

Reverend Hawker country... 3 miles Morwenstow cliffs & valleys, Cornwall

 THE NATIONAL TRUST

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Explore the most northerly National Trust area in Cornwall in a parish made famous by the eccentric Reverend R S Hawker of Morwenstow. This is a walk of contrasts with dramatic, towering cliffs, sheltered wooded valleys, wildlife-friendly organic farmland and the opportunity to visit one of the Trust's smallest buildings.

Start: Rectory tearoom – grid ref: SS205153 – maps: OS Landranger 190 & Explorer 126

Getting there & local facilities

By bike: the circular Cornwall Cycle Route (37km / 23ml) passes through Morwenstow

By bus: First Travel route 319, Bude to Hartland via Morwenstow

By car: informal car park adjacent to tea-room at Crosstown, Morwenstow. Turn off the A39 at Crimp

No public WCs. Tea-rooms & accommodation at Rectory Farm (NT tenant); www.rectory-tearooms.co.uk. Please call them on 01228 331251 to check opening times. The Bush Inn at Crosstown (not NT); www.bushinn-morwenstow.co.uk

Look out for...

-  **Rectory Farmhouse:** This National Trust farmhouse dates back to the 14th century. It now houses a tearoom which is well worth a visit, not just for the delicious homemade food, but also to see its fascinating antiques and artefacts.
-  **Church of St John the Baptist and St Morwenna:** An ancient church dedicated to saints of both Saxon and Celtic culture. Its most famous incumbent, Reverend Hawker, was the vicar from 1834 to 1874. Hawker built his rectory below the church in Victorian Gothic style and, rather uniquely, had the chimneys built to imitate other church towers. Look out for the figurehead of the *Caledonia*, wrecked in 1842, which marks the mass grave of its crew.
-  **Hawker's Hut:** This intriguing little building was reputedly built by Reverend Hawker out of driftwood from shipwrecks. He would sit here and meditate, smoke pipes of opium and write poetry. For decades people have carved initials and messages in the timbers – some are well over 100 years old.
-  **Farmland and valleys of maritime heathland:** Important areas for a number of rare species. See farmland birds and butterflies in the hedges and heath and look out for grey seals in the water far below, while kestrels and peregrines hover around the cliffs. The farm has also recently undergone conversion to organic status.



The Vicarage at Morwenstow, with its unusual chimney stacks, built by the eccentric Reverend Hawker. Now in private hands, it can be viewed from the churchyard and footpath.

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Looking across Cotton Beach to Higher Sharpnose Point in the distance. The coastline here at Vicarage Cliff, where the cliffs rise up to 450ft high, is stunning.

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The sheltered broadleaf woodlands in the valleys are a haven for wildlife. You can often see branches covered in lichens and mosses; a sign of the clean unpolluted Atlantic air. There is a wonderful flush of colour from spring and early summer flowers, both here and on the cliffs.

