



This guide to the coast path from Bude to Plymouth (288¹/₄ miles) covers the Cornwall section of the 630-mile South-West Coast Path (SWCP) and is the second book in this three-part series. It was based on *Cornwall Coast Path – Bude to Falmouth* originally written by **EDITH SCHOFIELD** and expanded by **HENRY STEDMAN** (right)



and **JOEL NEWTON** (far right) who also researched and wrote the two other books in this SWCP series, plus several other Trailblazer guides.

DANIEL MCCROHAN (far right), who updated the 5th edition of this book, returned to Cornwall for this 7th edition. He's a widely published travel writer who has written articles, television scripts, travel apps, and more than 40 guidebooks for both Trailblazer and Lonely Planet to destinations ranging from Chittagong to Chengdu. He lived



in China for more than a decade and specialises in writing about Asia, but he is from the UK, and relishes any opportunity he is given to explore his homeland, particularly if it means another chance to go camping.

Once again Daniel hiked and camped his way along the entire route, accompanied for much of it by his wife, Taotao (above left), and their 11-year-old daughter Yoyo (above centre and on the cover), who has now joined Daniel on more than half a dozen of his Trailblazer trips. Over the years, Daniel has trekked to Everest Base Camp, cycled solo across the Gobi Desert, hiked numerous sections of the Great Wall of China, and travelled by train across Siberia. To keep up with his adventures, track him down on Twitter (@danielmccrohan) or visit danielmccrohan.com.

Cornwall Coast Path (SWCP Part 2)

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Cartography: Nick Hill **Proof-reading:** Anna Jacomb-Hood **Index:** Jane Thomas

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A request

The author and publisher have tried to ensure that this guide is as accurate and up to date as possible. Nevertheless, things change. If you notice any changes or omissions that should be included in the next edition, please contact us at  info@trailblazer-guides.com. A free copy of the next edition will be sent to persons making a significant contribution.

Warning: coastal and long-distance walking can be dangerous

Please read the notes on when to go (pp13-16) and outdoor safety (pp74-7). Every effort has been made by the author and publisher to ensure that the information contained herein is as accurate and up to date as possible. However, they are unable to accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained by anyone as a result of the advice and information given in this guide.

Photos – Cover & this page: Trebarwith Strand (Map 12)

Previous page: Hayle Towans (Map 46) **Overleaf:** Upton Towans (Map 45)

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Cornwall

COAST PATH

SW COAST PATH PART 2 – BUDE TO PLYMOUTH

142 large-scale maps & guides to 81 towns and villages

PLANNING – PLACES TO STAY – PLACES TO EAT

HENRY STEDMAN, JOEL NEWTON &

DANIEL McCROHAN

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

This guidebook contains all the information you need. The hard work has been done for you so you can plan your trip without having to consult numerous websites and other books and maps. When you're packed and ready to go, there's comprehensive public transport information to get you to and from the trail and detailed maps (1:20,000) to help you find your way along it. It includes:

- All standards of accommodation with reviews of campsites, camping barns, hostels, B&Bs, pubs/inns, guesthouses and hotels
- Walking companies if you want an organised tour, and baggage-transfer services if you just want your luggage carried
- Suggested itineraries for all types of walkers
- Answers to all your questions: when to go, degree of difficulty, what to pack, and how much the whole walking holiday will cost
- Walking times in both directions and GPS waypoints
- Cafés, pubs, tearooms, takeaways, restaurants and food shops
- Rail, bus & taxi information for all villages and towns on the path
- Street plans of the main towns and villages both on and off the path
- Historical, cultural and geographical background information

❏ THIS EDITION AND THE COVID PANDEMIC

This particular edition of the guide was researched at a time when the entire country was just emerging from some pretty tight restrictions. Most of the hotels, cafés, pubs, restaurants, and tourist attractions have now reopened, but some are still offering a more limited service than they were pre-pandemic.

Most **accommodation** is back open, albeit with some changes such as later check-ins and earlier check-outs to allow for extra cleaning.

The majority of **pubs, restaurants and cafés** are open – though some are still operating reduced opening hours or have a limited menu. You may need to book a table in advance.

Most **train and bus services** were operating to reduced timetables but should now be back to normal. However, face coverings may still be required on all forms of public transport.

Museums and galleries may require booking (especially for tours) and may also restrict the number of people inside at any one time.

In this book all we can do is record the opening times as they currently stand, or as the owners of the various establishments are predicting they will be by the time this is published. Do forgive us where your experience on the ground contradicts what is written in the book; please email us – info@trailblazer-guides.com – so we can add your information to our updates page on the website.

Hopefully, by the time you read this, coronavirus, lockdowns and other ubiquitous words from the last two years will be nothing but a bad memory of a surreal time. And if that's the case, the operating hours of the establishments en route will be back to 'normal'.

For the latest information visit [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

INTRODUCTION

Synonymous with the sea and the sea's wild storms that created its dramatic coastline, Cornwall is a land of magic, myth and legend, of poetic writing and art. Its known history stretches back 5500 years and has witnessed Phoenician traders, pirates, smugglers and shipwrecks, the rise and fall of the tin-mining and fishing industries and a growing market in tourism which dates back to the days of Victorian villas built for long summer holidays.

This book covers the second section (288¹/₄ miles) of the 630-mile South-West Coast Path

The origins of the coast path lie in Cornwall's smuggling history. By the early 19th century smuggling had become so rife that in 1822 HM Coastguard was formed to patrol the entire British coastline. A coast-hugging footpath was created to enable the coastguards to see into every cove, inlet and creek and slowly but surely law and order prevailed and the smuggling decreased. By the beginning of the 20th century the foot patrols had been abandoned.

Walking the coast path is one of the best ways to experience fully the sights and sounds that make Cornwall unique and special. As well as the sheer physical pleasure of walking, the sea breeze in your hair, the taste of the salt spray on your lips, you are treated to the most beautiful and spectacular views of this beguiling and some-



The harbour at St Ives. The town became popular with artists in the 1920s and is now the home of Tate St Ives.

times hazardous coastline. The sky and the light change with the movement of even the smallest cloud over the sea that lies ultramarine and translucent on long hot summer days but becomes leaden and silver with mountainous white-crested waves in sudden storms. Watch for the seals that fool you by swimming under water for long periods, then bob up just when you'd thought they'd gone. You might see dolphins, too, or even a basking shark.

The Cornish coast is a holiday paradise that's easily accessible, where you'll enjoy some of the finest coastal walking Britain has to offer

Walking allows you flexibility over the distances you want to cover, your speed depending on your level of fitness. You can be completely independent, carrying all the basics of life – food, shelter and clothes – on your back, or book B&Bs ahead and walk with the knowledge that your creature comforts, hot baths and comfortable beds, will be waiting for you at the end of the day.

As for rest stops, you'll be tempted time and time again. Explore quintessentially Cornish fishing villages or take a quick break on the Isles of Scilly. Try to identify some of Cornwall's profusion of wildflowers. Look into the little rock pools that are so full of life. Immerse yourself in contemporary art in St Ives. Investigate tin-mining history in a landscape so important that it has been

(Below): There are several ferries, some just little boats, which you can use to get across rivers blocking the route. This is the Fern Pit ferry which crosses the Gannel (see p137).



declared a World Heritage Site. Try surfing or simply take a swim to cool off on a hot day.

For food, feast on Cornish pasties and crab sandwiches as you picnic on a cliff top or beach; in picturesque cottage tearooms gorge on scones piled high with strawberry jam and clotted cream. Above all eat fish fresh from the sea, superb shellfish, lobster, crab and scallops. As well as ubiquitous fish and chip shops and beach cafés there are several top-class seafood restaurants in Cornwall, some run by celebrity chefs; Rick Stein has been in Padstow for many years and more recently Paul Ainsworth, Nathan Outlaw and Michael Caines have opened restaurants in Cornwall.

The Cornish coast is a holiday paradise that's easily accessible, where you'll enjoy some of the finest coastal walking Britain has to offer.



There will be numerous chances every day to indulge in a cream tea. It's said that Cornish people will put the jam on first and the clotted cream on top of it whereas in Devon they do it the other way around. We say whatever floats your boat is fine.



❑ THE SOUTH-WEST COAST PATH

Typing 'Minehead to Poole Harbour, Dorset' into Google Maps reveals that travelling between the two can be completed in a matter of 2½ hours by car, along a distance of 98.1 miles. Even walking, along the most direct route, takes only around 28 hours, so Google Maps says, with the path an even shorter one at just 88.2 miles.

It is these two points that are connected by the South-West Coast Path (SWCP). This most famous – and infamous – of national trails is, however, a good deal longer than 88.2 miles. Though estimates as to its exact length vary – and to a large part are determined by which of the alternative paths one takes at various stages along the trail – the most widely accepted estimate of the path is that it is about 630 miles long (1014km). That figure, however, often changes due to necessary changes in the path caused by erosion and other factors.

So why, when you could walk from Minehead to South Haven Point in just 28 hours, do most people choose to take 6-8 weeks? The answer is simple: the SWCP is one of the most beautiful trails in the UK. Around 70% of those 630 miles are spent either in national parks, or regions designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The variety of places crossed by the SWCP is extraordinary too: from sun-kissed beaches to sandy burrows, holiday parks to fishing harbours, esplanade to estuary, on top of windswept cliffs and under woodland canopy, the scenery that one travels through along the length of the SWCP has to be the most diverse of any of the national trails.

(cont'd overleaf)

THE SOUTH-WEST COAST PATH

(cont'd from p9)

Of course, maintaining such a monumental route is no easy task. A survey in 2000 stated that the trail boasted 2473 signposts and waymarks, 302 bridges, 921 stiles, and 26,719 steps. Although out of date now, these figures do still give an idea of both how long the trail is, and how much is involved in building and maintaining it to such a high standard. The task of looking after the trail falls to a dedicated team from the official body, Natural England. Another particularly important organisation and one that looks after the rights of walkers is the South West Coast Path Association (see p46), a charity that fights for improvements to the path and offers advice, information and support to walkers. They also campaign against many of the proposed changes to the path, and help to ensure that England's right-of-way laws which ensure that the footpath is open to the public – even though it does, on occasion, pass through private property – are fully observed.

History of the path

In 1948 a government report recommended the creation of a footpath around the entire South-West peninsula to improve public access to the coast which, at that time, was pretty dire. It took until 1973 for the Cornwall Coast Path to be declared officially open and another five years for the rest of the South-West Coast Path to be completed. The last section to be completed, the North Devon and Exmoor stretch, is the first part that most coastal walkers tackle, though it was actually the last section to be opened to the public, in 1978.

