

## **Site research in the West of England**

This information is intended to assist club dive marshalls with planning expeditions to the West of England. It assumes that the dive marshall has an understanding of site selection, charts, tides, etc, and attempts to identify sources of information that may aid this process. It cannot substitute for good local information and if you are visiting an area for the first time it is strongly recommended that you make contact with a local dive club or shop for advice, particularly with regard to tidal flows which can vary considerably from published data near headlands or other geographical features.

Details of local clubs can be found via the BSAC and SAA websites:

BSAC - <https://www.bsac.com/club-life/find-a-bsac-club/>

SAA - <http://saa.org.uk/find-a-club/>

There are many books and guides dedicated to diving in the West Country and some of these are listed below for convenience. The BSAC Wreck Register is also a good, if dated, source on diving marks and information, if you can find a copy.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Publ date</b>
100 Best Dives in Cornwall	Hood C	Circle	2003
Dive Dorset	Hinchcliffe J & V	Underwater World	1999
Dive South Cornwall	Larn R	Underwater World	1996
Dive South Devon	McDonald K	Underwater World	1995
Dive the Isles of Scilly and North Cornwall	Larn R & McBride D	Underwater World	2003
Dive weekends in south west England	Sherwood A	Hedgehog	2017
Dorset Dives	Appleyard W	Red Flannel	2014
Dorset Shipwrecks	Shovlar S	Freestyle	1996
Falmouth Underwater: A Guide to Marine Life, Wrecks and Dive around Falmouth	Milburn M	Mark Milburn	2017
Hampshire and Dorset Shipwrecks	Smith G	Countryside	1995
Kimmeridge Bay - A Guide to the Purbeck Marine Wildlife Reserve	Tilsley P	Dorset Trust to Nature Cons	ND
Lost Patrols: Submarine Wrecks of the English Channel	McCartney I	Periscope	2003
Scuba Diver's Guide to Lundy Marine Nature Reserve	Kay P	English Nature	2002
Shipwreck Guide to Dorset and South Devon	Clarke N	Nigel J Clarke	2008
Silent Warriors: Submarine Wrecks of the United Kingdom: Volume 2 (South Coast & SW England)	Young R & Armstrong P	History Press	2009
South Coast Shipwrecks off East Dorset & Wight 1870-1979	Wendes D	David Wendes	2006
Sports Diver's Guide to Diving out of Plymouth	Jeffery D	PDS	ND
The Diver's Guide to the Weymouth and Portland Area	Weymouth & Portland BSAC	Weymouth & Portland BSA	1999
Top 100 British Shore Dives	Sherwood A	Hedgehog	2009
Wrecker's Guide to SW Devon	Mitchell P	Sound Diving	1986
Wrecker's Guide to SW Devon - Part 2	Mitchell P	Sound Diving	1992

There are also lots of good books on shipwrecks in general, which can give background information on the ships you may be intending to dive. Once again, a far from comprehensive list follows.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Publ date</b>
British & Commonwealth Merchant Ships Losses to Axis Submarines 1939-1945	Tennant AJ	Sutton	2002
British Merchant Ships sunk by U-boats 1914-1918	Tennant AJ	Starling	1990
British Vessels Lost at Sea 1914-18	HMSO	Patrick Stephens	1979
British Vessels Lost at Sea 1939-45	HMSO	Patrick Stephens	1984
Cornish Shipwrecks Volume 2: The North Coast	Carter C	Taplinger	1970
Cornish Shipwrecks: The South Coast	Larn R and Carter C	David & Charles	1969
Hampshire and Dorset Shipwrecks	Smith G	Countryside	1995
Ships, Shipwrecks & Maritime Incidents around the Isles of Scilly	Larn R	Isles of Scilly Museum	1999
Shipwreck Index of the British Isles - Volume 1: Isles of Scilly, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset	Larn R & Larn B	Lloyd's Register	1997
Shipwrecks around the Isles of Scilly	Graham R	Isles of Scilly Museum	1988
Shipwrecks of the Devon Coast	Larn R	Countryside	1996
Shipwrecks of the Isles of Scilly	Larn R	Thomas Lochar	1993
Shipwrecks of the South Hams	McDonald K	Wreckwalker	1996
Westcountry Shipwrecks	Behenna J	David & Charles	1974
World War One Channel Wrecks	Maw N	Underwater World	1999
Wreck and Rescue on the Coast of Devon	Farr G	Bradford Barton	1968
Wreck and Rescue Round the Cornish Coast - Vol 1: North Coast	Noall C & Farr G	Bradford Barton	1964
Wreck and Rescue Round the Cornish Coast - Vol 2: Lands End	Noall C & Farr G	Bradford Barton	1965
Wreck and Rescue Round the Cornish Coast - Vol 3: South Coast	Noall C & Farr G	Bradford Barton	1965

