

Coastal access reports
Combe Martin to Marsland Mouth
Cremyll to Kingswear

Devon Countryside Access Forum comments
Submitted on the representation forms

Combe Martin to Marsland Mouth

Generic comments

1) Signage

This comment relates to chapters CMM 1; CMM 2; CMM 3; CMM 4; CMM 5; CMM 6; CMM 7; CMM 8; CMM 9; CMM 10.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum expects, as part of the implementation process, that signage and waymarking will be clear, especially at points of decision where paths may go in different directions. Signage should reflect the nature of the path and be appropriate to the landscape to avoid sign clutter or urbanisation. Users should be encouraged to have maps available, especially away from residential areas.

2) Complex roll-back

Chapters CMM 1; CMM 2; CMM 3; CMM 4; CMM 6; CMM 7; CMM 8; CMM 9; and CMM 10.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum notes the significant number of more complex roll-back locations which have been identified in the reports. There is concern that there is no limit to how far inland roll-back might apply, given excepted land and environmental obligations. The Forum agrees that simple roll-back should take place. The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that it does not seem appropriate for roll-back to take place in the complex situations cited in the reports. Roll-back does not provide any statutory process for consultation, and could impact on landowners hitherto unaware that their land could be affected.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that it would be more appropriate to publish variation reports in these instances to formally allow landowners and others, such as the DCAF, to make objection or representation.

3) Disability access

Chapters CMM 1; CMM 2; CMM 3; CMM 4; CMM 5; CMM 6; CMM 7; CMM 8; CMM 9 and CMM 10.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is aware that many sections of the coast path include man-made obstacles such as path furniture (stiles, steps and gate design), narrow chicanes or lack of drop kerbs which make access difficult for people with limited mobility. There are other instances where upgrades to path surface, width or drainage could make access easier. The Forum advises that Natural England considers this in implementing the England Coast Path in Devon and works with land managers and other partners to secure improvements. It may be possible to identify particular stretches of path where the gains to access would be most beneficial. While the Forum recognises that issues of topography might make accessing some areas challenging, there are often many simple actions which can be taken to improve access for disabled people.

To give an example, the kerb in this photo (on the existing South West Coast Path) makes access through the gate difficult but could be replaced at modest cost with a ramp .



Specific comments

a) Watermouth Castle and The Warren

Chapter CMM 1
Map CMM 1b. Broad Strand to Samson's Bay.

The Forum notes and supports the change to avoid the car park and boatyard.

b) Lantern Hill

Chapter CMM 1.
Map CMM1d. Larkstone Beach, Ilfracombe to Seven Hills, Ilfracombe.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum supports the continuation of the existing SWCP route.

c) Shag Point

Chapter CMM 2.
Map CMM 2b Flat Point to Lee Bay.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum had suggested a more seaward route but notes the comments about unstable cliffs and excepted land (gardens). Use of the current SWCP route is therefore supported.

d) Morteheo

Chapter CMM 2.
Map CMM 2f. Sharp Rock, Morteheo to Woolacombe

The Devon Countryside Access Forum supports the proposal for a newly created route off-road with spectacular views CMM 2-S035 to CMM-2-S041 will be a safer route, even with the two road crossing points.

e) Chesil Beach

Chapter CMM 4.
Map CMM 4a. Cock Rock, Croyde to Saunton Surf Livesaving Station.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum welcomes the new safer route proposal as this avoids on-road walking and provides a road crossing point with better visibility.

f) Saunton

Maps CMM 4a: Cock Rock, Croyde to Saunton Lifesaving Station; 4b: Saunton Lifesaving Station to Braunton Burrows (Nature Reserve); 4c: Braunton Burrows (Nature Reserve); 4d: Braunton Burrows (Nature Reserve) and 4e Braunton Burrows (Nature Reserve) to Crow Beach House.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum welcomes the seaward route, between the junctions of CMM-4-S011/S012 and CMM-4-S018/S019, avoiding the road.

g) Horsey Island

Chapter CMM 4.
Map CMM 4f. Crow Beach House to Horsey Island.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum agrees with moving the route to the inner flood bank, CMM 4-S022 to 4-S026, as the outer flood bank has been breached, particularly as the area will have a long-term access exclusion.

h) Barnstaple

Chapter CMM 5.

Map CMM 5d. Pottington Business Park to Taw Bridge.

Although Natural England is proposing a route over the first crossing point of the river, the Devon Countryside Access Forum recognises the economic importance of signing walkers to Barnstaple and advises that appropriate and detailed signs to amenities and the town are installed.

i) Dyer's Lookout

Chapter CMM 10.

Map CMM 10b. Smoothlands to Warren Beach.

The problems with erosion are critical at this point and the Devon Countryside Access Forum supports a less steep route that zigzags slightly inland.

Cremyll to Kingswear

Generic comments

1) Ferries generally

This comment relates to CKW 2; CKW 3; CKW 4; CKW 5; CKW 6; CKW 7; and CKW 9.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that comprehensive information about ferries and alternative options should be available to assist people undertaking a long-distance walk.

