

## THE RIVER HELFORD

The secret jewel in the crown of the South Cornish coastline.

Only a few miles from the hustle and bustle of Falmouth lies the beautiful and tranquil haven of the River Helford. Peace and tranquility reign here, and if you can seek an anchorage or lie alongside one of the disused quays along its banks a night with the only the stars and the wildlife is guaranteed. The River Helford has many smaller creeks further upstream, the first being 'Frenchmans Creek' which is famous for its literary connections with Daphne Du Maurier. Pol-wheveral creek is the largest creek in the Helford River and at low tide it reveals large areas of mud flats making an ideal feeding ground for numerous birds. At one stage a total of four working quays lined its banks and to this day the remaining quays continue to serve an active role. Tremayne Quay was built in 1846 specifically to receive the Royal Yacht and a visit from Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, but, as in true boating tradition, bad weather caused the visit to be cancelled and Tremayne Quay did not receive its Royal endorsement until 1921 when Edward, Duke of Windsor visited.

## USING THE PHOTO SEQUENCE

### 1. TIMECODE: 00:04:32 FROM FALMOUTH

If you are approaching The River Helford from Falmouth It would be safest to head due south from Falmouth for approximately 2.8 miles before you swing round to head west and approach The Helford from about 2 miles off. This will ensure that you completely avoid the drying 'August Rock' That lies at the north eastern tip of the entrance to the river. There are no obvious transits from this distance but the entrance to the river is clear to see in reasonable visibility. If you are approaching directly from the east line up the entrance on 270° from around 2 miles off

### 2. TIMECODE: 00:04:23 AUGUST ROCK

Should you decide to approaching close inshore from the North East and hugging Rosemullion Point beware of the drying "August Rock" and 'The Gedges'. There is a 'seasonal' conical unlit green buoy to seaward of The Gedges marked 'August Rock' The longer, though safer approach from the east will ensure you completely avoid this hazard.

### 3. TIMECODE: 00:05:08 / 09 THE MANACLES

Approaching from the South you will need to be a good 1.5 miles out from Manacle Point to ensure that you leave the Manacles east cardinal marker to port. The notorious Manacles Rocks only uncover on a low spring tide so do not be tempted to cut inside! The dusty looking mineral works on the shore serve as a good indicator of their position. At night, the red sector of the St Anthony Head lighthouse at Falmouth will guide you clear of the Manacles

### 3. TIMECODE: 00:07:14 THE ENTRANCE

Once inside the entrance, there are no further hazards, except very close to the shore. Depths average 3 to 4 metres in the entrance. Shelter inside is excellent, in anything other than an easterly. The River is wide at this point, but stay in the middle unless you are looking for an anchorage.

4. TIMECODE: 00:07:39 THE VOOSE  
On the Southern shore, just before the river narrows lies the rocky ledge known as 'The Voose' this is marked with an unlit north cardinal buoy
5. TIMECODE: 00:08:00 THE POOL  
Once in the narrows the water deepens as you enter 'The Pool'. The village of Helford can be seen on your port side. Try to stay in the deeper water on the Southern side of the pool to avoid the shallows extending out from Helford Passage on the northern bank. A green conical buoy marks the end of this drying bank although it is difficult to spot amongst the surrounding boats.
6. TIMECODE: 00:10:12 FRENCHMANS CREEK  
If you time your visit to the Helford River to occur on a large spring tide you will be able to venture all the way to Gweek on the flood. To port is Frenchmans Creek and directly ahead is the main channel and to starboard side Pol-wheveral Creek
7. TIMECODE: 00:12:15 / 31 / 38 TREMAYNE QUAY  
Leave Frenchmans Creek to port and continue west up the main channel until Tremayne Quay appears on the southern bank
8. TIMECODE : 00:13:42 MERTHEN QUAY  
Opposite Tremayne Quay is Merthen Woods a coppiced oak woodland that stretches for over a mile along the river bank and is one of the largest remaining oak woodlands in Cornwall. Slightly upstream from Tremayne Quay is Merthen Quay which sits opposite a boathouse. This is an idyllic spot, though rocky on the bottom if you wish to dry out. The channel follows this route. Do not be tempted to stray to port if the tide is ebbing.
9. TIMECODE: 00:16:33 MAWGAN CREEK  
On the port side is Vallum Tremayne Creek and to starboard is a yellow cable indicator that lies opposite Mawgan Creek. It may be tempting to enter Mawgan Creek, but beware as it is only marked with withies and you instantly lose 2 metres if when you deviate from the main channel.
10. TIMECODE: 00:19:08 OR 00:19:41  
From here the channel is clearly marked with red and green buoys but be careful not to stray from the main channel even if you think its misleading the buoys will guide all the way to Gweek.

