

Navigational/Pilotage notes for River Tamar Between Pentillie Castle and Morwellham

Compiled by Michael Tucker and Rupert Hancock 11th March 2012. As you would expect, the authors accept no responsibility for all their errors and omissions and, as usual, you navigate entirely at your own risk.

Tide and met conditions

High tide at Devonport 11th March 2012 was at 07.44 5.7metres, low water 13.58 0.4 metres. Atmospheric pressure was 1039.50mb. All positions below are GPS WGS84 (note that the 2 charts referred to both use OS36, therefore an adjustment must be made before plotting these positions onto these charts.)

General observations

Once the ebb is underway, it is likely that the depth of water is heavily influenced by fresh water being added to the river (ie recent rainfalls). At Halton Quay, the river was still ebbing at 15.55 (LW+2 hours), so less fresh water in the river might have materially reduced our soundings, likewise recent rains might have increased them. There had been no material rainfall for the previous 7 days.

Specific points of interest and hazards to navigation

Pentillie to North Hooe Mine point (Devon side).

- There is a shallow spit drying 0.1 LWS on the Devon side opposite Pentillie bathing house (called "Boat house" on charts) (Photo below taken in 2011).



- The moorings along this leg are laid on Devon side of the river and this is the shallower side, so stay min 30 metres to the West of them.

- The channel is quite close to Halton Quay and only gradually moves across to the Devon side at North Hooe. Both the 1992 Admiralty chart and Imray 1993 seem quite accurate.

Also a note for Halton Quay - there are often several people fishing from the quay, so keep half way across if possible.

- At N 50 28.361 W004 13.410 there is a tree branch in the middle of the river part drying 0.3m LWS.
- At HW + 4 hours we measured the ebb current at 1.5 knots in mid reach. At LW + 2 ¼ we measured the flood at 2.5 knots in mid reach
- Opposite N Hooe Mine point there is shown to be an “OBST” drying 2.8m. There was no sign of this obstruction on 11th March 2012.

North Hooe Mine to Cotehele and beyond

- North of South Ward Farm there is a 200 metre long spit in the centre of the river, around 20 metres wide, and at its northern end it is joined to the Devon Bank. (Photo below taken in 2011). Therefore it is essential when heading upriver to stay west of the river centre after South Ward Farm. “Sounding” could be a failure if it leads a vessel into what becomes a dead-end.

Both AC and Imray are now inaccurate at this point.



- On Cornish bank just downriver of Cotehele, there is shown a ruined quay. Immediately beside this quay is a rock projecting 10-15 metres from the grass bank into the river and drying approx 0.5 above LWS. **This rock extends a further 3 metres into the river centre approx 0.25 below LWS.** The position is N50 29.379 W004 13.446 (photo below taken in 2011)



- Below Cotehele there was a mooring buoy. Down river of this point the river was under 0.25m at LWS.

Cotehele to Calstock

- N of Cotehele, there is a rock close in on Devon side at N 50 29.618 W 004 13.216 at the end of and in line with the moorings. The trees will probably keep you away from the bank at this point but keep clear anyway.
- At N 50 29.793 W 004 13.278 There is a tree on the Devon side of the river
- At N 50 29.649 W 004 12.352 There is a tree on the Cornish side of the river.
- At N 50.29.533 W 004 12.106 There is a tree, also on the Cornish side of the river.
- **At N 50 29.803 W 004 11.649 There is a tree 1/3RD of the way across the river,** (photo below taken in 2011) and being nearer to Devon than Cornwall, pass it on its west side.



- At N 50 29.946 W 004 11.254 there is a tree on the Cornish side of the river.
- At N 50 30.130 W 004 10.822 There is a tree on the Devon side.

- The furthest upriver we ventured was to N 50 30.208 W 004 10.826, where we anchored in 1m depth, 2 metres from Devon Bank (Mid stream was 1.5 metres (HW+6)).
- At N 50 29.989 W 004 11.080 there is a large wreck driven into the Cornish bank thought by old men with vivid imaginations to have once been a pirate's ship. Not a hazard to navigation (any longer).
- At 50 29.934 w 004 11.562 there is a wreck, dries 0.2 at LWS. (Photo below taken in 2011). This is on the Cornish side of the river, and **definitely a hazard to navigation**. This wreck lies bows downstream, it's approx 20 feet long, upside down, is made of wood (teak?) and has two big lateral scars suggesting it had been supported by 2 wires at some point in its life.

