

# Spectacular Sand Bay

Enjoy the rugged North Somerset coastline at Sand Bay during this invigorating walk. It was suggested by class 6Y from St Martin's Junior School in Worle, who spent an enjoyable afternoon hunting for fossils and spotting wildflowers.

With three car parks along Beach Road, the route can be varied depending on how much time you have. If starting at the most southerly car park, turn right onto a little wooden bridge to walk onto the grassy beach path.

Follow this path, which runs parallel to Beach Road, northwards until you reach Cygnet Hospital. Cross the road here and a little further on, turn right into Crookes Lane. A gravel path runs alongside the lane.

Follow this until the road bears to the right, near Ardnave Holiday Park. The public footpath is on the left, past the stream and cottage, running alongside the fence.



It is suitable for dogs but keep them on a lead and stay on the path through the meadow. Continue ahead, over a couple of little wooden bridges and stiles. Watch out for nettles and thorns.

Eventually the path leads out into the car park of Sand Bay Leisure Resort so head back onto Beach Road and take the steps up onto the grass verge. There are some benches here to sit and enjoy the view.

The sand dunes are man-made sea defences, installed in 1983/4 after a major storm in 1981. More than 600,000 tonnes of sand was dredged up from the Severn Estuary to raise the beach by about three metres at the base of the old sea wall. Paling fencing was also installed to help stabilise the dunes and encourage vegetation.

## Walk information

**Distance:** circular route from most southerly car park is about 5 miles, depending on how far you walk across Middle Hope

**Difficulty:** medium. Some kissing gates, steep steps and rugged paths

**Duration:** about 3hrs at a leisurely pace

**Map:** OS Explorer 153

**Public toilets:** Sand Road car park, off Beach Road, and National Trust car park at base of Sand Point



## How to get there

**Car** There are three free car parks along Beach Road in Kewstoke. The most southerly is opposite the Commodore Hotel.

**Bus** Services 1 to Kewstoke and Sand Bay from bus stop 'S' opposite Silica, Regent Street, Weston-super-Mare.

At the northern end of the beach, you will also see the remains of concrete forts, which were used as a line of defence during the Second World War by local troops and the Home Guard.



At the end of the beach, step over the small stone wall into the National Trust car park. From here, there are a number of paths up to the headland. If you follow the track, you will see a sign pointing towards the headland, with fairly steep steps up heading to Middle Hope. The grassy expanse has been grazed by local farmers since the Middle Ages and stock grazing still takes place so keep dogs under effective control.

If you veer to the right you will see magnificent views across the bay and the Severn Estuary, so take time to explore. To the left is a dry stone wall with a wooden gate. Go through here to follow the National Trust path. This leads towards Sand Point and there are a number of routes you can take towards the end of the rugged headland. Take care along narrow, steep paths.

Many birds can be spotted from Sand Point so keep your eyes peeled for Shelducks, Curlew, Oystercatcher, Little Egret, Short-eared Owl or a Skylark. You will also have far-reaching views over the mudflats, sand banks, rocky platforms and saltmarsh, which form the Site of Special Scientific Interest.

On the return leg, follow the lower path on your left and this will lead you to a small pebble beach. You will then need to climb back across the peninsular to the other side to make your way back down the steps to the car park. From here, you can walk back along the beach towards your car.



### Class 6Y, of St Martin's Junior School, explore the area:

There are fantastic facilities such as ice-cream vans, rock pooling, fossil hunting and flower hunting. All this in just one day – it's brilliant.

**Olivia Love and William James**

As you walk up the steps you see the wonderful surroundings, the birds are singing and there are lovely coloured flowers.

**Harry Dobson and Whitney Hall**

Based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (North Somerset Council, 100023397, 2010)