

# **WALKING IN THE ISLES OF SCILLY**

**11 WALKS AND 4 BOAT TRIPS  
EXPLORING THE BEST OF THE ISLANDS**

**by Paddy Dillon**

**CICERONE**

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The map on page 83 is used with permission of the Abbey Garden.

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*Front cover:* A sandy path leads around Little Bay and Great Bay on the island of St Martin's (Walk 11)

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A receding tide exposes an ancient wall, possibly  
Bronze Age, between the islands of Tresco and Samson

## INTRODUCTION

'Somewhere among the note-books of Gideon I once found a list of diseases as yet unclassified by medical science, and among these there occurred the word Islomania, which was described as a rare but by no means unknown affliction of spirit. There are people, Gideon used to say, by way of explanation, who find islands somehow irresistible. The mere knowledge that they are on an island, a little world surrounded by the sea, fills them with an indescribable intoxication.'

Lawrence Durrell, *Reflections on a Marine Venus*

Of all the British Isles, the Isles of Scilly are the most blessed. Basking in sunshine, rising green and pleasant from the blue Atlantic Ocean, fringed by rugged cliffs and sandy beaches, these self-contained little worlds are a joy to explore. They are as close to a tropical paradise as it is possible to be in the British Isles, with more sunshine hours than anyone else enjoys. There are no tall mountains, but the rocks around the coast are as dramatic as you'll find anywhere. There are no extensive moorlands, but you'll forget that as you walk round the open heathery headlands. The islands may be small in extent, but the eye is deceived and readily imagines vast panoramas and awesome seascapes. Views to the sea take in jagged rocks that have ripped many a keel and wrecked many a ship. The islands are clothed in colourful flowers, both cultivated

and wild, and attract a rich bird life, including native breeding species and seasonal migrants. And always, there is the sea.

The Isles of Scilly form the smallest of Britain's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and their historic shores have been designated as Heritage Coast. The surrounding sea is protected as a Marine Park of great biodiversity. Archaeological remains abound, not only on the islands, but also submerged beneath the sea. The Isles of Scilly are special, revealing their secrets and charms to those who walk the headlands, sail from island to island, and take the time to observe the sights, sounds and scents of the landscape. While the walks in this guidebook could be completed in as little as a week, a fortnight would allow a much more leisurely appreciation of the islands, and leave memories that will last for a lifetime.



## LOCATION

The Isles of Scilly lie 45km (28 miles) west of Land's End: a position that ensures they are omitted from most maps of Britain, or shown only as an inset. There are five inhabited islands and about fifty other areas that local people would call islands, as well as a hundred more rocks, and more again at low water. The islands are not part of Cornwall, perish the thought, but a self-administering unit; you could think of this as the smallest county in Britain (see [www.scilly.gov.uk](http://www.scilly.gov.uk)). The total landmass is a mere 16km<sup>2</sup> (6¼ square miles). The waters around the Isles of Scilly, extending as far as the 50m (165ft) submarine contour, form a Marine Park of around 125km<sup>2</sup> (50 square miles). Despite the small area of the islands, walkers can enjoy up to about 80km (50 miles) of truly

remarkable routes around one of Britain's most charming and intensely interesting landscapes.

## GEOLOGY

The geology of the Isles of Scilly can be summed up in one word – granite. The islands are the south-western extremity of a deep-seated granite mass, or batholith, that reaches the surface of the earth around Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor and Land's End. Granite is the bedrock of the Isles of Scilly, and it breaks down to form a stony, sandy or gritty soil, as well as bright white sandy beaches. In some places around the coast and occasionally inland, the granite forms blocky cliffs and tors, rounded boulders or tilted slabs that have such a rough texture that they provide excellent grip for walkers. In

other places chemical weathering of less stable minerals within the granite causes the rock to crumble, or peel away in layers. As a building material, granite has been used for centuries, but only in relatively recent times has it been possible to split the rock into squared blocks more suitable for substantial buildings.

