

CADGWITH

A small picturesque fishing village complete with thatched cottages and lots of charm has two small beaches. The main one is aptly known as Fishing Beach (or The Cove) where there are a number of working boats (catching shellfish and wet fish) that are winched up the beach on a daily basis. The smaller beach is known as Swimming Beach (or Little Cove); in between is a small promontory known as 'The Todden'. Cadgwith's old Cornish name is 'Caswydh' meaning thicket probably because the valley was heavily wooded. Facing south, both beaches are very sheltered and secluded.



Fishing Cove with working boats winched up above high water



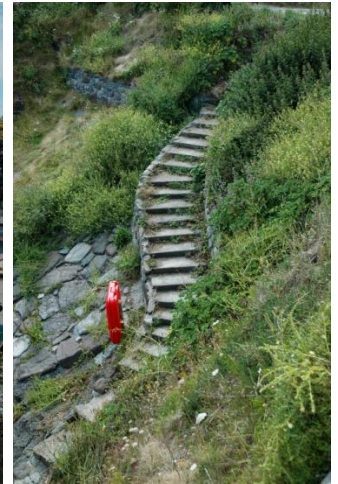
TR12 7JX - Take the A3083 road from Helston to the Lizard. 12kms south of Helston or 3.5kms north of Lizard village there is a turning signposted to Cadgwith (3kms) which goes through Ruan Minor. At the bottom of Barn Hill, and the centre of the village, the road reaches the slipway down to Fishing Beach. There are parking restrictions along the road so it is advisable to continue up the hill (New Road) for about 400m to the only car park (capacity over 130 cars).



There is a footpath from the lower level car park to the village centre and beaches. It is a delightful traffic free walk (300m) with views of the stream in the valley and whitewashed cottages, and, far better than walking along the road. The path meets the road almost opposite the slipway to Fishing Beach. To reach Swimming Beach, turn right at the junction with the road and go up the hill for about 45m and on the left are steps down to the beach and



Fishing Beach



Steps down to Swimming Beach

also a path out to 'The Todden' with great views over both beaches.



Fishing Beach is mostly shingle but with patches of grey sand at low water. The shingle bank above high water is often covered with fishing boats and associated activities which can be a source of considerable interest to visitors. There are places to sit and enjoy the Cove, especially on the eastern side of the beach which gets the full afternoon sunshine. Swimming Beach is a mixture of stone rocks and shingle with very little beach above high water. Both beaches can be affected by seaweed that gets washed up when there are southerly winds. There is a stream that crosses Fishing Beach.



There is rescue/safety equipment above both beaches but there are no lifeguard facilities.



Strangely it is easier to swim from Fishing Beach, especially at low water because there are no submerged rocks. When the tide is higher it is better to swim off Swimming Beach where there are rocks at the side of the beach that are good for diving



Swimming Beach at low water

providing the depth of water is checked first. Both are safe for swimming when the conditions are favourable. It is not advisable to swim out beyond the points either side of the coves on an outgoing tide due to strong currents.



Neither beach is remotely suitable for surfing. The proximity of Lizard Point means that the Atlantic swell is dissipated for most of the time although there is the odd occasion when body-boarding is possible on Fishing Beach. Conditions are often good for dingy sailing and kayaking.



Snorkelling can be excellent. On the southern side of the coves snorkelling around the 'Devi's Frying Pan' and the caves towards Chough's Ogo and Dollar Ogo is recommended. It is also good in the other direction of Kildown Point and the Brandise rocks about 100m offshore.



Fishing Beach



Low Water at Fishing Beach



View from 'The Todden'



View towards 'The Todden'



Even at low water there are only a few small rock pools on Fishing Beach which do not offer much of interest. However, in the rocky areas at low water on Swimming Beach there are numerous pools with interesting weeds such as Sea Lettuce, Gut weed, the colourful Coral Weed, and the lovely reds of Pepper Dulse and Red Epiphyte. There are also Sea Anemones which are the most eye-catching of creatures found in the pools.



Dogs are allowed on Fishing Beach throughout the year and on Swimming Beach from November to Easter Day but during spring and summer.



Toilets are located opposite the gallery next to the Fishing Beach slipway and are open all year.



Fishing Beach with seaweed in calm conditions



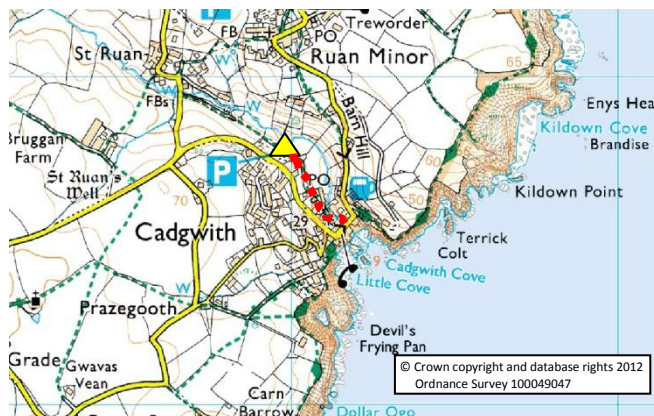
There is a beach shop and cafe opposite the Fishing Beach slipway and a pub/restaurant famous for its pub singing on Friday evenings.



The slipway is nearly always busy so launching even a small dinghy could be problematical at times.



Water quality is believed to be good although the nearest official testing is at [Kennack Sands](#) which is excellent. Fishing Beach is very much a working beach and this is reflected in its cleanliness. Swimming Beach often has much water borne litter above high water mark.



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 103



There are very few traditional fishing coves now left in Cornwall that still operate to the same extent as Cadgwith. The pilchards might largely have disappeared decades ago but all around the cove are reminders of the past – old pilchard cellars, winches, and the old lifeboat house which was used as such until 1963. Fishermen and locals still line the benches next to the winch-house as they have done for generations. Cadgwith is credited for reviving 'gig' racing in Cornwall over 30 years ago. It is a sight to see over 20 gigs launched from the beach on racing days.