

WALKING IN CORNWALL

40 COAST, COUNTRY AND MOORLAND WALKS

by Graham Uney

CICERONE

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First edition 2015
ISBN: 978 1 85284 684 8

Reprinted 2018, 2021 (with updates)

Printed in Singapore by KHL using responsibly sourced paper



A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks to my wife Olivia for all her support during the checking of routes and writing of this book. Thanks also to Sue Vickers for her editing skills, and for supplying the photograph of Lamorna Cove at the beginning of the Land's End chapter.

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Front cover: Exploring the granite outcrops on Showery Tor (Walk 6) (photo: Olivia Abbott)

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WALK 8

Sharpnose Point from Coombe

Start/finish	Duckpool Beach, Coombe: small car park overlooking the bay, toilets (SS 201 116)
Distance	7 miles/11.25km
Total ascent	1700ft/520m
Time	4hrs
Terrain	Coastal walking along high cliffs; return through fields and woodland, muddy in places
Map	OS Explorer 126 Clovelly & Hartland
Nearest town	Bude

This is a lovely walk in a very dramatic setting, leading you to the most northerly parish in Cornwall.

Striding out along the top of Steeple Point

Start by following the coast path signs from the car park, climbing quite steeply at first northwestwards to the top of **Steeple Point**. Here great shelves of rock fall away to Wren Beach while breakers pile against the tiny offshore



Kemphthorn's
Rock, Pig'sback
Rock and Squenach

Rock. It is possible to get down to the beach, and the OS map shows a public footpath, but the way is now blocked by a rock fall, and the route is not easy.

Our walk stays above the beach and leads along the clifftop to the next big headland, **Lower Sharpnose Point**.

The radio masts at Harscott High Cliff, just inland from Lower Sharpnose Point, are part of a GCHQ communication network.

As you near Lower Sharpnose Point you get a view along the next section of coastline, across Holacombe Beach to Rane Point, splitting two lovely sandy beaches: Rane Beach to the south and Stanbury Beach to the north. The route from Lower Sharpnose Point goes east, inland towards the radio masts, then leads northwards to regain the clifftop path.

The way passes high above Rane Point, then continues northwards around Stanbury Point above Hippa Rock. Continue northwards above Greenway Beach, getting closer to Higher Sharpnose Point all the while. In common with much of the north Cornish coastal path there is a fair amount of ascent and descent on this section, but you'll soon find yourself at Higher Sharpnose.

Beyond **Higher Sharpnose Point** the way drops into the deep valley of **Tidna Shute**. Ignore the public footpath that head off eastwards along the Shute, and climb out northwards, still on the coastal path.

Ignore the next public footpath on the right, and just beyond this junction you'll come to Hawker's Hut, just to the left of the coast path.

The **Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker** was both a parson and poet. He was vicar of Morwenstow parish – the most northerly in Cornwall – from 1834 to 1874. Hawker made it his duty to care for the victims of shipwrecks on the wild Morwenstow coast, and to find and bury the dead.

Just beyond Hawker's Hut you'll reach a footpath junction. Leave the coastal path now and head eastwards along the public footpath into Morwenstow, passing the church as you enter the village.

From the church walk along the lane to reach The Bush Inn. Turn right at the inn onto a public footpath. This takes you south into the head of Tidna Shute, then up through fields to the old farmstead at **Tonacombe**. Keep

the farm to your left and continue south out to a minor lane at **Stanbury**. Go left along the lane at Stanbury, then take another public footpath on the right through the farm. This will take you down to cross a little spring, then southeast across two fields to another lane. ►

However, our route crosses the lane to **Eastaway Manor**; keep to the left of the buildings along the drive, then after 200m cross a little stream. The footpath now climbs uphill out of the valley and on towards the village of **Woodford**.

As you approach Woodford continue out onto the lane. Turn right here, then right again at T junction. Continue to the end of the lane, then in 50m turn right again onto a public footpath. Turn right here along a green lane, and then left along the road in Woodford. In 50m turn right again onto a public footpath. This takes you slightly uphill, then down into the valley of Woodford Wood. Take a right down to cross the stream of Mill Leat, then follow the obvious footpath along the south side of the stream to emerge on a lane just outside of **Coombe**. Go right along the lane, and follow it down into the bottom of the valley. Here you'll come to a road junction from where you earlier accessed Duckpool. Turn right here and follow the lane back to the car park.

For a quick return to Coombe you can turn right and just follow this lane.

