

A circular walk along the coastal path from Cudden Point to Prussia Cove.

This scenic walk can be tailored to suit the walker in as much as there are two paths along the cliff top, one of which is a little more demanding than the other. We did this in mid October but if the weather has been wet, then a good pair of boots should be worn as the path can get a little muddy in places, but is generally not too hazardous. This walk can obviously be done in either direction, we chose to go to Cudden Point first so as to have the wind at our back and to my mind the scenery presents itself more dramatically from this direction too. The beauty of the Cornish coast is legendary and this walk encompasses many of the dramatic elements, from the sheltered sandy coves tucked between rugged cliffs, to the undulating cliff tops covered in a wide variety of flora.

Starting at the car park at the top of Prussia Cove, we head back up the road past the Bakery to the footpath on the corner. Following this path, which can get a bit muddy at times, one is flanked by old hedges full of rabbit holes and the odd badgers' set and topped with thick hawthorn which acts as an effective wind break.



Whilst these thickets do also hide some of the views across the fields for a short section, the unveiling of the panoramic view across Mounts Bay when one gets to the field gate at the corner is stunning and well worth the initial concealment.



From here one can see from Tatter Du lighthouse on the far left, to Mousehole, Newlyn, Penzance and a different perspective on St Michaels Mount and to the right is Perranuthnoe. No matter how many times I gaze across this scene, each time it is different and there is something new to appreciate.

Once one can wrench oneself away from this view the path continues to an old five bar gate which opens the way across the side of a field to another gate taking one onto the National Trust land at Cudden Point.



Several nature organisations are monitoring the Oil Beetle here and if you are lucky enough to see one they ask that you record it and let them know.



The path then leads you towards the cliff top and yet another dramatic view as the path opens up to allow you to see Eastwards as well as across Mounts Bay to the West. At this point it is worth continuing ahead onto the craggy tip of Cudden Point



to enjoy the tranquillity if sheltered from the wind and the incredible beauty of this location. In the past, Cudden Point also served as a convenient prominence as it concealed the many bays to the East from the scrutiny of the Customs officials based in Penzance and the legendary Pirate John Carter utilised this geography to the full by basing his smuggling operations in the Prussia Cove area. Some interesting stories relating to the smuggling activities and in particular John Carter, are given here [http://www.smuggling.co.uk/gazetteer\\_sw\\_11.html](http://www.smuggling.co.uk/gazetteer_sw_11.html)

At this stage one can opt to go back to the higher, and well worn, path heading East which is the easier route or take the lower path, down the east side of Cudden Point and along the grassy cliff edge. This route will be slightly more demanding and involve some scrambling over the rocky sections of cliff and some steeper grassy slopes. The choice is yours. Today we took the easier route due to time restraints and in order to get better pictures to document the walk. So continuing along the path towards Little Cudden the cliff tops are covered in heather, which even at this time of year is attractive to the eye and to the many birds feeding on the seeds. It is difficult not to stop every few yards to take in the view as ones perspective changes along the path and in the summer this is a popular spot to sit down and enjoy the sunshine over a bottle of pop and a cucumber sandwich. Again one has a choice of paths as one nears Little Cudden and I would always recommend the lower path as it is not too tricky and the views are worth the effort.





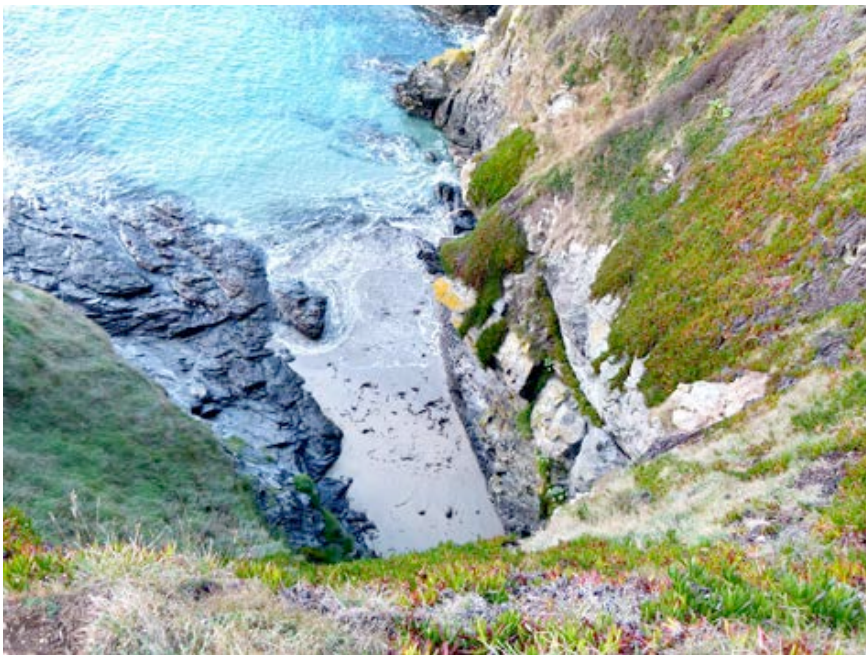
There is also an interesting plaque on the rock face over a small raised area near the cliff edge, and this is sometimes used as a burial site for ashes and possibly one or two coffins, but one has to wonder if the inscription relates to a house of God in Heaven or, maybe an old Chapel was sited there many years ago.



