

Passage Planning

Practical Example **South Coast to Channel Islands**



Introduction

Some considerations for a passage from the South Coast to the Channel Islands





Planning Aids

Cruising Almanac
UK Cruising Association



Shell Channel Pilot Tom Cunliffe



Tide Atlases NP250, NP264, NP337



Tide Tables



Suggested Charts

Admiralty Folios SC5602 West Country SC5600 Solent SC5604 Channel Islands

Admiralty Chart 2656 English Channel Central Part

Chartplotter



Dividers



Pad of paper, pencil and rubber





Study Chart & Pilot Books

First.....

Look at a possible route

Look at tidal stream atlas

Look and find any navigational hazards

Look at the suitability of bolt holes



Study Chart & Pilot Books

By reading the pilot books and studying the charts you can see understanding the tidal streams for this passage will be of the upmost importance.

You will also see the route crosses very congested waters and busy shipping channels.

Weather and wind conditions will also play a significant role in finalising your passage strategy.

Careful planning will be required to complete this passage successfully and without anxiety!



Before Doing Anything Else

Ask yourself this question:

Are the capabilities of the crew and the yacht suitable to complete this passage?

If the answer is yes, then carry on.....



From the Solent to Jersey

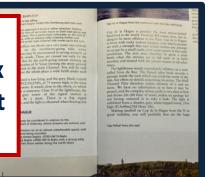
Tidal Gates

Departure Solent

Ebb tide required to exit via the Needles. Main stream runs west from about 1 hour before HW Dover

Cap de la Hague

SW stream starts approx at HW Dover (+5h HW St Malo)



Channel Islands

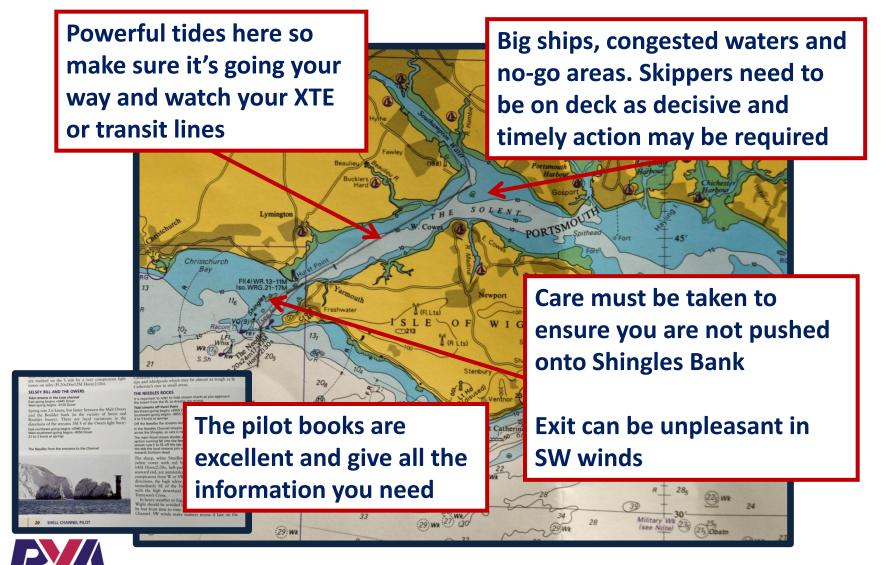
Complex tidal streams need careful analysis but passing Cap de la Hague at HW Dover will give a fair tide to Jersey







