causeway may be crossed safely along its length over the period HW  $\pm 2$ .

Access to Barmouth is local HW  $\pm 3$  in good weather. The approach to Barmouth provides stunning views of the town nestled below the mountain of Cadr Idris and the Cambrians, at the mouth of the River Mawddach. The town's history is rich with connections to the shipping and slate industries.

Barmouth Outer (Pillar RW vert, LFI 10s) marks safe water some distance offshore of the Bar which should not be attempted in strong onshore winds, especially against the ebb. A significant swell develops between the Bar and the Perch in (approx) F5 with winds between SW and N.

The channel is buoyed from the bar (0.3m) into the harbour, with a small SHM indicating a narrow drying channel to the quayside. Ahead (E) is the Pool with 10m and many moorings.

To port within the harbour lies a large drying area, accessible from the promenade, with a few drying moorings. On passing the

### *Barmouth, Harbourside Café*

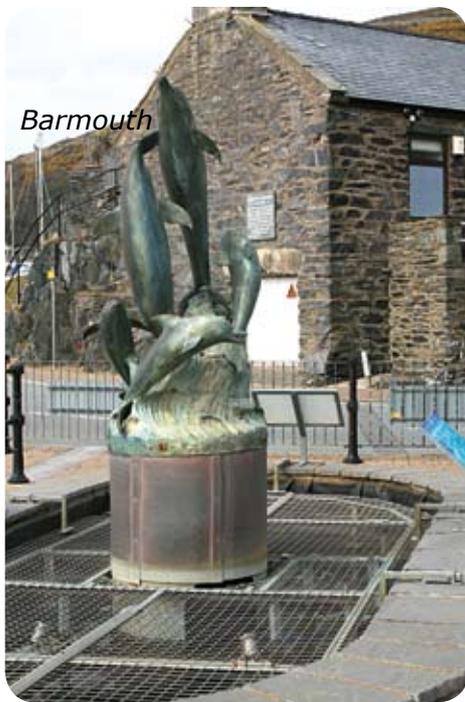


Breakwater the harbour wall with ladders, electricity and bollards can be seen to port Care must be taken to avoid a drying sandbank between the wall and the main channel leading to the bridges.

At the inshore end of the harbour wall, a small number of pontoon fingers have recently been added. Deep draft vessels should make arrangements with the harbourmaster before making the decision to visit the harbour.

### *Aberdovey*

A smaller version of Sarn Badrig, Sarn-y-Bwch, spans the direct route from Barmouth to Aberdovey but with minimum depths of 2m it can be crossed safely at most states of the tide. Strong onshore winds can create confused seas which make the area dangerous for deep draft yachts below half tide.



*Barmouth*

South of Sarn-y-Bwch the north-going flood tide can reach 2 knots, creating a W-going eddy at the obstruction formed by the causeway. To the north, the flow is reduced to ½ kn to 1kn on both flood and ebb.

As with Sarn Badrig, the patches may be ignored in good weather withing 2 hours of HW.

From Aberdovey Outer Safe water buoy (spherical, RW), steer 090° to the gate established by the Bar and No.2 buoys. The channel and bar may shift during storms and the harbour authorities re-position the channel buoys as necessary. There is deep water alongside the jetty but the channel almost dries away from it. Deep draft vessels should make arrangements with the harbourmaster before making the decision to visit the harbour.

Tides in the river flow at up to 2 kn, tending to the southern shore on the flood, marked by the channel buoys, and the northern side of the channel on the ebb. There is consequently more water to either side of the channel than in the centre. Between No.7 and No.9 stbd. buoys a gravel bank dries.

### *Entrance to Mochras Lagoon*



*Barmouth*



**POSITION** 52°49'.92N 004°07'.80W**CHARTS** C52, 1971, 1512**TIDES**

High: HW (Dover) -0310

Slack: HW (Dover) -0305

Height: 9.1 6.8 - - (approx.)



## Mochras Lagoon (Shell Island)

**APPROACH**

Enter only between local HW±2hrs and only then in fair conditions. Start the approach from ½nm N of the entrance and steer 186° (approx) to the post with Red topmark. The final approach runs parallel to a breakwater formed of metal pilings. Give the post a reasonable offing.

**DANGERS**

A drying sandbank lies to stbd. of the approach and lies in a direct line from the entrance channel to Tremadoc Bay. Boulders are scattered along the shoreline. Swell builds rapidly W of the entrance in strong onshore winds and against the ebb. Shallow/drying over most of lagoon. Cill of uncertain height retains some water in pool to stbd.

**SHELTER**

Complete shelter, but uncomfortable in Easterly gales as winds funnel out of the valleys.

**LIGHTS & MARKS**

Positions are approximate. Buoys are privately maintained and may be moved.

