

# Pembrokeshire, Easter 2012

Trip organised by Neil

Report by Neil

## The Divers:

- > Neil Taylor
- > Ian Gregory
- > Steve Dunkley
- > Peter Deane
- > Dan Reynolds
- > Stuart Moore
- > Karin Muller
- > Ro Crawford
- > Gina Dunkley
- > Joanna Deane
- > Steven Smith
- > Max Jamilly
- > Sarah Lubik
- > Harry Braviner
- > Cheng Liu
- > Hajdu Laszlo Hunor
- > KT Roberts

## Details

This could have been a great trip, but, due to factors largely outside our control, didn't live up to its potential.

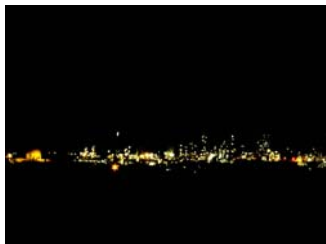
Hopefully this write up will provide some useful information for anyone returning.

## Accommodation

We stayed in two of the [Pembrokeshire Bunkhouses](http://pembrokeshirebunkhouse.co.uk/) (http://pembrokeshirebunkhouse.co.uk/) - they were fantastic and highly recommended. The communal areas were large enough that we could comfortably fit eighteen people around the table and the bunkrooms all had en suite bathrooms. There was an area for washing kit, a drying room and a barbecue. The bunkhouses are about ten minutes walk from the pub in Herbrandston, mid-way between two oil refineries, which look spectacular at night.



## Air and Diving Services.



We used [West Wales Diving Company](http://www.westwalesdivecompany.co.uk/) (http://www.westwalesdivecompany.co.uk/) and [Haven Diving Services](http://www.havendivingservices.com/) (http://www.havendivingservices.com/). WWDC operates out of an (un-signposted) caravan park between Hasguard Cross and Talbenny, making it convenient for sites north of the Bunkhouse. We used it for air, suit repairs and wetsuit hire. HDS are based in Milford Haven near Tesco. HDS were a little cheaper for air fills and one time dropped the cylinders off after filling. HDS was convenient for sites to the south.

## Dive Sites.

## St Brides

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- > Location: SA62 3AJ
- > Max depth: 12m
- > Weather: Swell with NW, N, NE winds

St Brides was intended to be our main training site for the first few days as it is sheltered and diveable in all virtually all conditions except Northerly winds. Unfortunately we had Northerlies virtually every day we were there. The site is shallow and on days when the wind was in the right direction visibility looked very bad. Otherwise the site had parking near the sea and two beaches. The beach on the right hand side looked sandy and would probably be better for rescue skills. The only facilities at the site are public toilets and a church. Parking is free.

## Stackpole Quay.

[View](#) [Larger](#) [Map](#) ([http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=embed&hl=en&q=Stackpole,+Stackpole+Quay+Car+Park+\(E-bound,+Unmarked\),+Pembrokeshire+Coast+National+Park,+Pembroke,+Pembrokeshire+SA71,+United+Kingdom&aq=&sl=51.754323,-5.185638&sspn=0.002202,0.00471&t=h&g=st+brides&ie=UTF8&geocode=FRS8EwMdwDC1\\_w&split=0&hq=&hnear=Stackpole,+Stackpole+Quay+Car+Park+\(E-bound,+Unmarked\)&ll=51.62498,-4.90272&spn=0.002208,0.00471&z=14](http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=embed&hl=en&q=Stackpole,+Stackpole+Quay+Car+Park+(E-bound,+Unmarked),+Pembrokeshire+Coast+National+Park,+Pembroke,+Pembrokeshire+SA71,+United+Kingdom&aq=&sl=51.754323,-5.185638&sspn=0.002202,0.00471&t=h&g=st+brides&ie=UTF8&geocode=FRS8EwMdwDC1_w&split=0&hq=&hnear=Stackpole,+Stackpole+Quay+Car+Park+(E-bound,+Unmarked)&ll=51.62498,-4.90272&spn=0.002208,0.00471&z=14))



### Stackpole Quay

- > Location: SA71 5LS
- > Max depth: 10m
- > Weather: Swell with E, SE winds

This was our backup site as weather was bad. We dived here two days. The site is a high quay in a narrow inlet. Parking is in a National trust car park (if you ask they will let you unload near the water, but you can't park there) and there is a nice cafe and toilets.

Marshalling here was a problem because of the narrow inlet. We found it best to have someone up on the headland to keep an eye on SMBs after they had gone out of site of the beach.

We had some very long, very shallow dives here, I think the maximum depth anyone got was about 8m, and visibility wasn't great either day. In spite of that there was quite a lot of life to see - lots of hermit crabs, spider crabs and a few lobsters, some people even saw juvenile rays!

You'll never get any depth here, but not a bad site, but I think it would be better later in the year when there would be more life.

## Martin's Haven.

[View](#) [Larger](#) [Map](#) (<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=embed&hl=en&geocode=&q=martins+haven+pembrokeshire&aq=&sl=51.754323,-5.185638&sspn=0.002202,0.00471&t=h&g=st+brides&ie=UTF8&hq=martins+haven&hnear=Pembrokeshire,+United+Kingdom&ll=51.73672,-5.24444&spn=0.002203,0.00471&z=14&iwloc=A&cid=11870821715157892975>)

- > Location: SA62 3BJ
- > Max depth: 27m
- > Weather: Swell with NW, N, NE winds



### Surf at Martin's Haven

Parking is in the National trust car park, but ask to drop your stuff at the end of the road first. Martin's Haven is in the Skomer Marine Park, signs warn that you can be fined up to £5000 and have your kit confiscated for taking anything.

We spent two days diving here. Visibility wasn't great and there was still a bit of surge from the northerly winds of the previous days. Stephan and I managed to get to 27m on the first day by diving round the left side at high tide, although we ended up surfacing much further around the corner than we planned.

Lots of big marine life here - more on the sand than in the kelp. Again we saw lots of different crabs, but also scallops, anenomes sponges etc. The crabs and scallops here were much bigger than at Stackpole.

This is a very nice site, I would like to dive it later in the year, and after better weather.

## Blue Lagoon.

[View](#) [Larger](#) [Map](#) (<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=embed&hl=en&geocode=&q=abereiddy+Pembroke&aq=&sl=51.877838,-5.118299&sspn=0.281041,0.602875&t=h&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=Abereiddy,+Pembrokeshire,+United+Kingdom&ll=51.934295,-5.205683&spn=0.004385,0.00942&z=14>)

- > Location: SA62 6DT
- > Max depth: 23m
- > Weather: Sheltered

The last day we had northerly winds again. We couldn't face another day at Stackpole so we headed north to the Blue Lagoon at Aberiddy in search of depth and a wall dive.



#### Blue Lagoon

It's about a five minute walk from the car park to the site and involves a bit of a climb. There's a large sheltered area where you can kit up. Getting into the water involves a scramble over the rocks. There is a shelf which gently slopes from 1m down to about 5m (while we were there) which covers about a third of the lagoon. A group of us swam directly across to try to find a depth below 25m; the bottom was very silty and we only managed to get to 23m. On the other side there seemed to be a bank of scree up to about 15m, the wall above this was completely covered in fanworms with occasional sponges, sea squirts and crabs.

#### Access is across these rocks

There were no other divers when we were there, but there were people jumping off the cliffs and canoeists, so an SMB is probably a good idea, although the site is compact enough to be able to see bubbles at the far side.

If we'd known about the shelf we might have come here instead of Stackpole, apparently some dive shops do their entry level training here.