The origins of the path, however, are much older than its official designation. Originally, the paths were established – or at least adopted, there presumably being coastal paths from time immemorial that connected the coastal villages – by the local coastguard in the nineteenth century, who needed a path that hugged the shoreline closely to aid them in their attempts to spot and prevent smugglers from bringing contraband into the country. The coastguards were unpopular in the area as they prevented the locals from exploiting a lucrative if illegal activity, to the extent that it was considered too dangerous for them to stay in the villages; as a result, the authorities were obliged to build special cottages for the coastguards that stood (and, often, still stand) in splendid isolation near the path – but well away from the villages.

The lifeboat patrols also used the path to look out for craft in distress (and on one famous occasion used the path to drag their boat to a safe launch to rescue a floundering ship). When the coastguards' work ended in 1856, the Admiralty took over the task of protecting England's shoreline and thus the paths continued to be used.

The route – Minehead (Somerset) to Poole Harbour (Dorset)



The SWCP officially begins at Minehead in Somerset (its exact starting point marked by a sculpture that celebrates the trail), heads west right round the bottom south-west corner of Britain then shuffles back along the south coast to South Haven Point, overlooking Poole Harbour in Dorset. On its lengthy journey around Britain's south-western corner the SWCP crosses national parks such as Exmoor as well as regions that have been designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including North, South and East Devon AONB and the Cornwall and Dorset AONBs), or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Braunton Burrows being just one example – an area that also enjoys a privileged status as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve), and even a couple of UNESCO World Heritage sites, too, including the Jurassic Coast of East Devon and Dorset and the old mining landscape of Cornwall and West Devon. Other features passed on the way include the highest cliffs on mainland



There are glorious views from many of the campsites, such as this one at Trewethett Farm (Map 10).

Other points to bear in mind are basically common sense: don't wander too close to either the top or bottom of cliffs; take care when swimming; be aware of the tides; and listen to weather forecasts. Your greatest danger on the walk is likely to be from the weather, which can be so unpredictable in this corner of the world, so it is vital that you dress for inclement conditions and always carry a set of dry clothes with you.

How long do you need?

If you're a fit walker who isn't carrying too much and who loves to spend all day on the trail you could manage Bude to Plymouth, or vice versa, a distance of around 288¹/₄ miles (464km) depending on your exact route, in about 20

A fit walker could manage Bude to Plymouth in about 20 days ... but most walkers take roughly three and a half weeks

days. There's nothing wrong with this approach, of course. However, **what you mustn't do is try to push yourself too fast, or too far.** That road leads only to

exhaustion, injury or, at the absolute least, an unpleasant time.

If you like your walking holiday to be a bit more relaxed with time to sit on the cliff tops, explore towns and villages, laze in the sun on the beaches, scoff scones in tearooms, visit an attraction or two, or sup local beers under the shade of a pub parasol – as well as have a few rest days – then you'll need to set aside at least one month. Most walkers will fit somewhere between these two extremes, taking roughly three and a half weeks which still allows time for exploring and one or two rest days.

When deciding how long to allow for the walk, those intending to **camp** and carry their own luggage shouldn't underestimate just how much a heavy pack can slow them down. For walkers with less time on their hands there are some superb day and weekend walks (see pp39-40) along parts of the coast path.

See pp36-8 for some suggested itineraries covering different walking speeds

The practical information in this section will help you plan an excellent walk, covering every detail from what you need to do

before you leave home to designing an itinerary to meet your particular preferences. More detailed information about the day-to-day walking and towns and villages along the trail can be found in **Part 4**.

When to go

SEASONS

'My shoes are clean from walking in the rain.' **Jack Kerouac**

The decision of when to go may be out of your hands. However, if you are in a position to choose which time of the year to go, make your plans carefully. Do you prefer the vibrant colours of springtime wildflowers, or the rich tones of autumnal foliage and heather? Do you want weather warm enough for swimming? Do you like the buzz of big crowds, or do you prefer to walk in solitude? The following information should help you decide when is best for you.

Spring and early summer

April, May and June are possibly the best months to go walking in Cornwall. The weather is warm enough without being too hot, the days are getting longer, the holiday crowds have yet to arrive and this is usually the driest time of the year. Perhaps the most beautiful advantage is the abundance of wildflowers which reach their peak in May. Cornwall starts to get busier in June as by now the sun is making an average appearance of seven hours a day.

April, May and June are possibly the best months to go walking in Cornwall

Summer

July and August are the hottest months and also the busiest. This is the time of the school summer holidays when families and holidaymakers flock in their thousands to Cornwall. Demand for accommodation is high, particularly in August, and many B&B owners and some campsites will only take bookings of at least two nights if not a full week. Surprisingly most of the coast path itself is not that busy, but you'll encounter the crowds at

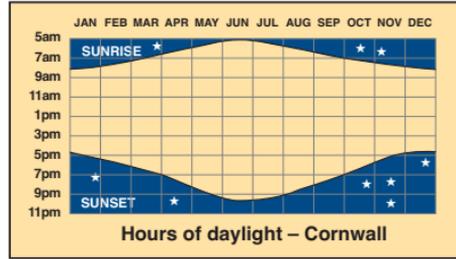
(Right): The ruined engine house of Wheal Coates, an old tin mine (Map 37). You'll see evidence of the once great Cornish tin mining industry (see p180) in several places along the coast.



Britain because of its southerly location and the influence of the Gulf Stream. Winter **temperatures** rarely fall below freezing and the mean maximum in summer is around 19°C. Sea temperatures range from about 9°C in February to about 17°C in August.

Rainfall is highest in the winter due to the regular procession of weather fronts moving east across the Atlantic. In the summer these fronts are weaker, less frequent and take a more northerly track.

Mean **wind speeds** are force 3-4 in summer and 4-5 in winter. Gales can be expected around ten days per month between December and February and less than one day per month from May to August.



DAYLIGHT HOURS

If you are walking in autumn, winter or early spring you must take into account how far you can walk in the available light. It may not be possible to cover as many miles as you would in the summer.

The sunrise and sunset times in the table are based on information for the town of Penzance on the 15th of each month. This gives a rough picture for the rest of Cornwall. Please also bear in mind that you will get a further 30-45 minutes of usable light before sunrise and after sunset depending on the weather.

❑ FESTIVALS AND ANNUAL EVENTS

Passing through a town or village in the middle of a festival or major event can provide a great atmosphere and give you an opportunity to join in the fun. However, if you unknowingly walk into a town heaving with people you may find it more of a headache when searching for accommodation. The events and festivities listed normally take place every year, though the dates may vary slightly, but do double check before you arrive to see if the festival you're trying to visit (or avoid) is still going ahead when you're here. You can visit the festival's website or Facebook page (indicated by **fb**), or see visitcornwall.com/whats-on.

In addition to the events listed below, you are also likely to come across bands or groups of singers performing in pubs or in the open air in the main season in Cornwall. Be prepared to join in the Floral Dance if you are lucky enough to be in a village on the right evening.

March to May

- **St Piran's Day (5 March)** Festivities held throughout Cornwall (see box p144).
- **Giant Bolster Festival (May Day Bank Holiday), St Agnes** Re-enactment of the legend of the Giant Bolster culminating in a torchlight procession of giant puppets to the cliff top (above Chapel Porth beach) where the wicked giant was tricked into killing himself whilst proving his love for Agnes.
- **'Obby 'Oss Day (May Day Bank Holiday), Padstow** Festivities and procession as the hobby horse (see box p120) dances through the town. *(cont'd overleaf)*







Left: The tiny settlement at Penberth Cove (Map 64). **Far left:** Red hot poker display below St Michael's Mount (Map 72; © H Stedman). **Left, bottom:** Soaking up the view over Parc Bean Cove (Map 83).

This page, above: St Mawes Castle (Map 101a). **Right:** Falmouth to St Mawes ferry (p254). **Below:** Strolling round Rame Head (Map 128). **Bottom left:** The 15th century chapel (p308) at Rame Head. **Bottom right:** The Cremyll Ferry (p310); Plymouth in the background.



PLANNING YOUR WALK

1

Practical information for the walker

ROUTE FINDING



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For most of its length the coast path is well signposted. At confusing junctions the route is usually indicated by a finger-post sign

with 'coast path' written on it. At other points, where there could be some confusion, there are wooden waymark posts with an acorn symbol and a yellow arrow to indicate in which direction you should head. The waymarking is the responsibility of the local authorities along the trail who have a duty to maintain the path. Generally they do a good job although occasionally you'll come across sections of the trail where waymarking is ambiguous, or even non-existent, but with the detailed route maps and directions in this book and the fact that you always have the sea to one side it would be hard to get really lost.

Using GPS with this book

If you have a handheld **GPS receiver**, or GPS on your **smartphone**, you can take advantage of the waypoints marked on the maps and listed on pp330-5 of this book. Essentially a GPS (Global Positioning System) will calculate your position on the earth using a number of satellites and this will be accurate to a few metres. Some units may come with inbuilt mapping, but while it's possible to buy **digital mapping** (see p47) to import into a regular GPS unit or smartphone, it might be considered about as practical as having internet on a mobile phone – you still end up scrolling and zooming across a tiny screen.

Having said this, it is **by no means necessary** that you use a GPS in conjunction with this guide and you should be able to get by with simply the signposts on the trail and the maps in this book. However, a GPS can be useful if for some reason you do get lost, or if you decide to explore off the trail and can't find your way back. It can also prove handy if you find yourself on the trail after dark when you can't see further than your torch beam. If you do decide to use a GPS unit in conjunction with this book don't feel you need to be ticking off every waypoint as you reach it; you'll soon get bored. You should easily get by without turning on your GPS.

Opposite: Mawgan Porth beach (Map 27) from the coast path.



in dormitories, although many now have private rooms available too. There are two types of hostels: **YHA hostels**, which are part of the Youth Hostel Association/Hostelling International (YHA/HI; see box below), and **independent hostels**, also referred to as backpacker hostels, which are independently owned. If you are planning to stay in hostels as often as possible you will have to make use of both types. Note, in almost all cases, **hostels require guests to show some form of photo ID when they check in**. A photocopy will suffice.

Hostels are not just for young travellers, the young at heart will be more than welcome at most places. In fact the YHA positively encourage conservation-minded older people who are an important market sector for them. If you find large groups of young people intimidating, you can always check if the hostel has any private rooms (this may be advisable in party towns such as Newquay, for example). Note, many independent hostels' dorms are mixed-sex, although some have single-sex dorms too. YHA dorms are always single-sex and adults only.