While the Isles of Scilly escaped the Ice Age that affected much of Britain, it didn't escape the permafrost conditions that pertained south of the ice sheets, breaking up the granite tors and forming a stony, sandy soil. Nor did the islands fare too well as the ice began to melt and sea levels began to rise. It is thought that Scilly became separated from the rest of Britain around 10,000 years ago. It may well have been a single landmass for a while, but a combination of rising sea levels and coastal erosion produced the current pattern of five islands and a bewildering number of rocks and reefs. Before the arrival of the first settlers, it was no doubt a wild and wooded place.

## ANCIENT HISTORY

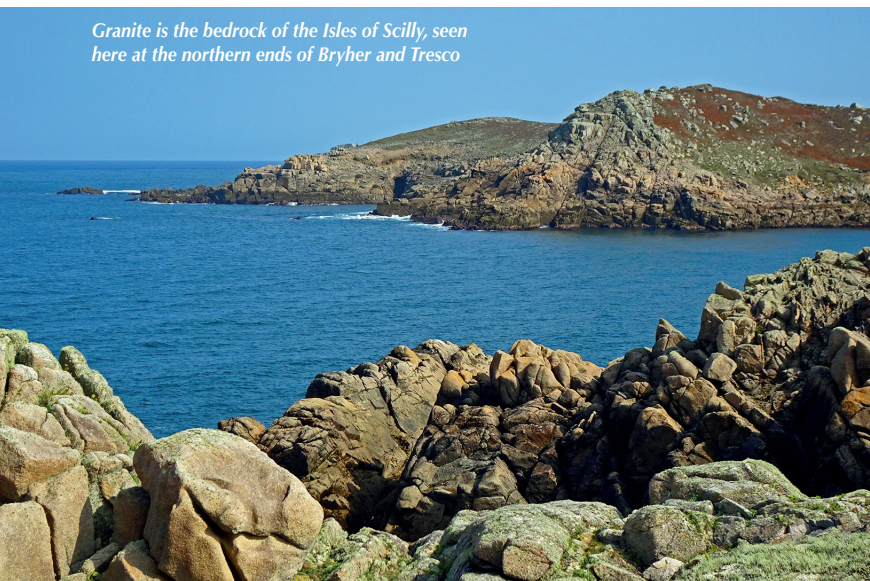
Arthurian legend points to the Isles of Scilly as the last remnants of the lost land of Lyonesse, but while a submerged landscape does exist around the islands, it was never Lyonesse. In 1752 the Cornish antiquarian William Borlase discovered and recorded submerged field systems on the tidal flats near Samson. It seems that the first settlers were Neolithic, but a more



*The Old Man of Gugh is a Bronze Age monument with a distinct lean to one side*

comprehensive settlement of the islands came in the Bronze Age, up to 4000 years ago. Some splendid ritual standing stones and stoutly constructed burial chambers remain from this time, and excavations have revealed skeletons, cremated remains and a host of artefacts. When the Romans began their occupation of Britain 2000 years ago, criss-crossing the land with straight roads, settlement patterns on the Isles of Scilly were in huddled formations, as witnessed today on Halangy Down and Nornour. No doubt the Romans traded with the islands, as coins have been discovered, as well as a votive shrine, but it seems they established no lasting presence. In later centuries the Isles of Scilly attracted Christian

*Granite is the bedrock of the Isles of Scilly, seen here at the northern ends of Bryher and Tresco*





*The remains of a 12th-century Benedictine priory at the Abbey Garden on Tresco (Walk 10)*



#### LATER HISTORY

A Benedictine priory was founded on Tresco in the 12th century, and Henry I granted the island to Tavistock Abbey. By the 14th century the islands became part of the Duchy of Cornwall and Edward III gave them to the Black Prince, who was made the Duke of Cornwall. In the 16th century Governor Francis Godolphin

hermits, leaving some of the islands blessed with the names of saints. That great seafaring race, the Vikings, also visited the islands. From time to time the Isles of Scilly have been a haven for pirates, their retreat every now and then smashed by the authorities of the day. In the 11th century over one hundred pirates were beheaded in a single day on Tresco!

