

MAWGAN PORTH

A wide sandy inlet where the Vale of Lanherne meets the sea and with imposing cliffs on either side. Facing west, Mawgan Porth is a popular beach with all the facilities right next to the beach and with many caravan and camping sites and holiday complexes in the locality. Mawgan Porth evolved in the early part of the 20th century with the development of tourism and there is a fair amount of mediocre modern development which provides the backdrop to the beach. However, the beach itself which is backed by a



Looking towards Trenance Point at low water

relatively small sand dune system, (which is looking more healthier nowadays than in the past), is quite magnificent, especially at low water when a large expanse of flat golden sand covers the whole of the inlet. It is very exposed to the Atlantic swell and surf, and with winds from all directions. It is close to [Bedruthan Steps](#) which is 2kms to the north and [Watergate Bay](#) which is 2kms to the south. The River Menalhyl crosses the beach on its southerly side and even in drier conditions significant amounts of water cross the beach (to the delight of children). Trenance



The River Menalhyl and the sand dunes at the back of the beach



The beach in winter



Access point across the dunes

Point is to the north of the beach and Grange Point to the south.



TR8 4BA - It is an easy beach to find being right next to the B3276 coast road from Newquay to Padstow. The centre of [Newquay](#) is 6.3kms to the south. There are two car parks on the opposite side of the road to the beach; one is on the southerly side of the river next to the pub (capacity 140 cars) and the other close by, behind the shops (capacity 190+ cars).



There are two access points on to the beach. The easiest is by the river but there is a path through the dunes which is opposite the road junction and more convenient for those using the main car park and want to use the more popular northern side of the beach. There is also a path down to the beach from Trenance from the top of Tredragon Road.



The expanse of sand



The sand dunes



The fine golden sand found at Mawgan Porth is very much the trademark of the north coast of Cornwall. In summer the beach above high water can be fairly large; about 600m long and over 150m deep on an average tide, which is why the beach is so popular because it is able to accommodate a large number of people without feeling overcrowded. After winter storms the level of sand can be reduced and the tide can often come right up to the sand dunes. As the tide goes out a wonderful flat beach is uncovered



The Beach and Grange Point

which can be over 500m from the high water mark and some 700m wide. The beach at low water goes around Grange Point with a part of the beach continuing to Beryl's Point which cannot be seen from the main beach and can feel wild and remote. There are a number of caves to explore. A few cliff falls in recent years make this a hazard.



There are safety equipment points above the Beach. The RNLI Lifeguard Service operates from a lookout on the edge of the dunes at the centre of the beach from the end of May until the end of September.



Swimming should only be undertaken in the Lifeguard designated area because there are powerful rip currents at low water coupled with the effect of the river. The normal swell and surf are not ideal for swimming but in calm conditions in summer, swimming can sometimes be relatively safe on a rising high tide as long as it is well away from the river area, which even when the sea looks settled and calm can be dangerous, so extreme care needs to be taken. On the signs to the beach it mentions a seasonal buoy-line delineating the dangers of the river but this is no longer in operation.



Low water in Spring



Despite some really good surf the beach is not as popular as some of its neighbours although it can get fairly crowded at weekends – the reason for this unexplainable as it is a good beach break with right handers in the middle of the beach and left handers on the southerly side. The surf can be far more powerful than it would appear from a distance. There is a surf school that operates from the beach with signs to enable contact for details.



It is not a snorkelling beach at all.



There are rock pools below the cliffs in the rocky outcrops but they are not a feature of the beach



Views of the beach



Dogs are permitted all year. Toilets are located behind the shops and cafes on the opposite side of the road to the beach. There are a variety of convenient cafes, restaurants, shops and a pub.



Location – Part of OS Explorer Map 106



Sea water quality is good but the river can be very variable especially after heavy rainfall. The beach is owned by Cornwall Council. When the tide is out it is a fine family beach with much to offer. There is a pitch-and-put and tennis courts and wonderful cliff walks along the Coast Path. A Saxon settlement was unearthed years ago behind the pitch-and put.