WALK 9

Crackington Haven to Dizzard Point

Start/finish	Crackington Haven: pay and display car park, toilets, pub, cafés (SX 143 967)
Distance	7¼ miles/11.75km
Total ascent	2030ft/620m
Time	4–5hrs
Terrain	Coastal walking along high cliffs; return through fields and quiet country lanes
Map	OS Explorer 111 Bude, Boscastle & Tintagel
Nearest town	Bude

Whether you buy into the Arthurian legends or not, the castle is well worth a visit, despite the fact that it is very much in ruins. A path leads up to the entrance gate (English Heritage entrance fees apply).

Tintagel Castle was built in the 13th century by Earl Richard of Cornwall, and stands on the site of a Celtic fortress. It was Geoffrey of Monmouth who claimed that the earlier castle was the one-time home of Igraine, mother of the legendary King Arthur.

When you've finished marvelling at Tintagel Castle head back out of the gate and pick up the path that starts tight under a big rocky headland. This overlooks the lane that goes down to the Haven. Follow the path to a small car park (usually a burger van here too), then up a short leafy lane to the main street through the village. There are plenty of cafes and pubs here, as well as the usual tourist tat shops. Worthy of note is the Old Post Office (National Trust), originally a traditional longhouse and at least 600 years old. Continue along the main street back to your car.

WALK 13

Around Port Isaac Bay

Start/finish	Pay and display car park on New Road in Port Isaac: toilets (SW 999 809)
Distance	4 miles/6.5km
Total ascent	980ft/300m
Time	2–3hrs
Terrain	Farmland paths, often muddy; return along clifftops
Map	OS Explorer 106 Newquay & Padstow and 111 Bude, Boscastle & Tintagel
Nearest town	Padstow

A nicely varied walk giving you a sample of the delightful coast at Port Isaac, as well as a chance to discover the quiet paths and tracks inland from the village.

From the seaward side of the car park turn left along the coastal path (your views to the right are towards the lovely Port Gaverne). Follow the path around the headland, marvelling at the views out to sea, and into the next cove along to the west, **The Haven**. This is where you enter **Port Isaac** proper; emerge onto Fore Street, and head downhill.

Port Isaac was a very busy port from the Middle Ages right up to the mid-19th century. Coal, timber, pottery and stone were among the regular cargoes coming and going from the town. Today the age-old occupation of fishing is still important, but tourism plays a hugely important role too.

The area around The Haven and Fore Street is very picturesque, and you should aim to at least stop at a café for a cream tea, and to take in the views.



Port Isaac is also becoming increasingly well known for its role as a **TV and film set**: the comedy drama series *Doc Martin* is filmed here. Those familiar with the UK folk music scene will probably have heard of the shanty singers Fisherman's Friends who hail from the village and who have been doing the rounds of folk festivals for the last 15 years or so.

Walk round the corner by the Golden Lion. Ignore the turn on the left into Middle Street, but take the next left up Church Hill. Just over 100m up the hill you'll come to a public footpath on the left, as the road swings to the right. Follow the footpath down into the valley, and above a small water treatment works. You'll soon come to a house. Go right along the driveway, then take the public footpath to the left again. This bends round to the left and down to a footbridge. Cross this and climb steeply eastwards along the path to **Trewetha**.

You'll come out on the B3267; turn left along the road to pass around a bend. A public footpath on the right takes you northwards downhill into the valley where

*Walking near
Trewethart above Port
Gaverne*



a caravan storage field will be found. Go right of this up the valley, then follow a public footpath uphill to the farm at Tregaverne.

Go through the farm onto a narrow lane. Turn right and follow the lane until you see a public footpath sign on the left that takes you down a little valley to the coast. Turn left on the coast path; this will lead you into **Port Gaverne**, from where the road is followed back to your car.

WALK 14

Pentire Point

Start/finish	Park at the old lead mines just beyond Pentireglaze, New Polzeath (SW 940 799)
Distance	3¾ miles/6km
Total ascent	875ft/265m
Time	2–3hrs
Terrain	Coastal path along high cliffs
Map	OS Explorer 106 Newquay & Padstow
Nearest town	Padstow

This is one of those walks that turns out to be better than anticipated. The headland looks low at first sight, but almost as soon as you leave the lead mines you're confronted with magnificent cliffs and expansive views along the coast.

Start by heading east through the gate at the top of the car park. This leads by the old lead mines and out to a gate overlooking Pengirt Cove. The Pentireglaze lead mines operated from 1580 through to 1883, and you can still see the remains of the old waste tips as you head out to the coast.

Turn left on the South West Coast Path above Pengirt Cove and head towards **Com Head** along the clifftop. It's a popular stretch of coastline, so expect to greet lots of