



South West Coast Path 1 : Minehead to Porlock walk

SWCP Day 1 - Gentle introduction to the coast path, with rugged and tea room options.

Length 14.1km / 8.7 miles

OS Maps OS Explorer 9 (Exmoor)

Toughness 4/10 - 408m of ascent - Good, waymarked paths with easy navigation - 1 steep hill. There is a more strenuous 'rugged' alternative

Walk Notes This is the relatively gentle start to the South West Coast Path (SWCP). There is a choice between a long ridge walk over North Hill with views across the Sea to Wales, and inland to Dunkery Beacon, or a more rugged alternative route along the cliffs. The 2 routes combine in picturesque Bossington with a noted tea room, before crossing Porlock Bay to Porlock Weir which has a good pub to finish it. There is a good year round bus service between the start and finish.

From Minehead (shops, pubs, bus, coaches, heritage rail - not National Rail) the walk follows the seafront, and climbs North Hill, which has good views inland, and over the sea to Wales. As mentioned above, there are 2 alternative paths. The gentle high path along the top of the hill to Selworthy Beacon, or the "rugged" path which contours around the side of the cliffs. Its more dramatic, but more strenuous (6 km, 219m ascent). Both paths are marked on the OS map

At Selworthy Beacon, there is a recommended option for 'high route walkers' - head south, downhill to Allerford, a chocolate box National Trust village which has a NT tea room with a garden with a stunning view. Then contour round the hill to rejoin the SWCP at Bossington

Both routes meet up at the far end of the hill, where there's a good detour out to Hurstone Point. Below you is Porlock Bay. On this side of the bay is Bossington, another NT village, which has a highly regarded tea room.

Cross the bay. Follow the SWCP path - the beach has shingle which is heavy going. At the far side of the bay is Porlock Weir (pub, hotel, bus, no shop).

You could press on to County Gate (on SWCP day 2), but a combined end of day 2 and all of day 3 (which has no drop out points other than Hunters Inn) would be too long

Return to your car/accommodation by the year round Porlock Weir-Minehead bus, or walk inland to Porlock for the summer Lynmouth-Porlock-Minehead bus

Lunch

Summer only tea room at Bossington, or a small detour inland to Selworthy (due south of Selworthy Beacon) to a 'chocolate box' NT thatched village with an NT tea room in a very pretty garden with lovely views.

Tea

Good pub in Porlock Weir, or many places inland in Porlock

SWCP

The South West Coast Path (SWCP) is the longest of the national paths and follows the coastline of Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Devon again and finally Dorset. This section, along the Exmoor coast, is its traditional start, as is done anti-clockwise.

The walk may be done as one long walk, staying overnight along the way, or as a series of day walks, returning by bus to your car or accommodation.

By car, you'd be better in a B&B, renting a cottage, or staying in one of the caravan parks near Combe Martin, and doing day trips by car (returning to it by bus), then you don't have to worry about carrying your kit, provisions, booking accommodation, etc. With 2 cars you can shuttle, and have far more freedom over how far you walk each day.

Stages

Minehead is a large seaside resort town with shops accommodation, but only heritage rail, not national rail.

- [Day 1\) Minehead to Porlock Weir : 14.1km / 8.7 miles / 408m of ascent](#)

Porlock is a small touristy village with several pubs, restaurants and B&Bs a few km inland. Porlock Weir on the coast has a hotel and a good pub.

- [Day 2\) Porlock Weir to Lynmouth : 18.5km / 11.5 miles / 1,072m of ascent](#)

Lynmouth (seafront) and Lynton (above it at the top of the hill) are a large very touristy village with lots of accommodation. Year round bus service inland, but summer only bus service along the coast

- [Day 3\) Lynmouth to Combe Martin : 21.8 km / 13.6 miles / 1,250m of ascent](#)

Coombe Martin is a small seaside village a few km from a much larger one - Ilfracombe

Links

The SWCP National Trail website has more details on each day's route. The SWCP Association has an annual handbook with updated accommodation guide.

