

North Devon's very own coast path comes out tops as Britain's favourite

The South West coast path between Bude and Westward Ho! has been voted the best by ramblers



The South West coast path between Bude and Westward Ho! has been voted the best in the UK. Credit: North Devon Ramblers

YES, it's official. With its dramatic sea views and scenic landscapes, the South West coast path between Bude and Westward Ho! has been voted, according to a nationwide public vote by the ramblers, as Britain's favourite path even beating the Loch Lomond stretch of the West Highland Way!

Anyone who has ventured out to this section of the coast path will understand why. From the dramatic heights of the cliffs around the Hartland peninsula to the bluebell -bearing woods at Brownsham and the quaint cobblestones of Clovelly, there is a great diversity of landscapes.

You wouldn't be expected to tackle it in one go; there are various circular routes to be found of differing lengths. If you prefer to be walking in a group for company and like to be led, then try a walk with the ramblers, who regularly offer walks covering sections of this path.



Above: The Hartland coast is among the most popular scenery in the UK. Credit: North Devon Ramblers

It is proven that walking boosts both physical and mental health. A recent study found that people walking regularly, (around 16,000 steps a day) had the longest life-expectancy of all.

Moreover, walking up and down hills (and there are plenty of these) uses different sets of muscles from walking on the flat, and has a greater effect on our metabolism and heart- meaning reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and metabolic disorders such as diabetes.

Coastal air is especially beneficial. Sea air contains tiny droplets of sea water rich in iodine, magnesium, calcium and potassium which typically promote better health. So walking on a gusty day when nutrient rich air is blowing inland gives the best results!



Above: The waterfall at Spekes Mill Mouth. Credit: North Devon Ramblers

If you have never walked the section of coast path around the Hartland peninsula, you don't know what you are missing. With its jagged rock formations and tumbling waterfall at Spekes Mill Mouth, it is indeed a spectacular stretch of coast path.

More than that, you will be rewarded by knowing that this is Britain's favourite walk and it's right on our doorstep!

By Janet Ellis, North Devon Ramblers

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