

# HELFDORD PASSAGE

(or Passage Cove), Gate Beach & Bar Beach (or The Bar)

Passage Cove, which is some 4kms from the mouth of the Helford Estuary, is normally known as Helford Passage and is a south facing sheltered beach that is better known for its boating activities and ferry service across the Estuary to Helford Village. The collection of buildings which nestle into the landscape above the Beach, together with striking views across the Estuary to the wooded slopes of Bosahan, make for a delightful setting. Bar Beach (also known as 'The Bar') is a further 400m further along the access road to Helford Passage. Gate Beach is between the two and is mostly rocky foreshore.



Passage Cove looking out towards the mouth of the Estuary



**TR11 5LB** From the Hillhead

Roundabout on the A39 between Falmouth and Penryn follow the signs to Mawnan Smith (5.5kms) and then the signs to Helford Passage and just beyond Trebah Gardens turn left and after 600m there is a car parking sign on the right. Unless it is necessary to launch craft off the beach it is best to park in the car park (capacity over 90 cars) as there are parking restrictions on the road in summer and in winter it can even get congested. It is a 120m walk down the steep hill to Helford Passage Beach. It is possible to drive along the end of the road which ends up at the slipway down to Bar Beach but there is no roadside parking. It is best to park in the car park even when the roadside parking restrictions do not apply to avoid causing an obstruction. The easiest way to get to Gate Beach is to scramble over the rocks (80m) from Helford Passage Beach although it a short walk from



Looking up-stream from Helford Passage with Gate Beach beyond

the slipway at Bar Beach. Either way, care needs to be taken as the sandy/shingle areas get cut off at high tide. 200m east of Passage Cove along the Coast Path towards [Polgwidden Cove](#) is a small secluded Cove (without a name) that is easily accessible.



Passage Cove at low water is a gently shelving beach with a mixture of coarse and fine sand and shingle. At high water there is a small area of beach which is not covered although there is always competition from small craft parked up on the beach and can often feel quite crowded in the peak of the summer from all the boating activity, boat charter, the ferry to Helford Village (Easter to October) and Estuary cruises which operate from the floating pontoon. When the tide is out it is possible to scramble across the rocks (about 80m) fairly easily to Gate Beach which is mostly rock with a small area of sand and shingle. Beyond Gate beach is 'The Bar', a sandy/shingle Beach at high water but as the tide goes out is a mixture of flat rocky ledges, fine silt and seaweed. The Bar extends westwards for 450m from the slipway to Pedna Billy Point and the mouth of Porthnavas Creek. Being within the Estuary all the beaches are little affected by the ocean swell that prevails elsewhere along the coast. The small Cove east of Passage Cove is shingle and flat stones.



'The Bar' or Bar Beach at low water



Passage Cove



Slipway access to Bar Beach



There is no safety/rescue equipment at any of the beaches.



Passage Cove is the best of the beaches for swimming and is fairly safe at all stages of the tide although care needs to be taken with the amount of water borne traffic and the strong tidal currents away from the beach. Bar Beach is suitable for swimming at high water but is not recommended at low water because of the strong currents on an ebbing tide. None of the beaches are suitable for surfing. Various craft can be hired from a kiosk on the slipway. In summer there are fishing trips from Passage Cove.



Snorkelling around this part of the Estuary is recommended especially from Passage Cove to [Polgwiddden Cove](#) at high tide but again care needs to be taken with numerous craft using the water.



There are many interesting pools in the rocks on Gate Beach. Whelks and other Crustaceans can be found easily at low tide on Bar Beach.



The Bar at low water



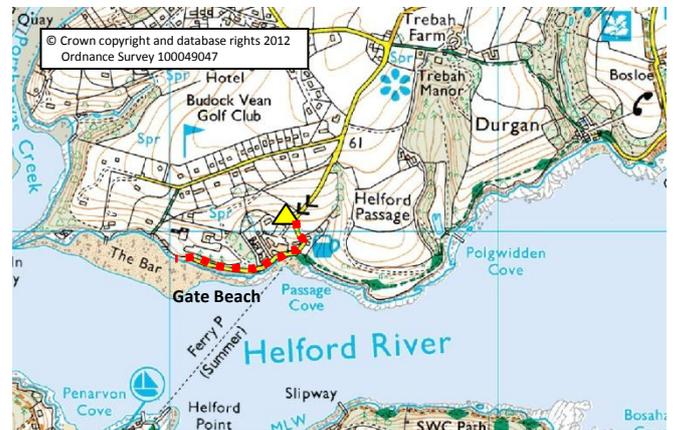
Dogs are permitted all year on all the beaches. There are no public toilets with the nearest being at the village of Mawnan Smith (2.5kms).



There is a well known pub immediately overlooking the beach at Passage Cove with its own car park and also a small shop that sells a mixture of products.



The slipway at Passage Cove can be used to launch small craft such as sailing dinghies and kayaks but there is a charge. The slipway down to Bar Beach is privately owned and its status for launching craft is not known.



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 103



The small unnamed Cove east of Passage Cove



Water quality is believed to be good but the amount of motorised craft can leave its mark at times. The Beaches are usually fairly clean but can be plagued by seaweed after a strong easterly wind. They are great beaches to watch activity on the water or to use as a base to explore a very beautiful estuary which is a Marine Conservation Area. If Passage Cove is crowded it is likely that Bar Beach and Gate Beach will be very quiet.