Whilst the lettering is in an old style, this does not necessarily denote the age of the plaque. If you know more about this please contact us. This is another spot which warrants a sit down and rest to absorb the view but if you suffer from vertigo, don't get too close to the edge.



Carrying on along the path around the back of Pisky Cove, one can get a birds-eye view of some of the sandy inlets which seem so tranquil in fine weather yet in stormy conditions these are a cauldron of boiling, foaming seas as the rollers relentlessly thunder into the cliffs.



This is just one of the factors which make this type of walk exhilarating at any time of the year and in any weather conditions. A little way past this bay there is an almost hidden path disappearing into the hawthorn trees. Again one has the choice to push through this path or take the next one on the right that leads to the small headland. The latter is a little

precariously close to the cliff edge and can cause a slight adrenaline rush, but the former is again worth the effort



as one is lead through a tunnel of trees which opens out unto a beautiful cove, which, in fine weather provides one with a palette of colours from a turquoise sea over sunlight golden sands through the slate gray of the rocks to the darkness of seaweed clad rocks below the surface of the glistening sea.



As you look around you, you will notice a small shelter which now supports a life ring.



This it seems has had some work done to repair it in recent years but it fuels the imagination as to the purpose of this tiny refuge and smugglers with lanterns to guide in the booty laden vessels to safe anchorage is not too much of a stretch. This is given further credibility when one notices how a path has been cut in the rocks leading toward the sandy bay,





which would be just about the size to haul a cart up or roll a barrel through. Just imagine the scene; a mixture of tension, excitement and expectations filling the air whilst men scurry about to land the booty and evade the tax man.....

Continuing on towards Prussia Cove (Originally called Portleah but gradually became known as Prussia Cove or Kings Cove due to the exploits of the Carter family as detailed in the above link), one is confronted with a puzzling sight of a large wooden pole with several holes in it and several Chain links embedded in the cliff just inland of it. This was used as one of the moorings for HMS Warspite (Images of her in Prussia Cove can be found via Google) and information at <http://www.warspite.dk/> The Queen Elizabeth class destroyer was constructed in Devonport docks in 1912 and served in many actions in her lifetime including the Battle of Jutland and extensive service during the second world war. She was eventually sold for scrap in 1947 but broke away from her tow to the breakers and ran aground in Prussia Cove. She was eventually refloated and towed into Mounts Bay where she was broken up for scrap. The ship has gone but her mooring remains as a reminder of her defiance of the scrap yard.



From this viewpoint one can look Eastward across the bay to the golden sands of Praa



and on past Porthleven and across to the wind turbines of Goonhilly, where there are still a couple of the huge satellite dishes which used to be synonymous with the name Goonhilly. In the distance one can see the headland near The Lizard and thus gaze right across the “claw” of Cornwall.

Walking on, one shortly comes across the old fishermen’s huts which are still used for storage, but alas the old winch house and the boiling pot are no longer utilised.



The slipway however is still used and in the summer a boat is often at its mooring in the shelter of the bay near the base of the slip. From a little further along the path, if the tide is low enough, one can see the cartwheel tracks worn into the rocks by the carts used to haul goods and seafood up from the bay. Rumour has it that there was a cave (A possible entrance is bricked up near the beach) which ran into the cellar of the house above which was used to hide contraband by the Carters, but this has yet to be proven. A little exploration of the bay at low tide can reveal several other areas where the rocks have been cut away to allow access with horse and cart and one wonders if this was a viable exercise just to haul seafood.

The path now leads up past the aforementioned house, toward the road which leads back to the car park, (However lookout for the old letterbox set into the hedge. I doubt it ever gets filled up!) One now has the option to venture down onto the beach in Prussia Cove or proceed to the road, and whilst going down to the beach will incur the reciprocal uphill walk on the return, it is a pleasant spot to rest awhile and contemplate the important things in life, to the soothing accompaniment of the waves gently lapping on the shore. You may consider the notion that Dame Judi Dench may well have sat in the very same spot whilst filming “Ladies in Lavender”.

On reaching the road a left turn will lead you back to the car park and end this particular walk. If however you are not devoid of energy, it is worth turning right and strolling down the hill to the corner where one can look back at Prussia Cove in all her glory. Take a seat on the wall and enjoy the beauty of the location and the tranquillity which has been enjoyed and cherished by thousands of people over the years.

Cornwall is blessed with many such locations, maybe that is why so many people return year after year, but Prussia Cove is one of the cherished jewels in her crown. St Hilary is a relatively large parish but this is the only section of coastline within the Parish. Cudden Point to Prussia Cove contains such a variety of attractions in its beauty and its history; it has a presence which combines serenity and awe with almost symbiotic compatibility.



Try it and tell me if I'm wrong.