

# Making a tidal stream atlas

# Tidal Stream Atlas

A good knowledge of tidal streams & eddies is an important factor in successful and stress free coastal cruising.

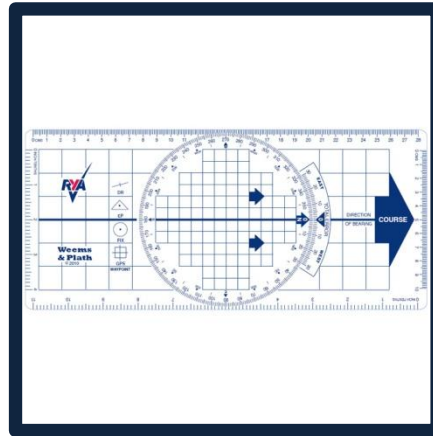
Making a 'home waters' tidal atlas for your cruising area is quite simple and a few hours effort will not only reward you with a valuable resource but you'll also have a much better understanding of the tidal streams in your area.

# You will need

Tracing paper



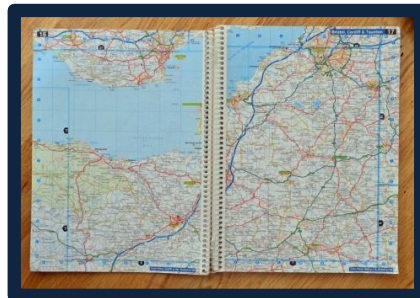
Plotter



