

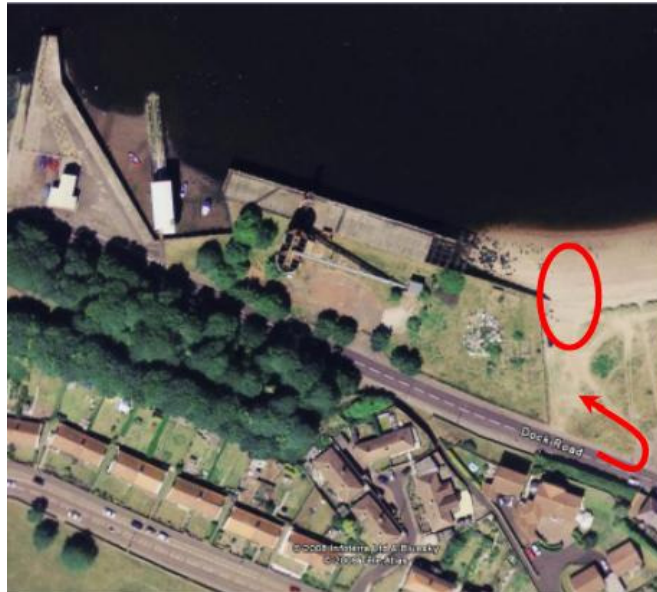
Hovercraft Launch Site – Berwick-upon-Tweed

Location:

Dock Road, TD15 2BE, North East England

Directions:

On Dock Road, travel past the docks, slipway and RNLI lifeboat station. 200 metres past the RNLI building, on the left, there is an area of grass/dunes – turn back sharp left onto a track leading into this area. The sand is soft and powdery – not suitable for wheeled vehicles. This area is recognised common land – you can use it for launching and parking at no charge.



Ramp Description:

There is a clear gap between sand dunes that leads directly into the harbour estuary. The sand ramp can be steep at low tide and sometimes has flotsam on it. The ramp leads directly into the deep shipping channel - check for water traffic (unusual) before launching.



Ramp Type:

Sand - full tidal range

Charges:

None

Suitability:

Suitable for self-powered launch and retrieval of hovercraft.
NOT suitable for trailer launching or retrieval (use public slipway 200metres west if required, $\frac{3}{4}$ tidal range)

Facilities:

None

Navigational Hazards:

Shipping and fishing vessels leaving harbour, small local sailing club to east, rowing club $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west upriver – very unusual to see any other water traffic. At low tide, large mud bank area opposite launch ramp has exposed debris. Sewage treatment plant outfall 1.5 miles upriver.

Cruising Area:

1. North Sea

Destinations include Scremerston beach (4 miles south), Holy Island (Lindisfarne - 12 miles south), Bamburgh Castle (25 miles south) and Farne Islands (30 miles south). Dolphin, porpoise, seal and many types of sea bird populate this coast. Toward the north, the coast consists of rocky cliffs and outcrops. Exposed and unsheltered coastline - conditions can change very quickly!

2. River Tweed

Access is permitted on tidal section of river – tidal limit is at Norham Castle (14 miles west). Best cruising time is Sundays – no fishing on river (the Tweed is an important salmon fishing river) Interesting destinations includes Paxton House (5 miles), Union Chain Bridge (oldest suspension bridge in Europe – 6 miles), Horncliff Honey Farm (6.5 miles), Norham Castle and village (14 miles).

Possible recovery sites with road access

1. North Sea

Spittal beach has access ramp onto sands at south end.
Scremerston beach (north end) has a track down onto the

sand. Track onto beach (high tide only) behind Goswick Golf Club, one mile tidal road causeway at Lindisfarne. Beach access next to Bamburgh Castle.

2. River Tweed

Public slipway next to RNLI lifeboat station in estuary on south bank. Track to river edge with turning point and ramp on Scottish/English border east of Paxton on north bank. Track leads to river edge below Paxton House – north bank. Concrete ramp east of Paxton on south bank (private club – ask nicely!). Sandy ramp down track from Norham village on south bank.

Other Considerations:

If travelling south off shore, the area around Goswick Sands is a nature reserve (SSSI and SSA) - you should avoid travelling over the large sandy beaches. On the river, give fishermen (rod and net) a wide berth and keep an eye out for rowing club members (small skiffs). The river is a noise sensitive area.