

FOWEY

tourist guide

Including POLRUAN, BODINNICK & GOLANT



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welcome to

FOWEY!

(Pronounced FOY to rhyme with JOY)

Fowey is a very special place, with plenty to see around every corner. The town dates back many hundreds of years and the roads were designed long before the motor car was invented.

Come and discover the charm and tranquillity of Fowey, an ancient Cornish seaport, with its narrow winding streets, where flower-bedecked houses and cottages jostle side by side with quaint little shops and pubs for a place on the hillside that sweeps down to the lovely River Fowey and its picturesque harbour. From the days of pirates and smugglers with their barques and brigantines to the thousands of colourful craft (over 6,000 a year) that enter what is, undeniably, one of the most beautiful harbours in the country. Time has changed little of this pearl of the Cornish Riviera.

In this idyllic setting, that enjoys the mildest climate in the whole of Great Britain, you will find much to enjoy. Apart from the wonderful joys of sailing, for which Fowey is renowned, the river and sea are truly an angler's paradise stocked with a wide variety of fish of all descriptions. The wildlife of the cliffs, woods and sandy coves will intrigue and delight you beyond belief, whilst for the more energetic visitor there are such pastimes as golf, horse-riding, swimming and diving.

In the cool of a summer's evening Fowey takes on an air of mystery, charm and intrigue and it takes little imagination to recall the historic deeds and legends of the past.

At the close of day there is still much to do in Fowey, from a gentle stroll along the Esplanade gazing at the lights of Polruan across the estuary, to enjoying a satisfying meal of fresh local mussels or crab in one of the cosy little restaurants or pubs in the town. Or maybe just sit and have a quiet drink in one of the pubs listening to local 'yarns'.

Whatever your choice, you're sure to have a good time.



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FOWEY

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General Information

The STD DIAL CODE TO THE AREA FROM OUTSIDE IS **01726**

ONLINE VISITOR GUIDE

www.fowey.co.uk

RAIL INFORMATION

Train Times, Fares & Bookings: Tel: **08457 484950**

BUSES

Traveline www.traveline.info Tel: **0871 2002233**

TAXIS/WATER TAXI

KP Cabs (Jan Philp) Tel: **07857 636881**

Yeo's Taxis, Par Tel: **814095**

Water Taxi (Only from ship to shore and vice versa)

V.H.F. Channel 6 or Tel: 07774 906730

POST OFFICE

Fowey Mini Market, 39 Fore Street, Fowey Tel: **833356**

Park Road, Fowey Tel: **0345 611 2970**

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Church of England St Fimbarrus, South Street, Fowey.
St Johns, Bodinnick, St Saviours, Fore Street, Polruan.

St Willow, Lanteglos. St Sampson, Golant.

Roman Catholic Church Woodland Road, St. Austell.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Minor Injuries Unit, St Austell Community Hospital,

Porthpean Road PL26 6AA Tel: **873010 or call 111**

Doctor's Surgery, Rawlings Lane, Fowey Tel: **829272**

Doctor's Surgery, The Quay, Polruan Tel: **829272**

FOWEY HARBOUR MASTER

Pelyn Veterinary Group, Lostwithiel Tel: **01208 872254**

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Harbour Master's Office, Albert Quay Tel: **832471**

ATM CASH MACHINE

Town Quay, Fowey Tel: **832386**

COASTGUARD

Available in Trafalgar Square opposite Kittows Butchers Shop.

