



Walk 26. North Hill and Selworthy Beacon.

- 7 miles, ascents and descents of 350 metres. 2 hours 50 minutes constant walking, allow around 4 hours.

Terrain: Generally well-made paths, some narrow and slightly uneven. ! The 'Rugged Coast Path' can be fairly narrow above steep hillsides, but it is never excessively exposed.

Access: Park off Hill Road at North Hill (SS 947 476): leaving Minehead on Hill Road, pass the camping site (TA24 5LB), ignore a hard-surfaced parking area just as you leave the woods, then in under half a mile make a sharp right turn on to an almost hidden track. If you miss it first time turn around in the next, more obvious small parking area. Alternatively see walk 27 to start from Minehead: this includes a very steep climb up from Burgundy Chapel.

Map: Croydecycle O1 Minehead Dunster Selworthy or OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor.

Refreshments: None on the route, wide choice in Minehead.

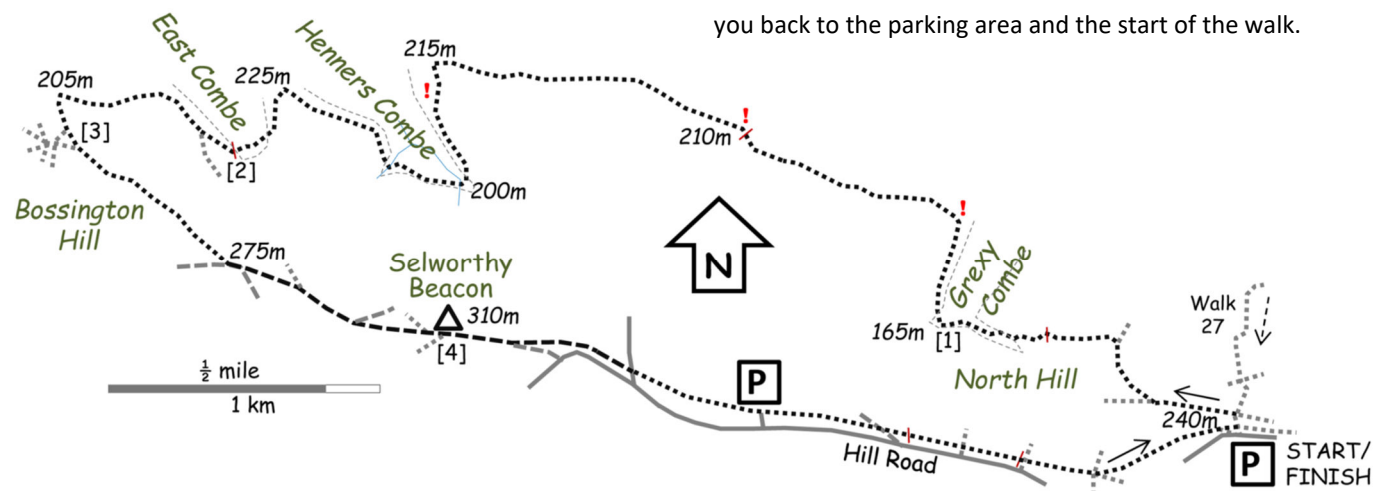
FROM MINEHEAD THERE IS A MAZE OF PATHS heading on to North Hill and Bratton Ball, thinning out to three main routes leading further west towards Bossington Hill: the Hill Road and the path running parallel with it to Selworthy Beacon, the official coast path just below it, and further down the 'rugged' coast path, now signposted by the National Trust. All three routes are highly scenic; the 'rugged' path is closest to the sea and skirts deep combes, while the inland routes offer distant coastal views and rather better ones inland and across to Dunkery Beacon and high Exmoor. This is a good area for winter walking as, unlike on central Exmoor, the open moorland is fairly free-draining. This undulating route follows the rugged path out and returns via Selworthy Beacon and the easier uppermost path.

Start from the North Hill parking area as described in 'access' above. Walk towards the sea and soon come to a wide crossing path (the path ahead comes up from Burgundy Chapel; if you have started from Minehead you will arrive here). Turn left towards Bossington. At the next signpost in three minutes or so turn right on to the 'rugged coast path'. Soon arrive at a simple seat overlooking the Bristol Channel; fork left here to come in three or four minutes to a field gate. Go through, keeping to the main path, slightly to the left and downwards: you are now on the rugged (lower) coast path, which has no official turn-offs for three miles (narrow tracks head down the combes, but they terminate at cliffs high above the sea).

The path takes you into Grexy Combe and down to a stream (25mins, [1]). Follow it back up the left-hand side of the combe; arriving above the coast it turns sharply left. Watch your footing on a short exposed section. Continue high above the sea for half an hour or so, passing through a gate after which there is another slightly exposed section. Come to a small rocky mound and bear left, following the path alongside Henners Combe. Descend to a stream near the head of the combe, then return to the coast. Almost immediately, continue around to the head of a third combe, East Combe, where there is a gate (1hr30mins, [2]). Go through and keep right, ignoring a path coming in from the left. At a fork take either path. About five minutes later it turns left above Hurlstone Combe; over to the right is a rocky crag, just above Hurlstone Point (see walk 25), and beyond it Porlock Weir and in the distance Foreland Point comes into view.

Ignore a path heading right, then keep left at the signpost towards Minehead (1hr45mins, [3]; you are now on the official Coast Path, indicated by an acorn symbol). Ascend to the ridge in front of you, keeping left at the next short signpost (looking back, Porlock is now visible). Bear left at the next junction, still on the Coast Path. Ignore paths turning off to the left, leaving the Coast Path and walking gently upwards to the hilltop in front of you; marked by a cairn and behind it a trig point, this is Selworthy Beacon (2hr10mins, [4]).

Four minutes or so past the Beacon fork left, then cross a narrow access road (the main road just to your right is Hill Road; it continues all the way to the church in Minehead). Six or seven minutes later pass a small parking area, continuing on the path more-or-less parallel with the road. When a wider track heads right to the road, keep ahead on a narrow path and go through a gate into a field. Cross the field parallel with the road. At the far end, go through another gate near a cattle grid, taking the path as it heads away from the road. At a wide grassy area continue ahead and slightly left on a narrow but well-defined path, which brings you back to the parking area and the start of the walk.



Starting from Minehead. Combine this walk with **walk 27** to make a longer circuit (● 10.7 miles, ascents and descents of 670 metres). After ascending from Burgundy Chapel cross a signposted path, then in a couple of minutes come to another signpost just before a small car park (the start-point for the main walk); turn right here to join the instructions for this walk. When you return to the parking area at the end of the walk, return to the crossing path but now turn right to continue walk 27 back to Minehead.

Minehead to Porlock (● 8.4 miles, 3hrs 30mins, ascents of 620 metres and descents of 600 metres). This route uses the outward legs of walks 27 and 26, and alternative part of walk 25. See **walk 27** for details.



Bristol Channel from North Hill

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