Folio Chart Set



Suitable map of area



Pack of stiff white card, pencil and rubber

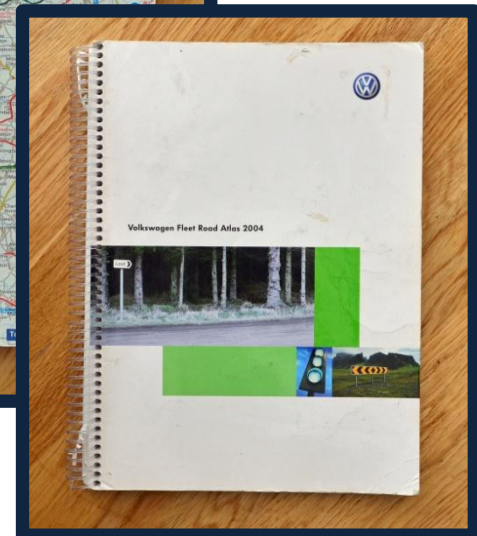


# Find a suitable base map

First - decide what size of map area you want to create

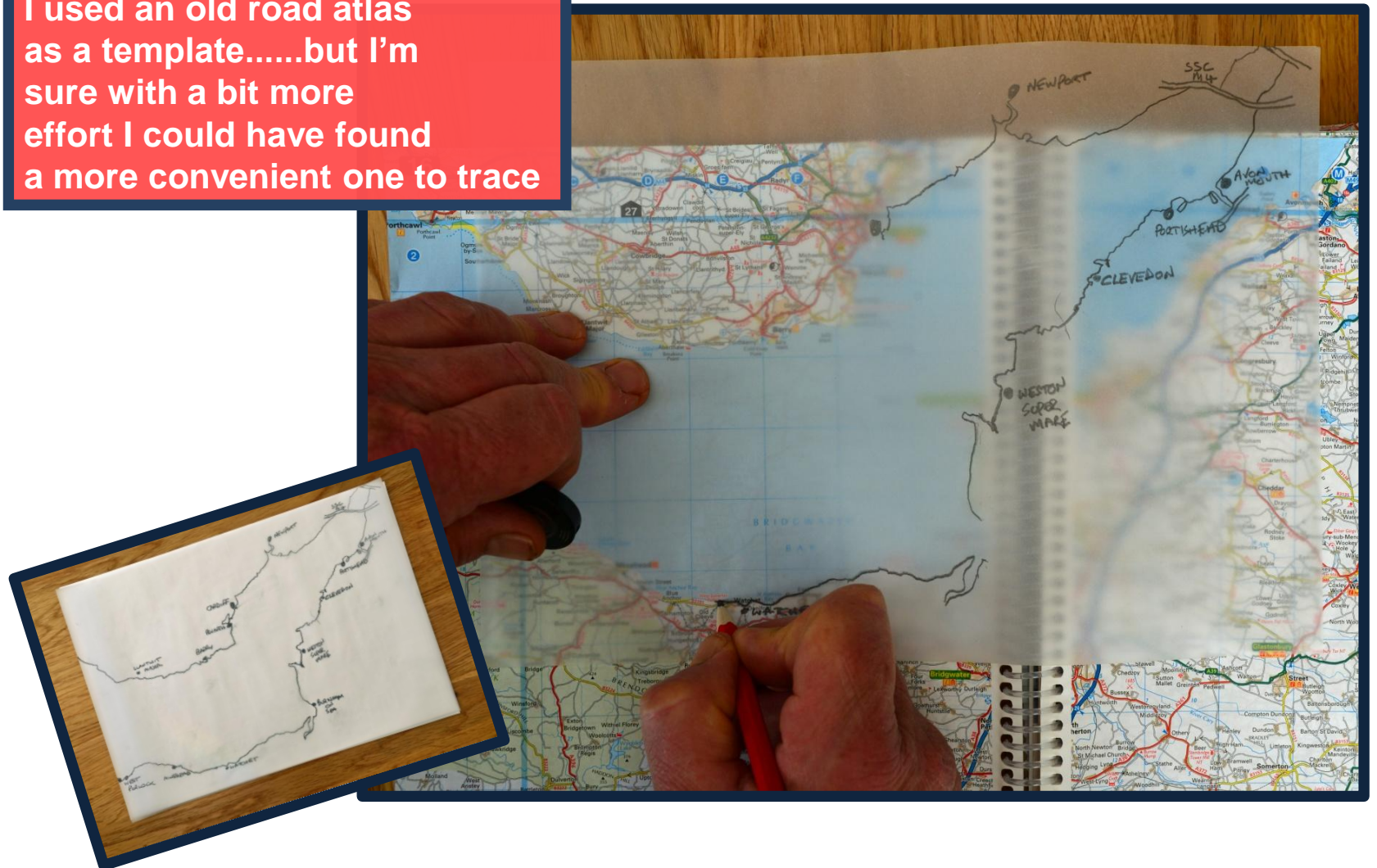


I chose one that would fit on 2 A4 sheets



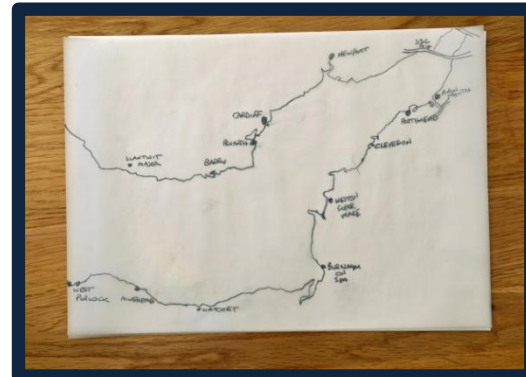
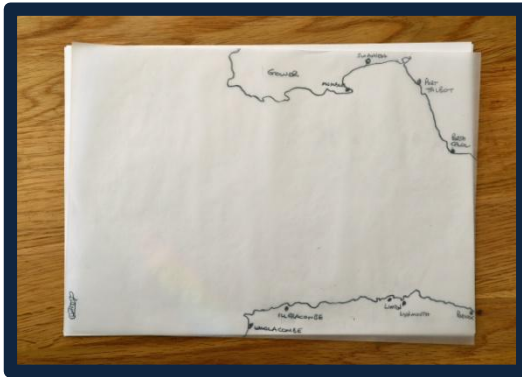
# Trace out your map

I used an old road atlas as a template.....but I'm sure with a bit more effort I could have found a more convenient one to trace



