

Kingswear to Froward Point



- Start:** | Marina car park, Kingswear.

- Distance:** | 5 miles

- Difficulty:** | Moderate to strenuous; 2 steep descents; 1 steep ascent. 2 Stiles

- Terrain:** | Coast path with some uneven sections and long flights of steps

- Parking:** | Pay and display car park, Darthaven Marina

- OS map:** | Explorer OL20

- Grid Ref:** | SX885 512

- Public transport:** | See www.travelinesw.com

- Refreshments:** | In Kingswear or Dartmouth

- Toilets:** | Public toilets are by the ferry slipway in Kingswear.

This walk is available in the following formats from www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/walk

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| online walk | downloadable PDF | downloadable route map onto your device |
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South West Coast Path walking app – enhanced content with photos, audio and film.



Directions

- 1** Turn right out of the car park along the road, then bear right again. By ferry slipway, pass under the arch, then left up Alma Steps.
- 2** Turn left at top of Alma steps then right to go up Church Hill. At the top of the hill, walk straight on along Castle Road / Beacon Lane. Follow coast path signs.
- 3** Turn right down wooden steps, signed Froward Point 1¼ m.
- 4** Just past Mill Bay Cove, turn right onto private drive, and then left after 30m, up steps and through woods. Pass above Newfoundland Cove to Brownstone Battery. (To explore the Battery, drop down the path to the right by the coastwatch station. Turn left by the first searchlight post, then left again following the 'acorn' waymarker. Fork left once more to wind back up to the coastwatch lookout).
- 5** Bear left onto the track signed 'HG Brownstone'. Past the Day Mark, fork left onto a green lane signed for Kingswear.
- 6** Turn left at Brownstone and follow the footpath through the farm and past Crocker's Cottage. The footpath joins a private road. Bear left where the road forks, and then left again.
- 7** At top of Church hill, go down first section Alma steps, turn right at the bottom to go down the next section of Alma steps. Retrace your route back up the road, past the railway station to the car park.

Further Interest

Heritage

The first historical mention of Kingswear is found in 1170, and a ferry has operated between there and Dartmouth from at least 1365. Always strongly linked to the sea, the village was at one time an important bunkering port, where steam ships would call to take on coal. This trade declined as vessels became too large to enter the harbour.

As you walk out of Kingswear, Dartmouth Castle can be seen across the water. It was built at the end of



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the 15th century, although the remnants of an earlier castle built in 1388 also stand just uphill. In the 15th century, a chain was fastened across the mouth of the estuary from Dartmouth Castle to a chain tower on this side of the water, Gomerock Tower. This heavy chain could be raised to prevent entry by ships, protecting the port. Remains of the base of the tower and the blockhouse can still be seen nearer the water.

Directly below your route, close to the waterline, is the smaller Kingswear Castle, finished in 1503. The original iron cannon had to be replaced with brass guns after suffering severe corrosion from the salt water and wind. The fortification was abandoned once the development of more powerful cannon meant that the whole river mouth could be covered by guns from Dartmouth Castle across the water.

The complex at Brownstone Battery was built in 1942 as a defence against German naval attack. The site was equipped with two six-inch guns taken from a First World War battleship. Each gun had a range of over 14 miles, and operated in tandem with a powerful searchlight situated close to the high water mark below. During the War, the Battery was manned by up to 300 soldiers, and the cliffs all around were strung with barbed wire.

The National Coastwatch Institute station is situated at Brownstone Battery. Visitors are welcome to pop-in and say hello at the lookout and to peruse the display house opposite.

The hollow stone tower of the Day Mark was built in 1864 as a navigational aid to shipping. It is a grade 2 listed building.

South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Walks

Landscape

The landscape of this walk is built on Dartmouth Slate. This is a relatively durable rock which gives rise to the high ground here, and stretches in a band across the South Hams to Wembury in the west.

Much of the land here is owned by the National Trust. The Trust works with its tenant farmers to manage the cultivated land for farmland birds and rare arable plants. Other areas are managed to provide a mosaic of open grassland and scrub habitats, along with the coastal woodlands. This management encourages a great variety of wildlife.

Wildlife

The conifers you pass on the coast path from Kingswear are Monterey and Corsican pines. These trees are tolerant of the salt winds and harsh weather, and so thrive in coastal situations.

The swift and rare Peregrine Falcon can be seen from the coast path. With blue-grey plumage above, and white with dark bars below, this bird-hunting falcon is one of the fastest animals on Earth.

The Mew Stone, visible off the shore from Brownstone Battery, is a rich site for seabirds, and is home to a large seabird colony. The rocky island is also the most easterly 'haul-out' for grey seals in the English Channel.

Thanks to sympathetic management, many of the fields on the walk are home to the skylark, a species declining on farmland in many areas. The liquid song of this crested bird can often be heard as it rises in its characteristic songflight. The Linnet, a sociable ground-feeding finch, is also found here, as is the rare Cirl Bunting, with its yellow and black facial stripes and green-brown plumage. Among the rare arable plants in these fields are the pink lipped flowers of the Lesser Snapdragon, the bright blue Cornflower and the purple and yellow flowers of the sprawling Sharp-leaved Fluellen.

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Working in partnership



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas has supported Explore South Devon to promote circular walks within the South Devon AONB using the South West Coast Path National Trail.



South West Coast Path Association