

Notes for new members of Forth Corinthian Yacht Club

These notes are to give new members guidance on how to use our facilities. They are based on the advice provided to new members at recent new members evenings.

The guidance isn't exhaustive but it will help you get going. If in doubt, please ask.

Sailing in the Forth

Tides: flow eastwards and westwards along the Forth. Usually no more than about 1 knot max at spring tides.

Granton Harbour is accessible from half tide onwards (about 2.6 meters of tide seems to work)

Weather: the main factor affecting sailing is the wind. Westerlies can produce a choppy sea while easterlies may produce bigger waves, especially in a NE wind. Easterlies can also blow in the haar which is often very thick. For the most part the Forth immediately to the north of Granton Harbour is protected from the worst of the North Sea by Inchkeith Island.

The free [Windy app](#) is very useful for getting forecasts and contains plenty of helpful detail. It is worth downloading onto your phone.

Things to watch out for while sailing

Not too many obstacles but in no particular order here's a few to be aware of:

Large boats entering or exiting Leith Harbour. They can come up on you surprisingly quickly. Stay to the west of the red Leith Approach Buoy which is to the west of Leith harbour entrance.

Shipping lanes 1: there's one to the south of Inchkeith that is used by ships headed for Leith. They will come up the lane and turn at the Leith Approach Buoy to line up for the harbour entrance.

Shipping Lanes 2: there's a second shipping lane for boats going up the Forth to the north of Oxcar Lighthouse. Ships using this lane will have limited mobility, be restricted by their depth and may be going relatively fast. Best to keep out of their way, letting them pass, if you can't cross the shipping lane in good time.

Be careful around the south of Inchkeith Island where there are some nasty skerries and a wreck. Give these a wide berth, especially on a falling tide.

The waters immediately outside the harbour can be choppy. The tide also flows across the mouth of the harbour which may pull you across the entrance so keep an eye on your position as you enter.

Use of the Harbour

Moorings are allocated based on boat draft, hull type and displacement, such that when the tide comes in after the harbour being dried out they all rise together. This reduces the chances of collision of adjacent boats when re-floating if the wind direction has changed while the boats are dried out over a low tide.

There are roughly 75 FCYC moorings and are identified by numbering and yellow buoys. The remainder of moorings are RFYC and are identified with orange buoys

The moorings are serviced every winter, by the volunteers and the Harbour Team.

The harbour bed is soft mud and is useable from half tide onwards.

The club has a hard limit on boat sizes of 32 ft, with boats up to a max of 27 ft preferred. Note: we have a few boats over these sizes but we are not encouraging more and have limited and rarely available moorings that can accommodate larger boats

The club has two motor launches for the use of members ferrying to their boats (Dumbo and Wee Dumbo). We also have a metal rowing boat, Timbo. There is also a mooring workboat L/O Linklater and committee boat Luffy, which is used for race officials and for other club events.

Please avoid using the club boats below half tide and be careful to avoid the junks (mooring lines) as these can become tangled. If a club boat is damaged please report this asap to the Harbour Secretary or Rear Commodore so that they can be repaired.

The Dumbos are only for the use of full members and members must be shown how to use them before using them independently.

Lastly the harbour and surrounding foreshore are an SSSI. Sailors need to be vigilant about disposing of rubbish, fuel spills etc. to avoid damaging the area.

Using the pontoons

The pontoon is jointly owned between the Royal Forth YC and Forth Corinthian YC through Edinburgh Marina Ltd.

During the sailing season boats that stay overnight on the pontoon are charged a fee based on the length overall rounded up to the nearest half metre. Details of current rates and how to pay are on page 6 of the FCYC Club Handbook.

Volunteers check which boats are on the pontoon each evening and morning to check payments against overnight stays.

All boats should clearly display their name and club.

Boats are encouraged to moor up close to other boats on the pontoon to maximise available space.

Except for very short stays boats should use plenty of fenders along with springs and ideally snubbers to avoid unnecessary forces on both their boat's fixtures and those of the pontoon.

The north end of the pontoon is generally left free for any large visiting yachts.

Any problems, please message Jim Croasdale, the pontoon manager.

The Boatyard

The club has a fleet of boats that are relatively old and are kept going by members helping each other. This is very much how the club works, helping each other.

Work parties

The club holds regular work parties, typically a few hours on a weekend, to get jobs done. These are often manual tasks where members work together under the supervision of someone experienced in the task at hand.

Locking up

Every member is responsible for locking up the club facilities. If you are the last person please ensure the Bell Block, Workshop, Toilets etc are all locked up. We have a lot of valuable equipment stored in the Boatyard which needs to remain secure.

The workshop

Members are expected to provide their own tools to maintain their boats. We do have a workshop which has some larger tools (e.g. band saw and bench drill) that members may use, along with a bench and vice. If you want to use any item and are unsure how to operate it please see Martin Palmer our House Convenor.

Projects

We have a range of other items that may be useful if you have a larger project such as swapping out an engine. See Martin (House Convenor) to discuss your needs.

Safety and developing your sailing skills

Safety

Lifejackets – please consider wearing a life jacket when in the harbour or sailing outside. People on the raceboat outside the harbour must wear a lifejacket.

Some members like to have a drink while they sail. We don't have any specific rules about drinking and sailing but encourage members to limit their drinking while sailing in the same way they might if driving a car.

Developing your sailing skills

FCYC does not provide any formal training but there are many opportunities gain experience and boating skills from fellow members. Use the *Racing and Cruising* and *Yard Talk* WhatsApp groups to offer your services as crew at club events and to ask technical questions about boats and sailing.

Formal training

Go to an RYA Training Centre.

[Edinburgh Watersports](#), locally based at Port Edgar, Queensferry offer a good range of useful courses that will help you develop both practical skills and theory.

At some point you will be tempted to the West Coast of Scotland. There are several RYA training centres operating in the Clyde and elsewhere. If you have a mind to complete your RYA Competent Crew / Day Skipper or more advanced qualifications, this is a great location to spend a week sailing. Use <https://www.rya.org.uk/> to find training centres.