

BO'NESS: TOWN HARBOUR (TC LEITH + 27 mins) (see plan*)

Approach: from North/North East. Avoid two beacons standing about 1200m North of the harbour and beware of submerged obstructions beyond the end of the West pier, marked by a North cardinal beacon. Harbour entrance lit by 2FR (vert) on East pier and 2FG (vert) on West pier. Harbour dries 2 ½ hours after HW.

Berthing: Moor on East pier. Subject to surge in strong W-NW winds. Berth dries on smooth mud – can be entered approximately 1 hour either side of HW. There is an exposed berth on hard ground on the outside face of the East pier. This is best left clear for commercial craft (Maid of the Forth).

Beware old moorings in the middle of the harbour. These restrict room to manoeuvre, larger yachts best warped onto the berth. The east wall has no ladders, is very rough and is exposed to wave action.

Landing may be made at lower states of the tide by the Pilot Steps on the outside of the East pier, very slippery but new stainless handrail fitted 2004. No LW landing.

The harbour is badly silted with deep gullies. New ladders and bollards were fitted in 2004 and the old wooden fendering removed.

Preparations for the redevelopment of the outer harbour and dock as a marina with a lock entrance are well advanced. While the works are in progress the harbour will be closed. Therefore it is recommended that those intending to visit should check on the status of the harbour.

No other facilities at harbour. All town centre facilities are nearby, via the foot bridge (new 2004) over the dock entrance. A footpath to the town has been laid. This crosses the railway line. It is negotiable by wheel chairs. Toilets in Register Street car park, behind the Post Office open 9am-5pm, 24hr automat in East Pier St. Showers at Bo'ness Recreation Centre (swimming pool), Gauze Road, 1 mile, phone 01505 828352 for opening times. Falkirk Council Office (Harbour Authority) next to Post Office.

Leaving boats unattended is not advised. The Police Station on Union Street has a view of the yacht berth from its first floor but this station is not continuously manned. Phone 01506 822877, calls automatically routed to Grangemouth if Bo'ness Station closed. On the front of the Bo'ness Police Station there is a phone link with the Grangemouth Police Station.

The proximity of town centre facilities to the pier makes Bo'ness useful to craft transiting the Forth and Clyde Canal and wishing to re-supply. Shops include Tesco and Lidl, two garages (Hastons in Corbiehall and Riddels in Dock St), motor accessories on North St, hardware in South St, tackle shop on Main St. Petrol and diesel at local garages..

Takeaway food - Kettle Drum (Chinese) in South Street, Corvi's (fish and chips), Sea View Place and Stav's (kebabs/pizza), North Street – opposite Woolworths.

Tourist information office located at the Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS).

The SRPS engine sheds, station and museum are adjacent to the dock. Steam trains run to Birkhill fire clay mine (3 miles) where a tour may be made underground while the train waits.

Kinneil House, Museum, Roman Fortlet on the Antonine Wall and church ruin 1 ½ miles. Cottage and boiler at Kinneil House with James Watt associations. End of the Antonine Wall not known but terminates in the Carriden area. A replica of a Roman distance slab found nearby can be seen set in a wall near the foot of Harbour Road. The original is in the RMS. The Dimmock building, next to the library is the oldest in the town. The library building is an 18th century tobacco warehouse. Much of the rest of the town is Victorian.

* Amendments to plans:

- Insert lights on East and West piers
- Insert North cardinal mark on foul ground off the end of the West pier
- Delete “Bottom foul” from outside wall of East pier. This was cleared 2004.
- Delete Foul Bottom below East wall of harbour
- Add caveat regarding soundings - “Constant deposition of dredging spoil off Bo’ness means soundings are optimistic and are outdated WRT Admiralty charts. No recent hydrographic survey”.

CARRIDEN (see plan)

Located at very East of Bo’ness – in front of tall church spire. LW landing at the slipway of the Carriden Boatyard Ltd, has two large sheds, one with pitched roof, one with semi-circular roof, Nissen hut style. In the Second World War yard was Thomson and Balfour a builder of the Fairmile B Type Motor Launch, a submarine chaser, which was used in the St Nazaire raid. Its displacement of 85 long tons, LOA 112ft and 18ft 3in beam gives an idea of the size of the slipway, the largest above Port Edgar. The winding house remains but not the winding gear. The surface of this slip is rough but useable. At HW small craft can secure alongside the small private timber jetty of the adjacent yard (JB Allan) with the owner’s permission. Taking the ground is not advised. Exposed from West through N to E. Small shops, PO and takeaway food at Grangepans 1 mile. All facilities in Bo’ness town centre 1 ½ miles.

Stopping only recommended for boatyard services, to visit Burnfoot House (ruin) and the Carriden churches, one in use and one a picturesque ruin. Notable graves include those of Admiral Sir James Hope of Carriden House, whose father Sir George commanded HMS Defence at Trafalgar, and C19th industrialist Dr James Roebuck. There is a memorial to Colonel James Gardiner (born at Burnfoot House) who fought on the Government side against the Jacobites and fell at the battle of Prestonpans.

GRANGEPANS (see plan*)

HQ of Upper Forth Boat Club where visitors are welcome. Bay located midway between Carriden Boatyard Ltd and the Town Harbour. Some shelter for small yachts can be obtained from West in bay off Club yard – dries with soft level mud. Local boats moor here, greater space East of the disused sewer pipe (marked by a beacon). No LW landing. Small craft can lie alongside Club pier where there are dinghy and patent slips.

A significant landmark, new 2002, is a large steel frame building East of the UFBC, part of Anderson's saw dust works.

Facilities at main road, small food shops, sub PO, café and two take away food premises. Tap at Club yard. All town centre facilities in Bo'ness ½ mile.

Bay open from NW to East.

The UFBC railway system can be useful in emergency but this option depends on the state of the tide, springs necessary for deeper draught yachts, and the availability of a spare bogey.

The former ship breaking yard of P&W McLellan just East of the UFBC at Bridgeness was the last call of many ships of which Falkirk Museum Service has a database. They include the Bencleuch, a compartment of which forms the clubhouse of the UFBC. Other notables were the passenger liner Columbia 27132 tons, the Metagama 12420 tons, especially well known to those of the Western Isles and Canada as an emigrant ship and the passenger/cargo V/L Minnetonka 21998 tons. The yard has not yet been redeveloped and the frames and stern post of the steam drifter Acquisition, crane bases and other relics remain.

At "the ship breaking" is the surviving pier head of Bridgeness harbour in a ruinous condition. Yachts may come alongside the end of this at HW but taking the ground is not advised. Mooring warps attached to lengths of timber may be dropped in the gaps between the granite cap stones. Legend has it that a U boat was buried when Bridgeness harbour was filled in. There is possibly some truth in this as a U boat engine room was used as a power plant in the harbour and other small vessels were buried. Many U boats were broken locally.

Immediately further East are the remains of a coal berth for loading coal from Bo'ness pits from railway wagons.

Shore walks in Grangepans are notable for the opportunity to collect sherds of Bo'ness pottery and kiln furniture. Fossils are occasionally found in the mine spoil with which this coast was reclaimed.

High quality domestic ornamental ironwork may be purchased from Ballantine's foundry.

Bo'ness Motor Museum in Bridgeness Road.

See the Cruising Guide <http://www.fyca.org.uk/> for The Bo'ness Waterfront.

Revised 21 January 2008