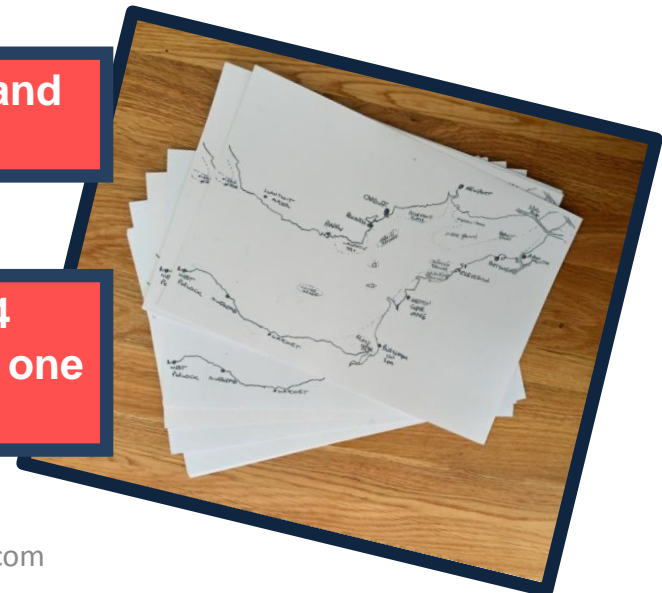
# Add on ports & harbours, etc

Add on the key ports and harbours, etc and after doing that you should have two transparencies like this



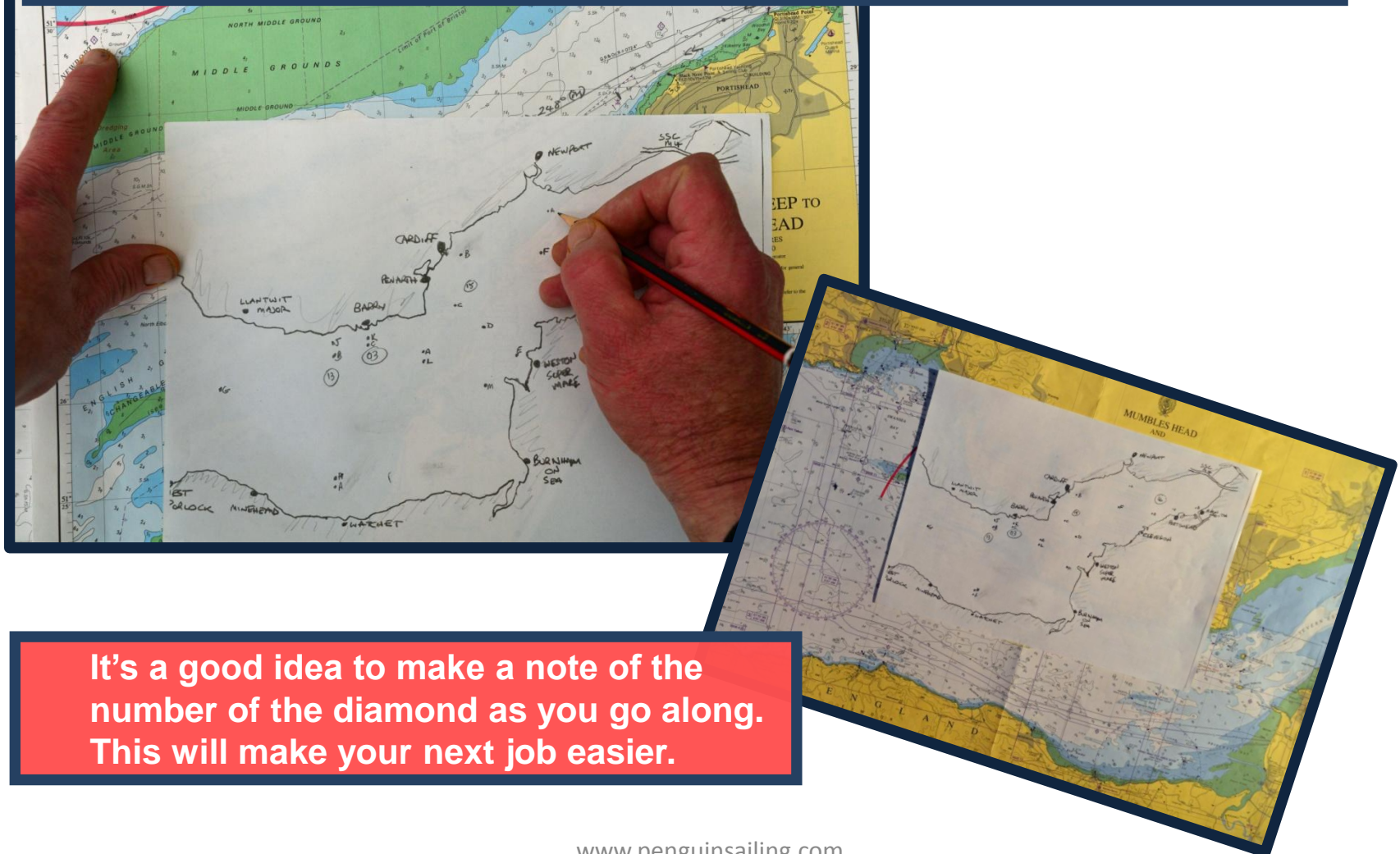
You can also add on major sandbanks and other dangers, etc