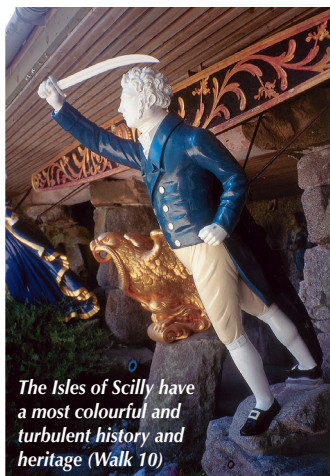
was granted the lease of the islands by Elizabeth I. Godolphin built the eight-pointed Star Castle above the harbour on St Mary's. During the Civil War, in the middle of the 17th century, Prince Charles (later King Charles II) stayed briefly at the Star Castle. Towards the end of the Civil War the islands were occupied by disgruntled Royalists who launched pirate raids on passing ships, causing the Dutch to send a fleet of ships to deal with the problem. An English fleet intercepted the Dutch, preventing wholesale destruction on the islands, and thereby gaining the final surrender of the Royalist force.

However, Admiral Maarten Tromp had declared war on the islands, and this situation wasn't officially concluded until a peace treaty was signed, 335 years later, in 1986!



*The Star Castle was built in 1593 and is one of several fortifications on The Garrison on St Mary's*





The 18th century was a time of great poverty on the islands, but despite their remoteness John Wesley visited them in the course of his preaching around the British Isles. Shipbuilding became an important occupation late in the 18th century and continued well into the 19th century. In the early 19th century the Godolphin family allowed their lease on the Isles of Scilly to lapse, so that they reverted to the Duchy of Cornwall. In 1834 Augustus Smith from Hertfordshire took over the lease of the islands as Lord Proprietor, and developed Tresco in particular, building the Abbey House as his residence and establishing the Abbey Garden.

The successful export of flowers from the islands dates from the middle of the 19th century and has enjoyed mixed fortunes. During 1918

the Dorrien-Smith family gave up the lease on all the islands except Tresco. While fortifications on St Mary's were strengthened in the First World War, the islands escaped lightly. During the Second World War, however, there was a lot more activity around the islands, as submarines and warships played deadly hide and seek in the waters, and several warplanes were stationed there.

It is said that the Isles of Scilly were spared strife during both World Wars, in recognition of the assistance the inhabitants gave to the survivors of the German trans-Atlantic liner, *SS Schiller*, which was wrecked near the Bishop Rock in 1875.

### RECENT HISTORY

In a sudden magnanimous gesture in 1949, the Duchy of Cornwall offered the sale of the freehold on most properties occupied by sitting tenants in Hugh Town. The Isles of Scilly were designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1975, [www.ios-aonb.info](http://www.ios-aonb.info). The Duchy leases all its uninhabited islands and unfarmed wilderness land to the Isles of Scilly Wildlife trust, [www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk). The annual rent is one daffodil! The Trust manages this land for conservation and recreation, safeguarding habitats for plants and animals, while maintaining the network of footpaths over the land. The designation of a Marine Park to conserve the surrounding sea bed and marine life was

another important development. The infrastructure of the islands continues to develop and tourism is an increasingly important industry, but always with due regard to the environment and the conservation of nature.

These brief notes can only give the barest outline of the islands' history, which has been turbulent and colourful and makes an interesting and absorbing study. Sadly, the Isles of Scilly Museum, [www.iosmuseum.org](http://www.iosmuseum.org), has closed, but some of its exhibits may feature at temporary locations around the islands until such time as new premises are acquired.

### GETTING TO THE ISLES OF SCILLY

**By Road:** The A30 road is the main transport artery through the southwest, pushing through Devon and Cornwall, around Dartmoor and over Bodmin Moor, to terminate abruptly at Land's End. Motorists will have to abandon their vehicles at airports such as Exeter, Newquay or Land's End for short flights to Scilly, or at Penzance for the ferry. Cars cannot be taken to the islands, nor are they necessary, so enquire about secure long-term car parking, either in Penzance or at the airports. National Express ([www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)) buses serve Penzance from London.

**By Rail:** The rail network terminates at Penzance, served by daily CrossCountry trains, [www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk](http://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk), direct from

Manchester and Birmingham, or, with a simple change at Birmingham, services operate from as far away as Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. First Great Western trains run to Penzance daily from London Paddington, [www.gwr.com](http://www.gwr.com).

Combined rail/sail deals are available through the Isles of Scilly Travel Centre. Transfers can be arranged between Penzance railway station and Land's End airport, if you chose to fly and enquire while booking your flight. A short walk around the harbour from the railway station leads to the far quay where the *Scillonian III* sails for the Isles of Scilly.

