

Summary

The Raid is expected to take 7-10 days, starting on 1 July, 2024. Current plan is to launch at Carrickfergus then sail to the Copeland Islands off the North Coast of County Down. After a night at anchor in Church Bay we would have an early start, heading for the Mull of Galloway and Drumore, some 35 miles away, which could take up to 10 hours.

We would then spend the next few days exploring the coast and inlets of the Solway Firth. Possible destinations include Creetown, Gatehouse and St Mary's Isle. The Solway Firth is tidal and has shallow sandbanks further East so these will determine how far into the estuary we can travel.

At present there is no plan to go South East to Cumbria but this may change depending on weather, crews or other commitments.

We have three options for the return journey:

- a) Retrace our tracks to Galloway and cross back to North Down
- b) Return to Ardglass via the Isle of Man
- c) Haul out at Kippford on the Urr Water and recover the boats after travelling over on the car ferry from Belfast or Larne

David Camlin
Coaster Delta

Notes:

- i) This is a liveaboard cruise which will involve a number of nights at anchor
- ii) The North Channel is a serious stretch of water and any one joining should ensure that their boat is properly equipped, including a VHF radio for intra-fleet communications
- iii) For those from further afield, parking for cars / trailers will be available at Templepatrick, about 15 miles North of Belfast
- iv) GB based sailors are welcome join us in Scotland if they wish to travel to Dumfries & Galloway by water or road. There are slipways at Drumore, Whithorn and Kippford although I have not inspected these for suitability
- v) Imray Chart C62
- vi) Clyde Cruising Club sailing directions includes the North Channel, Solway Firth and the Isle of Man
- v) This Raid will be very weather dependant so timescales will need to be flexible

Notes from Andy Biggs who has kayaked in the region

Hi David

Hope the trip goes well. I've walked and sea kayaked much of the solway coast. To state the obvious, it's tidal and shallow, having played cricket on a sand bank at low tide, which was planned ! Many of the harbours dry out and really can only be accessed at top half of the tide. Have spent some time exploring trying to see what's viable. Not certain what we're doing this year but let us know when you're around and if we're about, perhaps try and see you.

The Imray "Firth of Clyde" has a chapter on the Solway and to be honest explains things quite well. I've not been round to Stranraer.

Portpatrick, popular and I'm sure there's lots of NI yotties have visited. Pontoons etc, there's a beach on the SE corner where you could dry out. Always water.

Drummore, not a lot there. But with some water you could dry out.

Port William, tight spot and seems to have local boats in. Dry out by wall.

Isle Whithorn. Best spot along coast, you'll get in low tide, just. Good pub. Some drying moorings and wall. Dry out in front of sailing club.

Garlieston. Still has small fishing fleet which take the best spots along wall. There is a channel by wall which normally has water but shallow.

Kirkcudbright. Bit of a trek up the river. There's a floating pontoon but not a lot of free space.

Kippford. Yacht club welcoming. Muddy river. Drying pontoon. River can flow quite fast at low tide.

Going further up the coast is quite difficult, lots of moving sand.

On the Cumbrian coast, maryport has a lock gate to harbour. You could dry out side. Sea scouts have a pontoon outside and sail there at HW.

Silloth has a commercial dock, yotties probably not welcome but there is an outer harbour that would give shelter

Workington has a drying harbour for yachts, south side of river. Harrington is south of Workington and has a drying harbour. Not a great spot, has a small boating club.

Whitehaven, space and set up for pleasure craft..

Best of luck

Andy