The next job is to photocopy them 14 times (one for each hour of the tide + one extra copy)



# Positioning the tidal diamonds

Using the extra copy, pinpoint and mark the position of each tidal diamond



It's a good idea to make a note of the number of the diamond as you go along. This will make your next job easier.

# Marking up the first diamond

Now the main task, first mark up each piece of card with the appropriate hour of tide



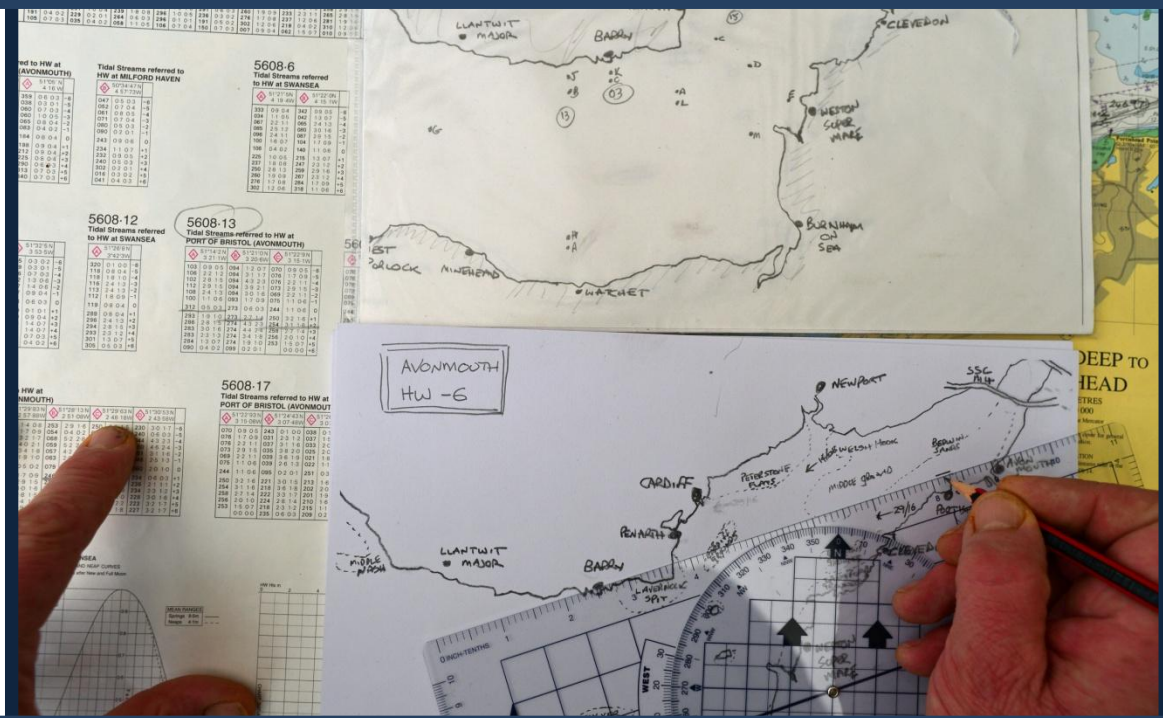
Put the cards in the same order as the tidal diamonds (-6 to +6) and dial in the bearing of the first hour of the first tidal diamond in the plotter