FOWEY CAR PARKS

Main Car & Coach Park, Hanson Drive **400 Cars**

Caffa Mill, Station Road (By Car Ferry) **160 Cars**

Fowey Docks, Station Road **120 Cars**

Parade, Tower Park (Readymoney Cove) **55 Cars**

POLICE

In an emergency dial 999

Devon & Cornwall Police: **Dial 101** Crimestoppers: Tel: **0800 555111**

FOWEY TOWN BUS SERVICE

The Fowey Town Bus operates from the Parish Church in the town centre to most of the town and the main car parks. Please see notice board on the church railings for details. Tel: **07703 292531**



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FOWEY TOWN TOUR

Relax on a 25 minute tour, see the fabulous views and places that most visitors miss! Starts and finishes on Town Quay. 1st May - 30th September only, weather permitting. No booking necessary. Contact:Tel: **07891 049536**

RIVER, SEA & FISHING TRIPS

Self-Drive Motor Boats (Town Quay)Tel: **07989 991115**
Fowey River & Sea CruisesTel: **07776 141 241**
Coastal & River CruisesTel: **07792 625908**
Fowey River HireTel: **07515 353936**
Encounter CornwallTel: **07976 466123**

FERRY SERVICES

Passenger & Cycle FerryTel: **01726 870232**

Polruan Quay to/from Fowey Town Quay/Whitehouse Pier

Summer Service (beginning of May to end of September)

Monday to Thursday: 7:15 am to 9 pm **Friday:** 7:15 am to 11 pm

Saturday: 7:30 am to 11 pm **Sunday:** 9 am to 9 pm

NB. From mid-May to mid-September

9.45am to 5.15 pm Ferry runs to/from the Whitehouse Pier
All other times from the Town Quay

Winter Service (beginning of October to end of April)

Monday to Friday: 7:15 am to 7 pm

Saturday: 7:30 am to 7 pm **Sunday:** 9 am to 5 pm

Car & Passenger FerryTel: **01726 870232**
Bodinnick to/from Caffa Mill

Summer Service (beginning of May to end of September)

Monday to Saturday: 7 am to 8 pm **Sunday:** 8 am to 8 pm

Winter Service (beginning of October to end of April)

Monday to Friday: 7 am to 7 pm **Saturday:** 8 am to 7 pm

Sunday: 9 am to 7 pm

Mevagissey Ferry - (See notice board at Whitehouse Slip)

7 days a week from Whitehouse Quay. (Weather permitting)

Tel: **07977 203394** www.mevagissey-ferries.co.uk

All of the above services are subject to the weather conditions and may change at any time. Please check before travelling.

Bed & Breakfast

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(Contact Ben and Michaela) Spacious en-suite rooms, communal area, friendly, quiet location, free parking, communal library/rest/games area. 10 minutes walk from Fowey centre, 5 minutes from coastal walks.
• From £40.00 pppn. **A**

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Idyllic location, 300m from the sea, tucked away above the valley of Coombe Haven. Free parking. Free WIFI.
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From £40 pppn – single person supplement applies **C**

The Safe Harbour Hotel

The Safe Harbour has two bars; the traditional lounge bar with its comfortable seating & dining area and the public bar with a pool table and dart board. There are also 9 well-appointed letting rooms with on-site parking. Fresh, locally-sourced food is served daily with a fantastic specials board and many gluten free dishes.



BOOK NOW
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58 Lostwithiel St, Fowey
Tel: 01726 833379

The River Fowey

Rising on Bodmin Moor, the River Fowey has always been the lifeblood of those towns and villages through which it flows on its way to the open sea of St. Austell Bay.



Palmerbridge is the first main bridge over the river and the nine arch bridge built at Lostwithiel in 1265, is the last.

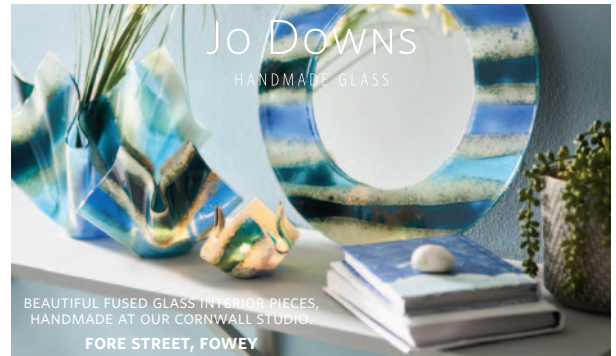
Once the capital of Cornwall, the ancient Stannary Town of Lostwithiel was granted a Charter in 1189 and made a Free Borough in 1269.