One of the big advantages of staying in a hostel, aside from a cheap bed, is the option to cook your own food. Most hostels provide **well-equipped kitchens** and all they ask is that you clean up after yourself. There's also no need to carry a sleeping bag. All hostels recommended in this guide provide linen and may not even allow you to use your own sleeping bag. The YHA hostels are particularly clean and well equipped. Note that hostels very rarely provide towels (sometimes these can be bought or rented at reception).

In some cases **camping** is available at YHA hostels for around £15 per tent per night, and campers can use the hostel's facilities.

Unfortunately, hostels aren't numerous enough or sufficiently well spaced to provide accommodation for every night of your walk so you will have to stay in B&Bs or use campsites on several nights, too. The long stretch between Falmouth and Plymouth is particularly barren with only one hostel (at Boswinger, near Gorran Haven).

Most YHA hostels (but not independent hostels) are open only for group bookings between November and March; however, check the YHA website for the latest details.

❑ YOUTH HOSTEL ASSOCIATION (YHA)

You can join the YHA (☎ 0800-019 1700, ☎ 01629-592700, 🌐 yha.org.uk) direct or at any hostel. However, you don't need to be a youth to stay in a YHA hostel. Nor do you need to be a member.

The annual membership fee is £20 (£15 if you pay by direct debit). If you are a member you get 10% off your entire booking (including food). Furthermore, a member can book for a group of up to 16 people, and the whole group will get the discount as long as the member is part of that group (they check ID). Should at least one person be under-26 you will get a further 5% off the entire booking. As part of your membership you get a digital version of the YHA handbook.

If you are from a country other than Britain the equivalent organisation is Hostelling International; their website (🌐 www.hihostels.com) has lists of each country's contact details. HI cards are accepted at all YHA hostels in Britain.

Phones and wi-fi

The **mobile phone** reception along much of the coast path has improved in recent years; although it's still not unusual to walk for half a day without a signal, and in some small coastal villages you will have to climb up a nearby hill in order to make a phone call. Consequently **public telephone boxes** are marked on the maps wherever one is available. The minimum cost for making a call from a public telephone box is 60p.

Wi-fi is everywhere these days – in most pubs, cafés, restaurants, B&Bs, hotels, and even on many campsites – and it's almost always provided free of charge to customers. Having said that, those of you carrying smartphones may find you're able to get online more often through your mobile phone network in some areas.

WALKING COMPANIES

For walkers wanting to make their holiday as easy and trouble free as possible there are several specialist companies offering a range of services from baggage transfers to accommodation booking and fully guided group tours.

Baggage carriers

The thought of carrying a large pack puts many people off walking long-distance trails. The main baggage company on the SWCP is the aptly named **Luggage Transfers** (☎ 01326-567247, 🌐 luggagetransfers.co.uk; Helston), who cover the whole of the path, charging from £15 per day.

Alternatively, some of the **taxi firms** listed in this guide can provide a similar service within a local area if you want a break from carrying your bags for a day or so. Also, don't rule out the possibility of your **B&B/guesthouse owner** taking your bags ahead for you; plenty of them are glad to do so since it supplements their income and adds to the service they offer. Depending on the distance they may make no charge at all, or charge £10-15; this may be less than a taxi would charge.

Self-guided holidays

The following companies provide customised packages for walkers which usually include detailed advice and notes on itineraries and routes, maps, accommodation booking, daily baggage transfer and transport arrangements at the start and end of your walk. If you don't want the whole all-in package some of the companies may be able to arrange just accommodation booking or baggage carrying.

- **Absolute Escapes** (☎ 0131-610 1210, 🌐 absoluteescapes.com; Edinburgh) Offer walking holidays along the whole path as well as in sections.
- **Celtic Trails** (☎ 01291-689774, 🌐 celtictrailswalkingholidays.co.uk; Chepstow) Organise walking holidays along particular sections of the footpath; length-of-time options are from four days to a week or more.
- **Compass Holidays** (☎ 01242-250642, 🌐 compass-holidays.com; Cheltenham) Organise walks of between three and eight days around the Lizard Peninsula (Helston to Mullion) and the entire Cornwall Coast Path.

As noted on pp18-19, it isn't possible to stay in **hostels** every night. However, for the nights you do stay in one expect to pay £17-25pp. If you cook your own meals you will need about £30-35pp per day. If you eat the meals provided in some YHA hostels expect to pay around £6.50 for breakfast, about the same for a packed lunch, and approximately £10 for an evening meal.

On the nights when you have to stay in a **B&B** there won't be the facilities to cook for yourself, so you will have to eat out. For these days budget in the vicinity of £60-70pp if you can make do with a simple packed lunch and fish & chips for dinner, or £80-plus if you intend eating lunches and dinners at cafés, pubs and restaurants. (See also p21).

Don't forget to set some money aside for the **inevitable extras**: souvenirs, washing and drying clothes, entrance fees for various attractions, cream teas, beer, buses, boats and taxis, any changes of plan.

Itineraries

All walkers are individuals. Some like to cover large distances as quickly as possible, others are happy to stroll along, stopping whenever the fancy takes them. You may want to walk the coast path all in one go, tackle it over a series of weekends or use the trail for linear day walks; the choice is yours.

To accommodate these differences this book is not divided into rigid daily stages but is designed to make it easy for you to plan your own perfect itinerary.

The **planning map** (opposite the inside back cover) and **table of village and town facilities** (pp32-5) summarise the essential information and make it straightforward to devise a plan of your own. Alternatively, have a look at the **suggested itineraries** (pp36-8) and simply choose your preferred type of accommodation and speed of walking. There are also suggestions for those who want to experience the best of the trail over a day (see p39) or a weekend (see p40), or who want to plan a series of day walks from a fixed base (see box p40).

The **public transport maps** on pp52-3 and **bus service table** (pp54-5) may also be useful at this stage. Having made a rough plan, turn to Part 4 where you will find: summaries of the route, full descriptions of accommodation, places to eat and other services in each village and town; as well as detailed trail maps.

WHICH DIRECTION?

Although the route in this book has been described from Bude to Plymouth, it doesn't make much difference whether you walk the coast path in a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. There is virtually the same amount of ascent and descent either way and the prevailing south-westerly wind will be in your face for one half of the walk and behind you for the other whichever way you go. Most people choose to walk the path anti-clockwise (starting in Bude), so this way you'll be more likely to enjoy coast-path camaraderie with fellow walkers.

Getting to and from the Cornwall Coast Path

All the major towns along the coast path are reasonably well served by rail and/or coach services from the rest of Britain. Travelling by train or coach is the most convenient way to get to the trail as you do not need to worry about where to leave your car, how safe it will be while you're walking, or how to get back to it at the end of your holiday. Choosing to travel by public transport is choosing to help the environment and is a creative step in minimising your impact on the countryside.

GETTING TO BRITAIN

By air

The best international gateway to Britain for the Cornwall Coast Path is London with its six airports: Heathrow (the main airport; heathrowairport.com), Gatwick (gatwickairport.com), Stansted (stanstedairport.com), Luton (london-luton.co.uk), London City (londoncityairport.com) and Southend (southendairport.com). However, some charter and budget airlines also have flights to Newquay (cornwallairportnewquay.com), Exeter (exeter-airport.co.uk) and Bristol (bristolairport.co.uk) airports.

From Europe by train

Eurostar (eurostar.com) operates a high-speed passenger service via the Channel Tunnel between Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Lille and London. The Eurostar terminal in London is at St Pancras International station with connections to the London Underground and to all other main railway stations in London. Trains to Cornwall (and Plymouth) leave from Paddington station; see p50 for details.

For more information about rail services from your country contact your national rail company or Rail Europe (raileurope.com).

From Europe by coach

Eurolines (eurolines.com) have a wide network of long-distance bus services connecting over 500 destinations in 25 European countries to London (Victoria Coach Station). Visit the Eurolines website for details of services from your country.

From Europe by car

P&O (poferies.com) runs frequent passenger ferries from Calais to Dover; and from Rotterdam and Zeebrugge to Hull. Brittany Ferries (brittanyferries.com) has services from Santander and Roscoff to Plymouth; from Bilbao, St Malo, Cherbourg, Caen and Le Havre to Portsmouth; and from Cherbourg to Poole. There are also several other ferries plying routes between mainland Europe and ports on Britain's eastern coast. Look at ferrysavers.com or directferries.com for a full list of companies and services.

Eurotunnel (eurotunnel.com) operates a shuttle train service (Le Shuttle) for vehicles via the Channel Tunnel between Calais and Folkestone taking one hour between the motorway in France and the motorway in Britain.

📌 NATIONAL EXPRESS COACH SERVICES

National Express (☎ 0871-781 8181, lines open 24 hours; 🌐 nationalexpress.com)

Note: the services listed below operate daily but not all stops are included. Places in bold are on or very near the coast path.

- 101** Birmingham to **Plymouth** via Bristol, Taunton & **Exeter**, 3/day
- 102** Birmingham to **Plymouth** via Cheltenham, **Exeter**, Torquay & Paignton, 2/day
- 104** Birmingham to **Penzance** via Bristol, **Exeter**, **Plymouth**, **Newquay**, **Hayle** & St Erth, 1/day
- 404** London to **Plymouth** via Heathrow Airport, Chippenham, Bath, **Exeter**, Torquay & Paignton, 1/day
- 406** London Victoria to **Penzance** via Heathrow Airport, Weston-super-Mare, Taunton, **Exeter**, **Plymouth**, **Newquay**, Truro, **Falmouth**, & Helston, 1/day
- 502** London to Ilfracombe via Bristol, Taunton & **Barnstaple**, 2/day
- 504** London to **Penzance** via Heathrow Airport, **Exeter**, **Plymouth**, Bodmin, **Newquay**, Truro & **Falmouth**, 2/day plus London to **Plymouth** 1/day

buy tickets from coach and bus station ticket offices, National Express agents, directly from the driver (though not always, so do check in advance), by telephone or online. You need to allow at least four working days for posted tickets.

However, it is not easy to reach **Bude** by coach. Your best bet is to travel to Exeter, Okehampton or Plymouth and from there take the local bus service to Bude (see box pp54-5). Alternatively take a coach to **Barnstaple** and get Stagecoach's service from there to Bude. There are several coach services to other towns on the coast path and also services from **Falmouth** and **Plymouth** to London and elsewhere.

You could also try Megabus (🌐 uk.megabus.com) which runs services to Falmouth, Plymouth and Newquay.

By car

The easiest way to drive into Cornwall is to join the M5 to Exeter and then take either the A30 or A38 depending on your final destination. Even if you're using a Sat Nav, a good road atlas is useful for navigating Cornwall's country lanes.

Parking your car can be a problem as you'll need to find long-term parking in a suitable location, then get back to it at the end of your walk.