# Marking up the first diamond

Put the plotter on the card and draw a short line showing the direction of the current and put an arrowhead on the end of it

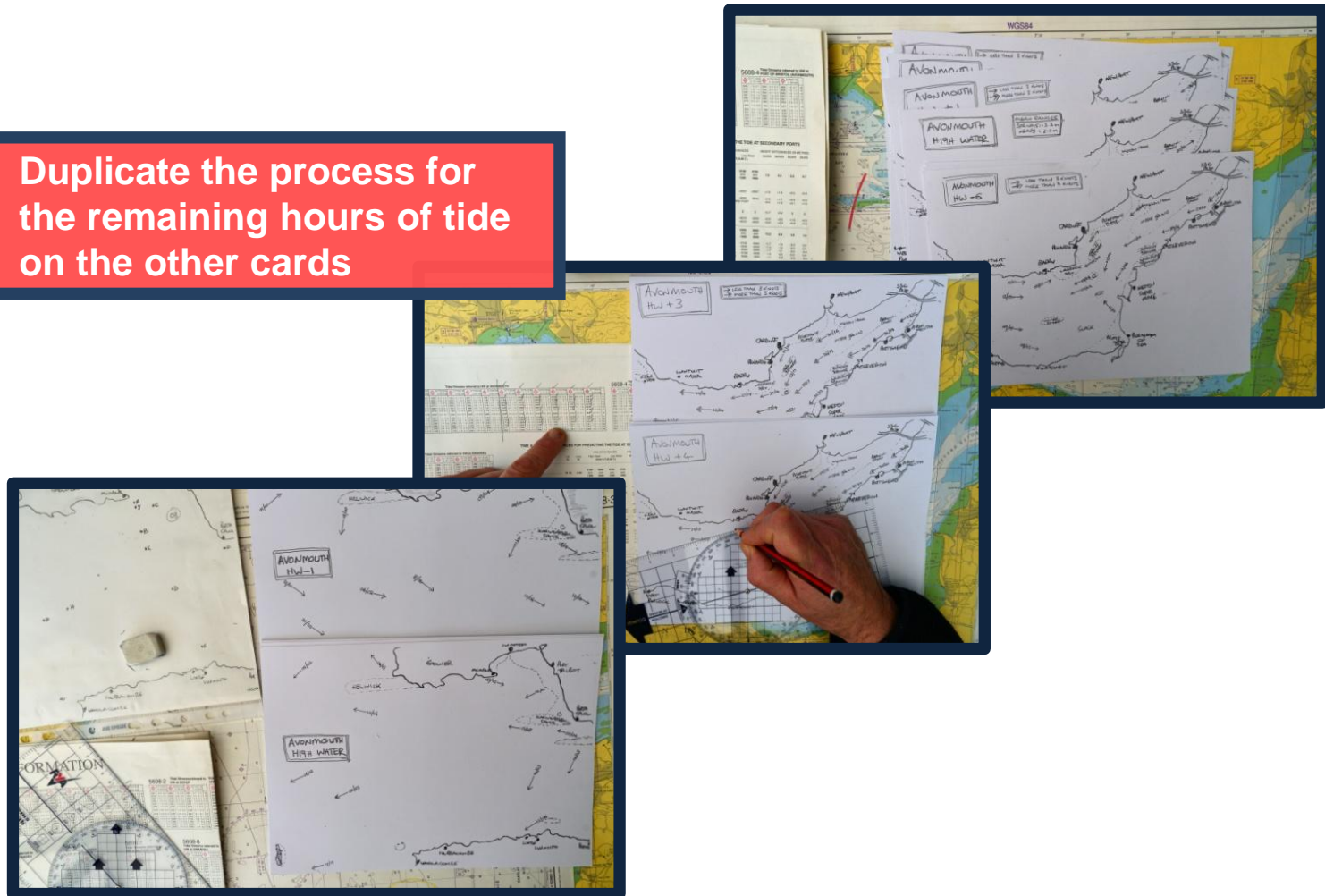
I put two arrowheads if the tidal stream is above 3 knots as it makes it easier to spot powerful streams quickly when using the atlas