There are many historic buildings in the town including St. Bartholomew's Church (14th Century), The Guild Hall, Museum and the remains of the Duchy Palace. As the river continues on its way down it passes, on the east bank, the lovely little church of St Winnow which dates mainly from the 15th Century, although there are some remains of Norman and 13th century architecture. Above the church is the fine Georgian Vicarage and the Tudor Manor House. A little further on is the creek that leads up to the pretty waterside village of Lerryn.

Back to the west bank and to the village of Golant, a favourite spot for small boat owners. Legend has it that it was here that King Mark, a Cornish King in 500AD, took his queen Iseult to the church of St Sampson, named after a famous Celtic Saint.

Just before reaching Fowey are the docks of IMERYS Minerals Ltd. from which some 450,000 tonnes of China Clay were exported last year to all parts of the world, and over 150 ships visited the docks under the flags of many nations.

From pre-Roman times until the thirteenth century ships came to Fowey to trade for the tin that was panned throughout Cornwall.



In 1380 the town was raided by a Spanish fleet of some size and to deter further enemies, two blockhouses were built at the harbour entrance, one on the Polruan side (the ruins of which can still be explored) and the other on the opposite shore in Fowey with a great chain stretched between them. A further fortification, St Catherine's Castle, was built in 1540 on the Fowey side of the harbour. Many men of Fowey sailed with John Rashleigh in his famous ship 'Frances of Fowey' on the many voyages with his cousins Drake and Raleigh. In 1578 the ship sailed with Admiral Frobisher on his voyage of discovery to Baffins Land. Later under the command of his son John and with seventy men of Fowey, the ship fought with Drake against the Spanish Armada.

In 1666, a Dutch squadron of some fifty ships chased the Virginia fleet of 30 ships who took refuge in the harbour. Contrary winds prevented the Dutch fireships from probing the harbour and a long battle ensued with the guns of St Catherine's Castle supporting those of the merchantmen. Cannon balls and shot can still be found amongst the rocks and on the floor of the harbour.

In 1704 Jonathan Rashleigh built eight more almshouses to add to those built in 1626 by John Rashleigh.

England became involved in a series of wars from 1739 onwards and as a consequence ships called at Fowey to 'press' men for the Navy. James Cook, a young Naval Lieutenant, surveyed the harbour in 1786. The Town Hall, a granite building, was erected in 1793 by two Borough M.P.'s of the time, Lord Valletort and Philip Rashleigh. It replaced the medieval town hall, but incorporated some of the old building and the prison. The remainder of the medieval building is now the town museum in which are displayed many interesting artefacts illustrating the history of the town and its people. Here you can see the chain and badge worn by Sir Charles Hanson when he was Lord Mayor of London in 1917-18. Also on display are the two ceremonial maces of Cornish tin.

In the nineteenth century the harbour was a very busy place with sailing ships of all types, men of war, tall East Indiamen, sleek fast privateers and slow brigs laden with supplies for Admiral Nelson's blockading squadrons. By the time Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert (after whom Albert Quay is named) visited the town in 1846, smuggling had all but ceased.

The docks were rebuilt and proved of valuable service during the Second World War as Fowey was a base for the Air Sea Rescue Service and a departure point for American Forces on 'D' Day.

In present times this natural and beautiful harbour, protected as it



is by the green and wooded hills that surround it, offers a safe anchorage from the severest weather to the many pleasure craft that visit the port every year. During the summer months there is continuous activity in the harbour as yachts go to and fro, fishing boats enter and leave, the ferry boats cross to Polruan and Mevagissey and the tugs turn the big china clay ships around before towing them up river to the docks beyond the town. There are days for sailing races and Cornish Gig rowing races.