If you have identified specific wrecks that you are interested in, then additional information, including GPS co-ordinates and depth can be found at [www.wrecksite.eu](http://www.wrecksite.eu) by subscribing (£25 annual subscription)

### **Charts:**

The main Admiralty charts covering the South-west are listed below:

General charts (1:75,000):

- 1156 Trevose Head to Hartland Point
- 1149 Pendeen to Trevose Head
- 777 Land's End to Falmouth
- 1267 Falmouth to Plymouth
- 1613 Eddystone Rocks to Berry Head
- 3315 Berry Head to Bill of Portland
- 2615 Bill of Portland to the Needles

More detailed charts:

1168	Harbours on the North Coast of Cornwall	(various scales)	
2345	Plans in South-west Cornwall (includes Longships and Runnelstone)		(various scales)
34	Isles of Scilly	(1:25,000)	
31	Harbours on the South Coast of Cornwall	(various scales)	
154	Approaches to Falmouth	(1:35,000)	
148	Dodman Point to Looe Bay	(1:30,000)	
26	Harbours on the South Coast of Devon	(various scales)	
1900	Whitsand Bay to Yealm Head, including Plymouth Sound	(1:25,000)	
30	Plymouth Sound and Approaches	(1:12,500)	
1634	Start Point to Brixham	(1:25,000)	
2610	Bill of Portland to Anvil Head	(1:40,000)	

A recent innovation is leisure folios which consist of 10-12 A2 sized charts, printed on heavyweight chart paper and packaged in a plastic wallet. Whilst designed primarily for yachtsmen, they provide a convenient way of achieving a large area of coverage for a relatively small cost, and are a good introduction to an area. The following folios are available for the South-west:

SC5603 Falmouth to Padstow including the Isles of Scilly  
 SC5602 The West Country: Falmouth to Teignmouth  
 SC5601 East Devon and Dorset, Exmouth to Christchurch

#### **Local tidal stream information:**

Admiralty Tidal Stream Atlases:

NP255 Falmouth to Padstow, including the Isles of Scilly  
 NP254 The West Country, Falmouth to Teignmouth  
 NP263 Lyme Bay

Atlases compiled by Mike Fennessey (ex British Canoe Federation Coach):  
 Tidal Stream Atlas of the South Cornwall Coast (Penzance to Plymouth)  
 Tidal Stream Atlas of the South Devon Coast (Plymouth to Exmouth)

#### **Useful websites:**

There is a multitude of information available on the web, some more useful than others! A few websites that have been found useful are listed below, but the BSAC and SAA club sites mentioned above will also provide a good source of local information.

Boatlaunching [www.boatlaunch.co.uk](http://www.boatlaunch.co.uk)  
 Wreck database [www.wrecksite.eu](http://www.wrecksite.eu)  
 SHIPS Project (Plymouth wrecks) [www.promare.co.uk/ships/ships\\_wk\\_main.html](http://www.promare.co.uk/ships/ships_wk_main.html)  
 Divernet wreck tours [www.divernet.com/wrecks/wrecktours.shtml](http://www.divernet.com/wrecks/wrecktours.shtml)  
 Diving in Cornwall [www.silverquick.net/cornwall/waterside/INTRODUCTION.htm](http://www.silverquick.net/cornwall/waterside/INTRODUCTION.htm)  
 Diving the Lizard (W) [www.divernet.com/wrecks/lizwrek.htm](http://www.divernet.com/wrecks/lizwrek.htm)  
 Diving the Lizard (E) [www.divernet.com/wrecks/lizwrek2.htm](http://www.divernet.com/wrecks/lizwrek2.htm)  
 Shipwrecks of Bigbury Bay [www.divernet.com/wrecks/bigby996.htm](http://www.divernet.com/wrecks/bigby996.htm)  
 Air filling stations <http://totnes-bsac.co.uk/useful/planning/Air%20and%20gas%20fills.pdf>

Charter boats [www.divesearch.co.uk](http://www.divesearch.co.uk)

#### **Emergency contact details:**

It is always a good idea to contact the coastguard before you go diving and again on your return. The coastguard can be contacted on VHF Channel 16, or using the telephone numbers below.

Dover Coastguard (Dorset & Hampshire) 01304 210 008  
Falmouth Coastguard (Devon & Cornwall) 01326 317575

Coastguard areas map:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/454931/FCG\\_Map\\_4-6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/454931/FCG_Map_4-6.pdf)

In addition, if diving within the confines of Plymouth Sound, you need the permission of “The Longroom” which controls shipping movements within the Sound. They may be contacted on VHF Channel 14, or on 01752 663225.

Finally, if things do go wrong, contact the coastguard if at sea, or, if a decompression incident is suspected once back on shore, then dial 999 in the usual way. However, with less life threatening symptoms, the following contact numbers may be of assistance:

British Hyperbaric Association (BHA) National Diving Accident Helpline  
07831 151523

DDRC Healthcare (Plymouth)  
01752 209999 (daytime); 261910 (after hours emergency)