



Walk A2. Hartland Point and Quay.

- 8 miles, ascents and descents of 585 metres. 3 hours 20 minutes continuous walking, allow up to 5 hours.

Terrain: Coastal walking on paths, often stony with some exposed rock; return section quiet lanes and paths, some muddy.

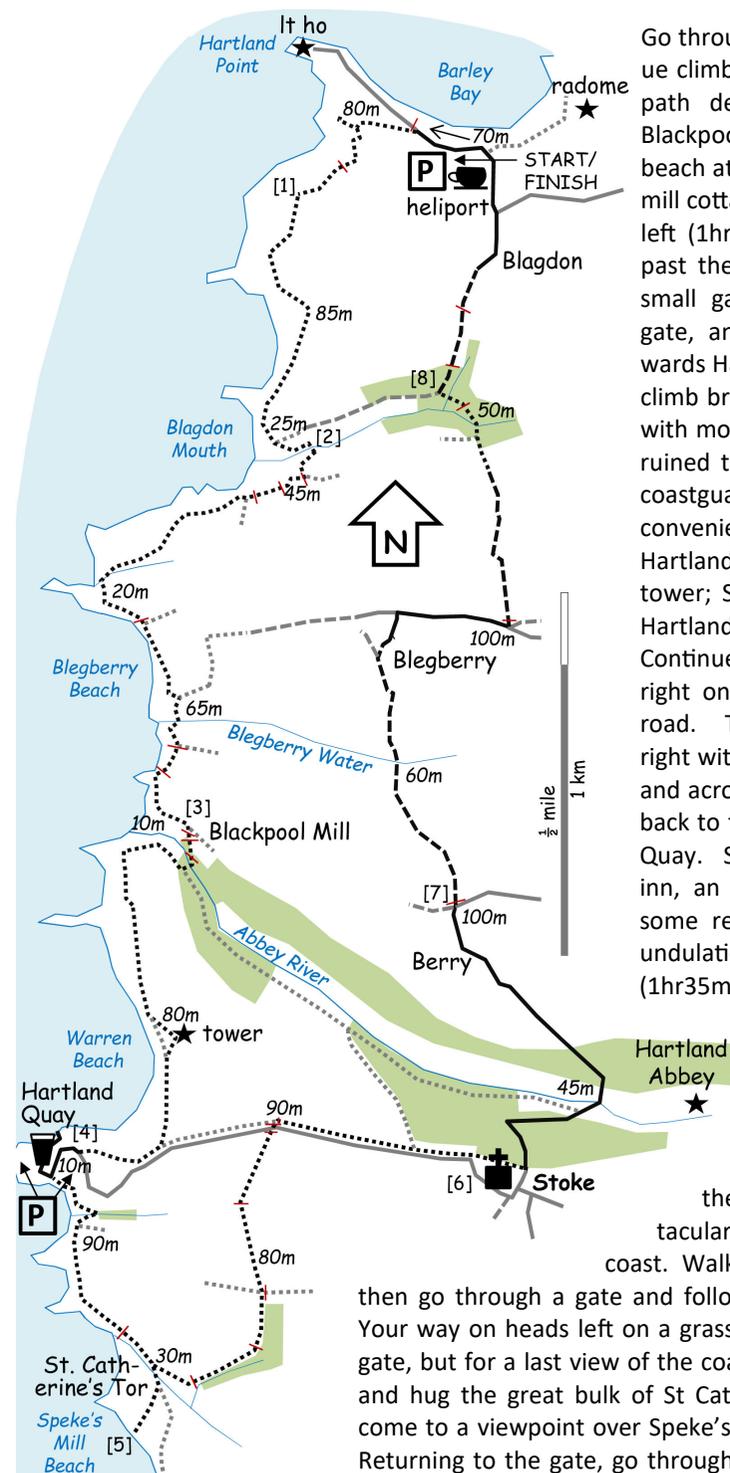
Access: Start from Hartland Point car park, just beyond the heliport (SS 234 274, near EX39 6AU, £); down narrow lanes from Hartland village or the A39. Alternatively the walk can be started from Hartland Quay or Stoke village.

Map: Croydecycle 11 Hartland and Clovelly; OS Explorer 126 Clovelly & Hartland.

Refreshments: Seasonal kiosk at the Hartland Point car park, inn at Hartland Quay, tea room at nearby Hartland Abbey (paying visitors only) or Docton Mill (no need to visit the gardens).

Hartland Point marks the abrupt, tide-swept end of the north-facing Devon coast, where the cliffs turn south towards Cornwall and exposure to the full force of the Atlantic Ocean. It is a remote and bracing place popular with walkers. The sandstone and shale cliffs are carved into strange formations and ridges, the coast path giving ever-changing views in exchange for seemingly constant climbs and descents. On a clear day there are good views of the south and east coasts of Lundy, just over eleven miles from Hartland Point lighthouse. Hartland Quay is something of a honeypot for visitors, with plenty of car parking and a large inn and hotel. The easier return route heads inland over farmland and through lush valleys, passing close to Hartland Abbey, now a private house and garden open to visitors.

