

Ceredigion Marine Code for Commercial Passenger Boats in the Cardigan Bay SAC 2025

The Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC) the West Wales Marine SAC and the Ceredigion Marine Heritage Coast are internationally important areas for bottlenose dolphins, harbour porpoise and grey seals; the coastline is a nationally important area for nesting seabirds.

Produced using current UK best practice and evidence from the CCC monitoring programme; compliance with the Marine Code not only helps to ensure the future of Cardigan Bay as a prime wildlife watching destination, but also models best practice to other water users.

All commercial wildlife trips operating out of New Quay to follow set routes as used historically (incl. good/bad weather).

Minor deviation from routes to avoid approaching animals directly is actively encouraged.

Please note the Ceredigion Coast and Harbour bylaws stipulate 5 knots within the harbour limits (extends to Carreg Ina and to the fish factory) and 8 knots along the coast.

Marine mammals

- Keep at least 100 metres away from all marine mammals, including seals / seal pups resting on the rocks or on the shore.
- Remain stationary or cruise by at 100m from any individual or group – if there is another vessel 100m away, keep all boats on the same side of the animal.
- If you stop to watch, enjoy their company for a maximum time of 10 minutes.
- Proceed at 'no wake' speed, no more than 5 knots, and minimise manoeuvring when within 300m.
- Never approach directly, and do not deviate from agreed routes to see animals.
- If more than one boat is travelling in the same direction, go in single file rather than abreast.
- Do not stop with the same animal/group of animals more than once on the same trip.
- Do not enter the sea caves, these areas are a valuable seal haul out and pupping site.
- The headlands at Mwnt, Aberporth and Ynys Lochtyn; Craig yr Adar, Carreg Ina, Trwyn Crou and the caves just north towards New Quay are all sensitive areas; proceed at 'no wake' speed and at no more than 5 knots at all times in these areas, stopping distances in these sensitive areas are 200 metres from any animals encountered.
- The area off New Quay harbour wall is a 'no stopping' area for viewing wildlife.

Birds breeding season (1st April – 31st August)

- Keep at least 100m from the base of the cliffs when passing the seabird colonies.
- Travel at 'no wake' speed and at no more than 5 knots at all times when passing within 300m of the seabird colonies. Pass seabird colonies quietly (no tannoy commentary please).
- No stopping within 100 metres of the base of the cliffs. Keep stopping times to a minimum (no more than 10 minutes). When more than one watercraft is present, water users should not move inside the 100m to pass. To avoid 'bunching', please communicate with each other on intention to either 'move on' or 'visit on return'.
- Keep clear of groups of birds resting or feeding on rocks or the sea (at least 100 metres away) slow down and go around them.

Operator & Skipper Signature:

Vessel and Company:

To report disturbance, please contact:

if urgent ring Dyfed Powys police on 101

If non urgent please email

melanie.heath2@ceredigion.gov.uk

Or report on the Disturbance page on the CBSAC

website; link and QR code:

<https://cardiganbaysac.org.uk/disturbance>