By air

Although there is the option of taking a domestic flight into **Newquay airport** (see box p49), Newquay is 70 miles from Bude, and buses between the two take at least three hours. Bear in mind that air travel is by far the least environmentally sound option (see 🌐 chooseclimate.org for the true costs of flying).

LOCAL TRANSPORT

Bus services

Cornwall has a comprehensive public transport network linking almost all the coastal villages with at least one bus per day in the summer. This is useful for the walker as there's the possibility of linear day and weekend walks (*cont'd on p56*)

▣ BUS SERVICES

[See public transport maps on pp52-3

ATLA	First Kernow	Atlantic Coaster	St Ives to Padstow via Hayle, Gwithian, Portreath, Porthowan, St Agnes, Perranporth, Newquay, Watergate Bay, Mawgan Porth, Bedruthan Steps, Porthcothan & Harlyn , May-Sep daily 1/hr
FALM	First Kernow	Falmouth Coaster	Falmouth to Penzance via Penryn, Helston, Porthleven & Marazion , daily 1/hr
LAND	First Kernow	Land's End Coaster	Penzance to Penzance via Newlyn, Lamorna Turn, Treen, Porthcurno, Sennen, Land's End, St Just, Botallack, Pendeen, Morvah, Gurnard's Head, Zennor, St Ives, Carbis Bay, Lelant & Marazion , May-Sep daily 1/hr (Oct-Apr daily 2-6/day)
MOUS	First Kernow	Penzance to Mousehole	via Newlyn , daily 2/hr
G1	GorranBus	Gorran Haven	to Truro via Mevagissey & Pentewan , Wed & Fri 1/day
G3	GorranBus	Gorran Haven	to Truro via Mevagissey & Pentewan , Tue 2/day & Thur 1/day
G4	GorranBus	Gorran Haven	to Plymouth via Mevagissey, Pentewan & St Austell , 3rd Mon of month 1/day (open-topped bus)
L1	First Kernow	Lizard	to Helston via Mullion & Poldhu Cove , summer daily 1/hr, winter Mon-Sat 5/day
T1	First Kernow	Penzance	to Truro via Long Rock & Hayle , daily 2/hr
T2	First Kernow	St Ives	to Truro via Carbis Bay, Lelant & Hayle , daily 2/hr
U1/U1A	First Kernow	Falmouth to Newquay	via St Agnes, Perranporth, Perran Sands & Goonhavern , daily 1-2/hr
U4	First Kernow	Falmouth to Penzance	via Penryn, Helston, Porthleven, Praa Sands, Perran & Marazion , daily 1-2/hr
1	St Ives Bus Co	St Ives	to Carbis Bay , Mon-Sat approx 1/hr
2	Go Cornwall Bus	Penzance	to Praa Sands via Marazion , Mon-Sat 1/hr
5	Go Cornwall Bus	Penzance	to Exeter via Paul via Newlyn , daily 1/hr
6A	Stagecoach	Bude	to Exeter via Launceston & Okehampton , Mon-Sat 7/day, Sun 3/day
7	Go Cornwall Bus	Penzance	to Land's End via Zennor, Gurnard's Head, Morvah, Pendeen, Botallack, St Just, Land's End Airport, Sennen Cove & Sennen , Mon-Sat 2/day
8	Go Cornwall Bus	St Just	to Penzance , Mon-Sat 6/day
10	Go Cornwall Bus	Launceston	to Bodmin Parkway via Port Isaac, Polzeath, Rock & Wadebridge , Mon-Sat 1/hr
11/11A	Go Cornwall Bus	Plymouth	to Padstow via Bodmin Parkway , Mon-Sat 2/hr, Sun 4/day
12/12B	Go Cornwall Bus	Bude	to Plymouth via Launceston , Mon-Sat 6/day, Bude to Launceston , Sun 6/day
16/16A	Go Cornwall Bus	Penzance	to St Ives via Gurnard's Head (3/day) & Zennor (3/day) & Carbis Bay , Mon-Sat 1/hr
17	First Kernow	Penzance	to St Ives via St Erth, Lelant & Carbis Bay , daily 1-2/hr
18	First Kernow	Penzance	to Lower Boscaswell via St Just, Botallack & Pendeen , Mon-Sat 1/hr
23	Go Cornwall Bus	Gorran Haven	to St Austell via Mevagissey & Pentewan , Mon-Sat 3/day

THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

2

The Cornish coastline provides a diverse range of habitats – ocean, beaches, sand dunes, steep cliffs, cliff-top grasslands and heathland – resulting in a rich variety of wildlife. For the walker interested in the natural environment it is a feast for the senses.

It would take a book several times the size of this one to list the thousands of species which you could come across on your walk. What follows is a brief description of the more common species you may encounter as well as some of the more special plants and animals which are found in Cornwall. If you want to know more refer to the field guides listed on pp47-8.

Nature conservation arose tentatively in the middle of the 19th century out of concern for wild birds which were being slaughtered to provide feathers for the fashion industry. As commercial exploitation of land has increased over the intervening century, so too has the conservation movement. It now has a wide sphere of influence throughout the world and its ethos is upheld by international legislation, government agencies and voluntary organisations.

Conservation schemes (see box on pp66-7) are outlined on the premise that to really learn about a landscape you need to know more than the names of all the plants and animals in it. It is just as important to understand the interactions going on between them and man's relationship with this ecological balance.

Flora and fauna

FAUNA

In and around the fishing villages

The wild laugh of the **herring gull** (*Larus argentatus*) is the wake-up call of the coast path. Perched on the rooftops of the stone villages, they are a reminder of the link between people and wildlife, the rocky coast and our stone and concrete towns and cities. Shoreline scavengers, they've adapted to the increasing waste thrown out by human society. Despite their bad reputation it's worth taking a closer look at these fascinating, ubiquitous birds. How do they keep their pale grey and white plumage so beautiful feeding on rubbish?





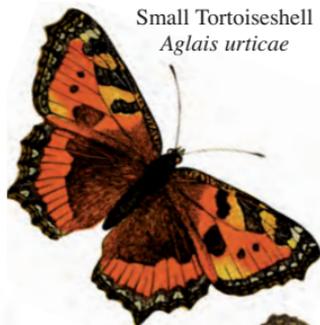
Above, clockwise from top left : 1. Herring gull. 2. Oystercatchers. 3. Puffin. 4. Razorbill. 5. Atlantic grey seal (© Joel Newton). 6. Black headed gull. 7. Great black-backed gull. (All ©BT).

C4 Some butterflies of Cornwall

Peacock
Inachis io



Small Tortoiseshell
Aglais urticae



Brimstone
Gonepteryx rhamni



Small Pearl-Bordered Fritillary
Boloria selene



Common Blue
Polyommatus icarus



Painted Lady
Vanessa cadui



Small Copper
Lycaena phlaeas



Red Admiral
Vanessa atalanta



Large Garden/
Cabbage White
Pieris brassicae



Meadow
Brown
Maniola jurtina



Clouded Yellow
Colias croceus



Dog Rose
Rosa canina



Meadow Buttercup
Ranunculus acris



Gorse
Ulex europaeus



Tormentil
Potentilla erecta



Birdsfoot-trefoil
Lotus corniculatus



Ox-eye Daisy
Leucanthemum vulgare



Common Ragwort
Senecio jacobaea



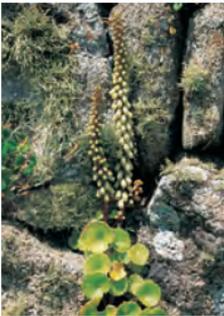
Primrose
Primula vulgaris



Cowslip
Primula veris



Yarrow
Achillea millefolium



Wall Pennywort
Umbilicus rupestris



Honeysuckle
Lonicera periclymenum

MINIMUM IMPACT & OUTDOOR SAFETY

Minimum impact walking

By visiting Cornwall you are having a positive impact, not just on your own well-being, but on local communities as well. Your presence brings money and jobs into the local economy (tourism supports one in five jobs) and also pride in and awareness of Cornwall's environment and culture. Cornwall receives over four million visitors annually, with the coast path attracting at least a quarter of those.

However, the environment should not be considered only in terms of its value as a tourist asset. Its long-term survival and enjoyment by future generations will only be possible if both visitors and local communities protect it now. The following points are made to help you reduce your impact on the environment, encourage conservation and promote sustainable tourism in the area.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Support local businesses

Rural businesses and communities in Britain have been hit hard in recent years by a seemingly endless series of crises, not least, of course, the financial fallout following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Most people are aware of the Countryside Code – not dropping litter and closing the gate behind you are still as pertinent as ever – but in light of recent economic pressures there is something else you can do: **buy local**.

Look and ask for local produce to buy and eat; not only does this cut down on the amount of pollution and congestion that the transportation of food creates (the so-called 'food miles'), but also ensures that you are supporting local farmers and producers; the very people who have moulded the countryside you have come to see and who are in the best position to protect it. If you can find local food which is also organic so much the better.

It's a fact of life that money spent at local level – perhaps in a market, or at the greengrocer, or in an independent pub – has a far greater impact for good on that community than the equivalent spent in a branch of a national chain store or restaurant. While no-one would advocate that walkers should boycott the larger supermarkets, which after all do provide local employment, it's worth remembering



Health and outdoor safety

AVOIDANCE OF HAZARDS

Swimming

If you are not an experienced swimmer or familiar with the sea, plan ahead and swim at beaches where there is a lifeguard service; these beaches have all been marked on the trail maps. On such beaches you should swim between the red and yellow flags as this is the patrolled area. Don't swim between black-and-white chequered flags as these areas are only for surfboards. If there is a red flag flying this indicates that it is dangerous to enter the water. If you are not sure about anything ask one of the lifeguards; after all they are there to help you.

If you are going to swim at unsupervised beaches never do so alone and always take care. Some beaches are prone to strong rips. Never swim off headlands or near river mouths as there may be strong currents running. Always be aware of changing weather conditions and tidal movement. Cornwall has a huge tidal range and it can be very easy to get cut off by the tide.

If you see someone in difficulty do not attempt a rescue until you have contacted the coastguard (see box on p77). Once you know help is on the way try to assist the person by throwing something to help them stay afloat. Many beaches have rescue equipment located in red boxes; these are marked on the trail maps.

❑ BEWARE OF THE COW!

Most people are aware of the dangers of bulls – indeed, there are restrictions placed upon farmers who mustn't allow adult bulls to graze in fields that are crossed by a public right of way – but few people realise that cows can also be dangerous. Each year there are reports of people who have been attacked, or even trampled to death by cows. Between 2015-16 and 2019-20 the Health & Safety Executive investigated 142 incidents, 22 of which resulted in the death of a person. However, only four of these were walkers or other members of the public, the rest being farm workers.

