



Exeter Port Authority Local Notice to Mariners

No. 11/20

13th May 2020

Covid-19 Notice to all recreational vessels

Until further notice

We understand that the last 36 hours has been a one of conflicting advice for all. We have received updated information from the government this morning and have made the following decision to move forward with lifting restrictions on the River Exe.

From 00:01 on Thursday 14th May 2020 recreational boat owners (using any type of vessel, whether motorised or not) are permitted to use their boats in local waters for recreational purposes as part of their daily exercise and recreation away from their homes, **but not for overnight accommodation**. Boat skippers may only be accompanied by persons permanently residing at the same address or, where the vessel is sufficiently large to maintain social distancing, with one other person from a different household.

DEFRA issued guidance on 13 May 20: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-guidance-on-access-to-green-spaces>

In England you can leave your home to exercise and spend time outdoors for recreation.

You can now:

- Spend time outdoors, including exercise, alone, with your household, or with one person who is not in your household as long as you stay two metres apart exercise more than once a day
- Take part in other outdoor sports and activities, including fishing – on your own, with your household, or with one other person while adhering to social distancing rules

- Drive to outdoor open spaces, including beaches and beauty spots, irrespective of distance. You should travel in a private vehicle, alone or with members of your own household.
- You should check first if facilities, such as car parks, are open to receive visitors and, when in the countryside, continue to follow the Countryside Code by respecting the local community and protecting the natural environment
- Go swimming in either lakes or the sea as part of daily exercise provided that social distancing guidelines are observed – you cannot use public indoor and outdoor pools
- All forms of water sports practiced on open waterways, including sailing, windsurfing, canoeing, rowing, kayaking, surfing, paddle-boarding and the use of privately-owned motorised craft (in line with the guidance issued by the relevant navigation authority) are allowed. You can continue to use towpaths for walking, running and cycling, being mindful of other users and people living in boats along the water

There are no restrictions on how far you can travel to get to the countryside. However, you cannot visit and stay overnight at a holiday home or second home.

Owing to some of the restrictions that remain in place, and reduced commercial activity, there is expected to be a far lower level of traffic density making reporting and response to any incident potentially far slower. Many vessels on the river will not have been used for a considerable time. In order to minimise the need for our emergency services to be mobilised, potentially placing them and you at risk, the following conditions should apply:

- The latest weather forecast should be obtained and vessels are to be checked and inspected thoroughly before leaving the berth. This should include ensuring that all boat systems and engines are operating correctly and all equipment is in date and operating as it should.
- Lifejackets or buoyancy aids should be worn by all on-board for your own safety.
- Boat skippers are urged to exercise good seamanship, courtesy, patience and common sense as they begin to move around the river.
- The skipper and crew of all vessels are required to follow government guidance in relation to COVID-19 to protect themselves and others they may come into contact with.

Visiting Craft

- We do not anticipate visiting vessels from sea overnighing as government guidance excludes overnight stays away from home.

- Exeter Port Authority visitor facilities remain closed for boats from outside the river, but we do expect river users to move boats to their annual residential moorings, including from other marinas and yards in the region.
- Vessels arriving into the Exe Estuary from sea should make contact with us in advance to clarify their situation and therefore the suitability of their travel. Rules on arrival from overseas are being reviewed.

Please note that the advice contained here is very new and Exeter Port Authority and other marine businesses around the river will need to adjust their routines and ensure that the risk from infection of Covid-19 can be reduced by maintenance of distancing guidelines.

Please be considerate and allow staff time to assess the level of service they are able to provide. This is for your safety and that of the emergency services and the NHS. Exeter Port Authority will continue to review the situation and any new Government guidance. We appreciate your continued support in maintaining safe and efficient port operations whilst being able to enjoy the benefits of getting afloat.

Notices 09/20 and 10/20 is hereby cancelled.

Any queries please contact the harbour office on 01395 223 265 or email epa@exeter.gov.uk

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