



COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION

LOCAL NOTICE TO MARINERS No. 20(T) of 2026

Round the Island Race – Saturday 11 July 2026

Central Solent – Traffic Restrictions

Notice is hereby given jointly by the King's Harbour Master Portsmouth, the Harbour Master ABP Southampton and the Cowes Harbour Master that the **Round the Island Race 2026** will commence from Cowes between **0700 and 0820** on **Saturday 11 July 2026**. Up to 800 yachts are expected to take place in the Race.

Mariners are advised that the Solent will be exceptionally congested during the event. All vessels are to navigate with particular caution and in accordance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs), local harbour regulations and directions issued by the relevant Harbour Authorities.

A full description of the Race is available from the Island Sailing Club (www.roundtheisland.org.uk).

The following summary is provided for informational purposes:

1. The start line extends from the Island shore at the Roal Yacht Squadron to an outer distance mark close to Williams Shipping Buoy.
2. Due to the number of competitors, class starts will be staggered at 10-minute intervals between **0700 and 0820**. A total of nine sequential starts will take place, with the final start at **0820**.
3. The anti-clockwise course around the Isle of Wight will be from Cowes west-about and back to Cowes. Turning points for the Race are at the Needles Lighthouse, St Catherine's Point and Bembridge Ledge Buoy.
4. It has been agreed with the race organiser that all competitors awaiting their class starting time will proceed to designated waiting areas (Figure 1), to avoid congestion in the main navigable channel. All competitors will be equipped with VHF radio and will keep a listening watch on VHF Channel 22, in the event that a recall or postponement becomes necessary.
5. The race limit time for this year is **2200**.

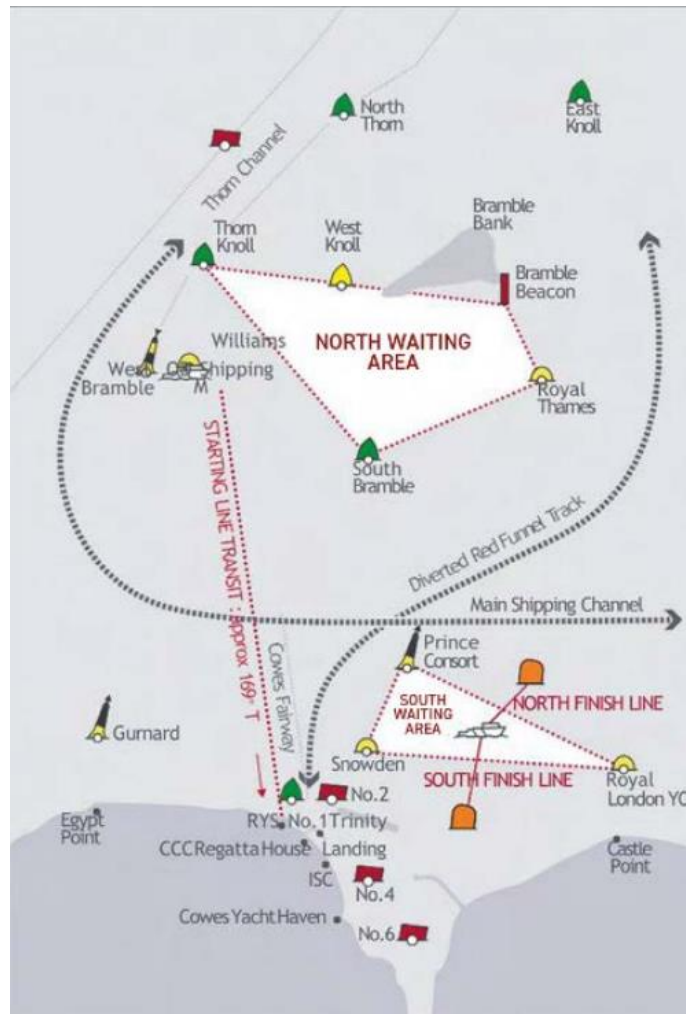


Figure 1: Start/Finish Lines and Waiting Areas

Seaview Exclusion Zone

When rounding Seaview, competing yachts shall not pass inside the outer line of moorings. A large orange cylindrical buoy will be laid at the eastern end of the line to identify it. Competing yachts disregarding the area and entering the Seaview mooring area will be subject to protest.

Commercial Traffic

In order to separate race competitors from commercial traffic transiting the Central Solent or bound to and from the Port of Southampton during the starting sequence:

1. The Precautionary Area will be closed to commercial vessels not participating in the event between **0600** and **0850**.
2. Masters of vessels not directly involved in the event are to be clear of the start area by **0630** and are not to enter the area before **0850**, or until the majority of competitors have cleared the vicinity.

3. Masters of Red Funnel ferries and Commanders of Red Jets are requested to avoid passing through the start area and, where safe to do so, arrive at and depart from Cowes via the eastern side of Bramble Bank between **0700** and **0850**.

Spectator craft are to remain well clear of the start area or proceed to one of the designated holding areas shown in Figure 1, whilst remaining clear of the Main Navigational Channel.

This local notice to mariners will self-cancel at 2359 on 12 July 2026.

Jon Kidd

Harbour Master, Harbour Office, Town Quay, Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO31 7AS

Email: chc@cowes.co.uk Website: www.cowes.co.uk

7 July 2026

Owners, Agents, Charterers, Marinas, Yacht Clubs and Recreational Sailing Organisations should ensure that the contents of this Notice are made known to the masters or persons in charge of their vessels or craft.