

Beach: **Strete Gate**

Nearest Town: **Dartmouth**

Grid Ref: **SX834453**



Local Facilities

- Toilets/washing: Public toilets 25m from the beach.
- Phone Coverage: There is no public phone, but full mobile signal all over.
- Shelter: There is no shelter on the beach. Use toilet area (25m) in an emergency.
- Picnic facilities: This is a beautiful white beach for picnics on the sand and there is also plenty of grass areas between the car park and the beach.
- Catering/Shop: There is an ice cream van in the summer in Slapton Memorial car park (0.5km).
- Water Sports: Sailing, surfing and canoeing are all popular on this beach. Although there are no sports hire facilities here, you are welcome to bring your own equipment, surf boards, canoes etc.
- Attractions: Nearby Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve is owned by the Whitley Wildlife Trust and the Field Studies Council have a centre based there. For more information about school visits, please go to <http://www.field-studies-council.org/slaptonley/>.
- Other facilities: Wonderful woodland walks are available, in addition to visiting the beach.

Access to beach (see local map appended)

- Vehicles: Access is just off the A379 main road and is suitable for coaches. Directions from Dartmouth - <http://goo.gl/maps/wGUD7>.
- Local access: At Strete Gate there is a level unsurfaced footpath along the back of the beach to soft shingle. A wheelchair viewing point is located at Stete Gate (LiL project).
- Restrictions: This is a public beach and access is not restricted.

Parking

- Ease: The car park is 150m from the beach.
- Spaces: There are 101 parking spaces available.
- Charges: South Hams District Council manage the car park and charges are £6.50 per day.

Natural features and appropriateness

Geology:	The bedrock here is part of the Dartmouth Group - consisting of slate, siltstone and sandstone.
Geographic examples:	A long beach of sand and shingle from Start Point towards Stoke Fleming, a good example of a coastal bar.
Rockpools/foreshore:	There are no rockpools on this beach.
Communities:	This beach has a typical sandy beach community with lugworm casts, sandmason worms, crabs, razorshells. The offshore sandy gravel is characterised by bivalve and gastropod molluscs, burrowing crustaceans, brittle stars, heart urchins and sea cucumbers.
Views:	Wonderful views of the whole of Start Bay from Dartmouth to Start Point.
Open Beach:	20-30m.
Other Habitats:	Offshore most of Start Bay is characterised by 'subtidal sand and gravels', a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat of conservation importance. This habitat is home to a number of species, including bivalve and gastropod molluscs, burrowing crustaceans, brittle stars, heart urchins and sea cucumbers. Nearby Higher Ley is composed of reed-bed, reed-swamp and fen woodland.
Rivers/features:	The Gara River channels through the Higher Ley to reach the Lower Ley via Start Stream.
Surrounding features:	Woodland surrounds the beach with Higher Ley to the south.

Historic Features

During WWII the residents of Slapton and nearby villages were evacuated in order for the areas to be used for training exercises in preparation for the D-Day landings. A Sherman amphibious tank and several plaques stand at Torcross car park (0.5km back along the road) as a memorial to the lives lost in WWI "Exercise Tiger," where German torpedo boats intercepted a convoy of vessels and sunk two tank landing ships and killed 749 American servicemen.

