



Six Walks around South East Cornwall



Produced by Looe Tourist Information, Looe Library and Community Hub, Millpool, Looe PL13 2AF Tel: 01503 261335. For more ideas of places to visit and things to do visit our website at www.visitlooe.co.uk/whats-on. Correct at time of publishing.

Looe to Polperro Coastal Walk



Duration – about 3 hours

Difficulty – moderate, some steep climbs/steps. May be slippery in wet weather. Dogs on leads at all times.

This is a popular walk of about 5 miles which takes you to the village of Polperro, where there are regular buses back to Looe.

From East Looe, cross the bridge to West Looe and turn immediately left keeping the River Looe on your left and proceed along the quay. Keep going straight ahead, past St Nicholas' Church on your right.

Continue by the waters edge past Nelson the Seal, and up some steps on your right to reach the main road. Continue up the hill and around the corner until you see the Hannaford Point Hotel.

You are now on Marine Drive. Walk to the far end of Marine Drive (approx. 10 mins) and through the farm gate.

The way to Polperro is easy to follow, just keep the sea on your left and keep to the coast path. The first part of the walk is across fields and has beautiful views of Looe Island.

After about 10 -15 minutes, you will reach the first ascent up steps after crossing a small stream. After a short descent, there is a gate on the left for an optional detour to Port Nadler Beach, owned by the National Trust.

The coast path continues around the cove to a headland with superb views up and down the coast. After a while, you will reach Talland Bay, where there are public toilets and two seasonal cafes. There are two beaches at Talland, linked by a short, quiet, stretch of road.

Just beyond the second beach, follow the path uphill to the left and continue on the coast path. Further along, it is possible to access a war memorial; a special place and also a lovely view point.

Continuing along the coast path with ascents and descents, you will eventually catch your first glimpses of Polperro. Here, the path levels out and it is soon downhill all the way to the village.

In Polperro, you can explore the pretty harbour before retracing your steps. Alternatively you may choose to get the bus back to Looe; make your way uphill, through the village, to the bus stop. This is located to the left of the mini roundabout at the top of the hill with the Crumplehorn Pub to your right.

Looe to Plaidy, Millandreath & the Monkey Sanctuary



Duration - Various routes

Difficulty - Moderate

Walk along Fore Street in East Looe to the Ship Inn and take the left turning by the side of the pub, onto Castle Street. Follow this narrow street uphill, ignoring the left turn to Barbican Hill, and bear right at the junction, up a short, steep hill.

You are soon rewarded with seats to rest a while and lovely beach and sea views. Here the path bears to the left and becomes a footpath - you are now on the South West Coast Path, going east.

Follow the path, keeping the sea on your right for about 15 minutes, until you come to a junction with the road. If you wish to visit Plaidy Beach or the Monkey Sanctuary, continue following the road downhill. This is a quiet road but please look out for cars as the road is fairly narrow. At the bottom of the hill, you will find Plaidy Beach, a good spot for rock pooling at low tide (Please be aware that there are no facilities here and the beach disappears at high tide).

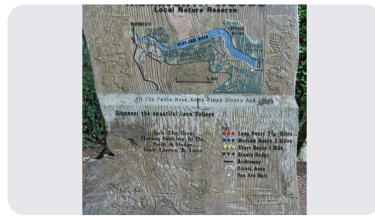
To continue to the Monkey Sanctuary, follow the road behind Plaidy Beach. The road will bear left and then joins with another road and bears right. At the top, between two houses, you will see a footpath with steps which will take you down to Millendreath, where there is a beach and seasonal cafe. Walk behind the beach and take the road ahead by the 'no through road' sign. The tarmac road gives way to an earthen path, continue uphill until you join the road. Ignore the coast path signs at Bodigga Cliff (although you may wish to take a break here at one of the benches and enjoy the views). After a while, you will come to the entrance to the Monkey Sanctuary on the right.