Post, R top 52°49'.64N 004°07'.87W

No.1 52°49'.63N 004°07'.90W FI.G

Tripod 52°49'.60N 004°07'.82W

No.2 52°49'.59N 004°07'.85W FI.G.2.5s

Post 52°49'.59N 004°07'.75W

No.3 52°49'.64N 004°07'.77W FI.G.5s

Sector Lt 52°49'.56N 004°07'.70W RWG

Fl.4s. R134°-179°, W124°-134°, G79°-124°

**FACILITIES**

Llanbedr & Pensarn YC (LPYC) on N prong, Shell Island Sail & Power Club (SISPC) on S prong.

Water at quay (S prong), dries. Toilets, Shop, Bar and Calor Gas in Shell Island Camp site complex. Access to mainland over causeway, covers with tides greater than 7.9m.

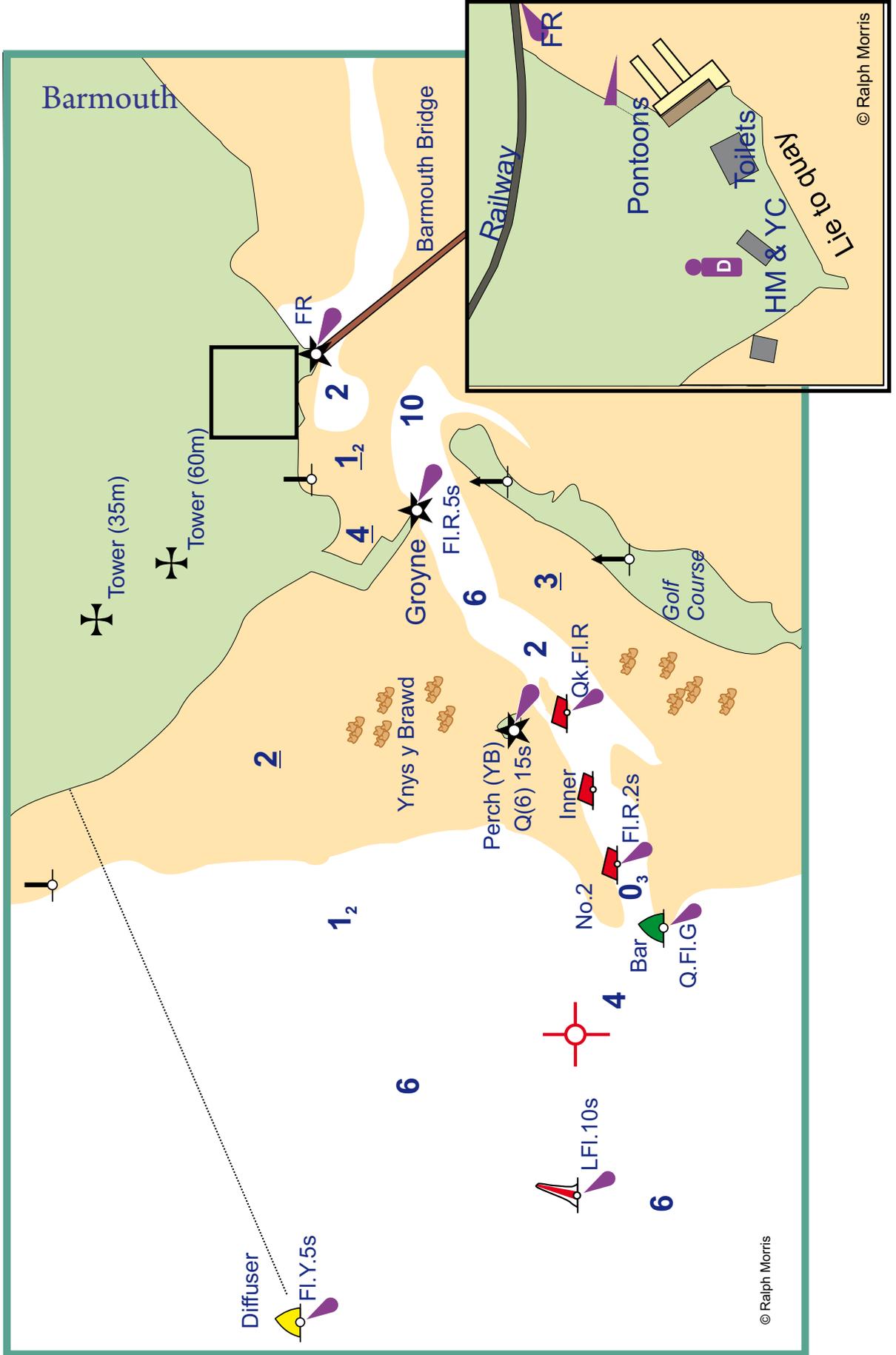
**NOTES**

Shell Island ☎ 01341 241453

[www.shellisland.co.uk](http://www.shellisland.co.uk)