Walking Around Fowey

With a stout pair of shoes, a stick and a camera you can enjoy a wonderful day out hereabouts - in the country, along the river or around the cliffs - filling your lungs with good clean air (and generating a healthy appetite - so take some food and drink with you!). Perhaps the best and most scenic of all the many walks in the area is that round the harbour itself, often loosely called the Hall Walk after the stretch of it above Bodinnick. Hall Walk proper is sometimes called King's Walk, for it was here, in 1644, that King Charles I was fired upon by a Puritan from across the river, while the King was surveying the Parliamentary army of the Earl of Essex trapped in the Fowey valley below. A fuller description of the round-the-harbour walk is given later in this guide in the section on Polruan.

For views of the sea and the ships in St. Austell Bay, a walk on the Fowey side of the harbour, which must not be missed, is that from Readymoney Cove to Polridmouth beach and then via the Gribben headland (with its prominent beacon built by Trinity House in the 1830's to mark the entrance to Fowey harbour) to Polkerris - a pretty little cove with a curving harbour wall which embraces and protects a sandy beach abounding in little rock pools. The beach is directly overlooked by the 'Inn on the beach' - the 'Rashleigh Arms'.

For the long-distance Rambler, the 'Saints' Way' offers a unique opportunity to view some of the magnificent scenery, both coastal and moorland - and at the same time learn something of Cornwall's Celtic history. This was originally a trading route across the peninsula (running from Padstow on the north coast to Fowey on the south coast) during the Bronze and Iron Ages, which avoided the treacherous passage around Land's End. Later it became the route for missionaries and pilgrims, some later revered as Saints of the Celtic world, crossing from Ireland to take ships from Fowey to France and thence overland to Rome or Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Hill forts, granite Celtic crosses, holy wells and ancient churches abound along the route, which passes several good village inns and other places of refreshment. The 'Saints Way' is about 26 miles from coast to coast.

Space in this small guide does not permit detailed descriptions of all the lovely walks in the Fowey area, but local bookshops have a number of special guidebooks for walkers.

Places of Interest

FOWEY MARINE AQUARIUM The aquarium has been on Fowey Town Quay for over 50 years and houses a collection of fish from the local waters around Fowey. You can usually see fish like the sinister Conger eel, the anglers favourite, the Bass, the gourmets popular choice, the Turbot, the canny Mullet, the very colourful members of the Wrasse family and sometimes an Octopus. There is

also a range of Lobsters and Crabs and a Crab touch pool for the children. The collection does vary as some fish are caught early in the season and returned to the sea in the autumn. Open from Easter until the end of September.

FOWEY MUSEUM Fowey is the toast of yachtsmen and ramblers, but also of historians and archaeologists. Iron Age Man lived here. The Romans used the port. In 1380 the Spanish, and in 1457 the French tried to burn it to the ground. Drake, Raleigh and Frobisher all sailed from Fowey and the harbour was surveyed by Cook before he became a Captain. Many famous authors have found inspiration here.

A natural place, then for a museum. It has a sympathetic setting in the oldest part of the Town Hall - in the room that was the Council Chamber when Fowey was a Borough in its own right. With the civic regalia on display is the Mayoral chain made for the former Lord Mayor of London, Sir Charles Hanson when he was the High Sheriff of the City of London. It stands proud among the memorabilia of the many who have enriched Fowey with art, craft or government, industrial skill or naval reputation.

Although small the museum is packed with so much of interest. Witness the very complimentary remarks in the visitors book.

