



St Ann's Head | Andy Biggs

St Ann's Head



No. 39 | Grade B | 16km | OS Sheet 157 | Tidal Port Milford Haven

Start  Martin's Haven (761 091)

Finish  Dale (057 812)

HW/LW at Martin's Haven is 10 minutes after Milford Haven.

Tidal times A southerly-flowing stream in Jack Sound starts 2 hours after HW Milford Haven. Further south towards St Ann's Head the flow starts an hour or more later. The ingoing stream in the entrance to Milford Haven starts around LW Milford Haven. The outgoing stream starts around 30 minutes after HW Milford Haven. Once the main flow has started in Broad Sound an eddy flowing in the opposite direction can start close into the shore, south of Gateholm Island.

Tidal rates Through Jack Sound the tidal flow can reach 6 knots, further south towards St Ann's Head it will drop to 3 knots.

Coastguard Milford Haven, Tel. 01646 690909, VHF weather 0335 UT.

INTRODUCTION This is a wonderful trip that will take you through a serious tidal race, past sandy beaches and round a major headland to finish in one of the world's largest natural deep-water harbours.

DESCRIPTION Try to leave Martin's Haven soon after the tide starts to flow south through Jack Sound, 2 hours after HW at Milford Haven and aim to arrive at St Ann's Head at or soon after LW Milford Haven, then the start of the flood will take you round to Dale. This will give you time to explore the coastline and have a break. Leaving later than this, you may encounter a north-flowing eddy south of Gateholm Island. Once through Jack Sound and heading SE you'll see Gateholm Island and Albion Sands before you. There may still be enough water to pass inside of Gateholm Island. This was an Iron Age fort and had later been used by the Romans. Next is Marloes Sands; here you'll find three natural chimney-shaped columns which are formed from alternating coloured layers of mudstone and sandstone.

At Westdale Bay the land drops close to sea level and it is just over 1km to Dale along the road. This also marks the western end of the Ritec Fault that extends as far as Tenby (the flooded river valley that now makes up Milford Haven). Westdale Bay provides an emergency egress if the weather changes, for anyone not wanting to round the headland. On Great Castle Head there is another Iron Age promontory fort and if

you continued heading south from here your landfall would be the north Cornwall coast. However keep close into the cliffs and within 300m the cliffs will run out and you'll be able to look east over to the surf beach of Freshwater West. You are now at St Ann's Head and above you are some particularly impressive rock formations including the Cobbler's Hole. As you round the final headland, Dale Point, you'll be facing back towards Martin's Haven. The last kilometre will be in sheltered water to Dale. There is a good-sized car park here, toilets and a café.

TIDE & WEATHER Eddies form round several of the headlands, especially south of Gateholm Island. Try not to arrive at St Ann's Head too early (around 4 hours after HW Milford Haven) on a strong south-flowing stream, as you will encounter confused water caused by the outgoing stream from Milford Haven and a rock shelf that extends south from St Ann's Head by 1km. If you arrive here soon after low water and the tidal stream will take you round the headland and into Milford Haven.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION The coastal bus service connects both ends of this trip; in less than 20 mins you can be back in Martin's Haven.



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

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			