- [SWCP Association](#) : updated accommodation and trail news
 - [SWCP Official Website](#) : details of each day (choose 'longer walks')
 - [Exmoor Public Transport](#)
-

Exmoor

Exmoor is a small National Park (NP) on the north coast of Somerset and Devon. It has a dramatic rocky coastline with the highest sea cliffs and largest coastal forest in England. Inland are steep sided valleys which lead up to bleak moorland plateau ("The Chains") and the NP's highest point - Dunkery Beacon at 519m / 1703 feet. The southern side of the plateau, bisected by steep valleys slopes much more gently, as is used for sheep farming. Formerly a royal forest, the NP has few towns, but 2 large seaside resorts outside it - Minehead and Barnstable. See [Exmoor's wiki page](#)

Travel

There are no train stations nearby. To get here, take 1) a National Express Coach to Minehead or 2) a train to Taunton, and then a bus to Minehead.

Regular buses run along the coast on the SWCP day 1 route to Porlock, then a summer only services along the SWCP day 2 route to Lynton. The coastal road heads inland, and doesn't rejoin the coast until the end of SWCP day 3 route - a summer weekend only bus service. NB the #300 bus along the coast runs in 2 sections: i) Minehead to Lynmouth, and ii) Lynmouth to Ilfracombe

Bus Routes

- National Express : London to Minehead
 - #28 Taunton (train station) to Minehead : year round
 - #39 Minehead (day 1 start) to Porlock and Porlock Weir (day 1 end / day 2 start) : year round
 - #300 Minehead (day 1 start) to Porlock (near day 1 end / day 2 start), County Gate (day 2), Lynmouth and Lynton (day 2 end) : April to October, reduced service on Sunday
 - #300 Lynmouth (day 2 end / day 3 start) to Combe Martin (day 3 end / day 4 start) and Ilfracombe (day 4) : April, October: weekends; May-September: daily
-

Help Us!

After the walk, please leave a [comment](#), it really helps. Thanks!

You can also upload photos to the   [SWC Group on Flickr](#) (upload your photos) and [videos to !\[\]\(269a46bd9f0c528dd4b0b2018aec306d_img.jpg\) Youtube](#). This walk's tags are:

By Car **Start** TA24 5QW **Finish** Porlock, Somerset

Map Walk This walk **requires** an OS map and a compass or GPS for navigation. You can print out OS maps using the link above.

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

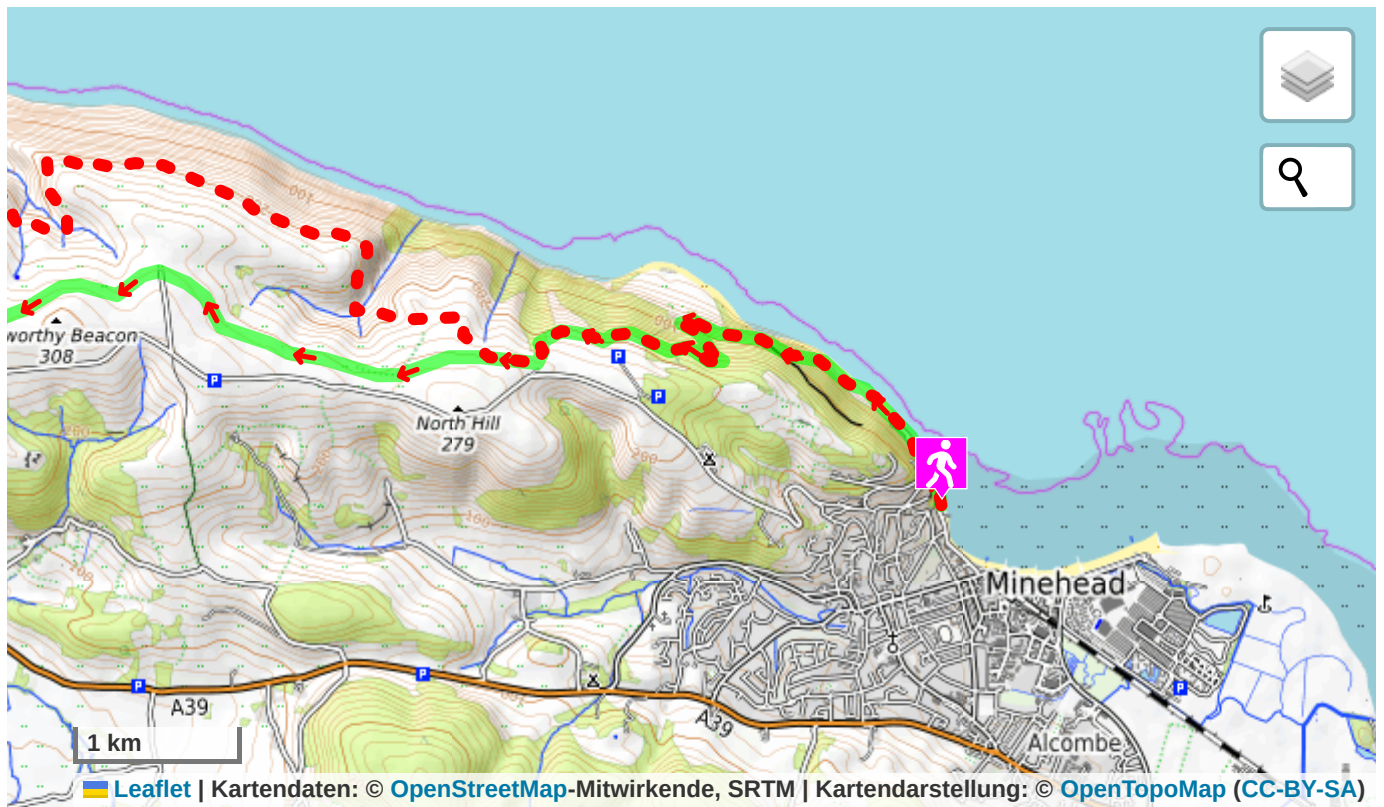
Version Apr-17 [Andrew](#)