THE GALLEON INN The Inn started its life as a Wine Bar over the wine vaults at 10 and 12 Fore Street. The original entrance was from Town Quay although by the late 1890's the entry to the Private and Saloon Bars was via the now existing passage beside number 10. Around the same period The Fowey Wine Company acquired number 14 with Behanna's Billiard saloon at the rear. Around 1948 the whole premises was leased to the Courage Brewery and it still retained the sawdust flooring of old in the Long Bar (now the main bar). It was later sold to the brewer who ran it as a pub until selling it privately in 1994 when major alterations were made into its present state. The front shops in Fore Street have been used in a variety of trades including a Tailors, Grocers, Basketmakers, several times a Wine Bar & Wine Merchants, Printers, Blockmakers and a Wine Importers and Whisky Blenders.

THE HAVEN The large house on the Esplanade by the Whitehouse passenger ferry slip, was the home of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, or 'Q', Cambridge professor, Mayor of Fowey, editor of the 'Oxford book of English Verse' and author of many novels on the life and times of Fowey.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA Situated on Town Quay, it is the probable site of an Elizabethan poor house named after Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, who's victories in the Seven Years War had made him a hero in Britain. Originally it was the Old Compting House or Municipal Hall built over the columns of the old market, which still remain to this day, but it was pulled down in 1886 and the Inn rebuilt on similar lines.

THE LUGGER INN Recorded as an Inn in 1782, it was probably formally a private residence, for upstairs a plaster plaque (now replaced by a metal one) commemorates a plaster ceiling in 1633. In the 17th century a group of plasterers were very active in the West Country and it would seem that at the time many houses in the area were embellished by their workmanship. Even in the 16th century there seems to have been a building on this site and this may have provided at least the foundations for the present Inn, which from 1787 to 1806 was the meeting place for the Court Leet which had jurisdiction over harbour and shipping dues.

NOAH'S ARK On the north side of Fore Street, it is one of the oldest buildings in Fowey having been here long before the fire of 1457. Originally the home and warehouse of a wealthy merchant, today it is now a shop.

THE WELL HOUSE This medieval house, reputedly the oldest building in Fowey, was built in 1430, the year before Joan of Arc was burnt at the stake, before the start of the War of the Roses and sixty years before Columbus discovered America. When Queen Elizabeth I reigned in glory during the swashbuckling days of Drake, this house was already 100 years old. The old kitchen is enchanting; walls, fireplace and beams are very little altered from when they were built and some of the original cobbles remain to view. More recently the premises housed a folk museum, which prior to its official opening, was attended by Daphne du Maurier at a private viewing. It is now B&B accommodation and the Well House Tea Shop.

PLACE The date the house was built is unknown, it became the family home of the Treffry family in 1280 on the occasion of the marriage of Thomas Treffry to Elizabeth Boniface who was living at Place at the time. When the French attacked the Town in 1456. Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Treffry the Second, with her men repelled the French by pouring molten lead from the roof onto the attackers. It was fortified by Thomas, like a castle in about 1458. The small brasses in Fowey church are of this courageous woman and her husband whom she married in 1443. As Place is still a family residence, the mansion is not open to the public.

SCALLOP SHELL HOUSE This fine Georgian building is on the site of a medieval rest house for pilgrims on their way to the shrine of St James of Compostela in Spain. Records show that between 1412 and 1456 licences were granted to seven Fowey shippers who carried approximately 350 pilgrims.

THE SAFE HARBOUR HOTEL Dating back to the early 1800's this building was known as 'The Commercial Inn', being a stopping place for coach and horses. In those days it was well known for hiring horses and carriages and the original stables were where the bar is now.

