

BEDRUTHAN STEPS

Pentire Steps & Whitestone Cove

This is generally regarded as one of the most iconic beaches in Cornwall at low water with the flat golden sand punctuated by distinctive ‘island’ outcrops. Over 1.5kms in length at low water the whole length is known as Bedruthan Steps but the southerly end is often referred to as Whitestone Cove and the northerly end as Pentire Steps. The main access point down the cliffs is managed by the National Trust and is closed from November to March, with the beach at the bottom also known as Red Cove.



View of the beach at low water looking towards Park Head



PL27 7UW - Located some 8kms north of [Newquay](#) or 2kms north of [Mawgan Porth](#) on the B3276 Newquay-Padstow coast road there are two car parks on the coastal side of the road. The main one, nearest Newquay, is owned by the National Trust (capacity 190+ cars) and is signposted as Carnewas. 500m to the north is another car park (capacity 300+ cars). Access to Pentire Steps and an alternative to the main access point is to park at Park Head – **PL27 7UU** - (Pentire Farm – capacity 58 cars) which is 1.5kms south of [Porthcothnan](#) on the B3276.



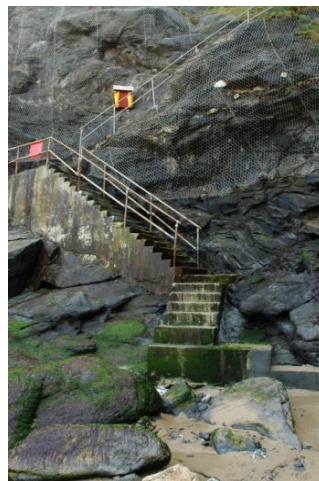
Access from either of the main car parks



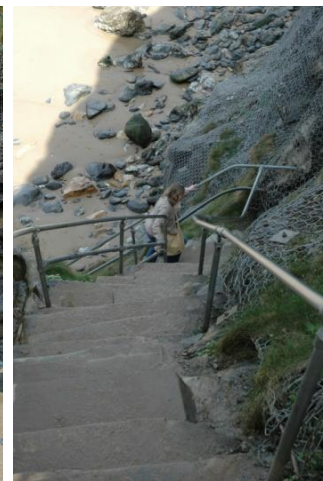
Samaritan Island



Sandy rock pools



The bottom of the 149 steps



Looking down the steps

involves a short walk (about 80m) to the Coast Path and then (from opposite directions) a further 100m to the viewing platform just above the flight of 149 steps carved and constructed out of the cliffs. For many, the walk to the viewing platform with the magnificent view down on to the beach is sufficient as the steps can be too arduous for some. If a highly challenging route to the beach is acceptable, then at the Pentire Farm car park, follow the path to the National Trust Centre and then the footpath to the Coast Path (450m) where there is a narrow path which winds down to the rocks above the beach: This gives access to Pentire Steps Beach which from half tide is separated from the rest of the beach at Diggory’s Island.



Looking down on to the beach, the difference in the outlook between low water and high water is



A glorious expanse of sand

quite remarkable as it is hard to view it as the same place. At high water, when the surf batters the cliffs and rocky outcrops, there is no beach at all except for a very small area of shingle at Pentire Beach. However as the tide recedes a vast area of flat sand is exposed. Real care has to be taken not to get cut off by a rising



Passage at Diggory's Island

Under Diggory's Island

tide. Also there is always danger of cliff falls along the whole length of the beach.



There is safety equipment on the main access steps but there are no lifeguards.



The whole length of the beach is highly dangerous at all stages of the tide so swimming and entry to the water should not be contemplated even in calm conditions (which are rare).



Surfing can be very good for those with experience and knowledge of this stretch of coast but is not recommended for others because of strong rip currents.



It is not a beach for snorkelling at all even when conditions appear favourable.



There are a number of fairly large sandy pools at low water but they provide little of real interest except for shrimps and small fish on occasions.



The Pentire Head stretch of the Beach



There are no restrictions on dogs at any time of the year.



There are toilets at the National Trust Car Park which are open all year except for the winter months.



There is a National Trust shop, cafe and Visitor Centre adjacent to the car park. The nearest pub, restaurant and beach shops are at [Mawgan Porth](#).



Pentire – path down the cliffs



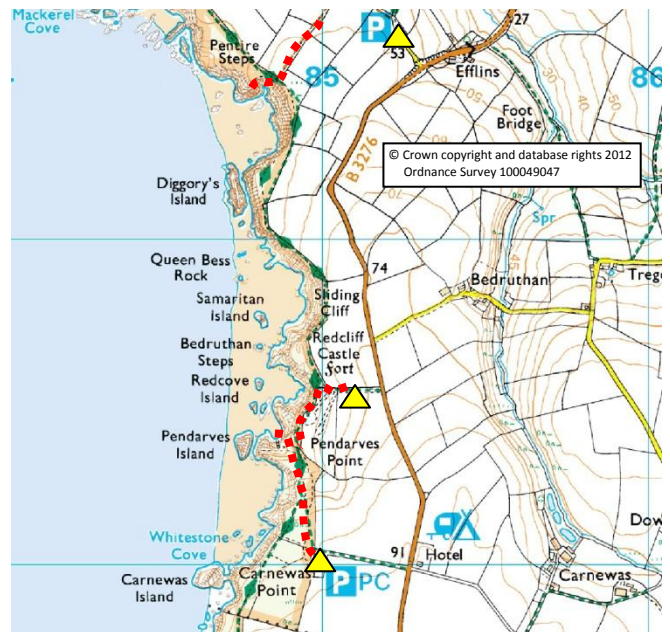
Beach also known as Red Cove



Whitestone Cove



Pentire Steps Beach



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 106



The beach is cleaned by the tide so there is little or no water borne litter. The water quality is very good. The beaches are often nothing short of stunning when the conditions are right. It is a pity that access is restricted in winter for safety reasons but it is very necessary. Access in winter from Pentire is possible.