



PILOTAGE DIRECTIONS 2025

Limits of Pilotage District

Bristol Harbour Authority is the Competent Harbour Authority for Bristol City Docks including Portishead Pier and approaches. See note 1 (limit of Pilotage District).

Under the **Pilotage Act 1987 (section 11-2 Use of Agents and Joint Agreements)**, a Competent Harbour Authority may arrange for all or any of its functions relating to pilotage other than its duty under **section 2(1)** to be exercised on its behalf by another competent harbour authority.

An agreement was made with The Bristol Port Company (BPC) in 1994 to provide pilotage services to Bristol Harbour Authority covering the harbour and Portishead Pier. The terms of the agreement are reviewed with BPC every 6 Months.

All aspects of maintaining a Pilotage Safety System are managed by BPC.

Bristol Harbour Authority, as the Competent Harbour Authority for Bristol City Docks including Portishead Pier Estate acting under powers contained in the Pilotage Act, 1987, gives the following Pilotage Directions to have effect from the 6th of April 2025.

Compulsory Pilotage

1. Bristol Harbour Authority directs that pilotage shall be compulsory for vessels:

Within Bristol's Floating harbour and Portishead Estate Pier which come within any one of the following descriptions.

(a) Vessels of 50 metres length or more overall.

(b) Tows of vessels (See Note 2) where the length overall of the vessel towed or combined length of multiple towed vessels is 50 metres or more.

(c) Sailing vessels (See Note 3) of 40 metres or more length on the water line.

(d) Any vessel, raft or floating project work in excess of 20 metres that by the nature of its construction, condition, or dimensions is deemed to require a passage plan and risk assessment, may on the result of said risk assessment be directed to take on a Pilot at the discretion of the Harbour Authority.

Pilotage Services

Bristol Harbour Authority directs that it is the responsibility of the Masters of vessels meeting the criteria for compulsory pilotage to engage the services of a Pilot. All costs for compulsory pilotage will be met by the vessel owner. Vessels which require the services of a Pilot must contact Bristol Channel Pilots Limited (bristolpilots.co.uk).

Embarkation and Disembarkation of Pilot.

Bristol Harbour Authority directs that every vessel, which requires the service of a pilot, embarks its pilot prior to breaking away from its mooring. Disembarkation should only take place when secured at the destination mooring.

Assistant Pilots

Bristol Harbour Authority directs that any vessel deemed to pose particular ship handling difficulties or other hazard by virtue of its size; draught or unusual characteristics shall embark an assistant pilot for all or part of any passage in the harbour area.

Additionally, any vessel by virtue of its size, draught or unusual characteristics is deemed, whilst navigating, to be likely to pose a hazard to other vessels using the harbour shall embark an assistant pilot.

Pilotage Exemption.

i) Portishead Pier

Pilotage exemption for Portishead Pier is available to bona fide Deck Officers that meet the required criteria.

To qualify the Applicant must berth on the pier at least 2 times in the previous 12 months under a Pilot or an existing Pilotage Exemption Certificate (PEC) holder.

Local knowledge is assessed prior to issuing the PEC.

A valid certificate of competency and a current MCA ENG 1 Medical Certificate are also required.

ii) Floating Harbour

Pilotage exemption for the Floating Harbour is available to bona fide Deck Officers that meet the required criteria.

To qualify the applicant must transit the harbour at least 3 times in the previous 12 months under a Pilot or an existing PEC holder.

Local knowledge is assessed prior to issuing the PEC.

A valid certificate of competency and a current MCA ENG 1 Medical Certificate are also required.