Start at the Hartland Point car park. Continue along the lane away from the kiosk, noting an information board and an old concrete rain collector on the left. Follow the coast path up to the left. At the radio mast take a narrow path to the right to a viewpoint over the lighthouse. Retrace your steps back to a wider path; turn right here to rejoin the coast path. Go through a gate, keeping to the right-hand side of the field; you will soon come to a memorial to the *Glenart Castle*, a hospital ship that was torpedoed in the First World War (15mins, [1]). Continue above a craggy bay, then drop down into a valley. Ignore a turn to Blagdon, but continue along the valley above a miniature gorge. Turn right over a footbridge (30mins, [2]) and ascend the other side on rough steps. Turn right through a gate at the top. After two more gates drop into a shallow abandoned river valley bordered by striking rocks. You may encounter a herd of grey and white Herdwick sheep here. Continue up the other side to a marker post. Hartland Quay comes into view, with the Cornish coast stretching away beyond. Your way on is to the left over rocks and scree, soon replaced by rough steps. At the top go through a gate and join a more gently undulating landscape above Blegberry Beach. The path soon descends again, crosses another miniature gorge, and turns left uphill.



Go through a kissing gate and continue climbing. After the next gate the path descends steeply again into Blackpool Mill valley, with a stony beach at the seaward end and an old mill cottage, now a holiday let, to the left (1hr5mins, [3]). The way on is past the cottage, right through two small gates, then right to another gate, and right at a T-junction towards Hartland Quay. Another steep climb brings you on to a grassy plain with more jagged rocks below, and a ruined tower to the left (formerly a coastguard lookout, now serving as a convenient landscape feature for Hartland Abbey). Walk over to the tower; Stoke church is beyond, and Hartland Abbey nestles in the valley. Continue to a lone house and turn right on a footpath just before the road. Take a narrow path to the right with views back along the coast and across to Lundy. This brings you back to the road just above Hartland Quay. Stroll down to the quay and inn, an ideal spot for a break and some refreshments after the steep undulations of the coast path (1hr35mins, [4]).

The coast path continues to the left of the lower car park, signposted to Speke's Mill. Pass the end of the upper car park then bear right; there are spectacular views down the Cornish coast. Walk above the coast for a while, then go through a gate and follow a stream for a little way. Your way on heads left on a grassy path that comes to a field gate, but for a last view of the coast continue over the stream and hug the great bulk of St Catherine's Tor on the right to come to a viewpoint over Speke's Mill Beach (1hr55mins, [5]). Returning to the gate, go through and walk uphill on a grassy

path. At the end enter a field, keeping right. The next gate on the right is marked private (the path goes to a camp site); bear left, then right to follow the hedge. Continue through another gate, still keeping right. This will bring you to a road; cross over, go through a gate, and turn right on a path heading towards a church. Join a narrower path at a modern slate house, hemmed in by hedges. This soon brings you to Stoke's fourteenth-century church, with its 39m/128ft tower (2hr25mins, [6]). Either continue through the churchyard on a grassy path, crossing a low stone stile and turning left at the end, or follow the road around it and turn left on a narrow lane ('unsuitable for motors').

Follow this pleasant wooded lane down into the Hartland Abbey valley. After a bridge you will see Hartland Abbey on the right (unfortunately with no access from this direction), and on the left the ruined tower passed earlier in the walk. Continue uphill into the open and come to a large farmhouse. Follow the lane around to the right past a smaller cottage, then when it bends sharply right take the bridleway ahead, through a gate just beyond a telegraph pole (2hr45mins, [7]). You will be heading slightly to the left of the radome. The track takes you down into Blegberry valley, possibly muddy, and up to a large farm. Bear right past holiday cottages and barns, and turn right on meeting a road at a T-junction. In about five minutes turn sharply left on a signposted bridleway, through a gate on to an enclosed stony track. Bear left on what is now a grassy track in front of a gate. Follow it downhill and over a foot-bridge, continuing next to the stream on a narrow path. Go through a gate, across a small stream, and start heading uphill. Turn right when you meet a wider track (3hr10mins, [8]). Continue through a gate to walk along the side of a field, then through another gate to come to Blagdon Farm. Bear left to join a concrete drive, then carry on ahead to pass the small heliport. The kiosk and car park are just beyond, on the right.

Shorter walks. Almost any of the paths heading inland can be used to shorten the walk, linking up with the return route; some of these are shown on the map.



Lundy from the Hartland coast

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