2) Signage

This comment relates to CKW 2; CKW 3; CKW 4; CKW 5; CKW 6; CKW 7; CKW 8; CKW 9. (Chapter CKW 1 does not fall within the geographical area covered by the Devon Countryside Access Forum).

The Devon Countryside Access Forum expects, as part of the implementation process, that signage and waymarking will be clear, especially at points of decision where paths may go in different directions. Signage should reflect the nature of the path and be appropriate to the landscape to avoid sign clutter or urbanisation. Users should be encouraged to have maps available, especially away from residential areas.

3) Complex roll-back

The same comment has been made for CKW 2; CKW 4; CKW 5; CKW 7; CKW 8 and CKW 9.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum notes the significant number of more complex roll-back locations which have been identified in the reports. There is concern that there is no limit to how far inland roll-back might apply, given excepted land and environmental obligations. The Forum agrees that simple roll-back should take place. The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that it does not seem appropriate for roll-back to take place in the complex situations cited in the reports. Roll-back does not provide any statutory process for consultation, and could impact on landowners hitherto unaware that their land could be affected.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that it would be more appropriate to publish variation reports in these instances to formally allow landowners and others, such as the DCAF, to make objection or representation.

4) Disability access

Chapters CMM 1; CMM 2; CMM 3; CMM 4; CMM 5; CMM 6; CMM 7; CMM 8; CMM9 and CMM 10.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is aware that many sections of the coast path include man-made obstacles such as path furniture (stiles, steps and gate design), narrow chicanes or lack of drop kerbs which make access difficult for people with limited mobility. There are other instances where upgrades to path surface, width or drainage could make access easier. The Forum advises that Natural England considers this in implementing the England Coast Path in Devon and works with land managers and other partners to secure improvements. It may be possible to identify particular stretches of path where the gains to access would be most beneficial. While the Forum recognises that issues of topography might make accessing some areas challenging, there are often many simple actions which can be taken to improve access for disabled people.

To give an example, the kerb in this photo (on the existing South West Coast Path) makes access through the gate difficult but could be replaced at modest cost with a ramp.



Specific comments

a) Yealm Estuary

CKW 3 – Maps CKW 3a (Warren Point to Wembury) through to CKW 3j (Bridgend to Ferry Wood, Noss Mayo). Maps in CKW 3 are the major ones for this representation.

CKW 2 – Map CKW 2f (Connor's Cover to Yealm Estuary)

CKW 4 – Map 4a (Yealm Estuary to the Warren)

The use of the ferry crossing is supported. However, the Forum is disappointed that Natural England has not been able to take the alternative route closer to the estuary. It recommends that Natural England explore the potential of increasing the ferry service, for example at weekends in the winter.

b) Mothecombe Beach and Meadowsfoot Beach

Chapter CKW 5.

Map CKW 5a. Mothecombe Beach to Redcove Point CKW-5-S001 and CKW-5-S002

The Devon Countryside Access Forum supports changes to the route as it would be available at all times and less susceptible to high tide.

c) Erme Estuary

Chapter CKW 5.

Map CKW 5a. Mothecombe Beach to Redcove Point

The Devon Countryside Access Forum recognises the difficulties involved in providing a continuous route across the Erme. However, the Forum is disappointed that no alternative route is proposed for the estuary. It is only possible to wade across the river at low tide and for an hour either side. This limits not only the time available but also presents a barrier for those not confident enough or able to wade across. The Devon Countryside Access Forum would encourage a review of this decision to see whether an appropriate alternative route can be found. Concerns about safety using the A379 are appreciated but the Forum would like this route, and the area immediately around it, to be reassessed in terms of potential improvements that would make it safer for access users. There is already a convenient bridleway link to Hollowcombe Cross on the A379 (Holberton Bridleway 5).

d) Avon Estuary

Chapter CKW 6.

Maps CKW 6a. Cockleridge Ham to Bigbury

6b. Bigbury to Tidal Road

6c. Tidal Road to Little Efford Farm

6d. Little Efford Farm to Stiddicombe Wood.

Also shown in part in Chapter CKW 5, map CKW 5f. Bigbury-on-Sea to the Avon Estuary, and Chapter CK7, map CKW 7a: Bantham to Butter Cove).

The Forum strongly supports proposals for the Avon Estuary, provided that the anticipated improvements to the ferry service are put in place. The alternative route runs relatively close to the estuary and is the current alternative route for the South West Coast Path.

d) Stoke Fleming

Chapter CKW 9.

Maps CKW 9e. Blackpool Sands to Redlap Lane

CKW 9f. Redlap Lane to Willow Cove.

The Forum welcomes the improvements that have been made to achieve a more seaward route. If there are opportunities in the future to move section CKW-9-S043 seaward through dedication by the landowner, the Forum hopes that Natural England will explore this.