

A Round Walk from Bude – Coast, Farmland and back on the Bude Canal – 5.77 miles
Route: Coast Path to Widemouth, field paths to Helebridge, back along the Bude Canal
Detour: Possible detour by the Inclined Plane to Marhamchurch and back
Interest: The Sea Lock, the Pepper Pot, The Weir at Helebridge, the Bude Canal

Bude to Widemouth – along the Coast Path – 3.09 miles

Start from the TIC in the main car park by the Bude Canal at 20784/06143.

Head for the canal and go R to a wooden gate to the road. Cross the road, go R then L to walk along the north side of the canal. Continue to the end and cross the sea lock to the S side. Go R for 30 yards, passing Efford Cottage on your R, and go up 8 steps on the L to a dead-end road between houses. At the end go up 8 steps and go R to follow the Coast Path uphill on tarmac to a Coast Path WM on L. Go L up 13 steps on to short springy turf uphill to the Pepper Pot on Compass Point. **(0.60 miles)**

Fine views north across Bude's beaches to GCHQ Steeple Point and, on a clear day, to Lundy Island. Note jagged Crackington Shale rocks below from here on.

Continue on the Coast Path down then up. At 0.81 miles go through a kissing gate on your L to continue on the Coast Path up to the trig point on Efford Beacon at 190 feet at 0.93 miles. *From here views open out S across the bay as far as Cambeak.* You now go downhill to a kissing gate (or gate) at 1.12 miles, then uphill to a kissing gate (or gate) at 200 feet at 1.34 miles. From here you go downhill, passing the first houses in Upton at 1.45 miles. At 1.53 miles you go through a kissing gate to a short path between fences, then back into the open on to rough cliff-top land. **(1.53 miles)**

The path continues downhill gently and from 1.64 miles follows the road to Widemouth for much of the way. You go through a gap in a massive hedge at 1.80 miles, and pass Elements (café/bar/restaurant/hotel) at 1.93 miles. You then pass Widemouth Bay signs on the road at 2.07 miles, at which point you leave Phillips Point Nature Reserve. *The path continues to undulate and at 2.50 miles views open out to Widemouth and Black Rock and across the bay to Cambeak.* You then go through another massive hedge at 2.51 miles then at 2.62 miles, 200 yards or so before a small car park (seasonal ice cream van), the path divides; here you could continue straight on and follow the road to where your field path leaves the road. But it is preferred to follow the Coast Path WMs R, partly on a wheelchair friendly track, out to Lower Longbeak and on down to Salthouse at 3.04 miles. Here you leave the Coast Path, follow a track L to the road (Marine Drive) and cross to a wooden kissing gate (WM & FP Helebridge 1) by a gate to a field. **(3.09 miles)**

Widemouth to Helebridge – 1.02 miles

The field paths, tracks and gateways from here to Helebridge can be wet and muddy after rain.

The path should cross the field at an angle to reach the LH hedge. However, if ploughed or cropped, follow the LH hedge round the corner and continue up the hill. At end of field ignore a galvanised gate on the R and a gap on the L and go straight ahead through a gap (WM) to a second field and head uphill, following a track roughly ENE, to a wooden gate (WM) to a third field at 3.62 miles. Follow a grassy track E along the RH hedge (*Marhamchurch in view ahead L*) to a gap at 3.82 miles to a fourth field. Now follow a wide grassy track bearing L (NE) downhill to a wooden kissing gate (WM) by a wooden gate to a fifth field at 4.03 miles. Continue NE up then downhill to a wooden kissing gate by a wooden gate to a small CP area on the lane to The Weir and Whalesborough. **(4.11 miles)**

The Weir: *Café/bistro, owned by nearby Whalesborough holiday complex, and overlooking a newly created lake. Open all day from 10.00 breakfast. Good value food, good service.*

Helebridge to Bude TIC – 1.66 miles

Go R on the lane and at 4.14 miles, just before the road, go L through a car park and along a well made path to a wooden gate at a junction of tracks at 4.20 miles. Here, you could go R over a FB to go under the A39 at Helebridge, then L back under the road to follow a well made cycle route back to Bude, adding about ¼ mile. Unless you prefer to take that route, you should go L here to follow a tarmac track along the W side of the Bude Canal, passing almost immediately on your R a weir where the River Neet leaves the canal (*the fish pass notice suggests brown trout, sea trout, eels*). Along the canal, which takes you all the way back to the start point, you will pass restored locks at 4.54 miles and 4.75 miles. At 4.87 miles, cross Rodd's Bridge to go L through a wooden gate to continue on the track now on the E bank of the canal. At 5.30 miles, pass a FB signed Petherick's Mill Marsh Nature Reserve. At 5.74 miles, shortly before road bridge in Bude, go R into the CP and back to the TIC. **(5.77 miles)**

Marhamchurch Detour – adds a little over 1¼ miles

To visit Marhamchurch and see the Inclined Plane, at 4.20 miles go R over a FB and under the A39 to Helebridge. Go L on the road and, immediately after the bridge over the canal, go R on the towpath along the last part of the canal in water. Across the canal is a former workshop, now a small museum, After the steep part of the inclined plane, where you join a track, the former foundry and stables are just off to your left.