

# MOUSEHOLE

This picturesque fishing harbour and village is famous for its narrow streets, passages and delightful collection of granite cottages but its history is also quite fascinating. Mousehole (or 'Porthynys' in Cornish) was destroyed by the Spaniards in 1595 and it marks the last time the shores of Britain were invaded by forces from another country. It is also reputed to be the home of the last Cornish speaker, Dolly Pentreath. On the 23 December every year there is a unique celebration, called Tom Bawcock's Eve, to celebrate the ending of a famine in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.



The harbour at low tide

The Mousehole Christmas lights are a sight to behold and the book 'The Mousehole Cat' is a children's favourite. The Penlee Lifeboat disaster occurred in 1981 just along the coast. The lifeboat, the 'Solomon Browne', located outside Mousehole, went to the aid of the coaster 'The Union Star' grounded in a fierce storm and heavy seas. After rescuing 4 people, both vessels were lost with all hands; 16 people died including 8 lifeboatmen. St. Clement Isle lies just 400m from the Harbour. Not well known for its beaches, the harbour contains areas of wonderful golden sand and there are also other beaches either side of the harbour.



**TR19 6PL** - Access by car into Mousehole

can be fraught with problems, especially in summer, because of the very narrow streets. Parking outside the village is recommended or else use the regular bus service from Penzance. To get to Mousehole from Penzance either take the A30 to Lands End and turn off on to the B3315 to Newlyn or follow the seafront from Penzance Harbour. At Newlyn follow the road



Part of the sheltered sandy Harbour Beach.

around the Harbour and continue along Cliff Road for 2.5kms. Just before the entrance to the village there is marked roadside parking for some 50 cars. Also on entering the village on the left-hand side is the main car park (capacity 85+ cars). It is recommended that these options are tried before descending into the harbour area where there is a small car park on the left-hand side (capacity 38 cars); there is also parking on both piers (capacity 50 cars). There are various access points down to the harbour beaches from slipways or steps. Access to the beach north of the village is down steps from the main car park or a path from the Harbour car park. There is also a flight of steps from The Parade opposite a property called Carveth. Access to the beach, called Saltponds, on the southerly side of the harbour is down steps either from the end of the pier by the toilets, or from the end of Gurnick Street.



Slipway to the harbour beach



Steps from the main car park



The harbour beach is crescent shaped with the best area of sand on the southerly side as it feels less overlooked from traffic and those around the harbour. It is incredibly sheltered from all directions. At high water the areas of sand are limited. The beach to the north of the harbour is a mixture of sand,

shingle and rock and is more exposed to winds from an easterly direction. Located in the rocks between this beach and the harbour is a very popular tidal pool and rocky foreshore.



The tidal pool at low water

Saltponds Beach is mostly shingle and stony with the best area close to the pier but has rock platforms for exploring beyond.



There are a number of points with rescue/safety equipment but there are no lifeguards.



When the tide is reasonably high it is possible to swim safely in the harbour. Swimming is quite safe from the other beaches in favourable conditions providing the tide is rising and fairly high although at Saltponds care needs to be taken with submerged rocks close to the surface. Although it would appear that none of the beaches are suitable for surfing there is a reef off Saltponds that is revered by the real experts but it only on a few occasions does it have the right conditions. Dinghy sailing and kayaking from the harbour are recommended. Getting a dinghy into Mousehole is another matter!



Either side of the harbour there is some very good snorkelling, especially on the southerly side towards Merlyn Rock and on the northerly side around Penlee Point. Snorkelling and diving around St. Clement Isle just offshore is also supposed to be well worth it.



Beach north of the harbour



Stony Saltponds Beach



Southerly end of the harbour



North of the harbour



Either side of the harbour there are some really good areas to explore the countless rock pools at low water. It is one of the best locations to catch small spider crabs, shrimps and small fish.



Dogs are not permitted in the Harbour at any time but are allowed all year on Saltponds Beach. North of the Harbour dogs are permitted from November until Easter but not for the spring and summer months.



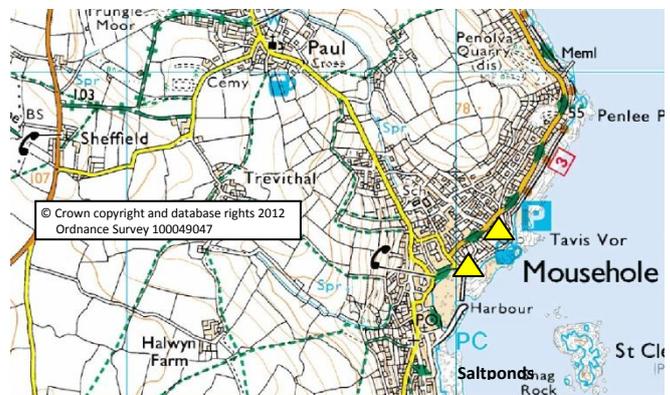
There are toilets located at the northerly end of the Harbour and also at the southerly end. There are a number of shops, cafes pubs and restaurants close to the Harbour.



There are two slipways: To use the one at the centre of the Harbour contact needs to be made with the Mousehole Harbourmaster. The one at the southerly end is amidst car parking at the end of the pier making access somewhat difficult at times.



All the beaches are relatively clean. Water quality is not know but believed to be good, even within the harbour.



Location – Part of Explorer Map 102



Although not renowned for its beaches they are nevertheless an important part of the character of Mousehole.