

Route Description:

This walk passes through farmland and quiet Devon lanes before reaching the South West Coast Path. It then follows the coast with wonderful views across to Lundy Island and of coastal erosion. The large Blackchurch Rock with its two 'windows' or arches is always ahead of you and is reached when you get to Mouthmill. It then becomes obvious as to how large it is. Be careful of the rocks here as they are slippery and are also covered with sharp barnacles if you try to go over to the arches. The walk finishes by gently regaining height through the Brownsham Woods.

Directions to start:

From the A39 between Bideford and Kilkhampton, take the B3248 on the Kilkhampton side of Clovelly Cross, towards Hartland. After 1.4 miles take a fork right signed to the lighthouse. Go a further 0.8 miles and fork right again. At the next junction turn right and soon bear left into the National Trust car park.

Route Directions:

1, SS 285 259: At Brownsham car park, with the road behind you, follow the footpath out of the car park signed to Beckland Woods and Coast Path, along the side of a field. At the edge of the woods pass through the bridle gate and then bear back left to cross the bridge over the stream.

2, SS 284 261, 0.1 miles: Now turn left towards Beckland Farm and go through the next bridle gate. Now aim up the middle of this field towards a large separate barn roof on the horizon.

3, SS 280 262, 0.5 miles: At the top of this field go to the right-hand gate and then turn left on to the track. On reaching the farm bear left to follow the road between the farm buildings. Continue on this road until reaching a road coming in from the left.

4, SS 275 259, 0.9 miles: Continue ahead and at the next road junction bear right towards Exmansworthy and Fattacott.

5, SS 269 262, 1.1 mile: At the next road junction turn right to the same places. Follow this road until you reach the Exmansworthy National Trust car park on the right.

6, SS 270 266, 1.5 miles: Enter it and exit in the far left-hand corner signed to the Coast Path. At the stile by a gate, cross it and continue ahead along an old track with hedged Devon banks both sides.

7, SS 272 268, 1.7 miles: At the end cross the stile by a gate and turn left to follow the hedged Devon bank on your left. Cross the next stile by a gate and continue ahead ignoring the gate on the left.

8, SS 271 273, 1.8 miles: On reaching the South West Coast Path turn right on to it signed to Windbury and follow it along the cliff edge.

9, SS 274 271, 1.9 miles: At the other side of this field go left over the stile to keep on the Coast Path. Good coastal scenery now opens up with the double arched (or windowed) Blackchurch Rock on the headland ahead.

10, SS 277 268, 2.2 miles: At the end of this field cross the next stile and continue to pass through the next bridle gate.

11, SS 280 266, 2.5 miles: Cross the next stile to then drop down through a small wooded valley, over a bridge and up to the next stile. At the other side of this next field cross the stile to then cross the next two stiles.



Coast near Windbury Point

12, SS 284 266, 2.8 miles: You are now at Windbury Hillfort and the memorial to the crew of a Wellington bomber which crashed beneath these cliffs on 13th April 1942. At the junction of paths is a shortcut to the right to Brownsham car park. Continue ahead on the Coast Path to Mouthmill. At the next bridle gate before the valley pass through to admire the views ahead and follow the Coast Path at the next signpost by a seat, to Mouthmill.

13, SS 289 265, 3.2 miles: Having rounded the headland at the next signpost turn hard left signed to Mouthmill along the Coast Path. The path drops into the Beckland Valley, across a bridge and then zigzags up the other side. There are seats on the way up.

14, SS 290 264, 3.5 miles: On reaching the stile at the top, ignore the path to the right to Brownsham car park and cross this stile turning left along the field and cliff edge. Soon follow the field edge to the left to reach the next stile with steps.



The impressive Blackchurch Rock



Coast Path near Windbury Hill

15, SS 296 264, 3.9 miles: Continue ahead to cross the next stile into woodland. Follow the zigzag path to the bottom of the valley.

16, SS 298 264, 4.1 miles: On reaching the track at the

bottom, turn left to the beach to see the old large limekiln with its unusual draught tunnels on opposite sides. Go down to the beach to see Blackchurch Rock close up. I estimate that it is about 50 metres high. If the tide allows, be careful if you go over to Blackchurch Rock as the rocks are slippery and sharp with barnacles. Mouthmill is a good place to have a picnic.

Now return along the same track with the river on your left, to follow it up the valley. After a short while ignore the track coming in from behind right, continuing ahead to the T-junction of tracks.

17, SS 296 259, 4.6 miles: Bear right on to the main track which goes gently uphill signed Public Bridleway.

18, SS 287 258, 5.1 miles: After a while pass through a gate or the wide pinch-stile beside it, pass by the Lower Brownsham Farm buildings and turn left up the road.

19, SS 285 259, 5.4 miles: Shortly turn right into the car park. We hope you enjoyed this walk.

*Walk written by: Bryan Cath of West Country Walks
Photographs by: Northern Devon Coast and Countryside
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Walks on The Hartland Peninsula

Brownsham via Exmansworthy and Mouthmill

5.4 miles, circular



Fact file:

Highlights: South West Coast Path and impressive coastal scenery, Windbury Hillfort, Memorial to the crew of a Wellington bomber, wooded valleys, Blackchurch Rock, Mouthmill limekiln, Brownsham Woods

Start Grid ref: SS 285 259

Distance: 5.4 miles, circular

Height gained/lost: 350 metres, starts easy to moderate, becomes harder through the Beckland valley, ending moderate to easy.

Highest Point: 161 metres

Lowest Point: 4 metres

Toilets: None

Eating Places: None

Time required: 3hr 10 min, plus stops

Mileages shown are cumulative

The route directions will take you around this walk without using the OS grid references, if preferred.