

SAFE CROSSING ROUTE



Safe crossing times are calculated using the **HIGH WATER TIMES**. Check the high water tide times for the day you wish to visit. It is safe to cross from West Kirby 3 hours after high tide. You must leave the island at least 3 hours before the next high tide. For example: If high water is at 10:00hrs (10am) you must add 3 hours meaning you can cross to the islands after 13:00hrs (1pm). If high water is at 18:00hrs (6pm) you must take off 3 hours meaning you must leave the islands by 15:00hrs (3pm). **HOWEVER – do not wait until the last safe time and allow plenty of time to return.** You must also **CHECK THE WEATHER** and ensure you are wearing **SUITABLE FOOTWEAR**.

It takes around 1 hour to walk the 2 miles from West Kirby Beach to the Telegraph Station on Hilbre Island at a gentle woking pace

IF IN ANY DOUBT - DO NOT CROSS TO THE ISLANDS

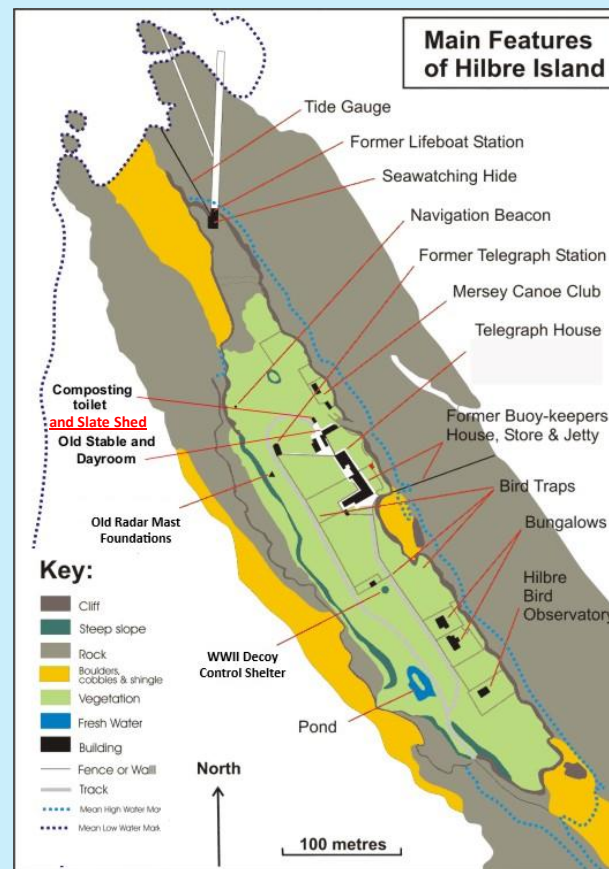
Staying on the islands over high water is not recommended and may result in emergency call-outs. Even if you are safe other people could call the Coastguard and the RNLI will have to be deployed

Friends of Hilbre Open Days 2026

On these Open Days you can learn about the islands' history and watch the seals through telescopes. You will have to make your own way to the island and the 2026 dates and safe crossing times are below:

Sunday 12th April 11.30am-3.30pm
 Saturday 23rd May 10.30am-2.30pm
 Saturday 13th June 1.30pm-4.30pm
 Saturday 25th July 1.30pm-4.30pm
 Saturday 22nd August 11.30am-3.30pm
 Sunday 20th September 11.30am-3.30pm
 Sunday 4th October 10.30am-2.30pm

Consider attending a Friends of Hilbre Open Day event if you are a first-time visitor



The Hilbre Islands Local Nature Reserve



Safe Crossing Leaflet

The Hilbre Islands are a national award-winning Green Flag and Green Heritage Site located at the mouth of the Dee Estuary which is one of the most highly protected estuaries in north west Europe. Enjoy your visit but please **BE SAFE**:

1. **Check the tide times and calculate your safe crossing time**
2. **Check the weather forecast**
3. **Use the only recommended safe crossing route**
4. **If in doubt – do not cross**
5. **Consider attending a Friends of Hilbre organised Open Day and Seal Watching event if you are a first-time visitor**

- Keep dogs on leads
- Keep to paths
- Keep away from the cliff edge
- Keep off slippery rocks
- Do not swim in the sea

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 999 AND ASK FOR THE COASTGUARD

TIDES



Make sure you know what the safe crossing times are by checking the **HIGH WATER** tide times for the day you want to cross to the islands and follow the **3 HOUR RULE**...

For example: If high water is at 07:00hrs (7am) you must add 3 hours meaning you can cross to the islands after 10:00hrs (10am). If high water is at 17:00hrs (5pm) you must take off 3 hours meaning you must leave the islands by 14:00hrs (2pm). **HOWEVER – do not wait until the last safe time and allow plenty of time to return. We ask that all visitors leave the islands by 8pm. No overnights stays are allowed.**

Tide times can be found in the large noticeboard by West Kirby Beach. These show the daily **HIGH TIDES** and there is information on how to calculate for safe crossing.

IF IN ANY DOUBT - DO NOT CROSS TO THE ISLANDS

We do not recommend staying on the islands over high water. IF YOU GET CUT OFF BY THE TIDE – DON'T PANIC. You'll have to wait until the tide goes out and that could be several hours. Only call the Coastguard in an emergency. On Hilbre, shelter is available in the Slate Shed (by the toilets).

WEATHER



Always check the weather forecast and remember that the weather conditions can change very quickly and can be much more severe in the estuary. Take warm, waterproof clothing and pack sunscreen. Please don't take an umbrella just in case there is lightening! Emergency shelter is available in the Slate Shed on Hilbre. However - do not rely on this instead of leaving safely and be aware that strong winds and low air pressure can cut off the only recommended safe crossing route quickly and unexpectedly.

CLIFFS



Keep away from the cliff edge – that's it!

SAFE ROUTE



Follow the only recommended safe crossing route (West Kirby Beach to Little Eye; then across Middle Eye and to Hilbre). Make sure you are wearing suitable footwear as there may be sharp objects under the sand and on the rocks. Enjoy the walk – and don't run!

SLIPPERY ROCK



The rocks **AND MUD** can be slippery (and worse on some days) so stick to paths. Also, keep to the paths on Middle Eye and Hilbre to protect the wildlife. **If it is very slippery – do not attempt to cross and try again another day.**