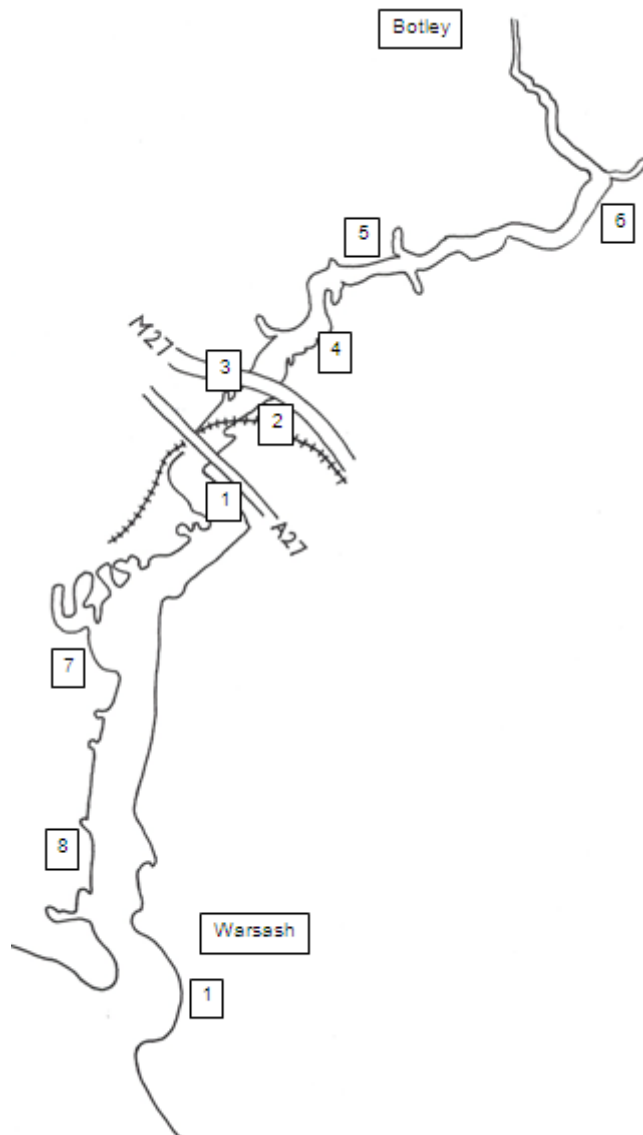


A Canoeing Guide - River Hamble

Known as being the home of British yachting the Hamble can be a very busy and exciting paddle or it can be a very restful glide through beautiful countryside, a river of 2 halves.



If you are starting at Low tide then do the lower half first. It is important to check tide times and to know where you are at which point of the tide. Also check for weather conditions as windy conditions will have a bearing on timings and flow.



Start - Lower Swanwick Car Park,
Swanwick Shore Rd Map Reference:
SU495093

Distance - 16km / 3 hours

Facilities – Public Slipway,

Route:

1. Starting from Swanwick slipway you turn left beyond the end of the shipyard passing the Sailors Mecca the Jolly Sailor Inn. As you go round the next corner you need to be aware of very strong tidal currents when the tide is filling.

2. As you go under the Rail bridge you will see on your left the rotting remains of some Thames Barges. On the Left there is a Motor Torpedo Boat that is used as a houseboat and points to the military past of the River.

3. Motorway Bridge – the channel is to the left of the river

4. Manor Farm Country Park

opposite the pontoon is the remains of HMS Grace Dieu one of Henry V's warships they can be seen at very low tides. (<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/history/ships/grace-dieu-1420/>)

5. As you paddle around the next corner look for numerous rectangular shapes cut into the river bank these are the remnants of where the landing boats for the D Day landings were stationed at HMS Cricket although the base was decommissioned after the war the Scout Campsite here is still called Cricket.

http://www.lhi.org.uk/projects_directory/projects_by_region/south_east/hampshire/hms_cricketcricket_camp_heritage_initiative/index.html

6. You now paddle through the very tranquil country park up to spinsters lake where the river splits you can either paddle past YMCA Fairthorne Manor a large outdoor centre and on to Botley or up the right hand fork to the Horse and Jockey Pub a gentle paddle back to the start
7. Going downstream from Swanwick slipway, there is a long straight leading to Mercury Marina, this is on the site of TS Mercury a Sea Scout school that was decommissioned in the late 60s, there is also in the Water a observation tower from a first world war battleship.
8. Hamble Le Rice is the yachting home, with good landing and facilities. It is also known for being an aircraft training centre during the Second World War.
9. On the right you can now see the life raft launching pier of Warsash Maritime College (<http://www.warsashacademy.co.uk/home.aspx>) – now part of Solent University; Here merchant sailors from around the world are trained. Beyond this is the river mouth and the exit out into Southampton Water. Directly opposite you can see Calshot Activity Centre (<http://www.hants.gov.uk/calshot/>) before you turn and return to Swanwick

Hazards

The Hamble is extremely busy with commercial and leisure shipping all of which are bigger than you! Stay to the right of any channel and where possible stay out of the shipping channel completely. Be aware of other water users.

The Estuary, by definition, is tidal please ensure that you will have enough water to get back (or be prepared for a muddy wade). At times the tide moves with great speed so be aware of objects that you could become trapped against. Check the tide times and weather conditions before you set out.