If you choose not to visit the Monkey Sanctuary, from Plaidy Beach, retrace your steps to the junction with the footpath at the top of the hill and take the first turning on the left into Meadway. Follow this private, residential road up the hill to the end to a T-junction.

Diagonally across the road there is a recessed gate up a small path, that will take you onto the Wooldown, a grassed area with seats and wonderful views. It is worth taking time to explore these open fields.

Proceed through the gate at the bottom of the field, follow the path leading downhill, down some steps, towards a finger post. Take the path to the right, keeping the sea to your left. When you reach the tarmac path above the beach, take the winding steps down to the sea front.

Kilminorth Woods & Beyond



Duration - between 1 - 3 hrs - various routes

Difficulty - easy/moderate

Kilminorth is an ancient woodland, as it has been continuously wooded since before 1600. It is a beautiful, tranquil spot, located in West Looe.

Starting at the Millpool Car Park, follow the riverside path to the far end of the car park to a wooden gate and the entrance to the woods.

Various difficulties of walks are marked and you can choose which one to follow. The woods run alongside the West Looe River. It is possible to just take a short walk to a clearing on the riverbank - the site of an old boat yard and now a quiet picnic area. The old boatyard stood on land reclaimed during the Second World War and it continued production until the 1990s, remaining an important source of employment in Looe.

Kilminorth Woods, together with Trenant Woods across the water, forms one of the largest oak lands in Cornwall. The area has been continuously wooded for at least 400 years and Kilminorth is classified as a semi-natural ancient woodland. A local nature reserve, with an abundance of species through the year, the woods are predominantly sessile oak and birch, there are also beech and sycamore trees growing here, as well as sweet chestnut, the occasional Scots pine and a holly understory.

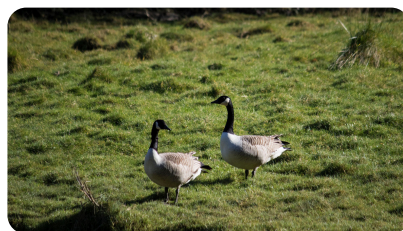
In the spring, there are banks of primroses and bluebells, followed by wood anemones, wood sorrel and dog violets. Blossom tumbles through the wild cherries, and in the summer honeysuckle twines through the undergrowth. Autumn brings edible berries to the bilberry bushes, and a profusion of fungi in the dark damp corners.

Many different mammals live among the trees, from tiny shrews and dormice to majestic roe deer.

Butterflies love it here too. Look out for the white orange tip, the brown speckled wood, the holly blue and the silver washed fritillary. You'll have to look even harder for the very rare 'scarce merveille du jour' moth - because with its mottled green grey wings it is perfectly camouflaged against the lichen clad trees. Other moths living here include hawk moth, swallowtails and the peach blossom moth with its bold white spots.

Birds include predators such as; buzzards, sparrow hawks, peregrines and owls. Nuthatches and various tits scamper around in the trees (as do squirrels), and green and greater spotted woodpeckers can be heard drilling in the bark for insects. In contrast, the liquid notes of birdsong from warblers, blackbirds and mistle thrushes, mix with the gentle cooing of woodpigeons.

Many different species of waterbirds and wildfowl make their home on the creek, to be joined at various times of year by migrant visitors passing through. These include herons and Canada geese, as well as smaller birds such as shelduck, little grebes and dabchicks. The shrill calls of oystercatchers and curlews mingle with the cries of the gulls coming in from the sea, while further inland you may be lucky enough to glimpse the blue and orange flash of a kingfisher over the water.



As you walk along the path through the woods, here and there you can see what remains of the ancient earthwork known as 'Giant's Hedge'. The noticeboard at the entrance to the woods explains how this came to be: 'Jack the Giant having nothing to do built a hedge from Lerryn to Looe!' Other versions attribute it to the devil, who also found himself with nothing to do one day!