Departure Solent



Departure Plymouth or Dartmouth

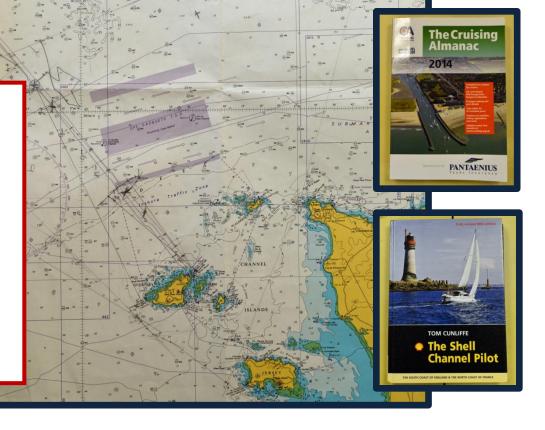
Less to worry about than departing from the Solent but still a busy shipping area. Departure time should be timed for favourable tides when approaching the Channel Islands PLYMOUTH ONE ROCKS Don't bash into This area can be these.....many ships nasty when wind is against tide in the past have been wrecked here!

Crossing the Channel

You'll want to arrive at the Channel Islands with a favourable tide stream and in day light so a night crossing is likely

Lots of shipping and a night passage will keep watch keepers busy and skippers alert.

The SHELL CHANNEL PILOT and CRUISING ALMANAC both give excellent detailed instructions and advice.





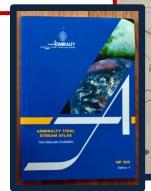
Cap de la Hague

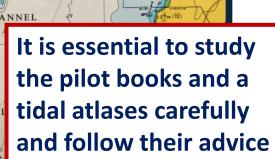
WARNING

Very powerful tides sweep past this headland. Very careful timing will be required.

Ideally, you want to arrive at HW Dover (+5hr HW Malo) and this will give a fast ride to Jersey.

In SW winds this area can be very unpleasant.







Northern Approach to Jersey

The passage from Cap de la Hague to St Helier will be a fast one with a fair tide.

Combined with many dangers the passage will keep navigators and skippers busy.

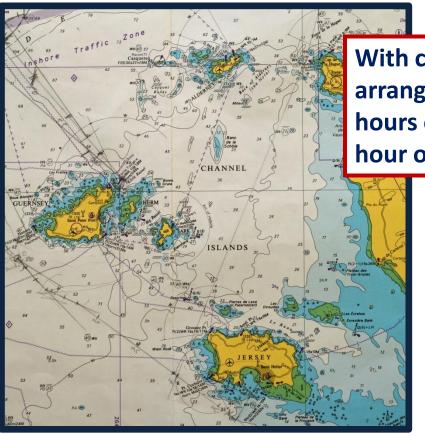




The pilot books give excellent instructions for approach and entry into St Helier



Western Approach to Jersey



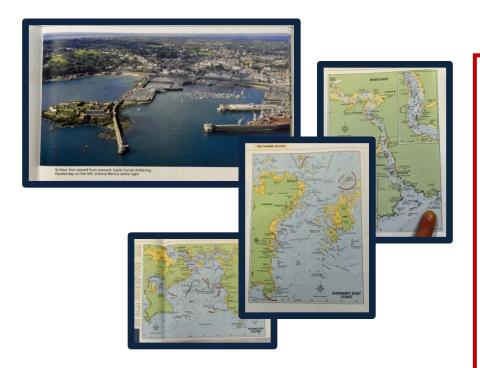
With careful timing you can arrange a fair tide for the last 6 hours of the passage and arrive an hour or two before HW St Helier.



Follow the advice given in the pilot books, this way you'll know what to expect and your confidence will increase

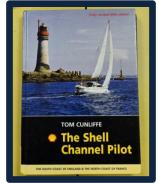


Boltholes



For the first part of the passage you will have many options of boltholes but as the passage progresses they'll be come less viable.