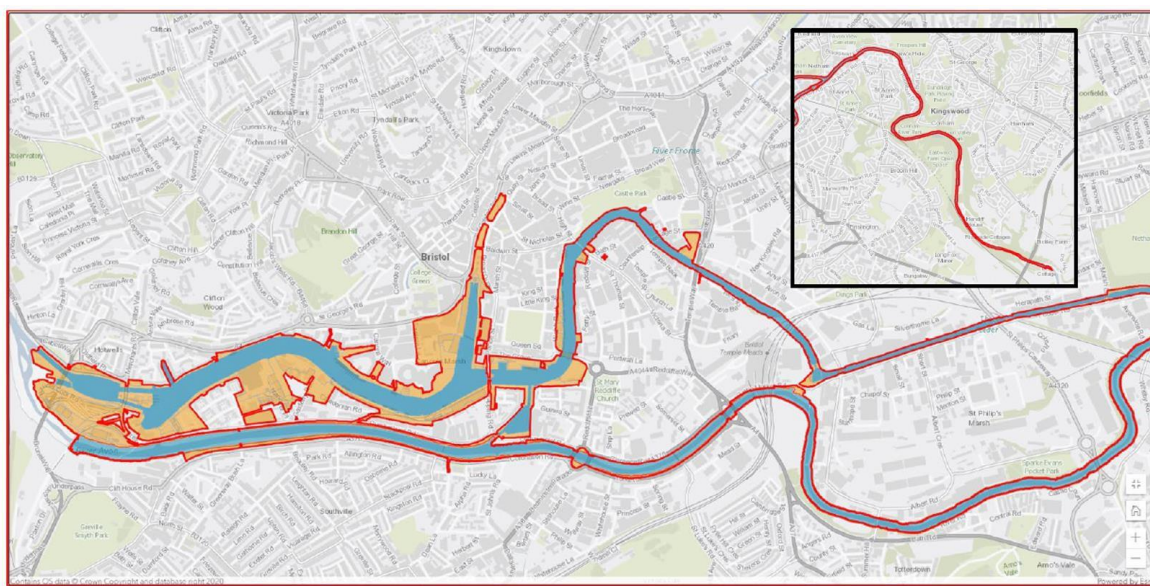
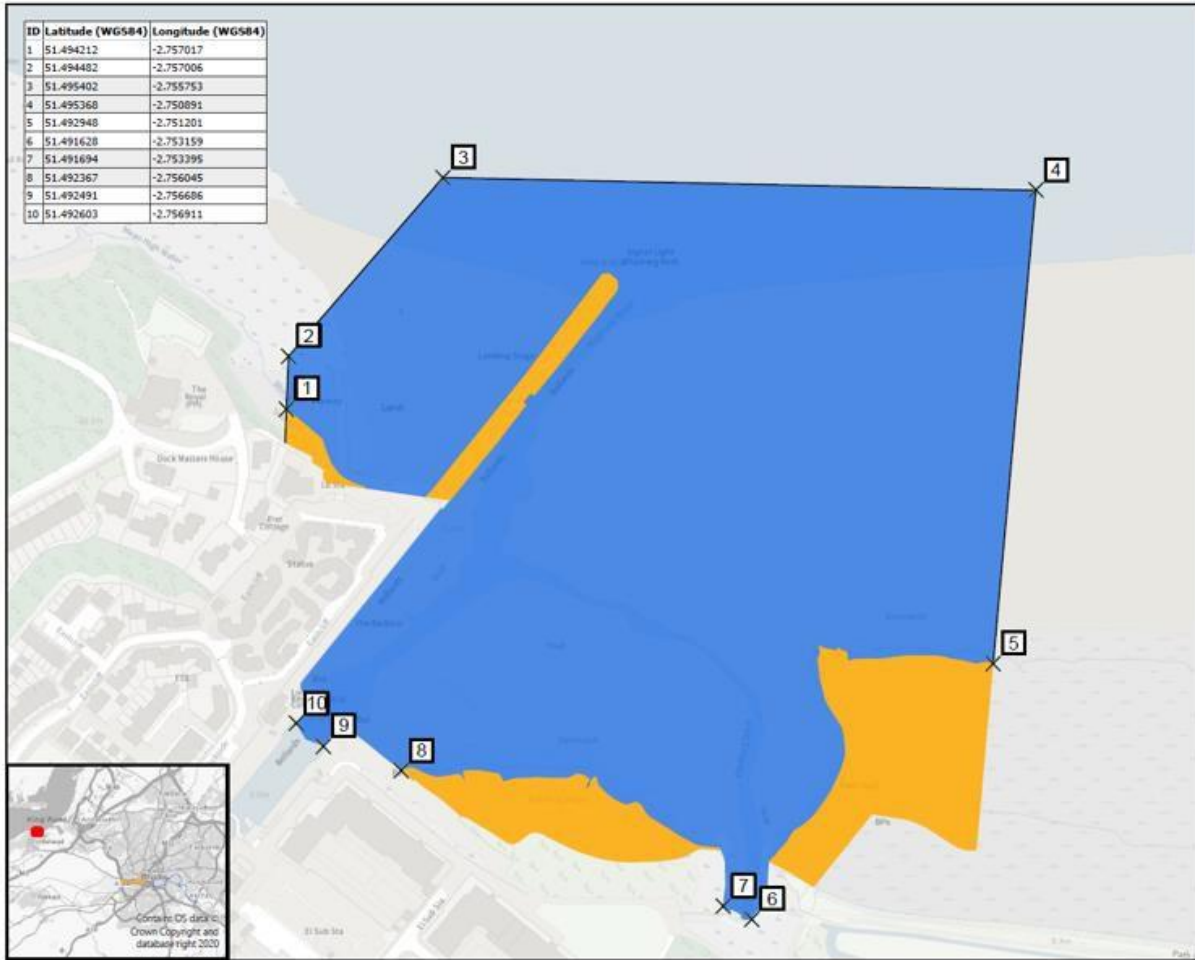
iii) PEC validity

PECs remain valid for a period of 12 months from the date of issue.

Bristol Harbour Authority may suspend or revoke a PEC if it ceases to be satisfied that the holder possesses the required skill, experience and local knowledge, or in cases of professional misconduct or the provision of false information.

Notes

1. Portishead pier and approaches (top) and Bristol Floating Harbour New Cut and River Avon (bottom).



2. A towed vessel in this context will include any vessel, barge, pontoon or other floating structure (whether manned or unmanned) which is not fitted with a means of mechanical propulsion or, if so fitted, does not have such means of mechanical propulsion available for immediate use.

3. Sailing vessel in this context will include any description of vessel provided with sufficient sail area for navigation under sails alone, whether or not fitted with mechanical means of propulsion.