

Trail Guide: Boscaswell to Pendeen Watch

A relatively short but jam-packed circular walk, taking in stunning views, ancient sites, post-industrial archaeology, a world class visitor attraction, and fascinating flora in different habitats. Maybe even a Grey Seal!

Distance:	2.8 miles / 4.5km
Time:	If you don't stop, allow 1hr 30 mins, but you'll wish to stop at least once, so allow whatever time you have!
Starting Location:	Start Point A: SW 377 347 - bottom of Boscaswell Road Start Point B: SW 379 358 - Pendeen Watch Lighthouse
Public Transport:	Boscaswell is served by the A17 First Kernow bus service travelling between Penzance, St Just and St Ives.
Car Parking:	Free car park at top of Boscaswell Road, with public toilets, opposite Boscaswell Stores. Car parking at Pendeen Watch (lighthouse)
Nearest Facilities:	Various services in Pendeen village and café at Geevor Tin Mine
Accessibility & Terrain:	The route is dog friendly, but the path does cross open fields which may be grazed by cattle so keep dogs under control. There are numerous stiles to climb over, some steep sections, and a very short section of public road.



Route instructions:

1. Start Point A: The trail starts from an unmarked gap between a stone wall and a fenced hedge next to a house named *Treplevna*. After 20 yards turn sharp left at the bungalow named *Whitewaves* and follow the path.

2. Here you cross two traditional Cornish Stone Stiles, and then cross the field to the stile on the opposite side and follow the path alongside a 'consumption wall'.

From this point on, many of the field boundaries you will see on the trail are not traditional Cornish (stone) hedges, but what are known as 'consumption walls', so called because they served the dual purpose of being places where cleared stones from the field could be put, thus improving the quality of the field for agriculture/grazing, whilst also enclosing the field. They are often very tall and very wide.

3. Here you cross onto National Trust land at Trease. Follow the path straight ahead.

This was the [United Boscaswell Mine](#). Looking around the remains of the mine workings you can see the chimneys and winding gear up at Geavor, getting some sort of impression of the scale of the tin industry back in the late 1800s. On a day when the light is good you may be able to see the Scilly Isles on the horizon to your left. In the spring these fields are carpeted with Bluebells. Also during the summer look out for flowers such as Pignut, Common Sorrel, Stitchwort, Tormentil and Red Campion.

4. Just in front of a roofless stone building, look to your right and cross over the stone stile (to the right of a Penwith metal gate). There is a waymarker there with an arrow pointing left. Follow the path to your left across the field towards the section of wooden fence and stone stile on the other side.

The roofless building is the remnant of a post medieval farm building or barn within its field system, associated with the long running settlement at Trease whose origin lies in the 13th century.

5. Turn right and walk up the road.

6. At the sign saying Manor Farm, Pendeen take a sharp left and follow the track.

As you walk down the track towards Manor Farm there is an area of rough ground to your right, with Bracken, Bramble and Gorse around a patch of wetland. In summer it is full of the sound of chattering small birds such as warblers and Swallows swoop in to feed on insects. There are some very handsome examples of Marsh Thistle and Foxgloves along here. On your left as you walk you will also notice a patch of Horsetail – a ‘prehistoric’ plant which reproduces by spores instead of seeds.

7. Just after you have passed the enormous rusting anchor on your right, follow around the side of the main house, and look for a waymarker on your right indicating the track to take across the farmyard. Climb over the stone stile, cross the farmyard, go through the little metal gate and walk down between a barn on your left and a stone wall on your right.

Pendeen Manor Farm is the birthplace of renowned Cornish antiquarian, geologist and naturalist William Borlase (1696-1772). In the field behind the farm (not publicly accessible) there is also one of those rarest of things – a fogou. See [Pendeen Vau Fogou](#) and the [CASPN website](#) for more information on fogous.

8. Look seawards on your left – head along the edge of the field towards the wooden waymarker post at the end of the stone wall on your right. When you get there, keep the wall to your right and follow it down, crossing the field boundary in the corner – look for a small granite platform with stone steps protruding from the hedge beneath. Take care – it’s a rather steep drop! Keep walking in the same direction towards the sea.