Copyright © [Saturday Walkers Club](#). All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only. www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml

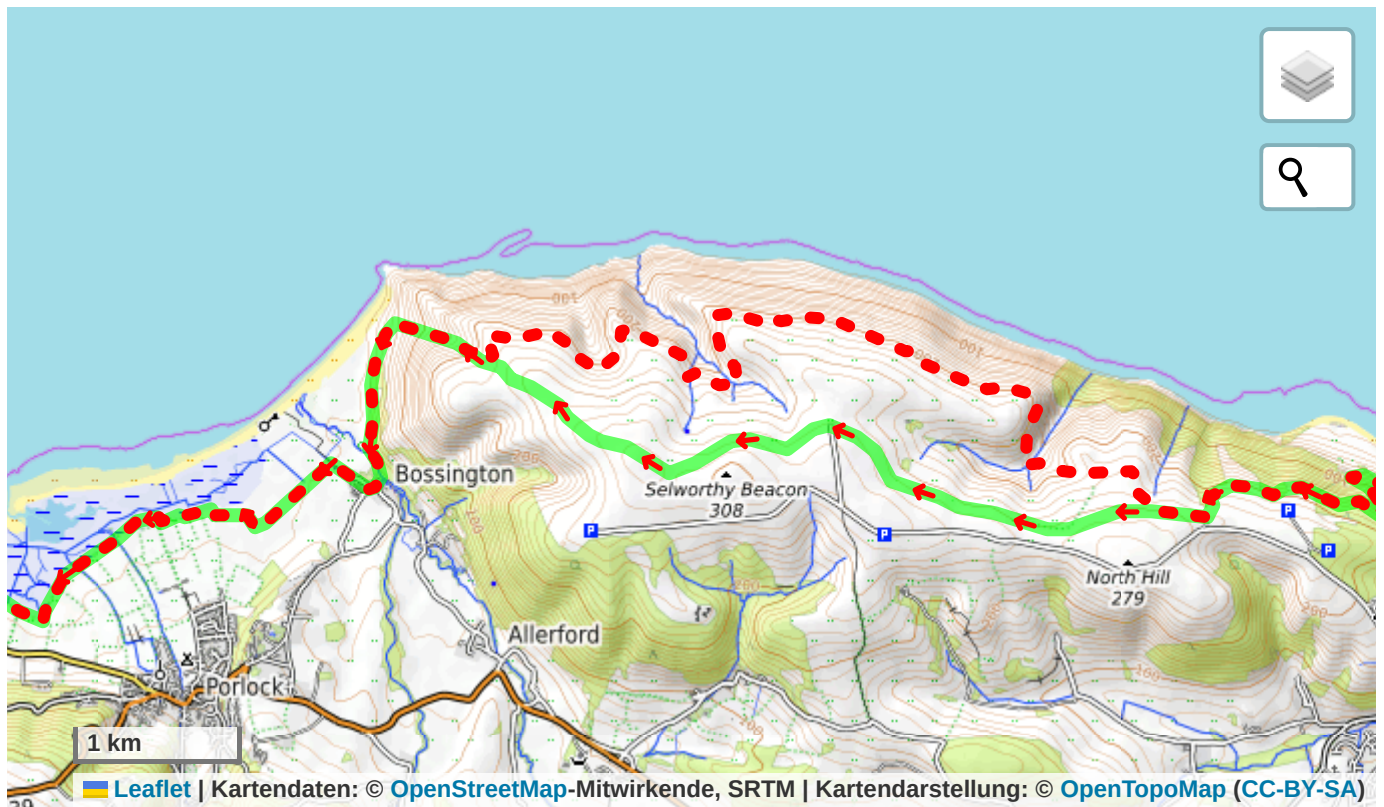
Walk Directions

OpenStreetMap (not OS) mapping is used in the PDF for licence reasons.