Cows are particularly protective if there are young calves in the herd, but even without any calves around, a herd of cows can suddenly be spooked, either by a walker or, more likely, by a walker's dog. If you find yourself in a field of worryingly aggressive cattle, move away as carefully and quietly as possible, and if you feel threatened by them let go of your dog's lead and let it run free rather than try to protect it and risk endangering yourself. Your dog will outrun the cows. You might not be able to.

Those without canine companions should follow similar advice; move away calmly, do not panic and make no sudden noises. Chances are the cows will leave you alone once they establish that you pose no threat.

If you come to a field of cows with calves in the herd, think twice about crossing the field; if you can, go another way.

You can report incidents involving dangerous cattle at [killercows.co.uk](https://www.killercows.co.uk).

4 ROUTE GUIDE & MAPS

Using this guide

The trail guide and maps have not been divided into rigid daily stages since people walk at different speeds and have different interests. The **route summaries** below describe the trail between significant places and are written as if walking the coast path from Bude to Plymouth. To enable you to plan your own itinerary, **practical information** is presented clearly on the trail maps. This includes walking times, all places to stay, camp and eat, as well as shops where you can buy supplies. Further **service details** are given in the text under the entry for each place. For a condensed overview of this information see the **town and village facilities table** on pp32-5.

For **overview maps** and **profiles** see the colour pages at the end of the book.

TRAIL MAPS [see key map inside cover; symbols key p338]

Scale and walking times

The trail maps are to a scale of 1:20,000 (1cm = 200m; 3¹/₈ inches = one mile). Walking times are given along the side of each map and the arrow shows the direction to which the time refers. Black triangles indicate the points between which the times have been taken. **See important note below on walking times.**

The time-bars are a tool and are not there to judge your walking ability. There are so many variables that affect walking speed, from the weather conditions to how many beers you drank the previous evening. After the first hour or two of walking you will be able to see how your speed relates to the timings on the maps. Note also that time spent on ferry crossings is not included on time-bars.

Up or down?

On the trail maps in this book, the walking trail is shown as a **dashed red line**. An arrow across the trail indicates the slope; two arrows show that it is steep. Note that the arrow points towards the higher part of the trail. If, for example, you are walking from A (at 80m) to B (at

❑ IMPORTANT NOTE – WALKING TIMES

Unless otherwise specified, **all times in this book refer only to the time spent walking**. You will need to add 20-30% to allow for rests, photography, drinking water etc. When planning the day's hike count on 5-7 hours' actual walking.



200m) and the trail between the two is short and steep it would be shown thus: A — — — >> — — — B. Reversed arrow heads indicate a downward gradient.

Other features

The numbered GPS waypoints refer to the list on pp330-5. Other features are marked on the map when pertinent to navigation. To avoid cluttering the maps and making them unusable not all features have been marked each time they occur.

ACCOMMODATION

Apart from in large towns where some selection has been necessary, the maps and text indicate almost every place to stay that is within easy reach of the trail and willing to take one-night stays. For **B&B-style accommodation** the number and type of rooms is given after each entry: **S** = **single** (one single bed), **T** = **twin** (two single beds), **D** = **double** (one double bed), **Tr** = **triple** (three single beds or one double and one single) **Qd** = **quad**. Note that many of the triple/quad rooms have a double bed and either one/two single beds, or bunk beds, thus in a group of three or four, two people would have to share the double bed, but it also means the room can be used as a double or twin. Many places describe these rooms as family rooms – **F** = **family room**.

Rates quoted are **per person** (pp) per night based on two sharing, unless indicated otherwise. The rate for single occupancy (**sgl occ**) of a double/twin is also shown where appropriate. Some B&Bs don't accept credit/debit cards but most guesthouses, hostels and hotels do, as do most of the large campsites.

The text also mentions whether the rooms are en suite, or have private or shared facilities, and if a **bath** (♻️) is available for at least one room. Also noted is whether premises offer **packed lunches** (🍱) if requested in advance; and if **dogs** (🐕) are welcome. Most places will not take more than one dog in a room and also accept them only subject to prior arrangement. Some make an additional charge (usually per night but occasionally per stay) while others may require a deposit which is refundable if the dog doesn't make a mess. See also pp336-8.

It is safe to assume nowadays that if a place to stay and/or eat has a **website**, it will also have **WI-FI** that is free unless otherwise stated. It can be useful to check the **Facebook page** (**fb**) before arriving, especially for small or seasonal businesses, as these tend to be kept more up-to-date with changes to opening times than regular websites.

Many places do not usually accept advance **bookings** for a single-night stay at weekends or in peak holiday periods, shown in the text as (**min 2/3 nights**) but they might if someone calls near the actual date or on the day. Whether booking ahead or not, you will almost always get the best rates by booking direct with the accommodation. Booking is sometimes needed at **campsites** in school holidays but is usually not necessary at other times. Always remember to tell campsites that you are walking the coast path when you call ahead. Many campsites will find room for walkers even if they are officially full. You'll also often get a cheaper rate.

The route guide

[For the route guide from Devon along the coast path north of Bude see pp321-9]

BUDE

Bude is a small, compact seaside town with plenty of charm and character that sprawls out from its famous beach, Summerleaze.

Summer and public holidays are when this normally sleepy little town springs into life and it can become quite hectic, but arrive at any other time and you shouldn't have any trouble booking accommodation and making your way around town.

Built in 1830, the town's small **castle** ( thecastlebude.org.uk; daily 10am-4/5pm winter/summer; free) is worth exploring. Its **heritage centre** contains exhibitions on shipwrecks and lifeboats as well as displays on the Bude Canal and the geology of the Cornish coast. Inside too is **Willoughby Gallery**, which holds local art exhibitions, a gift shop and the pleasant Lighthouse Café (see Where to eat).

Pretty **Bude Canal** (see box on p83) runs from the beach past the castle and can be followed for a mile or so along the tow-path or in **boats** (£10/30 mins). Also nearby is **Bude Light**, a Millennium project built to commemorate the life of Sir Goldsworthy Gurney, a Cornish scientist and inventor for whom the castle was originally built.

The marvellous **Bude Sea Pool** ( budeseapool.org; **fb**; open year-round; free) is a man-made tidal swimming pool, built in 1930 to provide a safe place for people to go sea swimming.

Bude is also known for its **Jazz Festival** (see p16).

Services

The excellent **Bude Tourist Information and Canal Centre** ( 01288-354240,  visitbude.info; **fb**; Easter-Oct Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm, Oct-Easter daily to 4pm; **wi-fi** free via Facebook or £1/3hrs) has a comprehensive listing of accommodation in the area (you can book accommodation in the centre and through its

website too) and the enthusiastic staff are willing to help. They are happy to store luggage for the day (£1.50). Hot drinks are available here too.

There is **internet access** (free for 30 mins) at **Bude Library** (Mon, Wed & Fri 9.30am-5pm, Sat 10am-1pm), which has a good Cornish reference section. All cafés, restaurants and pubs have free **wi-fi**.

Bude's main **post office** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 9am-12.30pm) is at the top of Belle Vue, the main shopping street. There's also a **sub-post office** which is part of a newsagent (daily 7am-5.30pm) almost directly opposite the tourist office.

For **food shopping**, head to Sainsbury's (Mon-Sat 8am-8pm, Sun 10am-4pm) or the Co-op (daily 7am-10pm). There is a **Boots pharmacy** (Mon-Sat 9am-5.30pm, Sun 10am-4pm) while, for **walking and camping gear**, there is a Mountain Warehouse (Mon-Sat 9am-5.30pm, Sun 10am-4pm).

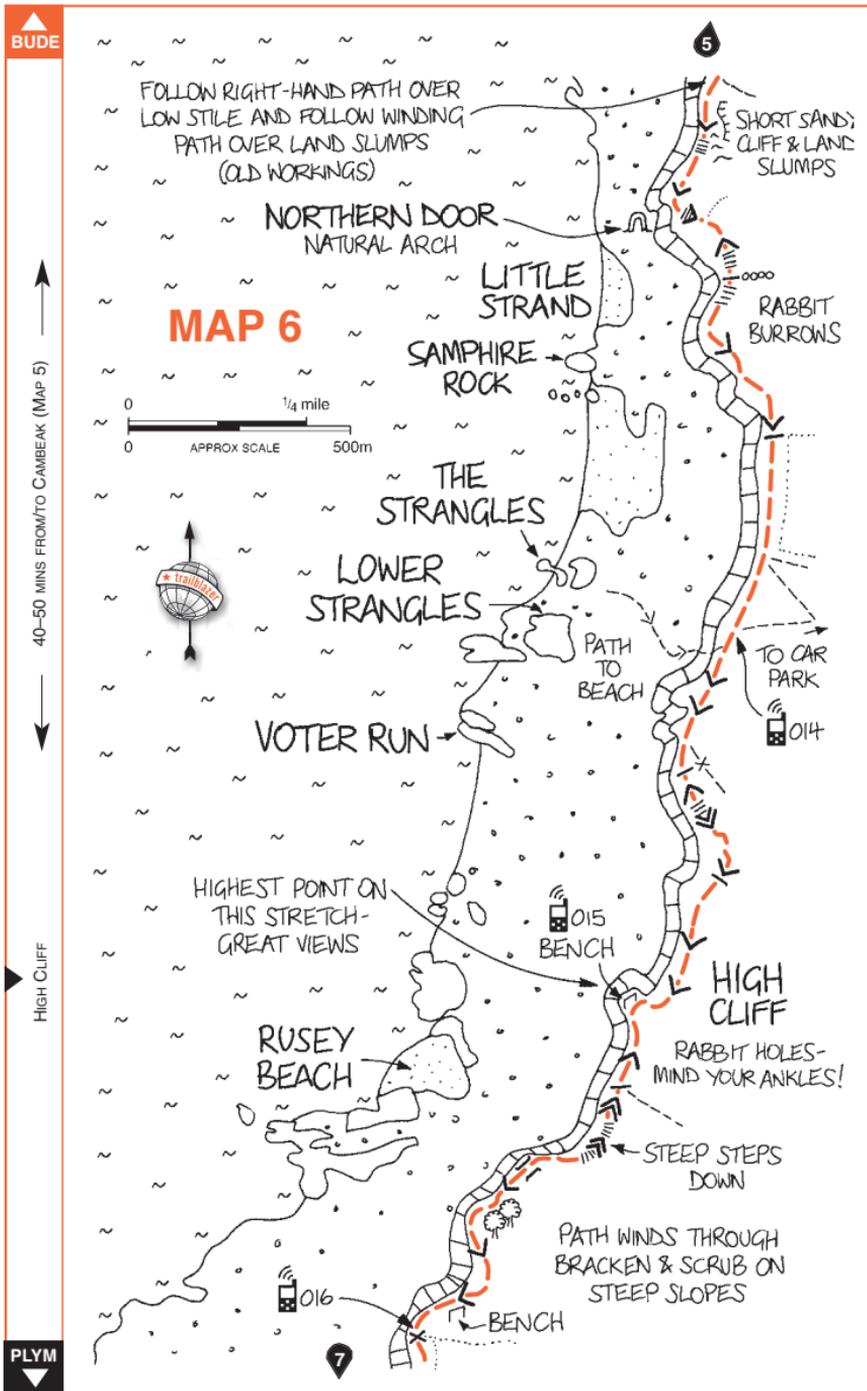
Spencer Thorn Bookshop ( 01288-352518; Mon-Sat 9am-5pm, summer school hols Sun 10am-4pm) has a good selection of books on Cornwall, including Trailblazer's *Cornwall Coast Path*.

