



### Walk 6. Berrynarbor, Hele and Watermouth.

- 7.7 miles, ascents and descents of 450 metres. 3 hours 10 minutes constant walking, allow 4-4½ hours (plus at least 30 minutes if you want to visit Broad Strand).

Terrain: Roads, paths and tracks, some likely to be muddy. One stream to ford near Hele.

Access: By car, park in the car park in Berrynarbor village (SS 562 466, near EX34 9SE). Twice weekly bus 33 goes to Berrynarbor from Ilfracombe, or use frequent Monday-Saturday bus 301 to start at Hele, Watermouth or close to Berrynarbor on the A399. There is also a car park at Hele (SS 536 477, EX37 9QZ, £) and a smaller free parking area above the cliffs just east of Hele on the A39 (SS 538 480).

Map: Croydecycle 06 Ilfracombe and Berrynarbor or OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor.

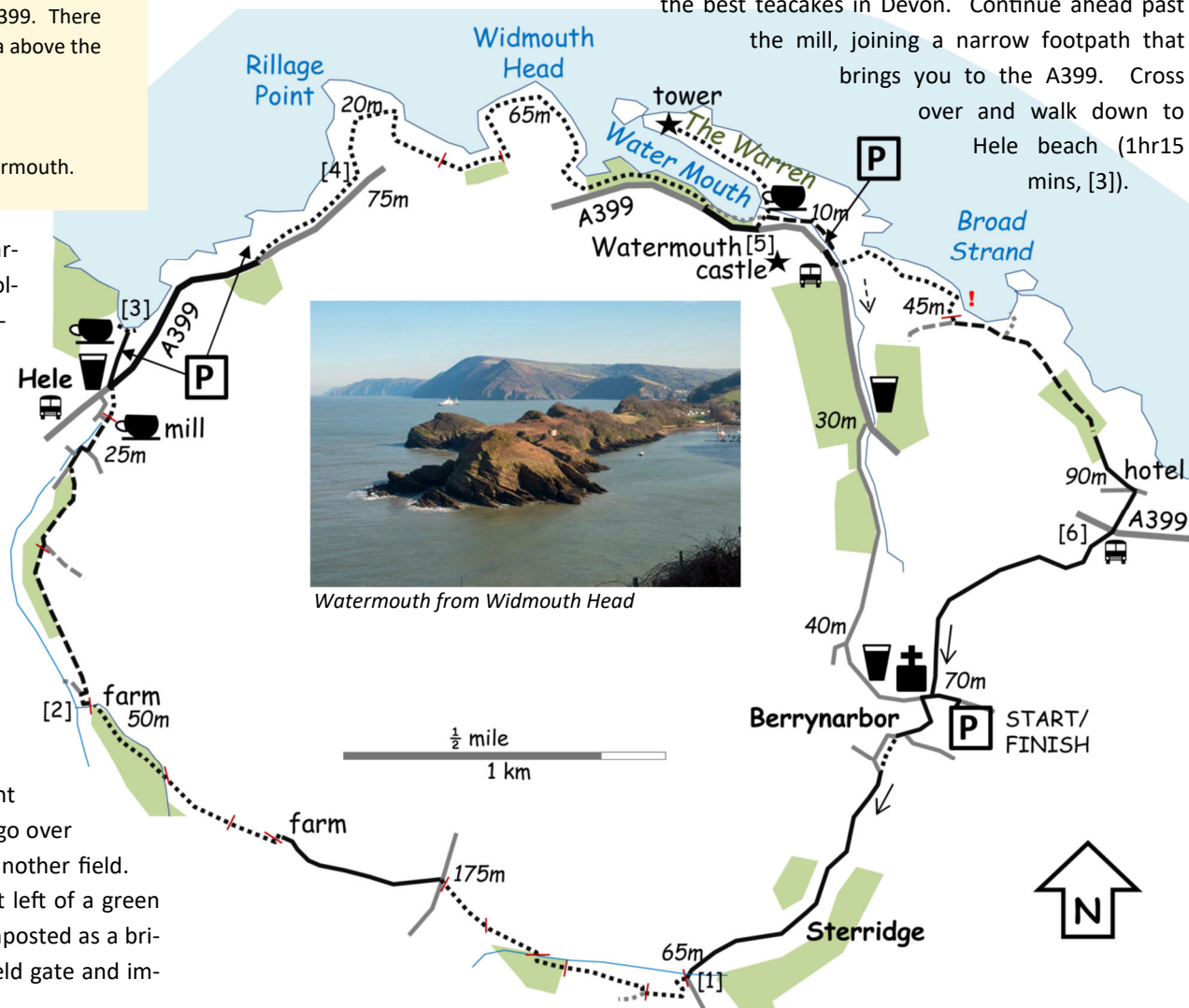
Refreshments: Pub in Berrynarbor, pubs and cafés in Hele, seasonal café at Watermouth.

