

Walk No. 7 - Bagging the Views

The walk starts from the attractive village of Croyde in North Devon. Although best known as a surfing venue it is also ideally placed to access some superb coastal scenery. This walk features the fine headland of Baggy Point and panoramic views over Woolacombe Sands, Croyde Bay and the sweep of the North Devon coast to Hartland Point. Much of the walk follows the line of the South West Coast Path and Tarka Trail.

Fact File

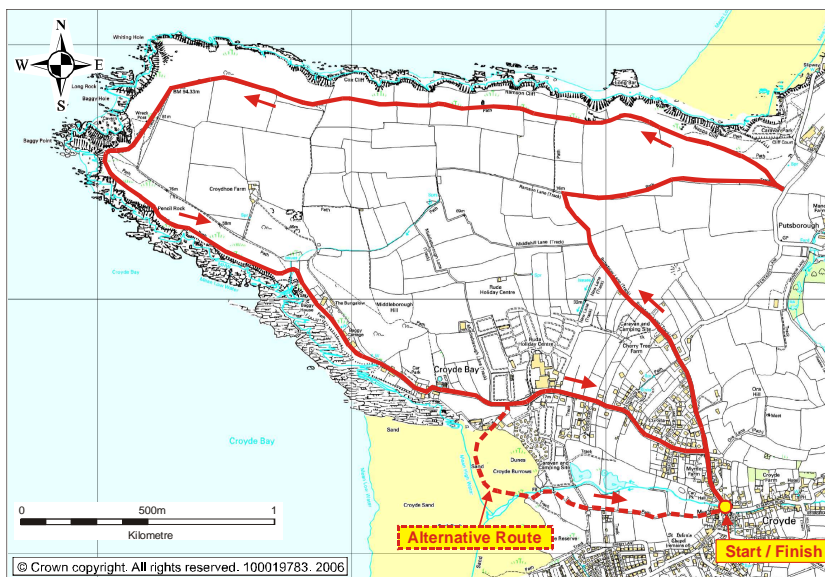
Croyde is served by regular buses from Barnstaple and Braunton (service 308). For up-to-date travel information simply call the Traveline on 0870 608 2 608. There is a car park near the Post Office at the village centre, another near the beach and a National Trust car park below Middleborough Hill.

Walk Length: 9km/5.5 miles. Two fairly gentle climbs.

OS Maps Explorer (1:25,000) no 139 Bideford, Ilfracombe and Barnstaple
Landranger (1:50,000) no. 180 Barnstaple and Ilfracombe.

Facilities: Croyde (all facilities); Putsborough (toilets and seasonal refreshments);
Croyde Bay (refreshments)

The Walk



Start at the road junction by Croyde Post Office. Take the side road, Jones's Hill, signposted to Croyde Bay and Putsborough. Use the higher path alongside the road to the next junction and continue along the road ahead, Stentaway Lane, signposted to Putsborough.

After a short way the road swings sharply to the right. Continue straight ahead towards Cherry Tree Farm at the no through road sign, then keep on the obvious track ahead.

The first views of the walk open out from here to the left, the high point of Middleborough Hill being especially obvious.

(Note that this track can be rather wet after a rainy spell).

Keep to the track as it rises steadily.

Notice the marks of wheels of the carts which would once have used this track, worn into the rock of the surface.

As the track approaches the top of the hill it bears left. Take the narrower path to the right which leaves the track here.

Attractive views over Croyde open up to the right from here.

Cross the stone stile and continue alongside the wall to the right. Bear left to cut off the field corner, then follow along the wall ahead.

A superb view over Putsborough and Woolacombe Sands to Morte Point at the far end soon opens up to the left.

Continue along the top of the field to a lane. Turn left down the lane, then left again towards Putsborough car park.

If you are in need of refreshments continue down the hill to the beach shop (seasonal). There are also toilets here.

Otherwise, turn left at the metal kissing gate and go ahead on this permitted path to the cliff top. This continues ahead to join the official line of the South West Coast Path.

The Coast Path around here is also the line of the Tarka Trail. This Trail follows the journey through North Devon of Tarka the Otter in the book of that name. The book, which evokes superb descriptions of North Devon in the 1920s, was written by Henry Williamson who lived for many years at Georgeham, just inland of Putsborough and Croyde.

Follow the Coast Path along the cliffs, slowly leaving behind the superb views over Putsborough and Woolacombe.

Approaching the headland of Baggy Point, views ahead begin to open out. If the weather is clear, the coast around to Clovelly and Hartland Point will be visible with Lundy on the seaward horizon.

Rounding a corner by a stone wall, bear right to head for a Coastguard climbing mast then follow the path which forks right to a stile. This leads to Baggy Point.

This was a favourite spot of Henry Williamson and it features more than once in Tarka the Otter. An unnamed man who appears in the story at Baggy Point has been said to be a reference to Williamson himself.

Cross the stile and go downhill to the gravel path. Follow this down towards the Point.

Baggy Point is a favourite location of rock climbers and they are frequently seen on the steeply inclined rock slabs ahead or on the sheer cliffs behind.

Continue on the gravel path round to the left and downhill past Baggy Point.

Croyde soon comes into view ahead, the backdrop of the long hill of Saunton Down prominent behind.

The path descends and passes through a gate - notice the memorial stone to Henry Williamson. Continue past the art deco style Baggy House and the remains of the whale bones and on to the surfaced lane. Continue past the National Trust car park.

For the direct route back to the village centre, go on past the entrance to the beach car park and along the lane. At the junction at the end cross over and turn right onto the raised path to return to the Post Office.

Alternatively, follow the path to the beach at the beach car park, then follow the footpath through the dunes to Croyde village.

Further Information

Information on the Tarka Trail and other walking routes in Devon is available from www.discoverdevon.com and the Discover Devon Holiday Line 0870 608 5531 - quote DP101 for a Tarka Trail Information Leaflet or DP311 for Discover Devon Walking - A complete guide to walking trails in Devon (free publications). They can also be ordered from Discover Devon Information Service, Westacott Rd, Barnstaple, EX32 8AW quoting references above.

There is also further information pack on the Tarka Trail available in the local Tourist Information Centres Price £2.00 or from the address above for £3.50 including postage and packing. Quote reference DP 102 of make any cheque payable to Devon County Council. There is also a Tarka Trail guide pack available locally price £2.00 or form the address above price £3.50 include past and packaging. Quote reference DP 102 or make cheques payable to Devon County Council.