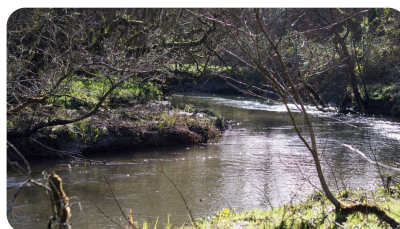
The Giant's Hedge bank stretches some nine miles, from the Fowey Estuary to the Looe Estuary, it is one of the largest ancient earth banks in the UK. In places it measures up to 15 feet high and 24 feet wide and parts of it are stone-faced.



The Giant's Hedge represents the northern boundary of an ancient territory defined by south flowing rivers on its eastern and western sides, and by the ocean on its southern side.

The Giants Hedge is thought to date from the Dark Ages, and historians believe that it was probably the boundary of a tribal chief's petty kingdom (one of many small kingdoms around Britain before the creation of the kingdom of England in the 10th century). Another theory is that it may have been a last-ditch defence of the Cornish against the Saxon incursions of the 9th and 10th centuries.

1930s archaeologist CK Croft Andrew, suggested that the Giant's Hedge originally ran from the Lamanna Chapel (above the coast path as you come into Looe) but no evidence has been found to prove this.



The hamlet of Watergate, at the other end of the woods is a beautiful, peaceful spot. It is worth taking time to sit here quietly - you might be lucky enough to spot kingfisher. From here you have a choice of two different routes to return to Looe.

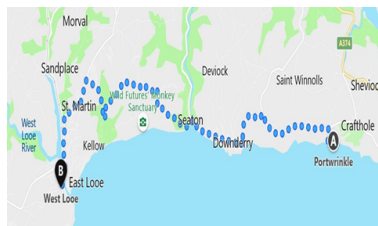
Turn left on the road and walk gently uphill to Kilminorth. At Kilminorth, carry on past the turnings the left and right leading to dwellings, until you come to a lane on your left at a right hand bend.

Shorter route: Turn left here onto a footpath, follow the path downhill, through fields to a path which drops steeply through the woods. Turn right on the path at the bottom and follow it back down through the woods to retrace your steps to Millpool Car Park.

Much longer route: Continue up the road until you reach the main road which leads to Polperro. Turn left and follow the road until you see signs for Talland Bay. Cross the road, following the signpost to Talland Bay. This is an inspirational walk for those who enjoy a bit of a challenge. Drop down into Talland Bay, whose secluded beaches were a haven for smugglers, and join the South West Coast Path, eastwards and back into Looe. There are a lot of ascents and descents, some are quite steep.

Upon reaching the mouth of the Looe Estuary, follow the cliff road around to the left, descending the stone steps to join the lower walkway by the side of the River Looe, past Nelson the Seal and The Heritage Centre, into West Looe. Make your way along the Quayside towards the bridge, where you will keep left, head down the narrow lane to return to the Millpool Car Park.

Looe to Portwrinkle



Duration - 3 hrs

Difficulty - moderate/steep

This walk leads you along a varied journey of high cliff paths, urban landscapes and shady woodland, passing rocky coves and meandering through wide open fields - resulting in a mixture of easy strolling and more strenuous walking.

From Fore Street in East Looe, take the left turning by the side of the Ship Inn, onto Castle Street. Follow this narrow street uphill, ignoring the left turn to Barbican Hill, and bear right at the junction, up a short, steep hill.

You are soon rewarded with lovely beach and sea views. Here the path bears to the left and becomes a footpath - you are now on the South West Coast Path, heading east. Follow the South West Coast path towards Plaidy.

Follow the path, keeping the sea on your right for about 15 minutes, until you come to a junction with the road and continue following the road downhill. This is a quiet road but please look out for cars as the road is fairly narrow. At the bottom of the hill, you will find Plaidy Beach, a good spot for rock pooling at low tide (Please be aware that there are no facilities here and the beach disappears at high tide).