**By Ship:** The *Scillonian III* is a fine little ship of 1250 tonnes, sailing once each way between Penzance and St Mary's from Monday to Saturday from March to November. There are two sailings on Saturdays either side of Whit week and for the World Pilot Gig Championships, as well as Sunday sailings in July and August. Observe the regulations for carrying luggage, which should always be labelled with your destination, and clearly labelled with the name of the particular island you are visiting. Luggage can be conveyed to your accommodation on St Mary's by Richard Hand, but be sure to follow instructions to avail of this service. The journey usually takes 2¾ hours. Bad weather can cause the schedule to be altered. It is likely that the *Scillonian III* will be replaced

The purpose-built RMV Scillonian III has been sailing from Penzance to St Mary's since 1977



After a long absence, helicopters again fly from Penzance to St Mary's and Treco

by a new vessel in the near future. For details contact the Isles of Scilly Travel Centre, tel 01736 334220, [www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk](http://www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk).

**By Aeroplane:** All flights to St Mary's are operated by Skybus using Twin Otter or Islander aircraft. Flights are available from Exeter, Newquay and Land's End. Frequency is generally higher on the shorter flights, with those from Land's End taking only 15 minutes each way. There are no flights on Sundays. Schedules and prices can be checked with the Isles of Scilly Travel Centre, tel 01736 334220, [www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk](http://www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk). Paulgers Passenger Transport meets incoming flights and will take passengers directly to their accommodation on St Mary's.

**By Helicopter:** After an absence of many years, helicopter flights are again available to the Isles of Scilly. The helicopters are twin-engine AW139s, regularly used for offshore work around Britain. Flights from Penzance to St Mary's and Treco take as little as 15 minutes and are operated by Penzance Helicopters, part of the Sloane Helicopters company, tel 01736 780828, [www.penzancehelicopters.co.uk](http://www.penzancehelicopters.co.uk).

Bear in mind, if travelling at the weekend, that Skybus doesn't operate flights on a Sunday. *Scillonian III* sails Monday to Saturday from March to November and also sails on a Sunday in the peak months between July and September.

## GETTING AROUND THE ISLES OF SCILLY

**Buses and Taxis:** A regular Community Bus service operates in a circuit around St Mary's, as well as minibuses and vintage bus tours around the island. There are also a handful of taxis, should you need to get to any place in a hurry. Most of the buses start from beside a little park near the Town Hall in the middle of Hugh Town, although services can also be checked at the Tourist Information Centre. The off-islands are small enough to walk around on foot and walkers don't really need any other form of transport, but there are electric minibuses on Treco. If choosing an accommodation base on one of the off-islands, the proprietor may be able to meet you at the quayside with a vehicle and assist with transferring luggage, but ask if this is possible when booking.

**St Mary's Boatmen's Association:** Run on a co-operative basis, the Association runs up to 10 launches from Hugh Town on St Mary's to the off-islands of St Agnes, Bryher, Treco and St Martin's. Launches to Bryher may also drop passengers at the uninhabited island of Samson on request. Details of services run by the Association, plus a wealth of cruises, are advertised on notice boards on The Quay at Hugh Town, as well as at the quaysides on the off-islands. Details can also be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre. The Association operates a small ticket



*Small ferries link all the inhabited islands, some uninhabited ones, and offer wildlife trips and tours*



## TOURIST INFORMATION AND ACCOMMODATION

kiosk on the Old Quay at Hugh Town. If you buy 10 return tickets then the price is discounted. There are more ferries and cruises to more places in the high season than in the winter months. Bear in mind that the onset of stormy weather can lead to the sudden cancellation of all boat services around the islands. St Mary's Boatmen's Association can be contacted at The Elms, Church Road, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly TR21 0NA, tel 01720 423999, [www.scillyboating.co.uk](http://www.scillyboating.co.uk). Other services to and from the off-islands are operated by St Agnes Boating, tel 01720 422704, [www.stagnesboating.co.uk](http://www.stagnesboating.co.uk); Tresco Boat Services offer services to and from the islands of Tresco and Bryher, tel 01720 423373, [www.tresco.co.uk/arriving/tresco-boats](http://www.tresco.co.uk/arriving/tresco-boats); St Martin's Boating offer services to and from St Martin's, tel 01720 423999, [www.stmartinsscilly.co.uk/boat-times](http://www.stmartinsscilly.co.uk/boat-times).

