

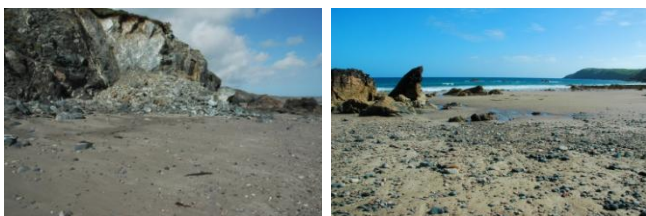
KENNACK SANDS

One of the largest beaches on the Lizard peninsular, Kennack Sands is a popular family beach that is also well known for its geology, rock pools and wonderful conditions for snorkelling. 'The Sands' consist of a number of beaches that connect each other at low tide. The main beach next to the car park and cafes is the most popular, mainly because of its easy access. The easterly beach (known locally as 'Dog Beach') is separated from the main beach by Kennack Towans and the rocky outcrop, the CaerVERRACKS. To the south of the main beach around a rocky area there are a series of small coves.



The main beach at low water with Black Head in the distance

The main beach, the southerly small coves and the CaerVERRACKS are all part of the Gwendreath National Nature Reserve which continues up the valley from the main beach. Kennack Sands is the only beach in Cornwall to have this status because of the outstanding geology of the cliffs and rocks where there is an unusual relationship between granitic and basaltic rock; recent major cliff falls on the southerly



Views of the southerly coves



Views of the main beach



The easterly beach at low water

beaches have exposed the geology to startling effect. The beaches have an array of serpentine and other pebbles found nowhere else in the UK. The Gwendreath Valley part of the Nature Reserve has a special flora as well as the geological importance of the former Gwendreath Serpentine Quarry.



TR12 7LT - South of Helston follow the B3293 to St.Keverne and just past Goonhilly Earth Station turn right at Traboe Cross. Continue across the flat Lizard National Nature Reserve until the T junction at Kuggar; turn left and continue down the narrow road for 900m to the car park; (capacity 55 cars for the surfaced area with a grassy overflow area with room for a further 200+ cars). The narrow road makes roadside parking impossible except for two small informal areas close to the beach. There is also a small informal parking area on the cliffs on the right along the approach road about 230m above the beach. An alternative is to park along the roadside (space limited) on the approach to Gwendreath Farm and Holiday Park - **TR12 7LZ** - some 600m up the valley from the main beach.



The main car park is next to the beach and access is on a level and suitable for prams and wheelchairs down a short slipway on to soft sand. From the informal parking area above the cliffs it is a short walk down the road. From the road next to Gwendreath Farm it is a wonderful wooded walk along the signposted public footpath down the valley to the main beach.



The amount of sand on all the beaches tends to change not only at the time of year but also from summer to summer. In 2011 there was more sand than usual during the holiday period. Normally both the main beaches are fairly sandy at, and above, high water with the patches of stone and shingle down a



Paths to the east beach



Valley above the main beach

gently sloping beach leading to a flat expanse of sand at low water. The southerly beaches usually have sand above the high water mark but quite often there are areas of shingle below which gives way to sand at low water. Both the main beach and the east beach have areas of stones where the streams from the valleys cross the beaches. At the main beach it is possible to walk up across the stones on to grassy areas and a natural pond at the base of the valley. The southerly beaches tend to be more sheltered than the others but at high tide they are cut off from the main beach access and getting off the beach involves a scramble on a route up the cliffs to the road. At low tide it is possible to walk on the sand from the main beach to the east beach but at high tide it involves using the paths across the Towans. East beach still has the remains of war time fortifications above the beach which are somewhat unsightly.



There are safety/rescue points at both the main beach and the east beach. There are RNLI Lifeguards on duty at the main beach from mid-May until the first week in September. The Lifeguard lookout is close to the toilets and the northerly of the two cafes.



Kennack can be relatively sheltered from the Atlantic swell by Lizard Point which makes it fairly safe for swimming on a rising tide. The easterly beach is even more sheltered at high tide by the Caerverracks and is best for swimming. However at times when there is a swell and surf, there can be rip currents, especially at low water. In summer it is always advisable to swim in the lifeguard patrolled designated area on the main beach. There can be quite reasonable surf for the south coast producing a good beach break which works best at mid-tide and when the wind is from the west or north.



The Caerverracks



Rock pools abound



It is a great beach for snorkelling and probably one of the best locations on the Cornish coast. Off the southerly beaches around the Crig-a-tana rocks is a favourite place and also slightly further along the coast around the Cavouga rocks. From the easterly beach around the Caerverracks and in the other direction towards the Green Saddle rocks and Compass Cove both provide excellent diving and snorkelling.



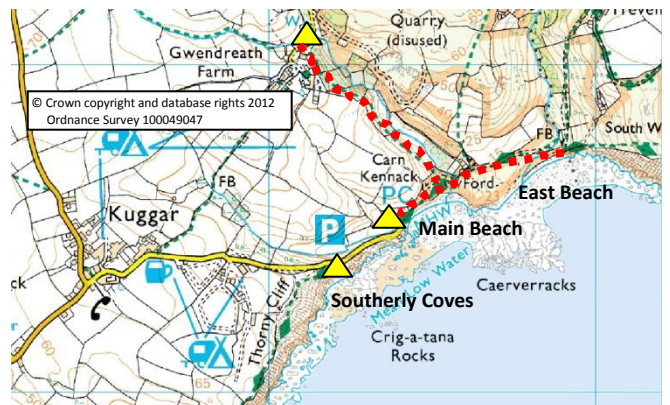
The Caerverrack rocks harbour an amazing array of rock pools with a wealth of wildlife including the colourful Carrageen weed and Coral weed, crabs, prawns, shrimps and small fish such as Shannies and Blemies. There are also many interesting sandy pools between the main beach and the southerly beaches.



The main beach has restrictions on dogs from Easter Day until October from 7.00hrs to 19.00hrs. The easterly beach has no restrictions on dogs but it means taking the footpath from the car park past the toilets and above the main beach and across Kennack Towans. There are no restrictions on the southerly coves but there no means of getting there apart from scrambling down the cliff path from the road.



The toilets are above the car park. There are two cafes and beach shops either side of the entrance to the main beach and a pub at Kuggar 900m from the beach along the approach road.



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 103



The slipway down to the main beach can be used to launch small craft. The sea water quality is generally good but can be affected by the three streams that cross the beaches as their quality is variable. They are excellent family beaches with so much to offer including more remote and secluded spots.