



# Cymyran Strait and Rhoscolyn



**No. 7 | Grade B | 18km | OS Sheet 114 | Tidal Port Liverpool**

**Start**

△ Four Mile Bridge (280783)

**Finish**

⊙ Porth Dafarch (233800)

**HW/LW**

are around 1 hour 30 minutes before Liverpool .

**Tidal times**

At Four Mile Bridge the south-going stream begins around 1 hour after HW Liverpool, the north-going stream begins around 3 hours 30 minutes before HW Liverpool.

In the southern entrance to the Cymyran Strait the south-going stream begins 1 hour 30 minutes before HW Liverpool, the north-going stream begins around 4 hours 30 minutes after HW Liverpool.

Offshore from Rhoscolyn the SE going stream begins around 1 hour 30 minutes before HW Liverpool, the NW going stream begins around 4 hour 30 minutes after HW Liverpool.

In Rhoscolyn Sound the SE going stream begins around 1 hour 30 minutes before HW Liverpool, the NW going stream starts around 3 hours after HW Liverpool.

**Tidal rates**

The strongest tidal streams in the Cymyran Strait are in the narrows, close to where it opens out into Cymyran Bay and can reach 5 knots. In the vicinity of Rhoscolyn Beacon and Rhoscolyn Head tidal streams are around 3-4 knots.

**Coastguard**

Holyhead, Tel. 01407 762051, VHF Weather 0235 UT.



Four Mile Bridge



## Introduction

This is a trip with tremendous variety and repeated visits to this area always turn up something new. The start at Four Mile Bridge has an estuary feel with salt marshes patrolled by terns, curlews and oystercatchers. Once out of the Cymyran Strait into deeper water the cormorant is king and you can embark upon a festival of rockhopping in one of the most popular sea kayaking destinations of the United Kingdom. Borthwen is a sheltered bay at Rhoscolyn and makes an ideal spot for a lunch stop before exploring more offshore islands, caves and gullies. Trearddur Bay is all too often plagued by jet skis and powerboats but has shops and cafes, so provides a useful opportunity to stock up on essential goodies. The finish at Porth Dafarch often has surf, especially following a few days of strong south-westerlies. Upon arrival you may be able to reward yourself with a steaming mug of tea from the food wagon that is often in attendance.

## Description

Four Mile Bridge is on the B4545 between Valley and Trearddur Bay. To the north lies the Inland Sea; to the south is the Cymyran Strait. There are no car parks at Four Mile Bridge but parking is possible on the roadside; remember to be considerate to other road users and people who live and work locally. Access can be gained to the water at either end of the bridge. The chute of water that develops as water levels change on either side of the bridge is sometimes used for fishing, but is also a popular spot for paddlers to practise moving-water skills.

If you leave Four Mile Bridge as water begins to flow south through the arch you should have reasonable tidal assistance along the Cymyran Strait to the open sea.

The shores of the Cymyran Strait are low-lying and marshy, making this an ideal setting for a lazy warm-up to an exciting day's paddling. The estuarine environment is home to wading birds such as oystercatcher, curlew and redshank. Herons can often be seen standing over drying pools, waiting for the next easy meal of freshly stranded fish. We might be relatively oblivious to the life under the water but during the summer months terns enjoy many a day fishing for sand eels here. The southern end of the strait leads through some small overfalls and on to the open waters of Cymyran Bay. There is often surf here too, all of which combines well for a place to stop and play for a while. Just to the west is Silver Bay, a beautiful little beach with a slipway at its western end. From here to the next bay is some of the finest rockhopping in North Wales. The Precambrian rock that makes up this coastline has been eroded by the action of the sea, exposing any weaknesses and widening cracks to reveal a myriad of gullies and channels. Hours can be spent rock dodging your way along the coastline towards Borthwen.

Borthwen is a charming little bay with sandy beaches and a narrow rocky entrance to its south. The whitewashed cottages and the old lifeboat station help to give this place an old-fashioned and remote feel, reminiscent of small fishing villages on the west coast of Scotland. The bay is well sheltered and has a car park with public toilets. The road to the beach is narrow and winding with few passing places. At busy times you may need to dig deep into your driving skills and patience in order to reach Borthwen by road. The combination of sheltered water and the abundance of interesting rocky gullies and islets close by makes this a popular venue for introducing novices to kayaking. The coast of Rhoscolyn is dominated by the presence of Rhoscolyn Beacon which stands upon a set of rocky islets called Ynysoedd Gwylanod. The beacon is a useful landmark and can be seen from as far away as Penrhyn Mawr and Llanddwyn Island. The overfalls and tidal races around the rocks can provide good sport in the middle hours of the north-west flowing flood.

The rest of the coast around Rhoscolyn Head is steep and rocky and in places is popular with rock climbers. When the sea is calm, more time can be spent exploring the many gullies, caves and arches between Borthwen and Trearddur Bay.







The Cymyran Strait



Trearddur Bay lies beyond the caravan sites at Porth Y Garan and Ravens Point. The bay is popular with holidaymakers because of its broad sandy beach and good car parking facilities. The main street has a post office and a well-stocked general store with an integral bakery. During the summer months Trearddur can get rather busy with jet skis and dive boat traffic. At the southern entrance of Trearddur Bay there is a quieter, sheltered beach at Porth Diana where there is a useful watersports shop and chandlers.

Porth Dafarch lies about 2km to the west of Trearddur along a section of yet more intriguing coastline with rocky coves and small beaches. Take care when landing at Porth Dafarch; there is often surf in this narrow rocky bay.

## Tide & Weather

You will need to make use of two tidal phases to complete the trip from Four Mile Bridge to Porth Dafarch. The ebb from the Inland Sea and the Cymyran Strait will help you on your way towards the open sea at Cymyran Bay. Between Cymyran Bay and Borthwen tidal movement is of little importance, especially if you stay close to shore. Borthwen is an ideal spot for a lunch stop and a place to wait for the flood stream to begin running north-west to assist your passage to Trearddur and Porth Dafarch.

## Additional Information

There is a campsite by the Inland Sea close to Four Mile Bridge at Pen y Bont Farm, Tel. 01407 740481. Outdoor Alternative is a centre used by schools, university groups and outdoor pursuits clubs. They do not generally advertise their camping facilities but sea kayakers are usually made very welcome, Tel. 01407 860469.

Rhoscolyn Beacon



Trearddur Bay - Photo: [www.pixaerial.com](http://www.pixaerial.com)







*Dawn over the rocky shores of Rhoscolyn*

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## Variations

Borthwen is a good place to start and finish short rockhopping trips, or excursions to the tidal races at Rhoscolyn Beacon. The sheltered bay here is an excellent spot for warming up and for skills practice.