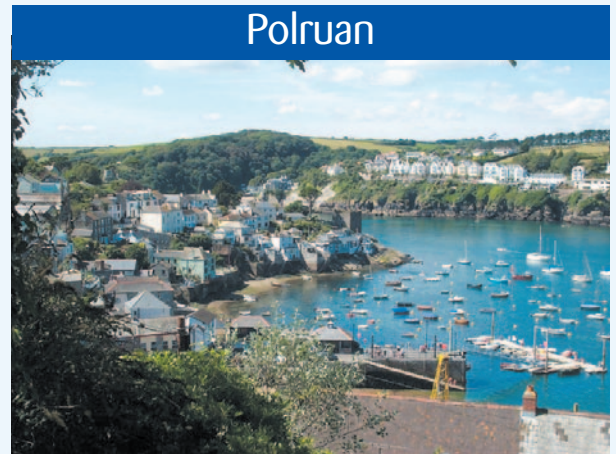
THE SHIP INN Built in 1570 by John Rashleigh, a celebrated merchant, it is named after his famous ship 'Frances of Fowey'. Although greatly altered over the centuries, one room remains much as it was originally with its ornamental ceiling, fine oak panelled walls and, carved over the fireplace, the names of 'John and Ales (Alice) Rashleigh' and the date 1570. At one time a room extended over Lostwithiel Street to the Gate House opposite to form the Toll Gate to the town. The dining room has a fine stained glass window depicting Elizabethan Fowey.

ST. CATHERINE'S POINT Here the Chapel of St Catherine, built about 1390, stood on a cliff at the harbour entrance where, in medieval times a light was burning as a primitive lighthouse. The fort below was built in the reign of King Henry VIII.

ST. FIMBARRUS CHURCH Dedicated to St Finbar who passed through Fowey early in the VIth century on his way from Ireland to Rome. His church was replaced by a Norman one, of which only the fine front remains. Rebuilt in 1336, partially destroyed in 1457 in an attack by the French when the town was burnt, it was again rebuilt in 1460 by the Earl of Warwick.

TRISTAN'S STONE On the left-hand side of the approach road into Fowey, is a very old inscribed monolith, the burial stone of Tristan, son of King Mark of Cornwall and famed in the legend of Tristan and Iseult. The stone was once near King Mark's citadel at Castle Dore, a fortified village dating back as far as the 2nd century BC. It was also at Castle Dore that, in 1644, a great battle was fought when the Royalists, under King Charles I, defeated the Parliamentarians commanded by the Earl of Essex.

THE LONG HISTORY OF FOWEY Fowey has indeed had a long and eventful history, but space in this guide does not allow us to do it full justice. For those more concerned with the history of the area there are a variety of books available locally which, will not only hold your interest, but make your stay in Fowey more enjoyable. Other books of historical interest are by authors Sarah Foot, Daphne du Maurier, John Keast, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Leo Walmsey.



Cross the harbour by the passenger ferry to the picturesque village of Polruan, and you enter a different world. Here you will wonder how the little cottages manage to cling to the steep hillside, interlaced with winding steps, alleys and passage-ways. Though there are many holiday homes in Polruan, often to let through one of the local agencies, the Polruan village community has great vitality at all times of the year. For here, as over centuries past, boats of many shapes and sizes are built and

quayside house

The Quay, Polruan PL23 1PA

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info@quaysidepolruan.co.uk



repaired, and here live many of those involved in running Fowey Harbour - pilots, tug-boat men, dockers, and ferry-men. The quay, where the ferry lands, is the hub of Polruan life. Here, the work-boats of the Harbour Commission and the fishermen's trawlers jostle with the yachts, dinghies and motor-cruisers of holiday-makers. Here at low tide, parents watch their children sand-castling and crabbing on the beach below. There are marvellous views of Fowey and the estuary from almost everywhere in Polruan, and a superb marine panorama from the top of the hill. Walk along West Street and look at the 15th century blockhouse, which with its twin in Fowey guarded the narrow harbour entrance, a great chain being slung between the two. Then climb Battery Lane to the grassy slope of St Saviour's Point. From here the vast seascape extends nearly 50 miles from Prawle Point in the east, past the Eddystone Lighthouse off Plymouth to Black Head and The Manacles, near The Lizard, to the west. Above, on the brow of St Saviour's Hill stands a gaunt buttress, last vestige of the ruined chapel of St Saviour, built in the Middle Ages, which also served as a landmark for homecoming sailors before the Trinity House beacon was erected on Gribben Head to the west.