Then add on the neap/spring rate at the beginning of the arrow

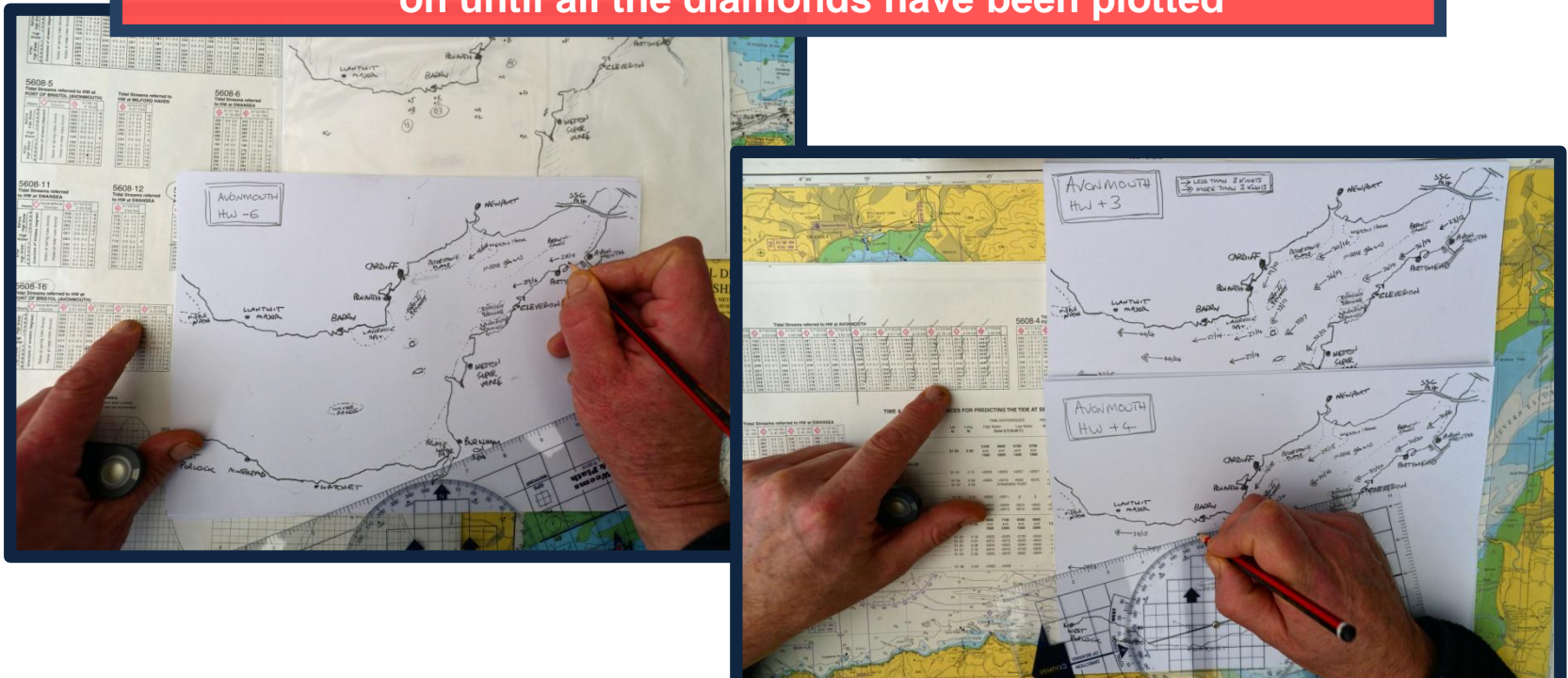
# Marking up the first diamond

Duplicate the process for the remaining hours of tide on the other cards