Notice the massive consumption walls as you walk down these fields

9. In the bottom corner of the field go through the kissing gate and turn left onto the Coast Path as it does a quick zig zag down the slope. The path joins a track climbing up from the slipway at Boat Cove; turn left and follow the track uphill towards the lighthouse. You pass by the remnants of the [Pendeen Consols New Levant Mine](#) before reaching the lighthouse.

From this section, you can see below you on the right Portheras Cove. Further east, the headland that sticks out into the sea in the distance is Gurnard’s Head. Typical granite cliffs run from Gurnard’s Head to Portheras, where there is a junction between the granite and Mylor slates. From Portheras to Botallack and beyond, a layer of other rocks has been metamorphosed by the extreme heat of the intrusion of molten rock (now granite) below. Running through the two rock types are mineral-rich lodes – primarily tin, but also copper and other metals – hence this coast’s mining history as part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. By the way, the easterly end of Portheras Cove is part of another circular trail from Morvah to Tregaminion and Chypraze! The coast path between points 9 and 10 exhibits a wealth of coastal flora including (in spring) the very pretty Spring Squill.

10. Walk across the car park at Pendeen Watch Lighthouse (Start Point B) and through the gap in the wall on the far side. It's well worth a stop here to enjoy the view along the coast. When ready, turn left along the grassy path before re-joining the road. Follow the road towards the line of white terraced cottages.

There are a few benches here to sit and look westwards up the dramatic coast towards Geevor Tin Mine and inland to see Carn Eanes, behind Pendeen. [The lighthouse was built in 1900](#). This is a good spot to watch Gannets plunging into the sea after fish and spot the occasional Grey Seal. The whole of this strip of coast path is within the Aire Point to Carrick Dhu Site of Special Scientific Interest. The complex maritime vegetation of the cliffs supports rare mosses and wildflowers. Old shafts are roosts for Greater Horseshoe and Daubenton's Bats. Birds to watch out for include Stonechats, Choughs and Peregrines, with Wheatears and Whitethroats in spring and summer. You may be lucky to get a glimpse of a Basking Shark.

11. The Coast Path leaves the road off to your right, marked by a squared-off block of stone opposite the white gateposts of the cottage at the far end of the row. Follow that path down, across the stream and up the other side. As you go up the other side you will see a path off to the left which will take you up through the fields beneath Trease and back to Lower Boscawell, should you wish to take a shortcut from here.

You are entering a completely different habitat for a short stretch of the trail - sheltered wetlands, bubbling streams, even a little waterfall, with dancing butterflies and Wrens and other small birds darting in and out of the undergrowth...

12. Here you reach the top of the footpath and are confronted with the surreal landscape of Geevor and Levant Mines. Carry on!

13. Here the path divides. Take the right-hand fork, go over the bridge, along the fence and up the track, bearing left.

For a shorter route back from this point, take the left fork; follow the grassy path uphill and into a fantastic hedged lane that leads straight back up to Lower Boscawell.

14. At a 'T' junction, turn left, down towards the chimney stack and pond, then follow the track uphill towards the buildings of Geevor Tin Mine. If you go straight on from here you will reach the [Geevor Tin Mine](#) with its cafe and Hard Rock Museum. Well worth a trip...

15. Follow the yellow arrows going to the left between two gateposts, and climb the steep gravelly path, keeping the Geevor buildings on your right.

Towards the top of this section, look for a small wooden gate in the fence to your left – just downhill in the field here is an intriguing archaeological feature set into a square, stone lined hole – a ['Beaker Pit'](#).

16. Here there is a 'T' junction. Take the path to the left behind the gorse bushes towards Boscaswell, and go over the stone stile beside the gate. Follow the track uphill with the houses on your left – as you walk out onto the small car park, you will recognise Start Point A.

Just after you go over the stile, there is a short track going down on your left in front of a house. At the bottom of the track there is the [Boscaswell Holy Well](#), which dates from medieval times (on Private Property).

Before you go, head down the track on the opposite side of the parking area, then turn right at Corner Barn, follow the track and go through the first gate on your left, to visit the [Boscaswell Fogou](#) – the remains of a fascinating, above-ground fogou. These features date to the Iron Age and are normally found underground. This one is built into the very substantial stone walled remains of the prehistoric settlement behind it. It is open to the public courtesy of the National Trust.

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