

HOLYWELL BAY

Another fine, gloriously sandy bay to compete with others along this magnificent stretch of coastline. It faces north-west and is backed by an impressive sand dune system and set between Penhale Point to the west and Kelsey Head to the east. It is easily accessible and is unusual in so much that the stream that flows down the valley to the beach, meanders behind the dunes creating a wonderful sheltered area that is popular with families and especially children. Its name is derived from another unusual feature



At low water looking towards Kelsey Head in evening sunlight

which is a 'Holy Well' in a cave in the cliffs on the north easterly side of the beach which can only be reached at low water. Considerable care needs to be undertaken with access but water drips from the coloured rocks above and the story goes that in Pagan times mothers brought their sickly children to it to be healed in the waters. Interestingly, the Holy Well story continues; on the edge of the Golf Course in the valley behind the sand dunes is another Holy Well that in recent times has been restored. The National Trust and local Parish Council own the beach.



TR8 5DD - On the A3075 5kms south of the centre of Newquay there are crossroads with a signpost to Cubert and Holywell Bay. Go through Cubert village and after 2kms there is Holywell village;



Sheltered Stream



Wonderful sand dunes



Looking out to Gull Rocks offshore

continue as far as possible and there is a National Trust car park (capacity 370 cars) just before the entrance to the Penhale Military Establishment. In the summer there are roadside parking restrictions through the village which are enforced.



On the other side of the road from the car park is the footpath access to the beach. This involves a level walk of about 600m if the bridge over the stream is used. The path is suitable for pushchairs but not wheelchairs. Access on to the beach is at the westerly end next to the stream which can involve a walk of over 400m to the bathing areas. An alternative path from the centre of the village (along the road opposite the public toilets) is shorter if the car park is not required.



At high water there is a wide strip of sand over 300m in length, from the stream right up to the cliffs on the easterly side of the beach. When the tide is out the full majestic qualities of the beach unfold as not



Views of the beach

only does it go out some 200m but stretches a distance of 1.5kms from the cliffs at Penhale Point to Kelsey Head. Much of the beach on the westerly side of the stream cannot be seen at first sight and is backed by high cliffs rather than the sand dunes; at this end of the beach care needs to be taken not to get cut off by a fast incoming tide. At some times of the year the beach is full of a variety of sea shells. Although the beach is very exposed there are areas behind the sand dunes that are wonderfully sheltered.



A rock on the westerly side known as 'The Monk'



There is safety/rescue equipment behind the sand dunes close to the access path by the bridge over the stream. RNLI Lifeguards are on duty from the end of May until the end of September and are located about 150m east of the stream at the base of the dunes.



It is not a swimming beach due to the normal swell, surf and strong currents which exist especially at low water. It is possible to bathe in the designated area when the lifeguards are on duty and very occasionally in docile conditions on a rising high tide.



It is another good surfing beach, amongst many along this stretch of coastline. It is a classic beach break that is best towards high tide when there is a fair swell. It is renowned to be good for beginners and longboarders whilst the more experienced surfers favour the conditions created by 'The Monk', a large rock on the westerly side of the beach when there is a large swell. Penhale Point provides a degree of protection when the wind is from a south westerly direction. The Lifeguards operate a segregated area for bodyboarders and surfers in crowded periods. A



Bridge across the stream



Path from the car park

Surf School operates from the beach and there is surf board and wet suit hire. There are signs below the toilets that give details.



It is not a snorkelling beach at all and there are virtually no rock pools but a number of sandy pools which are popular with children.



There are no restrictions on dogs.



The toilets are located next to the road in the village leading to the car park and reached from the beach path to the shop – about 500m from the bridge over the stream. There are disabled and baby changing facilities.



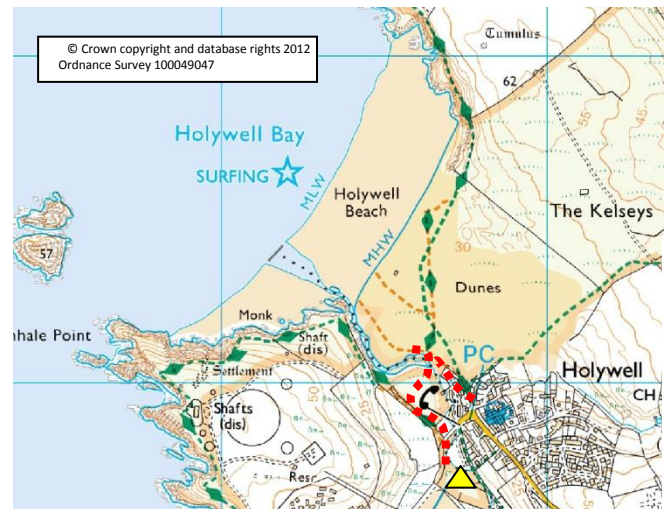
There is a beach shop and cafe on the road leading to the beach – about 400m from the bridge over the stream. A pub and restaurant is opposite the car park. A full range of facilities can be found at [Newquay](#) (9kms).



Playing in the stream



The Holy Well



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 104



The sea water quality is very good. The stream can be variable after heavy rainfall but is generally good. The beach is cleaned regularly by the National Trust. It is a truly excellent family beach although the eroding dunes need attention.