### BOAT TRIPS

Quite apart from using boats as a means of access to islands and walks, why not enjoy a series of boat trips? Some trips are operated by the St Mary's Boatmen's Association, on their large launches, while others are run using smaller boats, which usually limit their passenger numbers to twelve. Classic trips run by the St Mary's Boatmen's Association include tours around the Western Rocks, Norrard Rocks, St Helen's and Teân, the Eastern Isles, and a

complete circuit around St Mary's. There are Seabird Specials for bird-watchers, historical tours, evening visits to St Agnes and St Martin's for supper, and the chance to follow the popular Gig Races in the high season.

At some point during your visit to the Isles of Scilly, be sure to witness the evening Gig Races. This is the main spectator sport on the islands, when teams row furiously along a measured 2km (1¼ mile) course from Nut Rock, across the stretch of sea known as 'The Road', to The Quay at Hugh Town. Women's teams compete on Wednesday evenings, while men's teams compete on Friday evenings. Boats generally leave The Quay at 1930 on those evenings. The World Pilot Gig Championships ([www.worldgigs.co.uk](http://www.worldgigs.co.uk)) take place over the May Bank Holiday.

Do sample some of these boat trips to broaden your experience and enjoyment of the islands, and you should make every effort to include as many of the remote islands and rock groups as possible.

### TOURIST INFORMATION AND ACCOMMODATION

The Tourist Information Centre in Hugh Town on St Mary's can provide plenty of information about accommodation, pubs, restaurants, transport and attractions throughout the Isles of Scilly. Annually, around 200,000 people visit the Isles of Scilly, including those on day trips,



*The Western Rocks are exposed to the weather and are often overwhelmed by big waves (Boat Trip 1)*

the Norrard Rocks. Tresco and the little islands of St Helen's and Teän give way to St Martin's and the Eastern Isles, bringing this delightful tour around the Isles of Scilly full circle. Although of limited extent, it takes a lot of time to explore.

#### SAFETY MATTERS

It is highly unlikely that anyone could get lost in the Isles of Scilly, although it might be possible to get on the wrong ferry and land on the wrong island, or become marooned on an uninhabited island! Apart from that, while walkers may occasionally be unsure exactly which headland or bay they have reached, they cannot be much more than an hour's walk from wherever they started.

Apart from minor cuts and grazes, accidents are unlikely, although care needs to be taken around cliff coasts, and special care needs to be taken in any case while walking beside the sea. If tempted to walk along beaches, or visit rocks and islets at low tide,

always ensure that there is an easy escape route before the tide flows in again. Tide times can be checked locally, or at [www.tidetimes.org.uk/st-marys-tide-times](http://www.tidetimes.org.uk/st-marys-tide-times).

In the event of accident, the police, fire service, ambulance or coastguard can be summoned by dialling 999 (or the European 112). Be sure to give a full account of the nature of the accident, as well as your own contact details, so that the emergency services can stay in touch with you. A little forethought will ensure an accident-free trip.

#### GPX TRACKS

GPX tracks for the routes in this guidebook are available to download free at [www.cicerone.co.uk/1104/GPX](http://www.cicerone.co.uk/1104/GPX). A GPS device is an excellent aid to navigation, but you should also carry a map and compass and know how to use them. GPX files are provided in good faith, but neither the author nor the publisher accept responsibility for their accuracy.

## WALK 1

### *Hugh Town Trail*

**Start  
Distance**

Rat Island on The Quay, SV 902 109  
2.5km (1½ miles)

The main settlement on St Mary's used to be Old Town, but during the construction of the defences around the Garrison, people drifted onto the narrow neck of land between the harbour and Porth Cressa, and Hugh Town grew throughout the 17th century. Hugh Town is by far the largest settlement on the Isles of Scilly. In a sense it is the islands' capital, even though it only has the appearance of a small town or large village.

