

This walk description is from happyhiker.co.uk

Morwenstow to Hawker's Hut

Starting point and OS Grid reference	National trust car park at Morwenstow (SS 205153)
Ordnance Survey map	Explorer Map 126 Clovelly and Hartland
Distance	4.8 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: I was actually staying in North Devon and writing about walks there when I strayed over the border into North Cornwall for this walk. It starts in the hamlet of Morwenstow with its church and its unusual roof and memorial to sailors then proceeds through the countryside before emerging on the coast path and following an attractive stretch of coast to Hawkers Hut before returning to Morwenstow.

Although the walk is not especially long, there are three very steep descents/ascents on the coast path hence the red traffic light.

There is free parking at a National Trust outside the Refectory Tea Rooms. To get to Morwenstow, turn off the A39 about half way between Clovelly and Bude.

Start: With your back to the Refectory Tea Rooms facing the church, take the footpath opposite (not the one going left). Go through the church lych gate into the churchyard. The church is worth a look for its roof which inside looks like the hull of an upturned boat. On the left as you walk to the church door is an unusual monument to the sailors of a brig Caledonia who perished 7 September 1842. It is a replica of the figurehead (the original is in the church).

Immediately through the lych gate is a railed path which is your route. Follow it down turning right and as the rail runs out, turn right and immediately left down towards the vicarage.

Pass the vicarage and walk down through the trees, ignoring a left turn for the coastal path. After crossing a footbridge and coming out into a field, go straight ahead, ignoring the path to the left.

Go through a gateway at the top of the field. The official footpath turns right at a gate to go through the farmyard to Westcott but an alternative route has been provided so that you can avoid the hazards of the farmyard. Take this alternative path ahead to a stile with wooden steps at the top of the field (SS 206158). Cross this and turn right.

As you emerge at the farm, avoid following the concrete farm track by mistake and turn left through a gate indicated by a footpath arrow (SS 208158). Follow this to the road and turn left.

You soon come to Cornakey Farm where another alternative path guides you round the farm to the right of a wooden barn. Go through the walkers gate in the hedge on the left and turn right on the track (SS 211162).

The next section of the walk to Marsland manor is clearly marked with footpath arrows and via yet another alternative route, exits into a road. Turn left here past the manor.

Walk along the road for 100 yards or so and as it bends sharply right, you continue straight ahead on a broad track (SS 218169) signposted to Marsland Mouth. There is also a green footpath arrow indicating the way to the coastal path.

As the track bends right, there is a notice telling about the Marsland Valley with details of a short circular walk should you wish to visit it. Feel free but otherwise, turn left at this notice indicated by the yellow footpath arrow, Go through a kissing gate and take the left path.

You reach the coastline above Marsland Mouth joining the coastal footpath at SS 211173. Turn left.

It is now a case of simply following the coast path including the three steep ascents/descents – but I was kind bringing you out at the top of Marsland Mouth avoiding a fourth!. You pass a metal bench and a notice advising about visiting the Bush Inn (you will pass this later). The church and vicarage at Morwenstow appear on the left.

You reach Hawkers Hut (SS 199152) indicated by a National trust sign on a piece of slate but to see it, you need to go down a few steps. It seems the Reverend R.S. Hawker had this hut built from driftwood and timber from wrecked ships round about the 1840s and spent time here in contemplation and smoking opium! It is the smallest property belonging to the National Trust and although it has been maintained, much of the original remains. There are some old carvings on the walls.

Back on the coast path, continue beyond Hawkers Hut and after going through a kissing gate (SS 199150), turn immediately left to follow the wall. I was shocked (sorry!) to find an electric fence here at the time of my visit but there was fortunately an insulated bar to lift to pass through.

The footpath becomes a wide farm track lined with hedges which leads you to the centre of the hamlet Crosstown by the Bush Inn – which thankfully was open all day at the time of my visit! With the pub at your back, turn left and follow the road back to your starting point.

Morwenstow to Hawkers's Hut

