



Portmeirion | Andy Biggs

# Dwyryd Estuary



**No. 23 | Grade A | 15-20km | OS Sheet 124 | Tidal Port Liverpool**

**Start**  Borth-y-Gest Harbour (565 374)

**Finish**  Borth-y-Gest Harbour (565 374)

**HW/LW** at Borth-y-Gest are around 2 hours 45 minutes before Liverpool.

**Tidal times** The east-flowing stream (flood) begins around 3 hours 15 minutes after HW Liverpool and continues to run for a further hour in the gorge section of the estuary, upstream of Pont Briwet. The west-flowing stream (ebb) begins around 2 hours 45 minutes before HW Liverpool.

**Tidal rates** Tidal streams rarely exceed 2 knots in this section.

**Coastguard** Holyhead, Tel. 01407 762051, VHF Weather 0235 UT.

Porthmadog Harbourmaster, Tel. 01766 512917.

**INTRODUCTION** A good introductory paddle in the north-east corner of Cardigan Bay. Borth-y-Gest has convenient parking and easy access to the water. The Dwyryd can be paddled to its tidal limit at Maentwrog, passing the ornate village of Portmeirion and the slate quays, before entering the steep-sided Vale of Ffestiniog. A hasty return will be necessary so as not to become beached on sandbanks – the estuary dries quickly. A tide of at least 8.5m at Liverpool will make this trip worthwhile.

**DESCRIPTION** Borth-y-Gest is less than 2km to the south of Porthmadog and makes an ideal base from which to explore this area. At the south end of the bay there is a car park and slipway. Access to the water should be easy 2 hours either side of local high water. Looking east from the car park, you may make out a small white tower, the southernmost point of Portmeirion. Initially, it may be necessary to paddle round to the south of a series of sandbanks. As water floods the estuary and the deeper channel of the Dwyryd, it will be possible to head east and paddle closer to the wooded, rocky shores that herald the famous Italianate village. Beyond Portmeirion the deep channel lies to the west of Ynys Giffan and is difficult to follow north-west towards Pont Briwet (A487 toll bridge). Once under the bridge, the river channel is easier to see as you enter a rugged, steep-sided gorge with some dramatic rock formations. Beyond is the more open landscape and the Vale of Ffestiniog. Your

return should be easy as long as you don't hang around at Portmeirion too long and it may be necessary to paddle south of the sandbanks again.

**TIDE & WEATHER** Plan your trip so that you begin your return at the time of HW at Borth-y-Gest. The rising waters are held up by the gorge and Pont Briwet creating an unusually long period of high water upstream. When the tide turns in the upper reaches, the ebb will be entering its second hour at Borth-y-Gest. A west or south-westerly breeze and an ebbing tide can produce choppy conditions, especially around the southern point of Portmeirion.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Borth-y-Gest has a good car park with convenient access to the sea and also public toilets and a licensed café. There is a pleasant campsite on the banks of the Dwyryd, upstream from the tidal limit, close to Maentwrog at Llechrwd Riverside Camping Site, tel. 01766 590240. There is a small car park and slipway to the south of Minffordd, (600 379) which can be used as an alternative start/finish.



Excerpt abridged and adapted from *Welsh Sea Kayaking* by Andy Biggs & Jim Krawiecki ISBN 0954706188, published by Pesda Press, Caernarfon. For details of this and other books, as well as downloads of further mini-guides and route cards in this series, visit: [WWW.PESDAPRESS.COM](http://WWW.PESDAPRESS.COM)

Trip Name & Number	
Page Number	VHF Weather
Date	Weather Forecast
Coastguard Contact	

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tidal Port		Mean Sp Range			Local Port		
		Mean Np Range					
Tidal Port Tide Times (UT)	Height in Metres	Tidal Range in Metres	HW/LW	+1 Hr for BST?	Local Port HW/LW Time Difference	Local Port HW/LW	Sp or Np Tides

TIDAL STREAM TIMES

Location	Direction of Tidal Stream	Tidal Stream Time Diff.	Tidal Port HW (BST?)	Tidal Stream Start Time	Tidal Rate	Est. Max Speed
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ROUTE PLAN

Location	Notes	ETA	ETD
Start			
1st			
2nd			
3rd			
4th			
5th			
Finish			