A stroll around Hugh Town is something you should complete at the start of any exploration of the Isles of Scilly, so that you become aware of the islands' greatest range of services, and know where to find things and how the place operates. Hugh Town, for all its small size, is packed with history and heritage and all kinds of interesting corners. Most buildings are built of granite, the bedrock of the islands, and they stand cheek by jowl on a narrow neck of land between the Garrison and the larger part of St Mary's. Take special note of all the slide shows that are offered in the evenings in the high season. Knowledgeable local people present these talks; people with a passion for the history, heritage, flowers and wildlife of the islands.

**The Quay** is an obvious place to start this walk. Those who reach the Isles of Scilly using the *Scillonian III* place their feet on this stout granite quay before walking anywhere else in the islands. The Quay connects Rat Island to Hugh Town, with the Old Quay, closest to town, dating from 1603.

Don't rush straight into town. A restaurant and a café sit on **Rat Island**, offering food and drink here at the start. The ferry waiting room alongside is full of informative panels about the history and natural history of the islands, and these are well worth a few minutes of study. The Isles



of Scilly Wildlife Trust operates a small visitor centre full of interesting information. Be sure to look inside.

While following The Quay towards town, take note of all the notice boards advertising ferries to the off-islands, wildlife cruises, evening cruises and all the rest. There is a small stone kiosk on the **Old Quay** where tickets can be obtained for the off-islands launches and cruises run by St Mary's Boatmen's Association. For most other cruises and trips, either book in advance or pay on board. Ten o'clock in the morning is the busiest time in high season, when everyone flocks down to the quays for their tickets and the launches take their first eager passengers to each of the off-islands.

Turn left at the **Mermaid Inn** and walk along **Hugh Street**. Continue straight onwards, passing the Atlantic, which is a hotel and restaurant on the left. Hugh Street is like a canyon of granite and the only supermarket



in the Isles of Scilly, the Co-op, is on the left. The **Post Office** stands on the right beside a rugged granite arch and bears a stone marked 'VR 1897'. A fine granite terrace of houses continues on that side of the street, while the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company office is on the left. A group of shops are clustered around a road junction. The Bishop & Wolf is a bar and restaurant to the right, but keep left to reach a more open square. The **Town Hall** stands to the right, carrying a date-stone of 1887, and the small green space in the middle of Hugh Town serves as the town park. Taxis, small tour buses and a vintage bus may be parked here, should anyone fancy a quick spin around St Mary's along its rather limited road network.

Keep left of the little park, following **Lower Strand Street**. The **Custom House** is to the left, and the Star of the Sea Catholic Church is to the right. A toilet block stands beside a short promenade path, where there are fine views across the harbour, while inland, shops give way to a terrace of houses. The **Lifeboat Station** is tucked under the granite tor of Carn Thomas and is served by a

*The harbour, or St Mary's Pool, seen from the Town Beach in Hugh Town*





Looking down to  
Hugh Town and its  
harbour from a point  
near the Garrison  
Gate

short path. If you follow it, then you have to return afterwards. The latest lifeboat is called *The Whiteheads* and is usually moored out on the harbour.

The road called **Higher Strand** climbs uphill, but turn sharply right at the top. Just around the corner is the **Parish Church** of St Mary the Virgin, dating from 1835, and a cylindrical granite tower, which was once a windmill, can be seen on Buzza Hill. Walk straight down into town along Church Street. St Mary's Hall Hotel is on the right, as well as the **Methodist Church**. There may be a notice posted at the church detailing evening slide shows. The Bell Rock Hotel is on the left.

The **Isles of Scilly Museum** used to stand on the right, but at the time of writing the site was being redeveloped and the museum was looking for a new home. It used to include plenty of items relating to the history and heritage of the islands, as well as exhibits detailing the plants

and animals. Further along the road, the Church Hall is on the right, and again there may be a notice detailing evening slide shows. A terrace of granite houses leads back to the little park and the **Town Hall**.

Turn left to reach Porthcressa Bank and the Tourist Information Centre, for a view of **Porth Cressa Beach**. Walk back towards town and turn left along **Silver Street**, behind the Town Hall, and head back into the middle of Hugh Town. Turn left at Mumford's, where books, maps, postcards and the like can be bought.