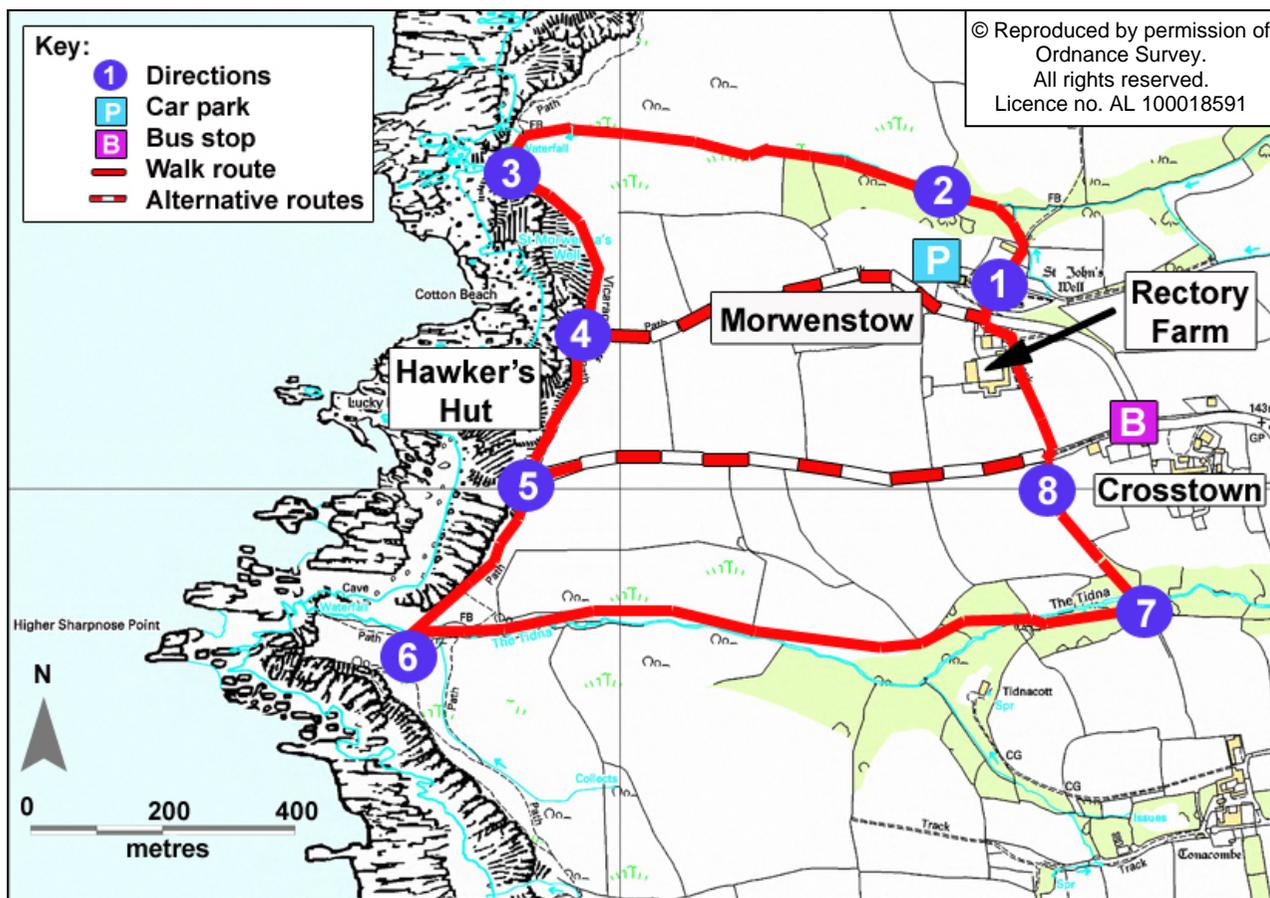
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Directions

1. From the Rectory Farm tea-rooms, pass through the lychgate into the churchyard. Taking the path to the right of the vicarage, descend into Morwenna Valley.
2. Turn left along the valley at the waymarker signed 'Coast Path'. This path was opened to the public under the farm's Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Continue along the length of the valley, walking through woodland, scrub and then open grassland to reach Vicarage Cliff and the coastal path.
3. Turn left at the path and ascend the cliff path to the farmland plateau above.
4. On reaching a kissing gate there is an option to turn left and return to the tearooms, or, continue along the cliff tops until you reach a walled entrance marked 'Hawkers Hut'. The hut is just below you down some slate steps.
5. Continue on the coast path, passing another gate into the next valley; Tidna Shute. Alternatively, for a slightly shorter route, take the path to the left to return to the tearooms.
6. Turn inland at the base of the hill.
7. Turn left at the waymarker and enjoy a walk through the Tidna Valley and woodlands until you reach a waymarker directing you back uphill toward Rectory Farm.
8. Crossing several stiles and a farm track you will see a sign for the tearoom where you started.

Walk distance, terrain and accessibility

Approximately 3 miles (4.8km), allow about 1½ hours. Variety of terrain, including slopes, uneven ground, steps, stiles and unfenced cliff tops. Occasionally muddy in parts. Dogs welcome, please keep under close control through farmland.



National Trust places to visit nearby...

North Devon countryside at Brownsham; North Cornwall countryside at Coombe and Duckpool; Sandymouth Beach and café near Bude

Contact us: 01288 331372

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