For determined (and fit!) walkers, the Cornwall Coast Path goes up from Polruan Quay through the village to the junction of St Saviour's Hill with Furze Park and School Lane, and then runs seven miles eastward to Polperro through National Trust-protected coastal scenery of unmatched grandeur. Alternatively, and less energetically, you can return to Fowey following the famous Hall Walk all the way round the harbour. This starts by walking up East Street, and turning right at the steps signposted "To the Hills", then follow the pathway up and through the woods along the slope above Pont Pill (the shallow eastern arm of the harbour where heron, curlew and other wading birds are to be found). From the quaint bridge at the head of this creek the path strikes up through beautiful woods to the Quiller-Couch Memorial on Penleath Point - a wonderful belvedere commanding the whole harbour and St Austell Bay beyond - and from there along the Hall Walk (or King's Walk) proper, to Bodinnick. After refreshment, perhaps, at the Old Ferry Inn you can re-cross to Fowey by the car ferry. The total distance round the harbour is some 4 miles, and the walk is acknowledged to be one of the hundred best in the land.

Guided Walks by Cornish Riviera Guides

Fowey every Tuesday. 31 March until 27 October

10.30 until 12.30. Meet by British Legion, Town Quay.

Polruan every Thursday. 14 May until 24 September

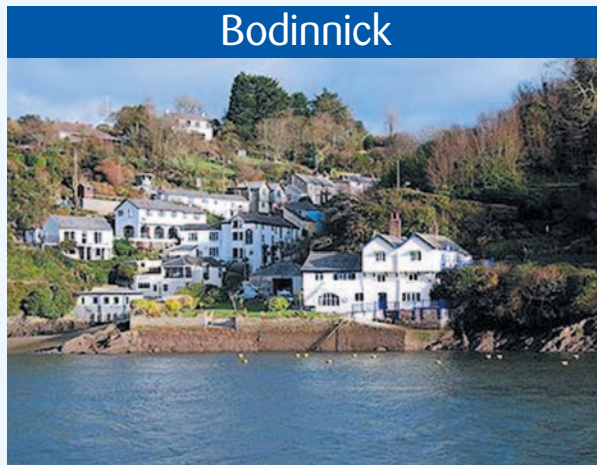
10.30 until 12.30. Meet on the Coal Wharf, Polruan.

Adults £7.50. Child £3.50



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Bodinnick



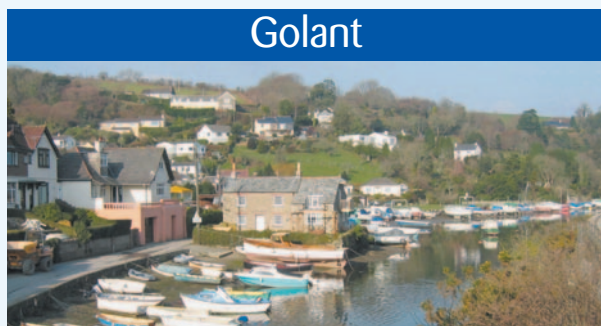
Bodinnick is more than just the place where the vehicle ferry from Fowey lands you on the east side of the river on your way to Polperro or Looe. It is a sturdily independent village community with its own church and pub, The Old Ferry Inn, which for centuries has provided rest and refreshment for travellers along the Queen's highway from Plymouth to points west of the river, and which still serves some of the best food in the area. However, for supplies (there being no village shop) residents of Bodinnick must cross over the river to Fowey.

