

Bodmin Moor Walks – Minions 01 – Minions, Stowe’s Hill, Tramway – 3.78 miles

Useful Information

Parking: Two free car parks in Minions. Use the western one at 25973/71094

Intermediate Parking: None.

Getting There: From A38 Bodmin to Plymouth at Doublebois, go L on minor road signed Minions.

Transport: Western Greyhound bus 574 links Liskeard, Crow’s Nest, Callington. One a day goes via Minions.

Refreshments: Minions, Cheesewring Inn, Hurler’s Halt and Shop tearooms (both seasonal).

Toilets: Minions, near Hurlers Halt tearooms.

Route Directions

Minions to Stowe’s Hill – 1.45 miles

From the W CP, set off roughly NW, alongside the well made track that leads to Golddiggings Quarry for 400 yards to the Pipers standing stones on your R at 25715/71354. From here head roughly ENE 200 yards to the clearly visible Hurlers stone circles, beginning at 25827/71368. Continue roughly ENE to Houseman’s engine house (**0.57 miles**) to see the excellent exhibition. From here head just a little W of N, on a reasonably clear path, until a massive bronze age barrow comes into view ahead. This, at 26035/71919 is where the Rillaton Gold Cup was found. (**0.94 miles**)

*Stowe’s Hill is now in view ahead, the Cheesewring clearly visible, and Sharp Tor off to the R. Continue roughly NNW towards it on a well trodden path, passing a massive degraded cairn on your L and a small fenced-off quarry on your R. Views open up down to the valley below R and to Golddiggings Quarry on Craddock Moor way off to your L. At 1.18 miles you encounter an unexpected massive ditch some 10 feet deep, not shown on the OS map but possibly a rampart relating to Stowe’s Hill. Once across this ditch, you will see a square opening in rocks, roughly below the Cheesewring. Head for it. This, at 25799/72298, is known as Daniel Gumb’s Cave. (**1.24 miles**)*

Continue, keeping the fenced-off Cheesewring Quarry, *popular with rock climbers*, to your R, up to the Cheesewring on Stowe’s Hill at 25784/72414. Do now explore the top of Stowe’s Hill, to climb the highest of several rocky outcrops at about 1260 feet, to see the impressive pound wall and to enjoy the long views in all directions, which include Dartmoor off to your east. (**1.45 miles**)

Stowe’s Hill to Minions – 2.33 miles

You could cut off some distance by continuing just W of N to the lane leading to Wardbrook Farm, crossing the pound wall, crossing the outer pound and then rough ground, but this is not recommended. So, return to the Cheesewring and head downhill, roughly WSW in the direction of Golddiggings Quarry, towards the valley floor. Cross a track, by a thorn tree, and continue down towards tiny hedged fields till you come to a clear grassy track. (**1.70 miles**) Go R on the track, curving from just W of N to just E of N. After a while, Wardbrook Farm comes into view ahead. Soon the track bears just E of N, towards Sharp Tor. When it peters out, continue to the lane from Wardbrook Farm to Sharptor hamlet, to a point opposite a gate where a track leads up towards Sharp Tor at 25676/73092. (**2.24 miles**)

Go R on the lane for 25 yards and, where a wire fence starts on the R, keep R of it to find the first signs of the Kilmar Tramway, granite setts that continue intermittently most of the way to Minions. *As you progress, views open up to the east, first to Sharptor hamlet, then to Henwood and Notter Tor behind it.* The tramway undulates very gently all the way, passing Cheesewring Farm to your L at 2.70 miles. Shortly after, you pass the massive Cheesewring Quarry spoil tip on the R. *Here Prince of Wales shaft of Phoenix United Mine begins to come into view forward left. A plaque there commemorates a visit by another Prince of Wales, and Duke of Cornwall, in June 1994. At 2.88 miles, a path heads up R, following the RH hedge, to the Cheesewring tramway and quarry.* Continue towards Minions, noting below to your L the handsome former Count House of Phoenix United. *At 3.18 miles a track heads down L to a lane from Henwood. Here you could make your own detour to visit the remains of Prince of Wales Shaft. (**3.18 miles**)*

Continue on the tramway and at a gap between boulders at 3.37 miles, take the R fork gently uphill heading to the LH side of a small plantation. At 3.52 miles turn L on the Cheesewring Quarry tramway track (no setts) for 25 yards to a fork. Keep R, cross a track to Houseman’s engine house and keep to the RH side of a grassy former loading ramp. A path bears R to a track at 3.60 miles. Go L on the track, passing toilets on your R, to the road at the centre of Minions. *Here you will see the Cheesewring Inn, Hurler’s Halt tearooms and the shop with its tearooms.* Go R on the road and continue past a terrace of cottages on your R to the western car park entrance. (**3.78 miles**)