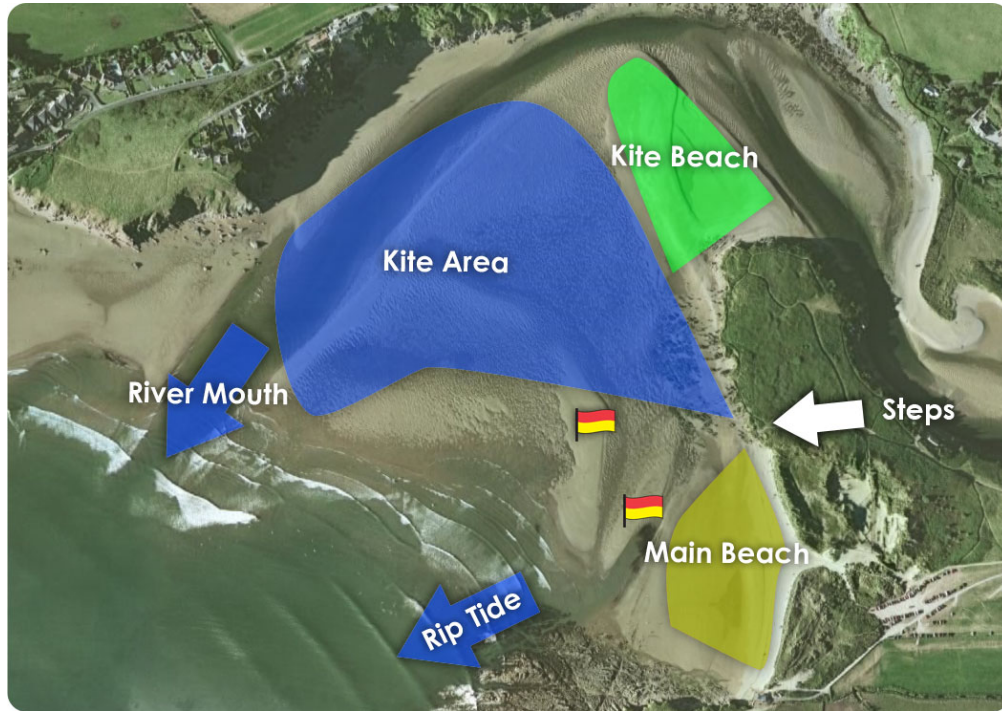




## Bantham main beach high tide restriction July 2008



**At high tide kite surfers, or any static power/traction kite users must not use the main beach under any circumstances.**

- At high tide, kite surfers must use the spit area on Bantham Ham or 'Kite Beach' to set up, launch and land kites. This is the area to the far north as shown on the map above. Bantham is a potentially dangerous location 2 hours either side of high tide and beginners should avoid it completely.
- Once the tide retreats and clears the rocks to the north of the main beach, you may launch and land to the north of the steps leading up to the Ham footpath, or to the right of the bathing area flags as you look out to sea. Avoid setting up too close to the rocks.
- A bathing area is marked by two red and yellow flags by the RNLI to make a safe zone for bathers. It is moved according to tide level and sea state. Kite surfers must not launch or land to the left of, or between these flags. Kite surfers must not kite surf across the flags until they are a minimum of 100m upwind, nor walk through the bathing area with the kite in the air.
- Kite buggies and land boarding are not permitted at any time. They are just too potentially dangerous for such a small and busy beach.
- The RNLI can recommend that individuals can be banned from entry to the private car park if they are deemed to be a continuous danger to public safety.
- If you are in any doubt where to launch, land or kite surf please speak to an RNLI lifeguard or a South Devon Kitesurf Club red rashie holder. These guys have useful local knowledge and know the rules.

**Reasoning behind the restrictions:**

Bantham is a relatively small beach, with a high number of beach and water users, and access here is a very sensitive issue. Kite surfing is becoming more and more popular, and therefore more people are using Bantham.

Over recent months we have had high tides combined with a very busy beach filled with pedestrians. The main beach 2 hours either side of high tide is just not big enough to launch on safely regardless of your skill level.

Conditions at Bantham are actually far better at lower tide states. Normally 2 hours either side of high tide you have that magic mixture of lagoons and waves and plenty of room for error. At high tide, it is usually choppy, with a beach break. Plan your day avoiding high tide and you can have a far better session!

**Serious complaints have been made to the RNLI lifeguards and if it continues this way, there is a very good chance that there will be a blanket ban of kite surfing at Bantham.**

The access to Bantham beach is run by a privately owned estate, as is the car park. The estate have the right to deny anyone access without any consultation and the RNLI can advise them to do this.

Obviously, we as kite surfers, need to manage the situation before we all lose a fantastic and very unique location. One bad accident, or a few near misses will be enough to ruin it for good for everyone.

A club has been formed which is affiliated to the BKSA (British Kite Surfing Association) and we are doing our level best to get guidelines in place to minimize chances of a ban, and more importantly danger to other beach users.

If you would like further information or would like to discuss, contribute, or help out with the club please contact Dave Reckitt (david.reckitt@googlemail.com) We are always on the lookout for different opinions and expertise.

We also have a website and forum for further information:

[www.sdkc.co.uk](http://www.sdkc.co.uk)

[www.sdkc.co.uk/forum](http://www.sdkc.co.uk/forum)

Thanks, and good winds,

The SDKC committee