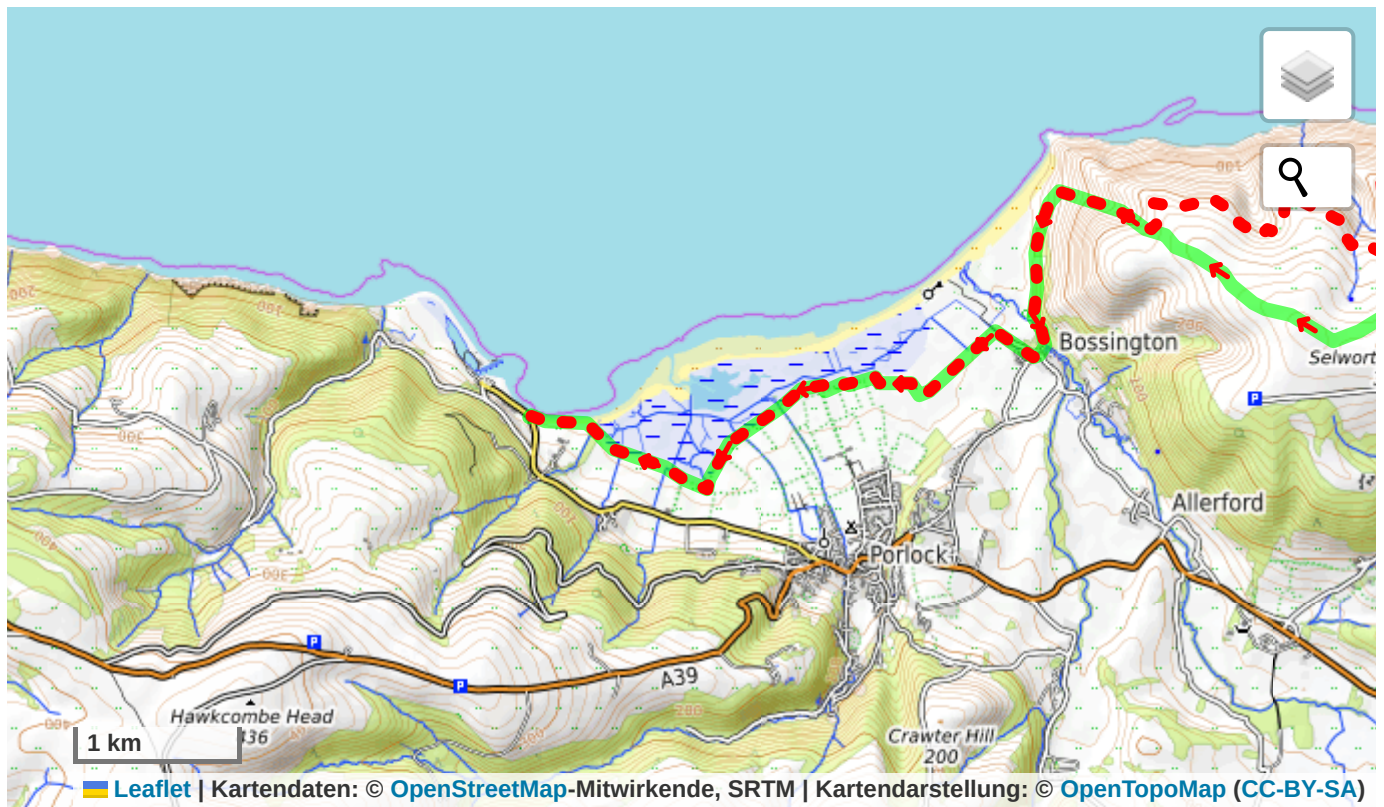
Map 1 : Minehead



Map 2 : Selworthy (hill top and rugged cliff side option)



Map 3 : Porlock Bay



© Saturday Walkers Club. All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only.
www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml