

The ancient city of Langarrow or Langona was thought to have been buried over 900 years ago by the sand dunes which now lie to the south of the River Gannel. In its prime it was the largest city in England. It had no fewer than seven magnificent churches, and seven churchyards. Its inhabitants were enormously wealthy as a result of owning large tracts of richly productive land which, though thickly wooded in parts, was highly cultivated elsewhere. According to the legend, the sea was overflowing with fish of all kinds, while the mines yielded an abundance of tin and lead.

Criminals were transported here from all over England to work in the fields and mines, to dredge the sand from the River Gannel and to build the harbour at its mouth.

These labourers were banished to the fringes of the city, living in rough huts and caves out on the moors beyond its walls. Traces of their dwellings are said to have been found in the heaps of wood ash buried beneath the sand, along with piles of cockle and mussel shells, (this was assumed to be their principal food) and the bleached bones of those unfortunate souls who perished here.

As was so often the case, the luxurious living - combined with a gradual lapse of the strict segregation between citizens and criminals - led to a riotous lifestyle. This turned to sin and sacrilege, finally provoking divine retribution. A savage storm blew up, lasting for three days and three nights. The sand dunes from Crantock to Perran were formed to wipe the city of sin from the face of the earth.

**8. Take the footpath to the left before you reach the beach, and follow it round the coast to join the South West Coast Path. This leads back to the Bowgie Inn.**

On the far side of Crantock beach is the River Gannel, the tidal outlet for a river rising on high ground near the A30 at West Mitchell. It flows past the National Trust house of Trerice, which was named after it (from the Cornish 'tre res', meaning 'the farm by the ford').

In the fifteenth century the mouth of the River Gannel was a thriving port, and until as late as the end of the nineteenth century it was used extensively by shipping. Vessels brought their cargoes of coal, fertiliser, limestone and earthenware into Fern Pit, on the Newquay bank of the river. This was then transferred to shallow-draught barges to be carried on the flood tide up to Treemper, an important commercial centre three miles upstream.

The deep cleft of Piper's Hole, in the rocks to your right as you walk above Crantock Beach, is a haven for birds such as fulmars, jackdaws and pigeons. At low tide it is

possible to enter one of the caves in the gully, where a flat stone slab can be seen, bearing a carving of a female figure, as well as a small horse and a few lines of verse. These were carved by a local man, Joseph Prater, early in the twentieth century.

A short distance beyond Piper's Hole, Pusey's Steps lead down to the beach. These were named after an Oxford academic, Dr Edward Pusey, who spent a lot of time on the North Cornish coast in the mid-eighteenth century.

*Text and photo of Crantock Beach by Ruth Luckhurst and the SWCP team.*

The Bowgie Inn, a Freehouse Restaurant, with a large car park, is a popular place to eat throughout the year, open daily from 11.00am!!

Bowgie is a Cornish word meaning "Cow Shed". The Bowgie was a farm building up until the 1950's. Hence the name of the main bar being The Pig Sty, and the Locals bar being called the Stable Bar!! The current landlord, has owned the pub for over 40 years. Back in the 1970's, he used to grow potatoes in the field on the cliff edge to make the pub chips.

#### Other useful information


<b>Refreshments -</b>	The Bowgie Inn
<b>Toilets -</b>	The Bowgie Inn
<b>Further information -</b>	Newquay Tourist Information Centre 01637 854020

**The South West Coast Path Association**  
([www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk](http://www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk))  
exists to help everyone enjoy the coast path.

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*Walks on and around the*  
**South West Coast Path** NATIONAL TRAIL   
*from the Bowgie Inn*

## Pentire Point West

A short walk visiting two beaches and the village of Crantock, a place of saints and sinners, with two holy wells. It is believed that the ancient city of Langarrow was buried in sand on account of its citizens' sinfulness.



<b>Distance:</b>	3¼ miles ( 5¼ km)
<b>Estimated time:</b>	2 hours
<b>Difficulty:</b>	Moderate
<b>Starting point:</b>	The Bowgie Inn
<b>OS Explorer map</b>	104 Redruth & St Agnes

*the*  
**BOWgie inn**  
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This is one of the many walks that can be found at  
[www.southwestcoastpath.com](http://www.southwestcoastpath.com)

## Directions

1. *From the Bowgie Inn walk down through the car park and join the South West Coast Path turning left.*

Listen out for the Gannel Crane, a mythical bird whose desolate howl has been heard all around Crantock Beach. The name is attributed to two brothers who were once working beneath West Pentire, gathering seaweed to use as fertiliser. One of the brothers described the sound, which frightened their horses into galloping away, as 'like a thousand voices in pent-up misery with one long-drawn wail dying away into the distance.'

*Ignore the paths to left and right along the way as the South West Coast Path travels around Pentire Point West.*

At Vugga Cove, en route to the headland, there are a few rusty mooring pins and rings leaded into the rocks, evidence that the cove was once used by boats, and there are also twin grooves where massive timbers once lay across the narrow channel, possibly to enable local boatbuilders to scrape the bottom of a boat.

The lower path on Pentire Point West leads to a collapsed sea cave, a common feature on the North Cornish coastline. The cave was carved into the rock by the erosive action of the waves, which then washed around inside it, causing such a build-up of air pressure that the roof fell in.

2. *Beyond the headland descend to the beach at Porth Joke. At the head of the beach leave the Coast Path, turning left onto the bridleway which heads back up the valley towards Treago.*

The beach at Porth Joke, also known by locals as 'Polly Joke', is named from the Cornish 'Porth Lojowek', meaning 'cove rich in plants'. The National Trust manages the fields around Pentire Point West as a nature reserve, and traditional conservation techniques have encouraged an astonishing 154 species of wildflower to flourish. In summer the headland is ablaze with the vivid heads of poppies and corn marigolds, also providing seeds for birds like buntings, partridge and finches.

