



## **Cruising Site Guide**

### **The Strand, River Medway. Gillingham, Kent**



#### ***Location:***

Strand Approach Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 1TT

#### ***Directions:***

From the West (M25) follow the A2 towards Canterbury/ Dover. Just before the start of the M2, take the left fork onto the A289. Follow the A289 until the

Medway tunnel. After the tunnel continue past Chatham Docks, Dagenham Motors and Gillingham Marina then turn left at the Strand Roundabout.

From the East follow the M2 to junction 4 (Gillingham). Follow the link road down to the A2 then turn left. Turn right at the next roundabout (A289) then go straight over the next two roundabouts. Turn right at the next roundabout.

***Ramp/access Description:***

There is a long straight access road down to the slipway between the Medway Cruising Club and public swimming pool. You should unload here and then park your vehicle in the public carpark.

You can drive your craft from the roadway to the slipway but launch either side of the slip over the beach. Be aware of rocks and wooden stakes to the right of the slip and deep gulleys to the left. The slip itself is long and narrow and designed for dinghy trailers only. There is no need to hover down this.

***Charges:***

None

***Suitability:***

The access road can get very congested in the summer, particularly when the tide is high. Be cautious of parked vehicles and trailers. Also this is a public park so be aware of pedestrians.

***Facilities:***

There is a café and public toilets on site. The nearest petrol station is two roundabouts away to the East on the A289. The chandlery next to the park is handy for items including 2 stroke oil.

***Access restrictions and other permissions:***

This is the only public slipway onto the River Medway. There is an 8 knot speed limit in the area and a ban on Jet skiing and similar activities.

There is an annual conservancy charge payable to Medway ports of £50.80 for all pleasure craft under 5.1m.

***Navigational Hazards:***

The Strand is bordered by a yacht club and there are numerous moored yachts in front of the slipway. Many pleasure craft use this part of the river and dinghy races are common. Extreme care must be taken when launching and cruising in this area.

### ***Cruising Area:***

This is a wide, tidal river with vast areas of mudflats and islands. Most islands are just salt marsh but a few are firm enough to land on. Darnet Fort is a popular stopping point.

From the Strand you can cruise upstream through Chatham and Rochester and as far as Allington Lock near Maidstone.

To the East you can explore the mudflats and follow the river to the Thames and Swale.

Upnor is a good place to stop for a pub lunch with 2 good pubs a short walk through the pretty village.

The Command pub at Chatham has steps down to the mudflats but needs care when landing due to debris and nearby gulleys.

Chatham town centre can be accessed by mooring near Sun Pier.

### ***Possible recovery sites with road access***

As the Strand is the only public slipway, recovery elsewhere can be difficult. There are slipways at various yacht clubs at Hoo, Upnor and Rochester, which could be used in an emergency.

Gillingham pier slipway could be used, Medway Bridge Marina or Kent Boat and Ski Club at Cuxton. Elsewhere there are high river walls and banks.

### ***Other Considerations:***

Most of the estuary is designed as a SSSI and it is not recommended to stop on the islands, particularly during the bird-breeding season.

The Riverside Country Park in Lower Gillingham should be avoided as it is a nature reserve.

Be aware of large ships using this part of the river up as far as Rochester.

Port authority vessels patrol this area but will usually not bother you as long as you are keeping your speed down and avoiding moored vessels.