BERRYNARBOR IS A CHARMING VILLAGE OF WHITE COTTAGES and flower-filled gardens, favoured by holidaymakers who want something quieter and more bucolic than nearby Ilfracombe or Combe Martin. The walk heads south on a pleasant lane to the Sterridge Valley, before continuing west through quiet woods and fields to pick up the coast path at Hele. The coastal stretch includes a spectacular view from Widmouth over Watermouth and east along the cliffs to Foreland Point. A there-and-back path explores the Warren on the far side of Watermouth, and there is an optional energetic detour to Broad Strand and offlying Hamator Rock.

From the car park in Berrynarbor turn left, left at the T-junction, then immediately left as signposted to Sterridge Valley. Go uphill, then after a road junction bear left on a parallel footpath. When it ends keep left on the road to walk through Sterridge. After the speed derestriction signs, opposite the gate to a long white house, turn right through a kissing gate on to a public footpath (20mins, [1]). This bends left then right to take you uphill above a side-valley. Keep the field boundary always on your left, forking right after a gate. Go over a stile to enter a small wood. Cross a small bridge and go over a stile into a field; bear left and upwards to a second stile taking you into another field. Head slightly right to follow the footpath across the field to a stone stile just left of a green barn. Go down steps to the road, cross over and continue on a farm lane signposted as a bridleway. Drop down to a farm; keep right of the house, then go through a field gate and im-

mediately through another gate on the left. Follow the path as it bends around to the right. Go through another gate and continue above a valley on a slight ledge. Gradually descend to the bottom, go through a gate and cross a stream. Walk beside the stream, then splash through it at a ford by a farm (55mins, [2]). Turn left, go through a gate, turn right and walk to the end of the house, right again and left in front of a barn to go through a gate. Follow the green lane; after going through a gate bear left. In Hele village turn right on the road, ignore the turn to the left ('Ilfracombe'), then follow the road right in front of Moles Farmhouse. Just beyond turn left on a drive signposted as a footpath. Go through the gate to Hele Mill, where there is a delightful tea garden next to a working watermill, open for viewing when the tea room is serving. There are no modern coffee machines here, only some of

the best teacakes in Devon. Continue ahead past the mill, joining a narrow footpath that brings you to the A399. Cross over and walk down to Hele beach (1hr15 mins, [3]).



Watermouth from Widmouth Head

Return to the main road and turn left to walk beside it. Heading uphill, look out for a small path to the left that takes you to a grass area with a viewpoint over Hele. Walk through the car park and continue parallel with the main road on the signposted coast path. Arrive at a row of coastguard cottages (1hr35mins, [4]); just before them, head down some steps on the left. This path takes you down towards Rillage Point, where there are views back over Ilfracombe. As the path returns inland Great Hangman hill comes briefly into view. Walk alongside a stone wall, then go through a gate to come high above a cove, Samson's Bay. Along this stretch of coast look out for fulmars, gull-like birds that nest on the cliffs. Through a second gate, then turn left; there are views over Watermouth. The path descends and ascends on earth steps, over a hundred in all. Look out for the Widmouth Head viewpoint on the left, from where there is a stunning panorama over Watermouth, along the rocky Warren peninsula, to the Hangman Hills and beyond to Foreland Point. Return to the path; many more steps take you down towards the sea. Follow the path over a small bridge and upwards towards the main road. Continue through a narrow strip of woodland alongside the road until you arrive at a concrete walkway.