There are many harbours on the French coast that offer a safe refuge, so make sure you take the correct documentation should the need





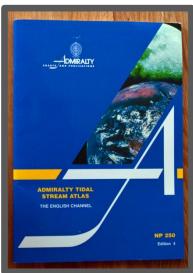
The pilot books tell which ports you can enter

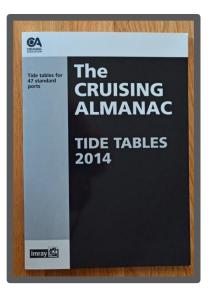


Studying the Almanac

The next job is to study the tide table and tidal atlas and work out a suitable leaving time









Planning the Passage

Now you have all the facts to make the passage plan. It should include:

- Tidal gates and streams
- Safe refuges
- Lights / marks and visual navigation aids you can use
- Departure plan
- Arrival plan

Before finalising it, you may find it helpful to go through it with you partner / crew



Other Considerations

PAPERWORK

Make sure you have all the documents required for your boat and your crew for a channel crossing to Jersey and also ensure you have the correct documents for entering French ports, should the need arise

purposes, however. nind that published tidal data are only facts on the day may be affected and weather.

water phenomenon in and around the sly difficult to predict. The above particularly noted in this are

are theoretically safe, the sometimes so proximity to the char lel. Examine and don't be afraid a 'borrowing' other to give an ad itional safety

es

ated, all bearings and courses are tue from seaward. Any necessary made for Variation and Deviation.

hell Channel Pilot as turned away olicy of stating the characteristics of s text. In general where light dicated on the relevant plan, they om the text for reasons of clarity. In reactions to be taken by olving a described, the light's area are lescription.

for lights, sound signals and any attion are generally lifted straight pply the same conventions, thus: 10s7M)' is read as 'Fort Gilkicker, once every 10 seconds, 7 miles attention of readers using French e English/French glossary in the

nbol $\mathring{\mathbb{L}}$ is used on the plans to horage. Its precise location does mend the ideal place to let go. reporting your arrival to the nearest customs house by telephone. You will then be directed as to your correct course action. In the islands themselves, ask the waff for clearance advice.

Checklist for cross-Channel departure

- Always carry:
- a National ensign, French or British courtesy ensigns as appropriate, and a 'Q' flag.
- ship's papers originals, not copies, including VATpaid evidence as required.
- radio licence
- passports
- certificates of competence
- insurance documents

Remember to clear customs to and from the Channel Islands. It is important to carry boat papers and passports when entering French waters. You will in all probability never be asked for them, but if you are and do not have them, you may be fined. The French customs carry out random checks and will not accept photocopies.

If you have a qualification such as an XA Yachtmaster Offshore, or an International Certificate of Competence, show them this as well.

Boarding by officials

In France, you may be wited by the Gendarmeric Manime, who are do anyal police, among whose duties is to check small boats. They will note everything on board, but it should be understood that they are only doing this in case the boat is lost. The information is filed on a computer. The Affaires Maritimes also have the power to board you, and here there is some overlap. They will sometimes check for VAT payment, so receipts are useful.

You must also have a current radio licence on board, lack of which may incur an on-the-spot fine. It is better

Check the pilot books for what documentation you need to bring

NEL PILOT



Other Considerations

Finding out the weather forecast for the time of the passage is essential





Particular consideration should be given to the wind direction and strength due the major tidal gates and lack of safe refuges



Other Considerations

It's an overnight passage, you will need to think about:

- Crew watches
- Crew victualling & comfort
- Crew responsibilities and rest periods
- Sufficient fuel and water

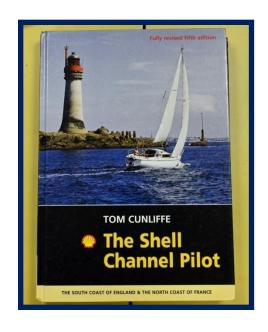
Finally, before setting off remember to contact the coastguard and your land contacts, etc.

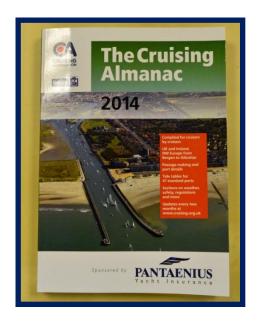






Recommended Pilot Books





Available in all good chandlery stores & on-line retailers



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Thank you for your honesty.

Further Reading



We highly recommend Tom Cunliffe's RYA Seamanship Handbook (G36)