There are **banks** including a TSB and a Barclays, both of which have **ATMs**. You will also find **ATMs** outside the town's supermarkets.

There's a **laundrette** (Mon-Thur 8.30am-5pm, Fri to 8pm, Sat 9am-5pm, Sun 10am-5pm) tucked away off Lansdown Rd.

Where to stay

Campsites The recently opened **Efford Farm Camping** ( 07495-915659 or  07870-472448,  effordcamping.co.uk; Easter to Sep) is now the closest campsite to the centre of the town. It's just off Vicarage Rd and charges £10 for hikers. It's no-frills camping – just an open field really – but has portacabin toilets and showers.



with walkers, with its location right on the path and lovely food, though it's now only open four days a week and surprisingly no longer serves cream teas.

Another nice café option is **Pilchard Cellar Café** (summer 10am-5pm, winter 10.30am-4pm; ☼☼), which is attached to the **National Trust gift shop** (same hours). You can get a decent soup here plus good-value pasties, teacakes and scones, and they serve bottles of Tintagel Brewery Ale as well as tea and coffee.

The tea room at **Bridge House** (see Where to stay) is another lovely option for Cornish delights such as cream teas, pasties and various seafood offerings.

Toby Jug Café (daily 10am-4pm) has plenty of roadside seating and has a wide selection of gluten-free and vegan options on its menu.

For pub food, the **Cobweb Inn** (☎ 01840-250278, ☐ cobwebinn.com, fb; food daily noon-3pm & 5-9pm) is popular with pub-classic mains ranging from £10 to £14. Their range of beers includes Sharp's Doom Bar and St Austell's Tribute.

Nearby former pub **Old Manor House** (☎ 01840-250251; summer daily 11am-

9pm, winter hours vary) is now a licensed coffee shop being run by next door **Sharon's Plaice** (same hours) where you can take away fish & chips, pizza or pasties or eat in their lovely garden.

Riverside Restaurant (see Where to stay; Mon 6-10pm, Tue-Sun 10am-10pm, winter hours shorter) has a delightful garden by the stream which runs down to the harbour, and serves a good range of locally caught fish. Lunchtime mains cost £7-10, though the crab sandwiches are more, while most evening mains range from £12 to £20.

At the top end of the market, **The Wellington** (see Where to stay) has a swanky restaurant (daily 6.30-9pm, booking advisable), where most mains will cost £15-20, but you can also eat main meals as well as sandwiches and cream teas in the bar (food noon-8pm) with a pint of Cornish cider or ale.

Transport [See pp52-5 for details] The No 95 bus service between Bude and Truro stops here as well as at Crackington Haven and Tintagel.

For a taxi, ring BosCars (☎ 07790-983911, ☐ boscars.uk).

BOSCASTLE TO TINTAGEL

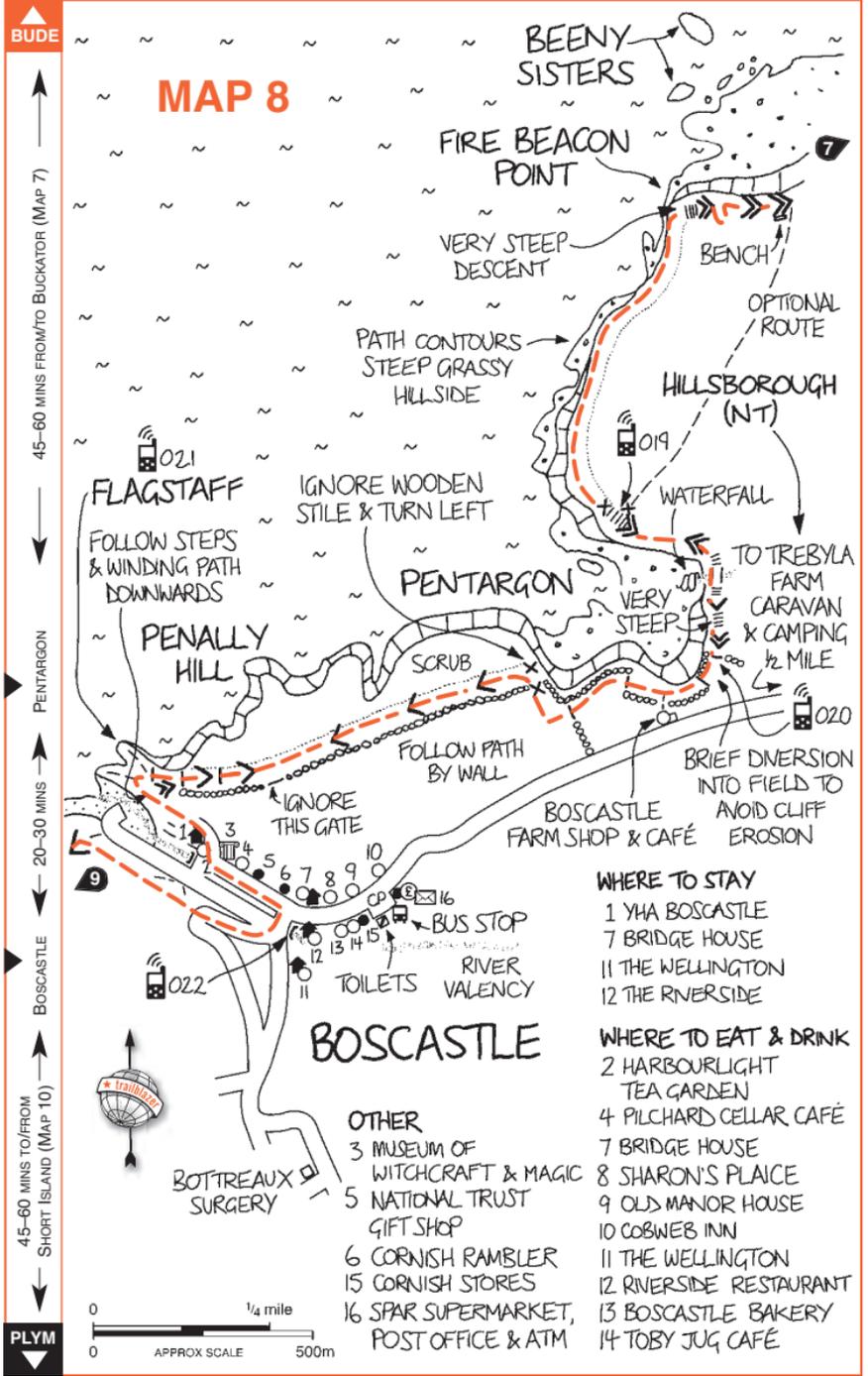
[MAPS 8-11]

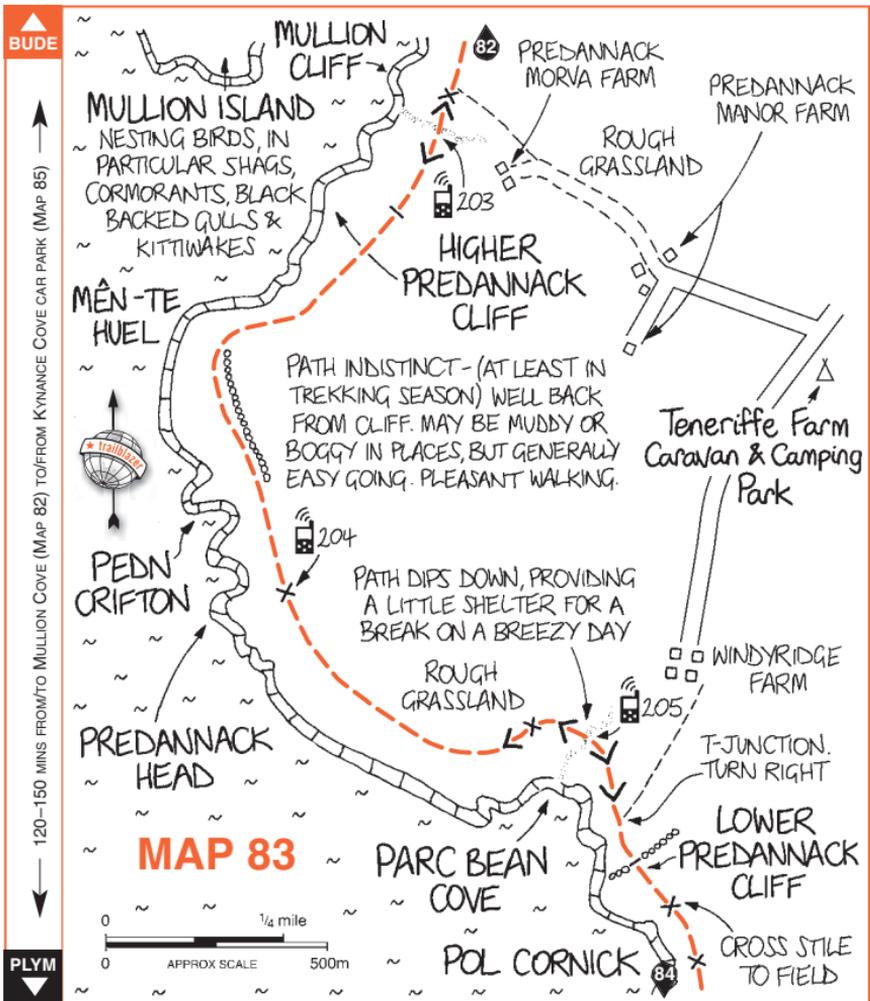
For the next **5 miles (8km, 2-2½hrs)** you leave the high cliffs behind. You start by passing the site of the **Willapark Iron Age fort**, where there now stands a **National Coastwatch tower** (and where you may stumble across some very cute ponies), before following a convoluted and rugged section of coastline, decorated with small bays, coves and headlands. The walking is not too strenuous and there are plenty of tempting places for a break, not least the dramatic rock arch known as **Lady's Window** (Map 9) and the sheltered **Rocky Valley** (Map 10), a narrow gorge just before **Bossiney** that provides welcome shade on hot summer days.