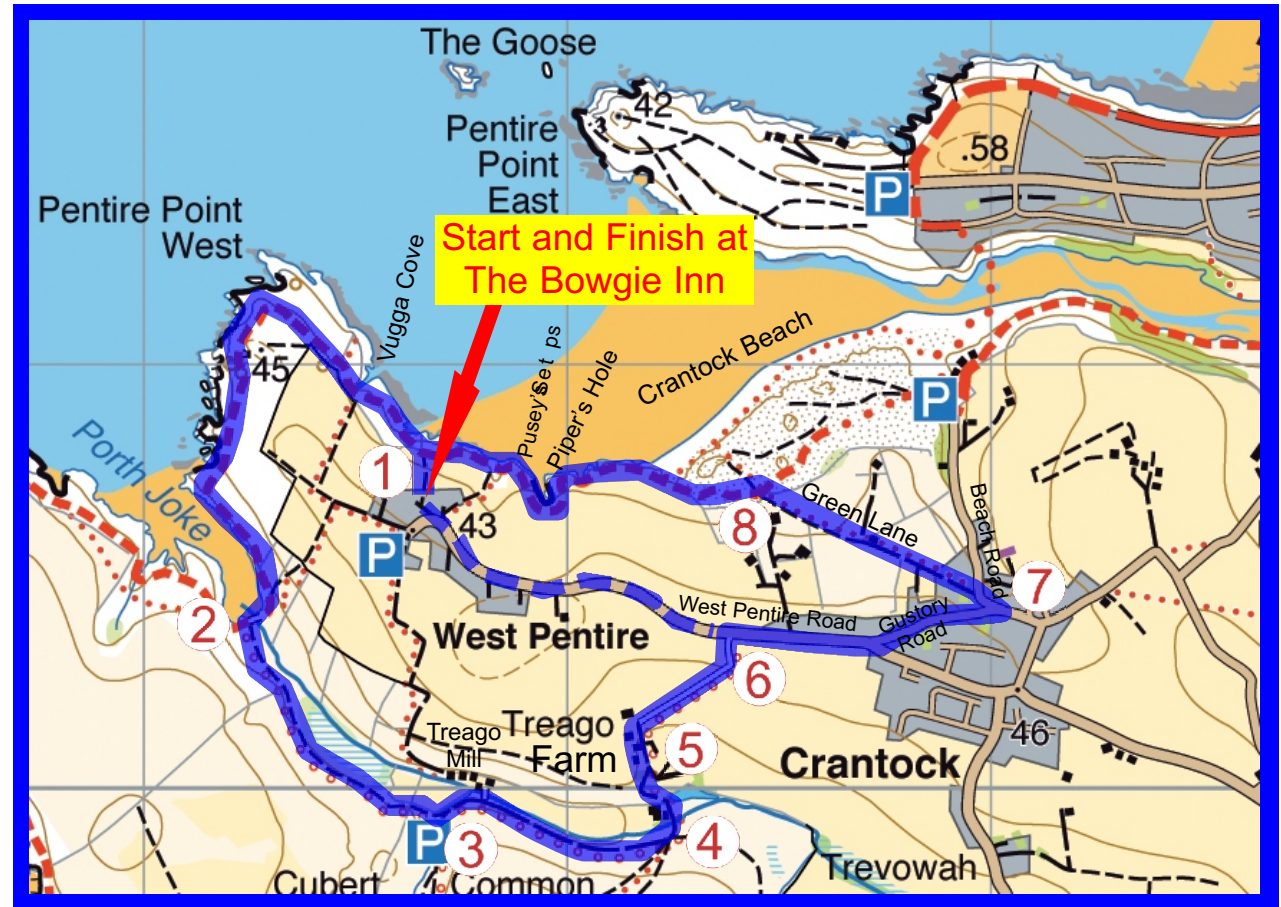
3. *At the T-junction fork left onto the track, carrying on ahead past the car park and then Treago Mill.*

4. *Stay on the track as a path joins from the right, descending from Cubert Common, and follow it to Treago Farm.*

5. *From Treago Farm take the path to the left through the campsite, walking uphill through the top field on the path heading north east towards the West Pentire to Crantock road.*

6. *Reaching the road, turn right. (For a short cut back to the Bowgie Inn avoiding Crantock turn left instead of right and walk along the West Pentire Road back to the Bowgie Inn) Heading towards Crantock, fork left at the junction onto Gustory Road, dropping gently downhill to Beach Road.*

The village is named after the sixth century Celtic saint, Carantoc, who supposedly arrived by sea on an altar and built an oratory here. This blossomed into a College of Priests, a major religious centre until it was



dismantled under Henry VIII's Dissolution of Monasteries in the sixteenth century. The 'Round Orchard' in the centre of the village is thought to be the site of the sixth century chapel.

There are two holy wells in Crantock. The seventeenth-century St Carantoc's Well is on the corner of Beach Road, in the village centre, and has a conical stone roof. The other is dedicated to St Ambrusca, with a modern door depicting this second Celtic saint in the style of the bohemian artist Modigliani, and can be seen halfway down Beach Road, on the right.

The Norman church of St Carantoc, now the parish church, was restored at the start of the twentieth century and is well-known for its woodcarving, as well as the stained glass windows which portray the story of St Carantoc's life.

7. *At the T-junction turn left on Beach Road and then take the footpath to the left along Green Lane and follow it towards the dunes.*

Crantock is said to be the site of the Lost City of Langarrow, buried by a sandstorm after the hedonistic lifestyle of its inhabitants brought the wrath of God upon their heads.