

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT

Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuaries

Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries provide the perfect base for exploring some of Britain's most attractive coasts and estuaries. Personal Watercraft (PWC), in common with all water users, have a duty to look out for others, and to ensure they ride in a safe and responsible manner.

Where to use your PWC

All recreational craft users are advised to keep well clear of the main channels around the Port of Plymouth.

The Queens Harbour Master has designated high speed areas specifically for waterskiing, jet skiing, and power boating, shown on the chart.

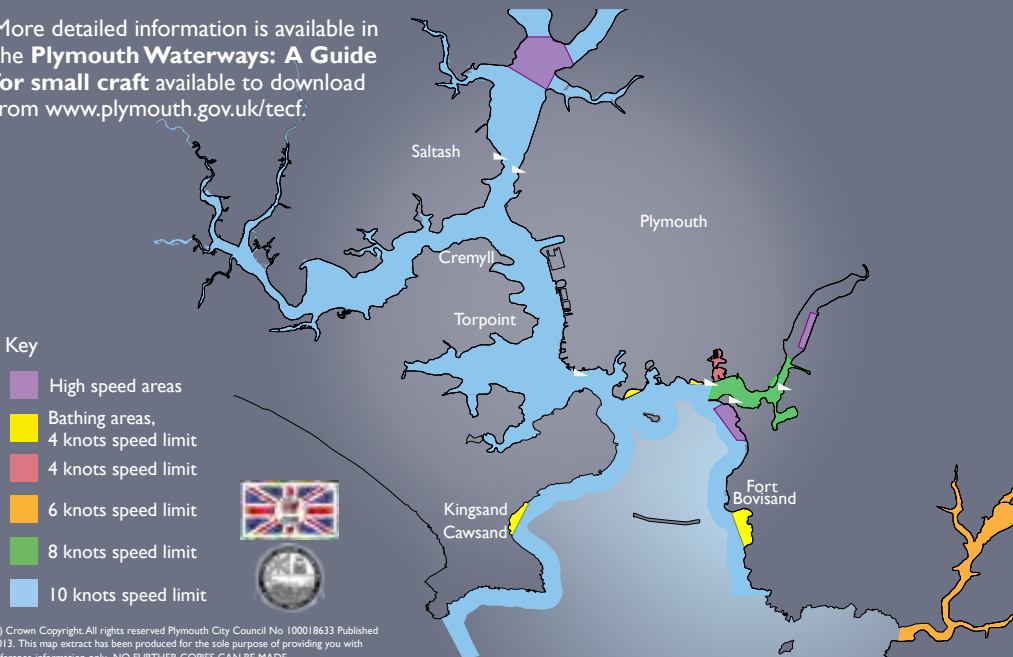
PWCs must also comply with the local speed limits outside of the high speed areas, as shown on the chart.

The Ministry of Defence Police have the powers to prosecute anyone who infringes the speed limits within the Port of Plymouth.

More detailed information is available in the **Plymouth Waterways: A Guide for small craft** available to download from www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf.

DOs!

- Comply with the *International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea* and the *Dockyard Port of Plymouth Order 1999* - check www.qhm.mod.uk/plymouth.
- Always wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid.
- Be aware of high and low water times.
- Know the collision regulations.
- Have the relevant insurance cover.
- Always use your kill cord - this will cut the engine if you fall off your PWC.
- Look out for dive marks, buoys and swimmers. Remember, divers may be just below the surface.
- It is recommended that children under 16 do not operate a PWC.



Launching Sites

The main slipways for launching are indicated on the chart. PWC must be driven at slow speeds, keeping wash to a minimum, to the designated areas for uses.

There are various other slipways throughout the area, which can be used with care - see the contacts section for details.

Bathing Areas

There are five designated bathing areas in the area, as shown on the chart. It is advised to avoid bathing areas - these are clearly marked with yellow buoys during the summer season. If passage through a bathing area is absolutely necessary then craft must not exceed 4 knots, and must proceed with extreme caution, giving way to swimmers.

Key Equipment Needed on a PWC

- First aid kit
- Full tank of petrol and oil
- VHF radio and/or mobile phone
- Small fire extinguisher
- Flare pack
- Rope
- Small anchor
- Torch
- Toolkit

Personal Equipment Needed

- Suitable clothing - wet/dry suit
- Buoyancy aid or life jacket
- Goggles or sunglasses
- Kill cord
- Foot protection
- Gloves
- Whistle

Contacts and Further Information

Safety on the Sea Personal Watercraft Guidance www.rnli.org.uk
International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea www.rya.org.uk
Details of Slipways www.qhm.mod.uk/plymouth/leisure/access-points
Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) www.mcga.gov.uk
Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) www.plymouth.gov.uk/tecf
Queens Harbour Master Plymouth www.qhm.mod.uk/plymouth
Cattewater Harbour Commissioner www.plymouthport.org.uk

Look out for the Environment

Plymouth Sound and the Tamar Estuaries is a designated European Marine Site. In order to maintain this important environment, PWC users should follow these guidelines:

- Avoid the areas of important eelgrass beds
- Do not throw rubbish into the sea and take care not to spill any petrol or oil when refuelling
- Avoid disturbing areas of the upper Tamar Estuaries, which are important to birdlife
- Avoid the mudflat areas as much as possible, particularly between November and March, when important bird species are building up their winter reserves
- Marine mammals, such as dolphins are often seen in Plymouth Sound and are susceptible to disturbance. If you see these animals, slow down and keep a constant speed and direction to avoid startling them

Incidents

In an emergency contact the Coastguard on 999 or VHF channel 16. All incidents within the Port of Plymouth, including any PWC acting irresponsibly, should be reported to Longroom on VHF channel 14 or on 01752 663225.



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