At the end of this leg are the ruins of **Tintagel Castle**, a fittingly mystical spot for a fortress that is reputed to be the birthplace of the legendary King Arthur.

☐ IMPORTANT NOTE – WALKING TIMES

Unless otherwise specified, **all times in this book refer only to the time spent walking**. You will need to add 20-30% to allow for rests, photography, checking the map, drinking water etc, not to mention time simply to stop and stare. When planning the day's hike count on 5-7 hours' actual walking.





📍 GEOLOGY OF THE LIZARD

Even the most ungeologically minded can't miss the colourful serpentine rock around the Lizard; great streaks of green cliffs reminiscent of a snake's skin giving the stone its name. Spanning 20 square miles, this is the largest outcrop of serpentine in mainland Britain. It is actually part of the Earth's mantle, which would normally be about 20km, on average, below the surface. Local sculptors still carve ornaments from the serpentine rock which reached their height of popularity during the Victorian era, although they're probably a little too heavy to carry away in your pack.

Lizard Point isn't just famed as the most southerly point of mainland Britain. The offshore islets from Lizard Point are 500 million years old, a leftover crumb of the collision between the super-continents of Gondwanaland and Euramerica.

sunsets are stunning. Don't forget to say you're a walker when you call ahead; they almost always find room for walkers even if the campsite is otherwise full.

If Henry's really is chock-a-block, there's **Kynance Camping** (off Map 85 & 86; ☎ 07534-616006, **fb**; Apr-Sep 🐾; £20 per tent), a spacious site with clean showers, a few hundred metres north of the village.

Occupying the buildings of a former Victorian hotel, at **YHA Lizard Point** (see Map 86; ☎ 01326-291145, 🌐 www.yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-lizard-point; 28 beds, from £25pp; Mar-Dec only; booking recommended) there is a huge self-catering kitchen and oodles of space throughout.

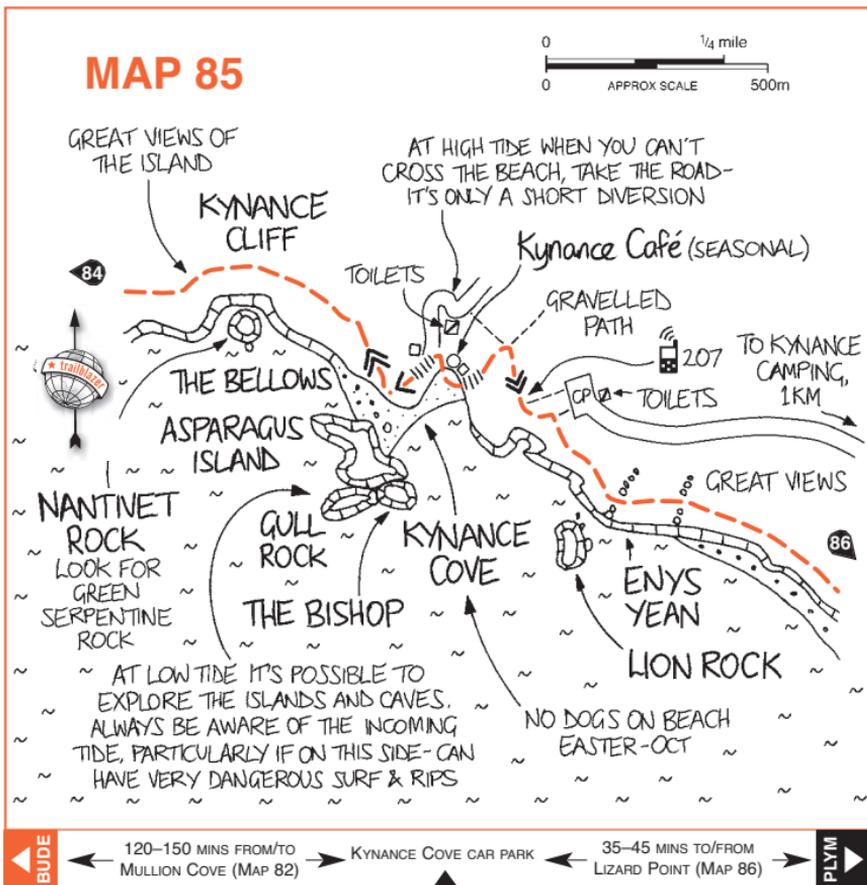
For **B&B**, **The Caerthillian** (☎ 01326-290019; 1S/1T/3D; 🍷; 🐾; from £40pp, sgl

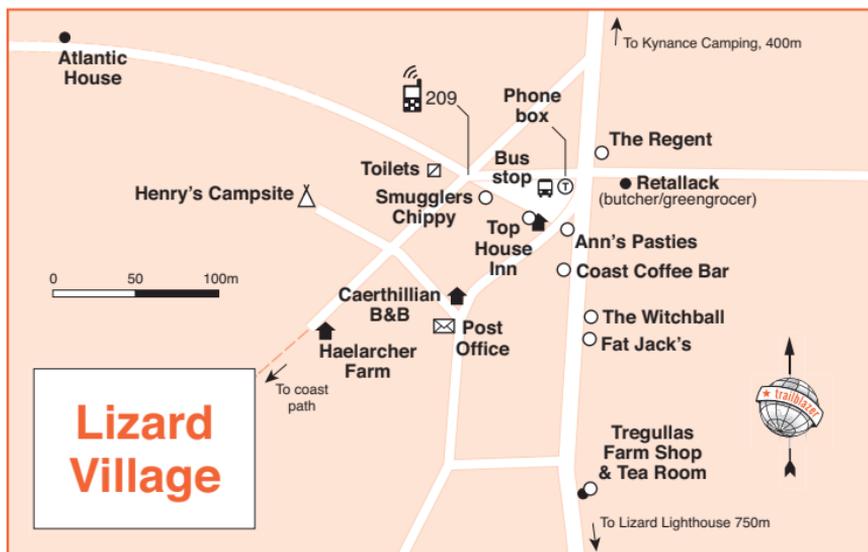
occ £40) is a lovely blue and white painted house in the heart of the village with very welcoming owners. Alternatively, enjoy panoramic sea views, and freshly baked bread for breakfast, at **Haelarcher Farm** (☎ 01326-291188, 🌐 haelarcher.co.uk; 1S/2D; from £45pp, sgl occ from £60). Both welcome one-night-stay walkers.

The Top House Inn (☎ 01326-450098, 🌐 thetophouseinn.co.uk, **fb**; 5D/2T/1Qd; from £45pp) is a friendly pub with very comfortable B&B rooms.

Where to eat and drink

In the village centre is the famed **Ann's Pasties** (☎ 01326-572282, 🌐 annspasties.co.uk, **fb**; Mon-Sat 3-9pm), which also does cakes, flapjacks, ice creams, and even beer!





For pub food, head to **The Top House Inn** (see Where to stay; food daily noon-8pm, Fri & Sat to 8.30pm) which does pub classics, fresh seafood and a separate pizza menu (£10-13). Nearby, **Smugglers** (☎ 01326-290763, fb; daily 4.30-8pm) is the place to go for fish & chips (£7.50).

Also close by, you'll find plenty of outdoor seating at **Coast Coffee Bar** (fb; Wed-Sat 9.30am-8pm, Sun-Tue 9.30am-5pm); good for breakfasts, cream teas and sandwiches, but with a decent evening menu too.

The Regent (☎ 01326-761049; ☑ the regentcafe.co.uk; Sun-Thur 9am-7.30pm, Fri & Sat to 8pm) is a no-frills café and grill serving an extensive, reasonably priced menu (mains £7-12) including crab mac and cheese, giant hot dogs and scampi and chips. Between village and coast **Tregullas Farm Shop and Tea Rooms** (☎ 01326-290122; ☑ tregullasfarm.co.uk, fb; daily 9am-5pm; 🍷) dishes up some fabulous Cornish breakfasts plus tarts, pies, sundaes, scones, ice cream, cakes... you get the idea. Delicious.

The Witchball (☎ 01326-290662, ☑ witchball.co.uk; food daily noon-3pm & 5-9pm, booking advised) is a popular bar and restaurant serving pizza, burgers and some excellent seafood (most mains £9-11). They also serve Cadgwith Crabber Ale, brewed

by Cornish Chough Brewery right here in the village, and their front terrace is lively on summer evenings. In case you were wondering, a 'witch ball' is a hollow sphere of glass hung in a cottage window to ward off evil spirits.

Next door, café **Fat Jack's** (fb; Sun-Mon & Wed-Thur 9.30am-6pm, Tue & Sat 9am-5pm) serves sandwiches, pasties, ice cream and coffee.

The most southerly café on mainland Britain, **Polpeor Café** (see Map 86; ☎ 01326-290939, fb; summer daily 9am-5/6pm, winter 11am-3pm; bring your own wine) at Lizard Point has one of the best terraces anywhere, with a view over the rocks and sea that is second to none; you'd be hard-pressed to imagine anywhere more evocative. Nearby, though not quite as far south, the licensed **Wavecrest Café** (Map 86; ☎ 01326-290898; ☑ wavecrestcornwall.co.uk, fb; daily 10am-4pm) has been serving holidaymakers since the 1930s, and also has fabulous sea views from its terrace.

Transport

[For details see pp52-5] The No 34 bus service calls here, as does the open-topped L1 tourist bus.

For a taxi, ring Meneage Taxis (☎ 07773-817156).

PLYMOUTH [MAP 131, p319]

'Plymouth is indeed a town of consideration, and of great importance to the public. The situation of it between two very large inlets of the sea, and in the bottom of a large bay [...] is very remarkable for the advantage of navigation.'

Daniel Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*

Lying between the mouths of the rivers Plym and Tamar, Plymouth is a modern city with a rich and eventful past. The city's growth and prosperity are forever indebted to her proximity to – and relationship with – the sea. Not just as the famous departure point of the Pilgrim Fathers but also as a hub for trade (the commercial dockyards are amongst the largest in Europe) and, foremost, as a vital naval base; with a tradition that dates back to the very inception of the Royal Navy, there is much to see and do in this historic and thriving metropolis.