Before the development of Cornwall's two big east-west spine roads, the A30 and A390, the road to Bodinnick from the east had a much greater significance than now, particularly for the prosperous farmers of Lanteglos and neighbouring parishes between Looe and the Fowey River, who used this road to take their produce to market in St Austell, using the Bodinnick Ferry. In those bygone days the horse traffic was all-important for the ferry, and the unwieldy ferry craft, heavily laden with horses and carts, were rowed across the river by tough men using outside oars known as 'sweeps'. That must have been hard work, especially when the tidal flow in or out of the estuary was strong - even today the ferrymen will tell you that it is an arduous and demanding business to manoeuvre the now much larger ferry across the small stretch of water in certain weather conditions. In the 1830s, such was the economic importance of the traffic between Plymouth and Cornwall that plans were seriously discussed for building a major south coast road between the Tamar crossing at Torpoint and St. Austell, with a spectacular high-level suspension bridge (like Brunel's at Clifton) over the River Fowey close to the Bodinnick ferry passage.

The prime mover in this project, which eventually collapsed through lack of financial backing, was Joseph Treffry of Place, Fowey. For a more detailed account of the multifarious enterprises of this extraordinary man, see John Keast's excellent book 'The King of Mid-Cornwall: the Life of Joseph Treffry (1782-1850)'.

In 1926 the actor Gerald du Maurier bought his family a holiday home (which they called 'Ferryside') alongside the landing slip at Bodinnick. It was here that Gerald's daughter Daphne wrote her first novel - 'The Loving Spirit', set in the fictional village of Plyn (Polruan, thinly disguised); and from here Daphne set out by boat for her wedding at Lanteglos Church, not far from the head of Pont Pill, a wonderful 14th-century shrine which you should on no account leave out of your itinerary. 'Ferryside' remains the private property of the du Maurier family. You pass the gates

to the house as you walk off the ferry slip and up the hill through the village. On your way up Bodinnick Hill you also pass St John's Church, one of three churches in Lanteglos parish, which was converted from a stable of The Old Ferry Inn in 1948.



Golant

Iron Age Man lived here. St Sampson built his monastic cell in the 6th century on the site of the present parish church and countless travellers between Cornwall, Brittany, Wales and Ireland passed by along the Saints' Way from Padstow to Fowey. The tramp of armed men and the jingle of harness and weapons was heard in 1644 when 6000 besieged Roundheads surrendered to King Charles at the nearby Iron Age fort of Castle Dore. Today it is the permanent home of 200 inhabitants and the summer base of several hundred boat owners.

The two-mile boat trip up-river from Fowey Town Quay, when the tide is high, should not be missed. The traveller passes the wharves where ships of all nationalities load china-clay, Cornwall's greatest export, sees fine yachts at their moorings at Wiseman's Point and sails between densely wooded banks on either side of the broad reach to Golant. Wildlife abounds and herons, swans, cormorants and the occasional leaping fish may be seen. Alternatively, a car journey of about 2 miles from Fowey towards Lostwithiel and approx 1 mile down a very narrow road will take you there. A third route, approx two miles for the walker, from Caffa Mill through Penventinue (Penventinny) and across Golant Downs, gives magnificent elevated views of the river.

The name Golant probably comes from Celtic words meaning a small valley and the visitor will find the meaning apt, for the village nestles, half-hidden, at the waterside, sheltered on all sides except the east. A cosmopolitan village, it is home to those whose families have lived here for generations as well as to those who have come in recent years. It is still a working community, with boat building and repair, chandlery and engine maintenance going hand in hand with leisure and retirement.

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The small and lovingly cared-for parish church was consecrated in 1509 and is dedicated to St Sampson, whose holy well stands by the porch. Windows depict various incidents in his life and commemorate his work as Archbishop of Dol in Brittany. What were formally carved bench ends now adorn the pulpit and organ. Tradition says that King Mark and Iseult made their devotions here and that Iseult gave her best dress as a gift. From the churchyard there are extensive views over the river. Car parking on the foreshore and quay is very limited, especially when the summer sailors arrive, and do beware of the incoming tide as it floods the road to a depth of 2 or 3 feet in front of the Fisherman's Arms at spring tides.

Fowey Events

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