Follow **Garrison Lane** uphill. The police station is on the right, but turn left along **Sally Port**. Look for a sign above a passageway marked 'Garrison Through Archway' to be led through a housing block and under the Garrison Walls by way of the low-roofed Sally Port. Turn left along a narrow road to reach **Hugh House**, the Duchy of Cornwall office, facing the **Garden Battery**. Enjoy a view over the rooftops of Hugh Town, appreciating just how compact the little town really is, essentially built on nothing more than a small sandbank.

Follow the road past the **Higher Battery**, then walk down to the Powder Magazine Exhibition to learn about the fortifications of the Garrison. Turn left up to the **Star Castle Hotel**, which can be visited by non-residents. While walking back downhill afterwards, pass through an old archway dated 1742 at **Gatehouse Cottage**.

Walk downhill past Tregarthen's Hotel, which was founded by Captain Tregarthen. He used to bring passengers to the Isles of Scilly from 1849, whenever he brought supplies from the mainland. There was a catch; his guests couldn't leave the islands until he went back to the mainland for more supplies! Turn left below the hotel to return to the harbour where the town trail started.

FACILITIES IN HUGH TOWN

Most services and facilities on the Isles of Scilly are concentrated around Hugh Town. If you can't find what you need here, then you probably won't find it anywhere on the islands. Anything else must be brought from the mainland!

- There are a few **hotels** around Hugh Town, as well as the largest concentration of **guesthouses**, **bed and breakfast** establishments and **self-catering** accommodation in the islands.
- The only **bank** available in the Isles of Scilly is Lloyds, on Hugh Street, and it has an ATM. However, banking can also be done at the nearby post office. The **Co-op**, as well as a few other shops and pubs, may offer a cashback service.
- There is a **chemist** and **newsagent**, as well as a number of **shops** selling provisions, crafts and souvenirs.
- Although several **pubs**, **restaurants** and **cafés** are available, in the high season it is wise to book in advance for meals.
- The **police station**, **hospital** and all administrative services for the Isles of Scilly are located around Hugh Town.
- **Churches** include St Mary the Virgin (Church of England), Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church and the Methodist Church.
- **Toilets** are located on The Quay, on The Strand and at Porth Cressa.
- **Tour buses** that make circuits around St Mary's, as well as taxis, run from clearly marked stands in the centre of Hugh Town, near the Town Hall.
- **Ferries** to the off-islands all depart from The Quay, along with **cruise trips** and the **Scillonian III** ferry to Penzance.

WALK 2

The Garrison Wall

Start	Garrison Gate in Hugh Town, SV 901 106
Distance	3km (2 miles)

The promontory to the west of Hugh Town is almost completely encircled by a stout, granite defensive wall bristling with batteries and cannons. The Garrison was developed in stages over three centuries, but the most significant starting date is 1593, when Governor Francis Godolphin built the eight-pointed Star Castle. Additional walls and batteries were built around the promontory, with more appearing during the Civil War. The Garrison held out as a Royalist stronghold until 1651. Other islands holding out to the bitter end included Jersey, in the Channel Islands, and Inishbofin, off the west coast of Ireland. The Garrison came to resemble its present form during restructuring associated with the Wars of the Spanish Succession and the Napoleonic Wars. During the two world wars, there were few alterations, except for the positioning of pillboxes into some of the batteries. Even while it was manned by soldiers, the Garrison Wall provided a leisurely walk for 18th- and 19th-century visitors, and it still does so admirably today. English Heritage produces an excellent leaflet map and guide to the Garrison, and a visit to the Powder Magazine Exhibition is highly recommended.

Accommodation is available within the Garrison Wall at two remarkably different locations. The Star Castle Hotel is one of the more exclusive hotels in the Isles of Scilly, offering some rooms in the castle and some in the adjacent garden. The hotel also has a Dungeon Bar! Standing high on the headland is the Garrison Holidays campsite, the only campsite on St Mary's, and one of only four campsites available around the Isles of Scilly.

A steep, narrow road climbs from **Hugh Town**, beside Tregarthen's Hotel, to reach the **Garrison Gate**. Look for the date 1742 carved in stone above the moulded archway, below a little bellcote. The Guardhouse and Gatehouse Cottage stand just inside the archway. Visit the **Powder Magazine Exhibition** straight ahead, if an in-depth study