
RYA Guide to the River Medina



Past the hustle and bustle of Cowes on the Isle of Wight, the upper reaches of the Medina River often go unexplored. But it offers with great waterside pubs, a clench of interesting marinas and yards, and plentiful alongside mooring.

The Medina takes its name from the Saxon, 'Medene' meaning Middle River because it nearly splits the island in half. The Medina is navigable to the capital, Newport, but the source stems from the chalk springs high on St Catherine's Down on the south side of the Island.

Newport is a great lunch stop as it offers more than 2m of water for four hours every tide, or overnight stop if you can dry out.

Top of the river and the Quay Arts centre and access to the shops and pubs

Getting started

Passing the chain ferry signals the start of the journey upstream. It displays a white flashing light when on the move. In the river, Whitegates visitor's pontoons offer a quieter night and are serviced by harbour taxis.

East Cowes Marina

East Cowes Marina offers visitors berths at its downstream end and the well frequented 'The Lifeboat' pub. Nestling behind the marina is the RNLI Inshore Lifeboat Centre where most of the organisations inshore lifeboats are built.



East Cowes Marina and the Lifeboat pub (chart pt2)

Passing the power station chimneys, a long pontoon to starboard and buoyage to port marks the start of Folly reach.



The start of Folly reach (chart pt3)



The spire of St Mildred's church to port marks the resting place of Sam Saunders designer of the first 50 knot powerboat, and Uffa Fox the pioneer of planning dinghies and the first airborne lifeboat - parachuted by aircraft to aid downed aircrew in WW2.

The spire of St Mildred's Church (chart pt 4)

Folly Reach and Inn

The Folly reach offers plenty of visitor's pontoons, served by a water taxi and some walk ashore pontoon berths leading to the popular Folly Inn.

The reach was the setting off point for convict ships to Australia.

So the tale that The Folly Inn originated from a barge that ran aground whilst selling illegal liquor in the 1700s, could well be true.



Folly Inn pontoon and Inn (background) with water taxi landing (right) (chart pt5)

Island Harbour

Passing Folly Pt. the channel bears to starboard and is well buoyed.



To port, the holding pontoon and distinctive lock tower of Island Harbour Marina come into view.

Formerly, a tide mill dating to 1790, now a locked marina with bistro and bar.

It offers access for 4' draft 4 ½ hrs either side of HW and handles vessels over 2m draft. A scenic footpath runs from Folly Inn to Island Harbour continuing to Newport.

Island Harbour holding pontoon leading into the lock. White lock tower (right) (chart pt. 6)

The buoyed channel passes under electricity pylons (30m+clearance) and Medina Valley Centre pontoon to starboard. The Newport Rowing Club dates to 1863, the clubhouse projects into the river.



Newport Rowing Club boathouse with Newport ahead (chart pt. 7). Transits (far left)



A transit marks the port side of the channel through the buoys.

A gentle turn to starboard reveals the commercial quays and small craft moorings of Newport.

Newport Harbour entrance buoys and transits (chart pt.8)

Newport

The harbour authority visitors' pontoon runs to port and the Odessa boatyard to starboard. If you intend staying overnight, both dry, so either dry out on the pontoon or move to the walls adjacent the Boatman's Rest pub.

Once a thriving port, the commercial aspect of the port has mainly been replaced by visitor attractions such as the classic boat museum, the vintage bus museum, Quay Arts and the shops of Newport. It's a great place to escape and to start your exploration of the rest of the island by bus or bike.



Newport harbour looking downstream. Public pontoon (right) (chart pt. 9)



Fact File

Web

Cowes Online	www.cowes.co.uk/zonexml/index
Cowes Harbour Commission	www.cowesharbourcommission.co.uk/
The Folly Inn	www.thefollyinn.com
Classic Boat Museum	www.classicboatmuseum.org

VHF

Port working channel	Ch.69 – Call sign ‘Cowes Harbour Radio’
Harbourmaster’s launch	Ch.69
Harbour Taxi	Ch.77 – Call sign ‘Harbour Taxi’
Shepards Wharf Marina	Ch.80 and 69 – Call sign ‘Shepards Wharf Marina’
Cowes Yacht Haven	Ch.80 – Call sign ‘Cowes Yacht Haven’
East Cowes Marina	Ch.80 – Call sign ‘East Cowes Marina’
Folly Launch	Ch.72 – Call sign ‘Folly Launch’
Island Harbour Control Tower	Ch.80 – Call sign ‘Island Harbour’

Tides

Cowes

Range	Spring	3.4m	MHWS 4.2	MLWS 0.8
	Neap	1.7m	MHWN 3.5	MLWN 1.8

Newport Quay caters for 2m draft vessels from - 0130 HW Portsmouth to + 0230.

Slipways - West Cowes

Whitegates Pontoon

Slipway between Thetis Wharf and Shepards Wharf Marina

Red Funnel Pontoon SOUTH SIDE ONLY

Sun Slip, by the HSBC Bank

Market Slip, by the Waterside Pub

Watch House Slip, adjacent to HM Customs, giving access to the Parade

South end of Trinity Landing

Egypt Point, slipway immediately to east of the Point

Slipways - East Cowes

Medina Slipway, just north of Cowes Waterfront hangar and in front of the barracks

White Hart Slip, immediately south of the Red Funnel ferry terminal

Pontoon south of Trinity Wharf

Folly Slip, Folly Reach

Charts

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Imray 2200.9 – Isle of Wight and Solent plans

Imray C15 – The Solent

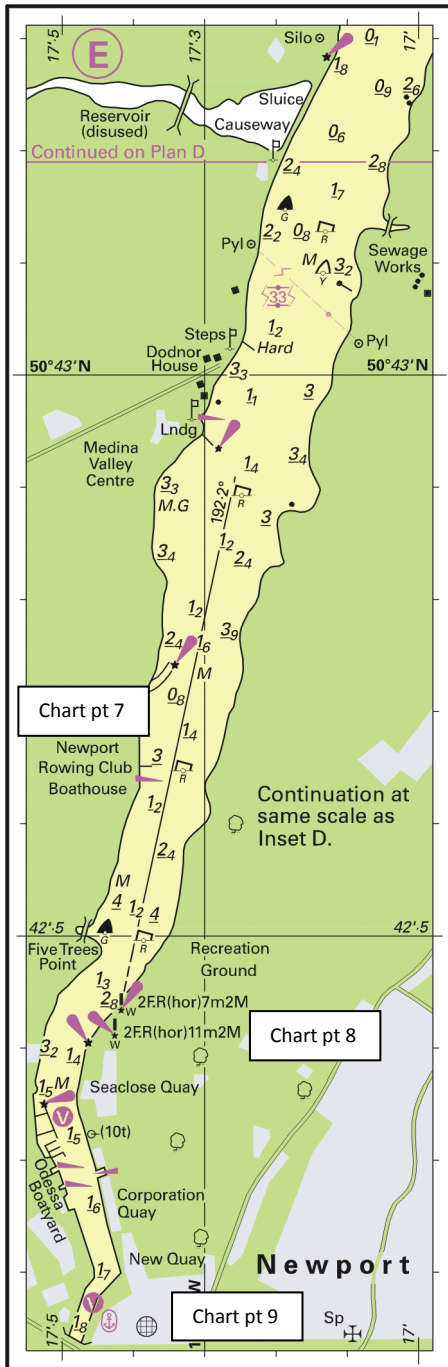
BA 2793 – Cowes Harbour and Medina River

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