# Marking up the atlas

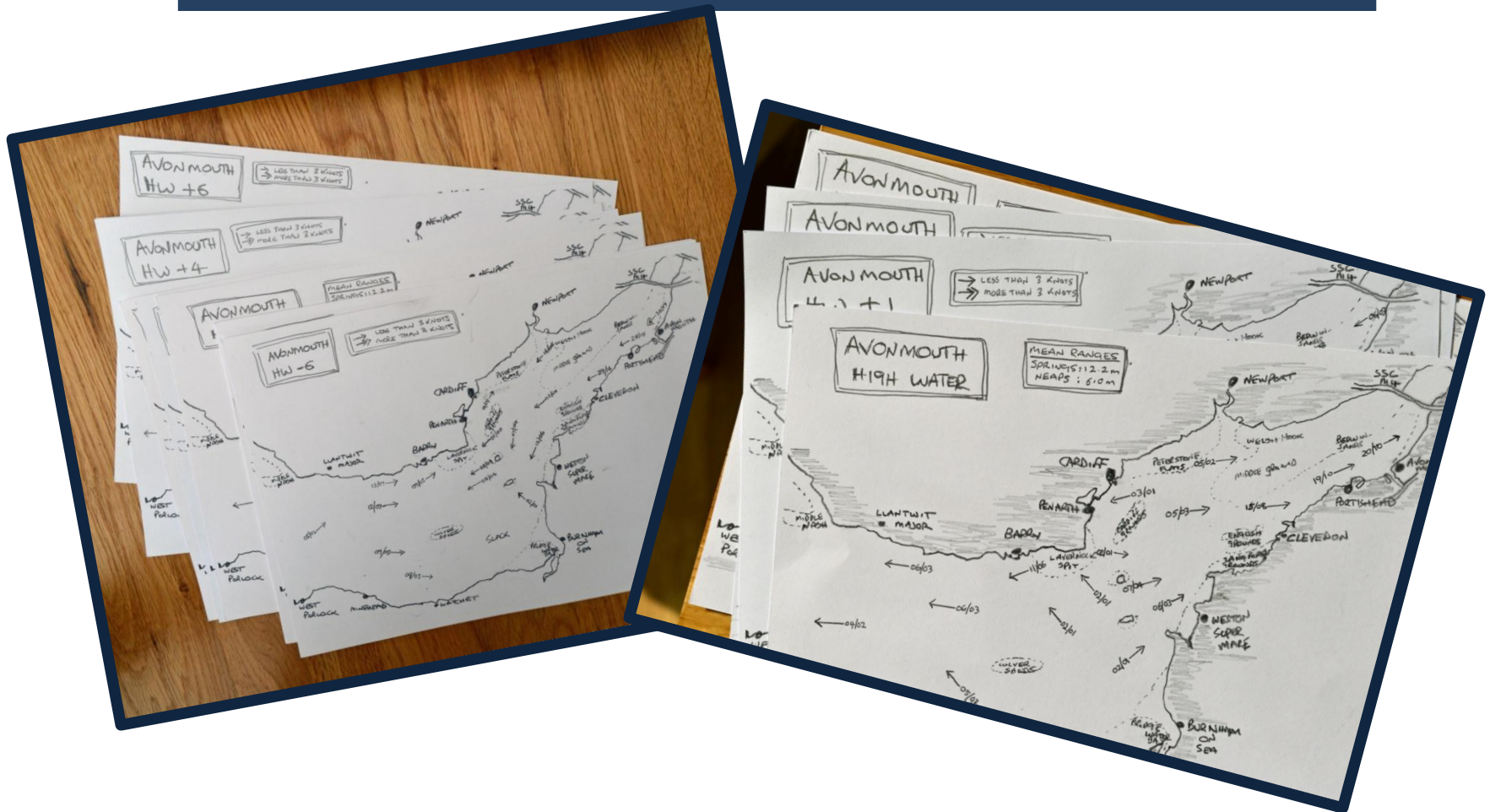
Now start marking the direction of the next tidal diamond and carry on until all the diamonds have been plotted