Above: Entrance looking North from quay.  
Right: Quay





**POSITION** 52°42'.70N 004°04'.50W  
**CHARTS** C51, C61, SC5609, 1971, 1484



## Barmouth (Abermaw)

### TIDES

High: HW (Dover) -0255  
 Slack: HW (Dover) -0255  
 Height: 5.0 3.5 1.8 0.7



### APPROACH

The approach is straightforward. Enter between local HW±3hrs and only then in fair conditions. The Bar is situated ½nm E of Barmouth Outer buoy. Note the R can (PHM) marking the channel lying S of the lit S card. perch (YB, Q(6)).

### DANGERS

The Spring ebb runs at 5kn. through the narrows creating short, steep seas in onshore winds. Entry is dangerous in strong SW winds. The Bar is subject to constant change and has a least depth of 0.3m (1 foot!). Deep water moorings are not protected by the groyne to the north of the harbour. A drying sanbank lies between the Pool and the quay.

### SHELTER

The Pool is exposed in SW winds above half tide and use of a dinghy can be dangerous in poor conditions.

### LIGHTS & MARKS

Barmouth Outer 52°42'.72N 004°04'.91W L.Fl.10s.

Bar Buoy 52°42'.56N 004°04'.33W QG

No.2 52°49'.62N 004°04'.11W Fl.R.2s.

Inner 52°49'.64N 004°03'.94W

PHM 52°42'.79N 004°03'.68W QR

Perch 52°42'.82N 004°03'.73W Q(6).15s

Groyne 52°42'.99N 004°03'.11W Fl.R.5s

### FACILITIES

Berthing is available alongside quay with electric points and toilet facilities. Possibility of pontoon berth at inner end of quay. Visitors' moorings. The town does not have a chandlers but there is some limited engineering capability. Red diesel is available via the harbourmaster.

Barmouth is a busy holiday town with all the usual amenities, and many small provisioners & food outlets. The train is the primary form of public transport, roads in the area being reminiscent of the stagecoach era and generally unsuited to buses.

The Three Peaks Yacht Race starts from Barmouth in mid-June each year.

### NOTES

Harbour Master } 01341 280671

Ch12, 16

Merioneth YC } 01341 280000

[www.merionethyachtclub.co.uk](http://www.merionethyachtclub.co.uk)





**POSITION** 52°32'.00N 004°05'.30W  
**CHARTS** C51, C61, SC5609, 1972, 1484



## Aberdovey (Aberdyfi)

### TIDES

High: HW (Dover) -0257  
 Slack: HW (Dover) -0257  
 Height: 5.0 3.7 2.0 0.7

**COASTGUARD: Milford Haven MRSC**



### APPROACH

From N beware Sarn-y-Bwch: from S beware Sarn Warrog and Cynfelyn Patches. Care must be taken to identify the Bar buoy (G.Con.) and not let down on the larger South Spit G. Con. buoy. With Aberdovey Outer and Bar in transit, steer 090°T, keeping within the buoyed channel. Banks cause eddies & cross currents. Follow buoyed channel to jetty. Approach only above half tide ( $\pm 3$ hr).

### DANGERS

Watch for drift onto North Bank on flood (N-going) tide of 2+ kn. The bar creates a severe and dangerous sea extending past South Spit. Banks are steep-sided.

### SHELTER

Good from most directions below gale conditions against jetty (3m) and on moorings. Beware swell entering harbour in gale conditions above half tide (when banks are covered).

### LIGHTS & MARKS

Aberdovey Outer 52°32'.00N 004°05'.56W Iso. 4s  
 No.2 52°32'.04N 004°04'.83W Fl.R.5s

Bar 52°32'.99N 004°04'.76W Fl.G.5s  
 South Spit 52°32'.17N 004°04'.32W QG  
 No.5 52°32'.19N 004°04'.04W Fl.G.4s  
 No.7 52°32'.25N 004°03'.46W Fl.G  
 No.9 52°32'.33N 004°03'.19W Fl.G.6s  
 No.11 52°32'.48N 004°02'.86W

### FACILITIES

Usual facilities of holiday town. Good rail services, limited bus routes. Diesel. Hauling, storage & engineering at Ynyslas Boatyard on S side of river. Limited access.

### NOTES

Harbourmaster } 01654 764626/07879 433148  
 Stockford Marine } 01970 871405/07891 088858  
 RNLI - ILB

Aberdovey lies in the operating purview of Milford Haven coastguard.  
 Milford Haven CG } 01646 690909