Follow the road behind Plaidy Beach. The road bears left and then joins with another road and bears right. At the top, between two houses, you will see a footpath with steps which will take you down to Millendreath, where there is a beach and seasonal cafe. Walk behind the beach and take the road ahead by the 'no through road' sign. After an ascent, the route opens up on Bodigga Cliffs, where the views can be enjoyed out Rame Head in the distance. The path twists and climbs to heights with spectacular views, especially on the approach to Battern Cliffs, one of the highest points on the south coast of Cornwall at 462 ft (141 m). From here you can observe the seabirds around the long stone stack and enjoy views of Portwrinkle, nestled on the western edge of four miles of beautiful Whitsand Bay.

Continue along the path to reach the tiny fishing village of Portwrinkle.

Duloe to Looe



The walk starts from Duloe. The 573 bus service runs between Looe & Duloe so you could catch the bus to Duloe and enjoy a walk back to Looe. A five mile walk from Duloe to Looe through the West Looe Valley and Kilminorth Woods.

Start the walk at the entrance to Duloe Manor and turn left by the side of the main road. At the road junction in 100m turn left at the 'Tredinnick Farm' sign. Pass through Tredinnick hamlet. In approximately 200m. further turn right, along the access drive to Tredinnick Farm. Pass between the farm buildings, bearing left to take a muddy lane 'unfit for motors'. The lane descends the side of the West Looe Valley, gradually at first. At an apparent fork there is a waymark post; keep right here. After a farm gate, the lane becomes sunken and the descent into the valley becomes steeper. Mud and projecting rocks underfoot need care in negotiating.

At the foot of the descent is a gate and a ford across the river. Do not cross; turn sharp left before the gate to follow a comparatively narrow path on the near side of the river. The path, through woodland, stays fairly close to the river, a little up and down and with muddy areas, for a mile and a quarter. Ignore any paths to right or left. There are occasional waymarks to confirm the route and four stiles to be negotiated.

Join a minor road close to Sowden's Bridge. Turn right to cross the bridge and follow the road round to the left, keeping left at three junctions, signposted to 'Watergate'. The road stays fairly close to the river, providing pleasant traffic-free walking as far as Watergate hamlet. Pass a massive former (and unsafe) lime kiln on the way.

At Watergate the road bears to the right, uphill. Leave the road at a 'public footpath' signpost on the left. There is a seat and a wooden 'Kilminorth Wood' display board. Of the various trails through the wood, the route staying closest to the estuarial river is recommended, a delightful easy path through mature woodland, never far from the sight and sound of the abundant bird life on the water. At very high tide, a section of the route by the side of the water may not be usable; in that case a short diversion up the bank to the right is made.

Many different mammals live among the trees, from tiny shrews and dormice to majestic roe deer. Birds include predators such as; buzzards, sparrow hawks, peregrines and owls. Nuthatches and various tits scamper around in the trees (as do squirrels), and green and greater spotted woodpeckers can be heard drilling in the bark for insects. In contrast, the liquid notes of birdsong from warblers, blackbirds and mistle thrushes, mix with the gentle cooing of woodpigeons.

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Reach the exit from Kilminorth Wood at a gate. Continue along the side of the West Looe River, keeping the Millpool Car park on the right. On the right, at the town end of the car park, you will pass Looe Tourist Information Centre. Follow the lane uphill past an amusement arcade to join the road at the west end of Looe Bridge. Turn left to cross the bridge. If you want to catch the return 573 bus back to Duloe, the bus stop is across the bridge, just to the left, close to Looe Medical Practice.

Seaton Valley Countryside Park



A delightful 2 mile, level stroll, through a beautiful nature reserve stretching for approximately 2 miles inland between Seaton Beach and Hessenford, Seaton Valley Countryside Park includes semi-ancient woodland, ponds, wet grasslands and is home to wildlife such as otters, kingfishers, dormice and fritillary butterflies. There are toilet facilities and parking at Seaton Beach and refreshments are available at Hessenford.

Helpful websites

www.iwalkcornwall.co.uk

www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk

www.friendsofkilminorthwoods.co.uk