It may seem a slow process at first but the arrows soon build up and you start to get a picture of the tidal streams in your area

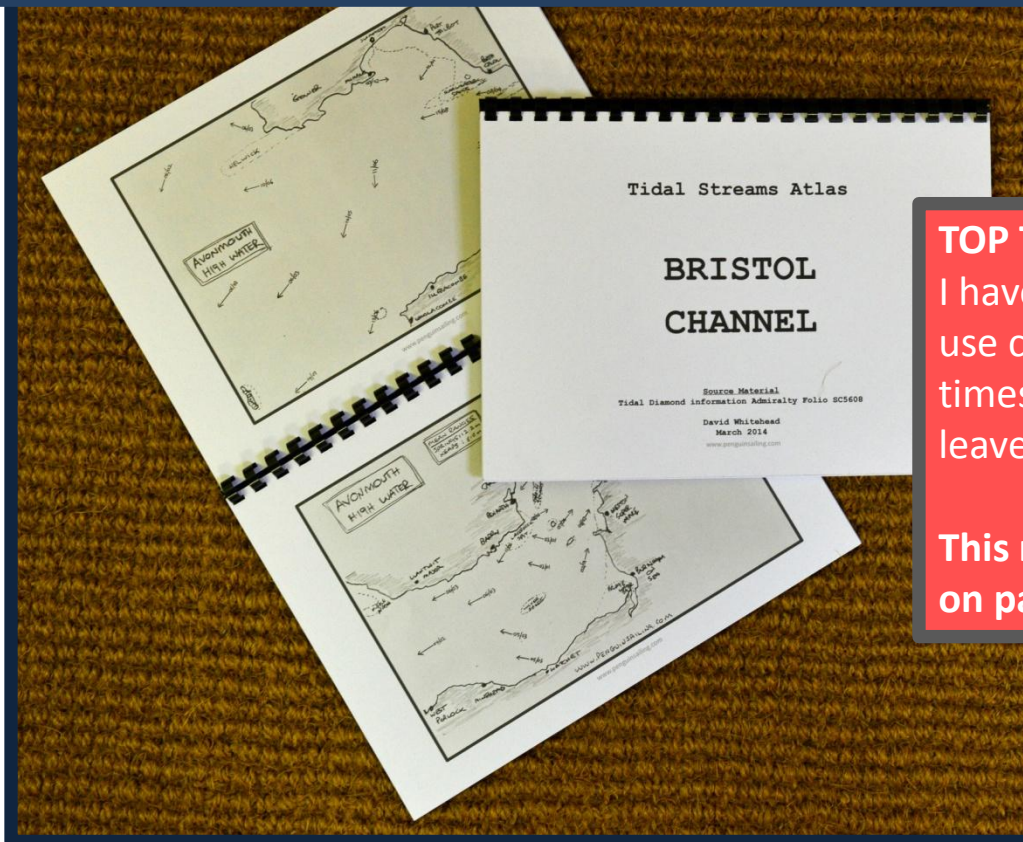
# Marking up the atlas

After a short period of concentrated effort you will be rewarded with something like this



# Final task

Finally, I photocopied them onto fresh card and bound them, keeping the originals safe in case I need to copy them again or share them with friends



## TOP TIP

I have laminated my **TIDAL ATLASES** and use china-graph pencils to write the times for the day on each page before I leave port.

This makes it very easy to refer to them on passage.



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