At the end of the concrete the all-tide route joins the A399 through a gap to the right, continuing along the pavement. Watermouth Castle is above on the right; once a Victorian manor it is now run as a family theme park. Turn left opposite its entrance on a short signposted path through the boatyard to arrive at the Watermouth inlet (2hr5mins, [5]). Alternatively, take the path straight ahead from the concrete walkway to descend steps to the beach, which is firm sand and easy to cross at low tide. Either way, to explore the Warren, cross the head of the inlet (there is a café in a converted boat here) and go over a small stream. Turn left: the path briefly follows the shoreline, then heads slightly inland between hedges. Come into the open and arrive at a small open-topped tower, with views over the Bristol Channel. The path ends just beyond, above a chasm. Retrace your steps back to the A399 and turn left.

Just beyond the entrance to the holiday park is a bus stop. Turn left here on a footpath and go over a small bridge. This takes you into a camp site: go straight ahead and join the service road. Continue through a gate on a narrower path along the top of the cliff. The sharp peak of Little Hangman appears in front of you. A seat on the left has views over a sheer drop above Broad Strand or Broadsands, a beach far below, and the small tidal island of Hamator Rock. Continue upwards, then pass through a pedestrian gate and turn left on to a wider track. A path to the left descends to Broad Strand; there are over 200 steps down to the beach, so allow at least half an hour if you want to detour. Continuing on the walk pass some houses and a hotel on the left, then turn right on to the signposted coast path diversion. This brings you back to the A399 (2hr50mins, [6]); cross the road into Barton Lane, follow it downhill into the centre of Berrynarbor and turn left at the junction to return to the car park.

**Short-cut missing out Broad Strand** (● 6.5 miles, 390 metres of ascent and descent). At the 2hr5min point ([5]) continue along the A399 to the Sawmill Inn. Turn right here to pick up the road to Berrynarbor. Keep to the left, and this road will take you past the Olde Globe inn and the church; continue ahead to the car park.

**Extension to Combe Martin** (● 11.7 miles, 715 metres of ascent and descent; **see walk 7**). Follow the main walk as far as the 2hr50min point ([6]), then join walk 7 to continue to Combe Martin. From the sea front, continue ahead inland on the main street. Pass a small garage and a general stores, then take the fourth residential road on the right, Barton Gate Lane, which is marked as a public footpath. The road bends around to the right and becomes a track; shortly afterwards take a footpath forking to the left, heading upwards into Adderstable Wood. Follow the zigzag path, keeping always left and upwards; ignore paths that continue straight ahead (there are two). Eventually arrive at a gate into a field. Go through, and follow the path past a clump of trees and bushes that conceals a lime kiln. At the far side of the field go over a stile and turn left. Join a wider track coming in from the right, then go through two gates. Cross a road and head downwards. The path narrows, then widens out again and passes some houses before arriving at Combe Martin church. Turn right here and rejoin the instructions in walk 7 to return to Berrynarbor.

**Coastal walks using the bus.** There is a frequent service (301) between Combe Martin and Ilfracombe that can be used for linear walks along the coast. (A) Park at Berrynarbor and walk up either lane to the A399 to catch the bus to Hele. Join the main walk here to return to Berrynarbor (● total including the diversions to Hele Beach and the Warren 5.3 miles, with ascents and descents of 300m). (B) Park in Combe Martin and take the bus to Hele, returning as for the main walk as far as the 2hr50min point ([6]), then continue along the coast path as described in walk 7 (● 5 miles, ascents and descents of 300m).

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