

CROSSING BREYDON WATER

Bridge Clearance

Clearance at mean high water during the summer is given below, but always check the bridge clearance boards. Look out for additional advance clearance boards as you approach bridges 1 and 3. The river is narrow and tides can be strong. Lower your canopy in plenty of time. Make sure everyone is down inside the boat.

MAXIMUM HEIGHT UNDER BRIDGE	
FEET	METRES
5	1.50
6	1.75
7	2.0
8	2.25
	2.50

1 Breydon Bridge 3.96m (13'.00")

Pleasure craft capable of passing under the bridge are requested to go through the right hand side span in each direction.



Navigate between the two arrows on the bridges



Stop lights indicate you must NOT pass through the centre span

2 Vauxhall Bridge 2.06m (6'.09")

3 Yarmouth/Acle Road Bridge 2.13m (7'.00")

NB: In all cases tidal levels can vary considerably and so affect the above figures.

North Quay
Mooring for emergencies and demasting only

Great Yarmouth Yacht Station
Moor **against** the tide – quay assistants will help when possible

River Bure to northern Broads

Shallow corner - go around yellow post

No Hire Craft Beyond Here
Dangerous tides and North Sea ahead



WATCH OUT FOR WATER SKIERS in the central straight of Breydon Water – see signs on posts.

Berney Arms Reach – Broads Authority 24 hr free moorings for 8 boats

TAKE CARE HERE
Always stay in the channel between the red and green posts.

River Yare to Reedham

River Waveney to St. Olaves and Oulton Broad

KEY

Demasting structure

Lay-by mooring

Channel

Shallow water and mud

Strong currents outside slack water

Dangerous currents

This map is intended as a guide. Do not use for navigation.
www.broads-authority.gov.uk

GREAT YARMOUTH BRIDGES & BREYDON WATER

Passage through Great Yarmouth

On the River Yare at Great Yarmouth there are three bridges; **Breydon Bridge**, **Haven Bridge** and the new **Herring Bridge**. All three are lifting bridges. As from the 1st January 2024, there was (but being challenged by NSBA) a passage charge for non-commercial craft transiting Great Yarmouth Harbour to and from the sea. At the time of writing, the proposed charge is £20 per vessel per direction of each passage required regardless of whether or not Bridge lifts are required. If intending to make such a passage, you should contact Peel Port's credit control department on 0151 949 6254 (Liverpool) to pay the charge; you will need to quote the vessel name and the date on which transit is required. Thereafter you should contact the Port Marine services on VHF channel 12 or call 01493 335522 to arrange a lift of either Haven Bridge or Herring Bridge (call 01493 448448), or both.

Boats coming from the River Yare or River Bure requiring a lift of only Breydon Bridge should telephone 01493 651275 or use call sign "Breydon Bridge" on VHF Channel 12. Lifts should be booked by 16:00 the previous day. Please note that Breydon Bridge is only manned 10 minutes prior to a booked lift.

Passage from Northern Rivers to Southern Rivers

When passing relatively low bridges, it is essential to know the air draft (total height above waterline) of your vessel. Page 124 lists the bridge heights of the bridges on the Broads at Average Summer High Water. Each bridge on the Broads has a tide gauge which shows quite clearly the air draft under the bridge. Look out for the tide gauges and if necessary have a pair of binoculars available to read them well in advance.

For the majority of boats on the Norfolk Broads, passing the bridges at Great Yarmouth is not really an issue since their air draft is sufficiently low that they will be able to pass under the bridges at almost any time other than high water spring tides. If your boat is one of those with an air draft of under 2m then the sensible thing to do is to arrive at the confluence of the Yare and Bure at about an hour and a quarter AFTER low-water at Yarmouth Yacht Station. You will pass under the Vauxhall Railway Bridge (which is the lower) with plenty of room to spare and you will arrive in the River Yare or the River Bure with a good tide to push you on your way either through Breydon Bridge and across Breydon Water or past the Yacht Station and up the River Bure.

Continued over



Aerial of Breydon Bridge – courtesy of Mike Page – www.mike-page.co.uk



Photo – Sue Hines

River Bure is top left of this image. A waiting pontoon (lay-by mooring) lies before the shallow corner (*The Knoll*) just before you enter the Bure.

Image on left shows the view heading south-west from **Vauxhall Bridge**. **Breydon Bridge** can be seen in top right of the image.

For larger vessels with an air draft of over 2m, it becomes necessary to “play the tides” and for very large seagoing vessels, there will be periods in the month when passage between North and South is not possible. For these vessels, it is necessary to look at tidal predictions (page 175) for when it is possible for a vessel of given air draft to make passage under the Vauxhall bridges. In most cases, the timing is critical.

When calculating predicted heights and times, remember that a change of 1mbar in atmospheric pressure changes the predicted height of tide by approximately 1cm. Thus if on the day of your passage the barometric pressure is 995mbar (Standard Pressure is 1015mb), the difference in water level against prediction will be 20cm or approximately 8 inches HIGHER (low pressure “sucks” the water up and high pressure “presses” the water level down). Approaching low-water, there is a period of about 20 minutes when the depth does not reduce by very much. After low-water, the rate of change in tidal depth increases quite quickly, so it is important for larger yachts to arrive early rather than late. The author recommends 20 to 30 minutes before low-water.

If you are coming southwards at or near spring tides, you will find that the River Bure is confined within a narrow channel as it flows past Yarmouth Yacht Station. The effect of this is to produce a very strong current and as you approach the bridges towards low-water you are being carried along at

quite a speed and it is difficult to stop. There are three tidal gauges on the approach, the first of which is about a half a mile before the first bridge – check the indicated clearance at that first gauge and if in doubt, back up and tie up on the moorings at the Yacht Station until the water level has dropped further: the staff at the Yacht Station are extremely helpful and can be contacted for advice on 01493 842794.

EMERGENCY

If you are passing Yarmouth Yacht Station and you realise that you are not going to get under the bridges, you need to act extremely quickly.

You will not, repeat NOT be able to turn your boat under its own power in the tideway with any chance of success before you arrive at the bridges.

The ONLY way you can turn your boat is to steer to starboard and put the bows of the boat into the wall – keep the engine running and pushing the bows of the boat against the wall; the tide will carry the stern of the boat round surprisingly quickly so that you will be facing up stream.

Yes, there will be some damage to your boat and some of your crew may be a little frightened, but you will all be alive to tell the tale and the damage to the boat will be minimal compared with impact on one of the Vauxhall bridges.

Victualling for Oulton Broad Yacht Station



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