#### VISITORS MOORINGS AND ANCHORAGES.

On account of the importance of its marine life, which includes commercial oyster beds, the whole of the Helford River has been declared a Voluntary Marine Conservation Area. There are important Oyster Beds in Porth Navas Creek and upstream of the mooring channel. Anchoring is not permitted in any of these areas

The Hamlet of Durgan is a picturesque cluster of fishermen's cottages with small craft local moorings. Anchoring is permitted to the west of these moorings off Polgwidden Cove, however, between Toll Point and Durgan anchoring is prohibited to 200 metres out from the low water mark as a conservation initiative to protect the eelgrass beds. Seasonal buoys mark the seaward extent of the beds.

Visitors moorings can be identified by either having a green pick up buoy or a green main buoy. Vessels under 6.5mtrs may book ahead for a mooring though reservations are not accepted for vessels over 6.5mtrs. In the high season rafting is essential for visitors. The moorings officer will come and find you between 1630hrs and 2100hrs call VHF channel 80 or visit the kiosk at Helford Passage.

The pontoons on the South bank of Helford Point are privately owned. Yachtsmen are welcome to land here and leave your tender. The white hut on the shore has an honesty box to assist with the upkeep of the pontoons. It is also permitted to land at the ferry stage, but on no account are tenders allowed to be left unattended here or on the slipway as it may impede the operation of the ferry.

For more information visit: [www.helfordrivermoorings.co.uk](http://www.helfordrivermoorings.co.uk)

FEES.....CHECK WITH HELFORD RIVER MOORINGS?????

#### FACILITIES

TIMECODE: 00:24:52 HELFORD RIVER SAILING CLUB

The Helford River Sailing Club is on the southern side of the river and is open to non members and visiting yachtsmen it has a dinghy pontoon that is available on a first come first served basis, a fresh water supply is available from here. Showers, toilets, and even a laundry account for some of the facilities. The extensive clubhouse has a busy sailing and social calendar with a well stocked bar and restaurant open to members and visiting yachtsmen.

TIMECODE :00:22:11 PORTH NAVAS YACHT CLUB

The Porth Navas Yacht Club yacht club occupies the upper quay along Porth Navas Creek. It is claimed that shallow draft boats can access the yacht club up to four hours either side of high water. Visiting yachtsmen are welcome to utilise the facilities which include showers and toilets, a bar, restaurant, fresh water supply and even a holiday home to rent. Temporary berthing is available on limited basis with plenty of room for tenders. There are also refuse skips at these locations and at Helford Passage. There are no fuel suppliers in the river

#### EATING

The Helford River has been known for its oysters since the 12th century and has been one of Britain's very few private fisheries since the early 17th century. The Duchy of Cornwall acquired the fishing rights at the turn of the 20th century, since when the oysterage became known as the Duchy of Cornwall Oyster Farm. The Ferry Boat Inn at Helford Passage serve the Wright Brothers' trademark seafood specialities which include the Duchy of Cornwall oysters alongside home-made pub classics, plus fish, crabs and lobsters sourced from local cornish fishing boats.

[www.ferryboatinnhelford.com](http://www.ferryboatinnhelford.com) (Tel: 01326 250625)

TIMECODE: 0025:10 SHIPWRIGHTS ARMS

The village of Helford on the southern bank centres around the popular ShipWrights Arms. A fine waterside Inn that serves good pub grub, its popularity dictates that

booking is essential for evening meals during the high season, (Tel: 01326 231235) access, other than by tender is via the passenger ferry from Helford Passage.

#### WATER TAXI

The water taxi can be contacted on channel 37 or via the Mooring Officer. Callsign is "Helford Ferry".

#### VICTUALLING

Helford Village Stores in the village of Helford on the southern bank stocks a range of groceries and papers.

#### CREEKS

##### PORTH NAVAS CREEK

Helford is famous for its shellfish, particularly oysters that are still fattened by the Duchy Oyster Farm at Porth Navas. Anchoring in Porth Navas Creek is not permitted on account of the important and valuable oyster beds that occupy it. Porth Navas Creek dries and the channel is unmarked. Following the line of trot moorings will keep you in the deeper water. The lower quay is often busy as the Duchy Oyster Farm is a thriving commercial operation

##### GILLAN CREEK

Directly to the south of the River Helford is the hidden entrance to Gillan Creek. an idyllic spot in the right conditions. On the approach lookout for Car Croc, a drying rock that guards the entrance. Although it is marked with an east cardinal buoy beware that the rock extends further south east than the cardinal indicates. Once inside Gillan Creek there is little room for anchoring as the deep water is occupied by local moorings. On a good tide and with a shallow draft boat you can venture further into this picturesque and delightful creek. If you have a tender it is essential that you go ashore and visit the very happy chickens that live right on the beach!

TIMECODE: 00:27:37

#### CHARTS

ADMIRALTY LEISURE CHART FOLIOS SC5602 AND SC5603

Charts : SC5602.19 & SC5603.2