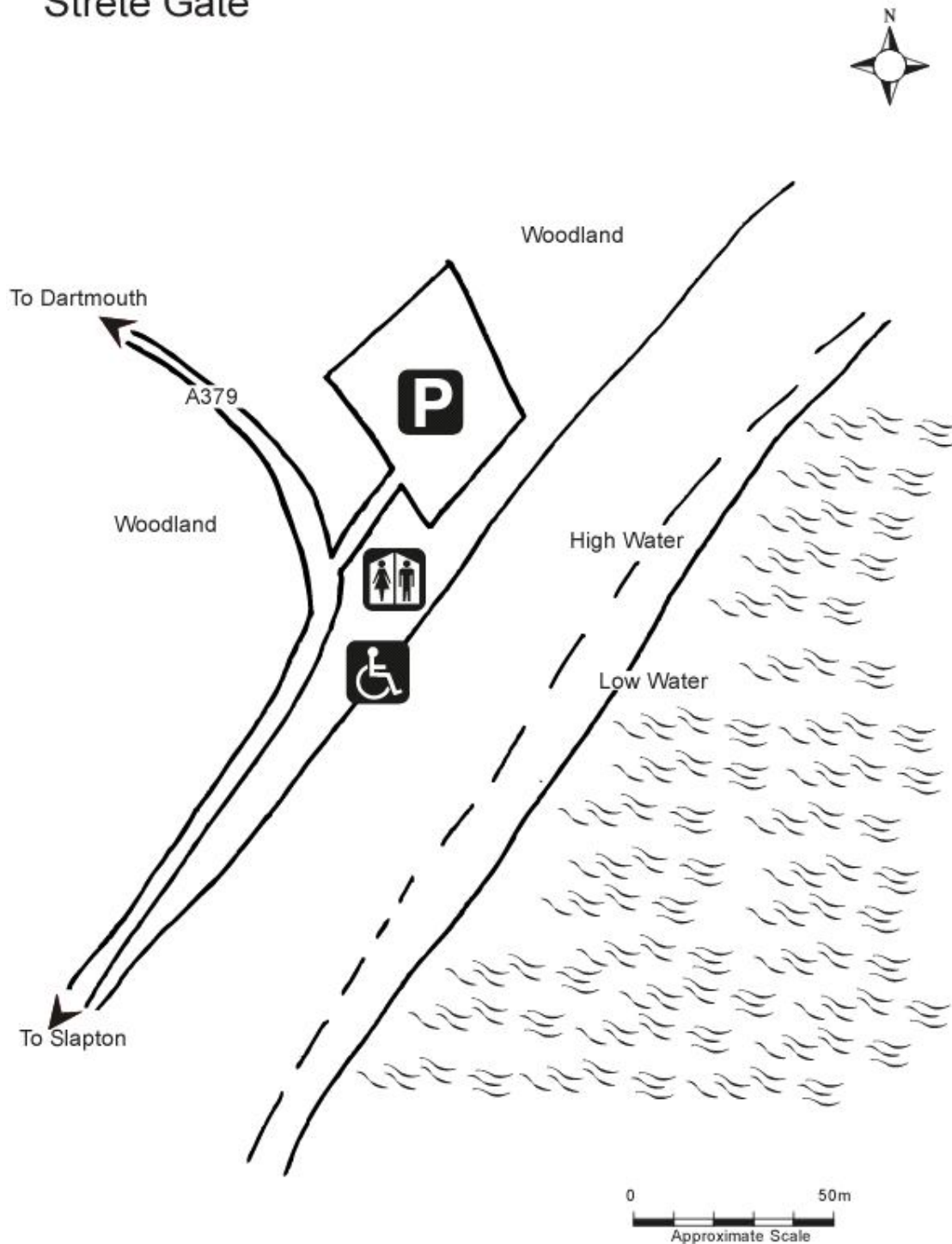
Site Sensitivities

Designations:	Slapton Ley (to the south of beach) has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a National Nature Reserve. Strete Gate belongs to South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and South Devon Heritage Coast.
Species:	The freshwater habitat at Slapton Ley supports a nationally important assemblage of breeding birds, including cuckoo, kingfisher, mute swan and great crested grebe, to name but a few. There is also a nationally important population of cetti's warbler breeding in the fen woodland on the edge of the Ley. Strapwort is a very rare plant that doesn't occur anywhere else in the UK except on the shore of Slapton Ley. Otters, badgers and dormice are also thought to live and breed around the Ley.
Level of sensitivity:	Low

Hazards and Safety

Roads/Vehicles:	Cross the car park and a minor road in order to reach the beach.
Tides:	The beach is not cut off at high tide, but do note tide times and take care on the beach around high water.
Rivers:	There are no safety issues identified with a rain surge at this site.
Aspect:	This beach is open to the east.
Cliffs:	There are no cliffs at this beach.
Other:	No other safety issues have been identified at this beach.
Paddling:	The beach shelves steeply downwards so take care when paddling.
Lifeguard:	There is no lifeguard present at this beach. Slapton Sands (0.5km south) has a seasonal lifeguard July-Sept 10am-6pm.
First Aid:	No first aid is available at this site.

Strete Gate



The small print ... ** All the information given within this guide is given in good faith as helpful guidance for class teachers planning an educational field visit to this beach and is intended for use alongside the teacher's own formal pre-visit recce and HS risk assessment. The information given was trusted to be correct at the time of the survey and we would be very grateful to hear of updates or further information that others may find useful. We undertake to keep the information as accurate as possible but you will understand that we cannot be held formally responsible for accidents that could arise from its use. **No seahorses were harmed in this survey but a few crabs may well be during your visit! :-)