The first record of habitation in the area, Sudtone (Saxon for 'South Farm'), situated on the site of the present-day Barbican, can be found in the Domesday Book (1086). Initially just a small fishing

village, its strategically important location soon brought prosperity and despite bouts of plague, cholera and smallpox trimming the ever-burgeoning population – as well as a concerted attempt at destruction by the Luftwaffe during the Plymouth Blitz – the city has continued to swell in size.

Much of this success is down to its situation at the mouths of two rivers, a crucial location that the nascent Royal Navy in the 17th century was quick to recognise. Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Devonport opened in 1690, with further docks being built in 1727, 1762 and 1795. Isambard Kingdom Brunel then designed the Great Western Docks (1844-1850) and in 1854 the Keynham Steam Yard, built for the construction of steam ships, was also completed. Hardly surprising, then, that most of the city's defining moments are sea based, from the defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588) to the sailing of the *Mayflower* (1620) as well as the heroic resistance the city showed in WWII when, despite enduring 59 German bombing sorties, it still played a full part in the Battle of the Atlantic and was a major embarkation point on D-Day.

□ THE COAST PATH THROUGH PLYMOUTH

Initially this **2¾-mile** (4.5km) trail from the Cremyll Ferry through Plymouth is a little confusing, the lack of coast path signs not helping. If you fancy some refreshment, the much-loved **Elvira's Café** (**fb**; Mon-Thur & Sat 8am-2.30pm, Fri 7.30am-2.30pm, Sun 8.30am-2.30pm; cash only) is right in front of you as you disembark from the ferry. Their breakfasts are particularly good.

Take the road opposite Elvira's (Strand St), then turn left and right onto Cremyll St. This leads you past **Ede Vinegar Works** (owned by the same family for six generations) to **Royal William Yard**. Named after King William IV (who stands overlooking the entrance), the yard was built, mostly on reclaimed land, to supply the navy with beef, biscuits and beer – with a brewery, bakery and slaughterhouse on site. The yard has undergone recent restoration and is now dotted with **cafés, restaurants and bars**, making for a very pleasant stroll; and the official coast path has been redirected through the yard, so you can explore its historic buildings without having to make any detours. You exit the yard at its far end, via a **staircase** dedicated to the late Eric Wallis MBE, who was the secretary of the South West Coast Path Association for 24 years. This brings you out over the defensive wall and into **Devil's Point Park**, with its wonderful sea views, before leading you back round the peninsula to the **Artillery Tower**, built to protect the harbour and yard but now a restaurant.

From here, make your way past the smart Georgian terraces of Durnford St, where Sir Arthur Conan Doyle worked as a doctor – which explains the **Sherlock Holmes quotes** in the pavement.

APPENDIX A: HARTLAND QUAY TO BUDE

HARTLAND QUAY TO BUDE

[MAPS 48x-54x]

The following section, the route from Hartland Quay in Devon over the border into Cornwall and on to Bude, is from *Exmoor & North Devon Coast Path*, the first book in this series. It's included for completeness, so that every inch of the path within Cornwall is covered in this book.

This **15½-mile (24.9km; 9hrs)** stretch is often cited as the hardest section on the entire South-West Coast Path! It's across soaring summit and plunging combe that includes, by our reckoning, ten *major* ascents and descents as you scramble across valley after valley, with no refreshments along the way (unless you divert off the path to Morwenstow, Map 51x) until right near the end.

Thankfully, the rewards are manifold: the views along the way, especially the panorama at Higher Sharpnose Point, the vista south from Steeple Point and the aspect from Yeolmouth Cliff back to Devil's Hole, are little short of magnificent. If surveying the scenery is difficult due to inclement conditions you can find shelter in the huts of writers Rev Stephen Hawker, near Morwenstow, and Ronald Duncan, above the border with Cornwall. While if the weather is good, it seems churlish not to pay a visit to the endless stretch of sand before Bude. All this, and we haven't even mentioned the waterfalls (with a particularly fine example at Speke's Mill Mouth), Iron Age forts, Roman sites, and the sheer joy of being on one of the most remote and beautiful stretches of coastline this country can offer.

HARTLAND QUAY [MAP 48x, p322]

In Tudor times this was a major port but a storm in 1887 destroyed the quay, and now there's only a small modern slipway and *Hartland Quay Hotel* (☎ 01237-441218, 📧 hartlandquayhotel.co.uk, 📄; 13 rooms, 12 en suite; 🍷; from £55pp, sgl/sgl occ £70/80). It has its own **museum** (Easter-Oct 11am-4pm), with photos and mementoes of various local shipwrecks. (They've plenty of raw material: it's said that this coastline has about ten shipwrecks per

mile!). The hotel's bar, the *Wreckers Retreat*, serves **food** (daily noon-2.30pm & 6-8.30pm, summer also 3-5pm; mains from £10).

Campers can pitch tents at the welcoming and well-facilitated *Stoke Barton Farm* (☎ 01237-441238 or 07766-766176, 📧 westcountry-camping.co.uk; adult/child £9/3.50; WI-FI shop only; 🐕; Mar-Oct), half a mile inland in the village of Stoke.

The route

Despite the fearsome reputation of this stage, the beginning of the walk is rather gentle as you leave Hartland Quay to head towards the triangular promontory of **St Catherine's Tor**. The path ignores the scramble up the Tor (which is believed to have had a Roman villa on its summit), preferring instead to follow **Wargery Water** upstream, a waterway that ends its journey in impressive fashion by plummeting over the cliffs to the north of the Tor. Those who miss this waterfall (which, after all, is not actually on the path) needn't be too concerned, for the next valley, **Speke's Mill Mouth**, has, if anything, an even more spectacular version, and one that is easily visible just a few metres from the path.

Climbing out of the combe – the first of many calf-popping ascents – takes you up **Swansford Hill** and past the turn-off to **Elmscott**.

APPENDIX C: TAKING A DOG ALONG THE PATH

The South-West Coast Path is a dog-friendly path and many are the rewards that await those prepared to make the extra effort required to bring their best friend along the trail. However, you shouldn't underestimate the amount of work involved in bringing your pooch to the path. Indeed, just about every decision you make will be influenced by the fact that you've got a dog: how you plan to travel to the start of the trail, where you're going to stay, how far you're going to walk each day, where you're going to rest and where you're going to eat in the evening etc etc.

The decision-making begins well before you've set foot on the trail. For starters, you have to ask – and be honest with – yourself: can your dog really cope with walking 10+ miles (16+km) a day, day after day, week after week? And just as importantly, will he or she actually enjoy it?

If you think the answer is yes to both, you need to start preparing accordingly. For one thing, extra thought also needs to go into your itinerary. The best starting point is to study the Village & Town Facilities table on pp32-5 (and the advice below), and plan where to stop, where to eat, where to buy food for your mutt.

Looking after your dog

To begin with, you need to make sure that your own dog is fully **inoculated** against the usual doggy illnesses, and also up to date with regard to **worm pills** (eg Drontal) and **flea preventatives** such as Frontline – they are, after all, following in the pawprints of many a dog before them, some of whom may well have left fleas or other parasites on the trail that now lie in wait for their next meal to arrive. **Pet insurance** is also a very good idea; if you've already got insurance, do check that it will cover a trip such as this.

On the subject of looking after your dog's health, perhaps the most important implement you can take with you is the **plastic tick remover**, available from vets for a couple of quid. Ticks are a real problem on the SWCP, as they hide in the long grass waiting for unsuspecting victims to trot past. These removers, while fiddly, help you to remove the tick safely (ie without leaving its head behind buried under the dog's skin).

Being in unfamiliar territory also makes it more likely that you and your dog could become separated. All dogs now have to be **microchipped**, but make sure your dog also has a **tag with your contact details on it** (a mobile phone number would be best if you are carrying one with you).

Dogs on beaches

There is no general rule regarding whether dogs are allowed on beaches or not. Some of the beaches on the SWCP are open to dogs all year; some allow them on the beach only outside the summer season (Easter or 1 May to 30 September); while a few beaches don't allow dogs at all. (Guide dogs, by the way, are usually excluded from any bans.) If in doubt, look for the noticeboards that tell you the exact rules. A useful website for further details is cornwall-beaches.co.uk/dog-friendly. Where dogs are banned from a beach there will usually be an alternative path that you can take that avoids the sands. If there isn't an alternative, and you have no choice but to cross the beach even though dogs are officially banned, you are permitted to do so as long as you cross the beach as speedily as possible, follow the line of the path (which is usually well above the high-water mark) and keep your dog tightly under control.

Whatever the rules of access are for the beach, remember that your dog shouldn't disturb other beach-users – and you must always **clean up after your dog**.

Finally, remember that you need to bring drinking water with you on the beach as dogs can over-heat with the lack of shade.

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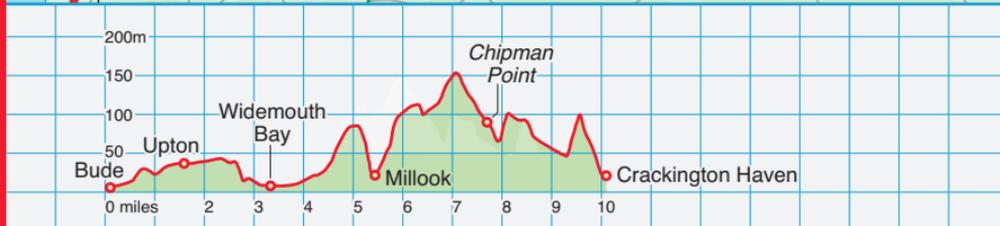
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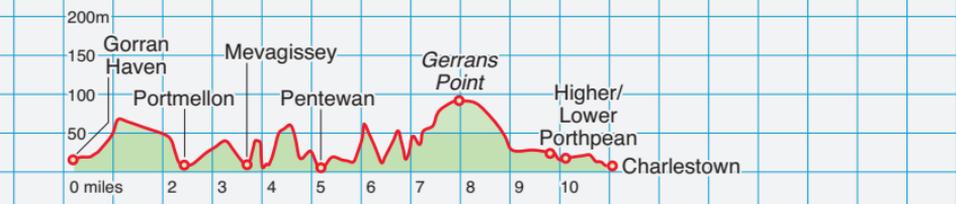
Crackington Haven Bude

Maps 1-5, Bude to Crackington Haven

10 miles/16km – 4-5hrs



NOTE: Add 20-30% to these times to allow for stops



Maps 106-110, Portloe to Gorran Haven

9 miles/14.5km – 2-3hrs

Maps 110-111, Gorran Haven to Mevagissey

3½ miles/5.5km – 1¼-1½hrs

Maps 111-114, Mevagissey to Charlestown

7¼ miles/11.75km – 2¾-3¾hrs



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