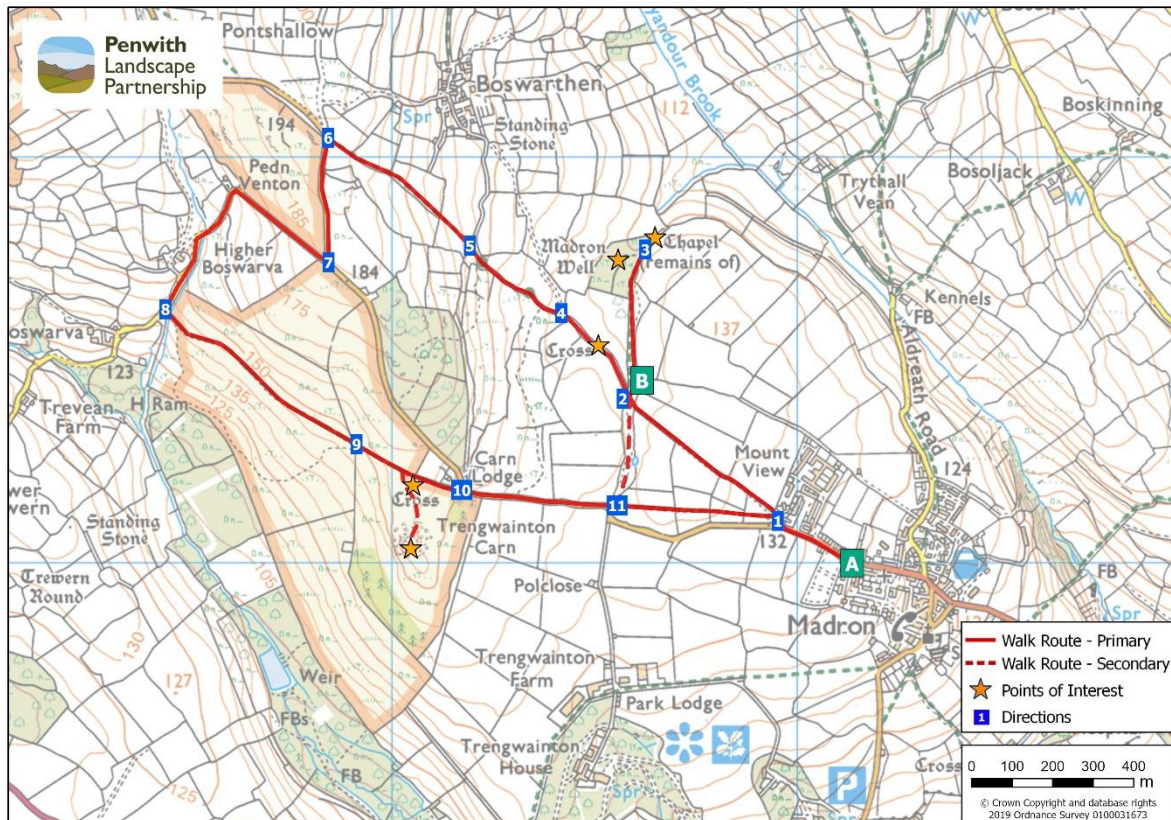


## Trail Guide: Madron Chapel and Trengwainton Carn

A walk very much in the geographical centre of West Penwith, encompassing a varied historic landscape from Churchtown, through ancient lanes and enclosed fields and onto the edge of rough ground, with great views out to Mount's Bay and the surrounding landscape.

Distance:	3 miles / 4.8km
Time:	Allow at least 2 hours
Starting Location:	A: SW 451 320 (Bus stop on Fore Street, Madron) B: SW 446 324 (Car park for Madron Chapel & Well)
Public Transport:	Frequent buses between Penzance and Madron
Car Parking:	Roadside in the village, or the Madron Well Car Park
Nearest Facilities:	In Madron & Heamoor
Accessibility & Terrain:	Fairly gentle climbing & descent, numerous granite stiles. Some road walking. Cattle likely to be present in parts.



### Route instructions:

**1.** From the bus stop by Madron Village Cemetery (Start Point A), walk up the road to Point I. On the outskirts of the village look for a granite stile just beyond the last house on the right, and cross into the field. The footpath turns immediately right and follows a well-defined path, initially along the edge of arable fields. After the second field, cross another stile into a hedged lane, then turn right when you come out onto the road (known as Wishing Well Lane)

Views of Madron Workhouse can be glimpsed through the hedge along the field edges. The 'Penzance Union Workhouse' was built in 1838 at Madron. It was designed by George Gilbert Scott and his partner William Bonython Moffatt, architects of numerous other Cornish workhouses, and intended to accommodate 400 inmates. After 1930, the workhouse became a Public Assistance Institution under the control of Cornwall County Council's Public Assistance Committee. The Institution was closed at the inauguration of the National Health Service in 1948. In 2001, the former entrance block was converted to housing, and for a time the old infirmary was used by a food processing company. It is believed that some of the stone robbed from Chûn Castle was used in the building of this workhouse.

**2.** From the parking area off to the right off the lane (Start Point B), the entrance to the path leading to the well is indicated by a CASPN tablet, and an older plaque with the words "CELTIC CHAPEL & WISHING WELL" in incised lettering, set into a wall. Follow the clear path all the way to the Chapel.

The [CASPN website](#) contains extensive information on the Madron Holy Well and Chapel – a site that has a long continuity of spiritual use by both Christians and Pagans. Despite the plaque, Madron never was a 'wishing' well, rather a place of healing and divination. Shortly before reaching the 'cloutie tree' and the Chapel, a side path crosses the stream and leads to the well. The route to the well is only passable after dry weather; planks and duckboards have been placed in some of the wetter sections, but are rather broken and unstable at present, proceed with caution if seeking the well!

**3.** The Chapel is accessible through a gate at the end of the footpath. Spend some time here, then return by the same route to the parking area, turn right and walk down the road.

Partway along this road (Wishing Well Lane) is a Medieval Celtic Cross in the verge on your right, known as the ['Boswarthen Cross'](#)

**4.** The track to Boswarthen bends off to the right across open fields, while the trail continues straight ahead into an old hedged lane, somewhat overgrown but with a clear path. The lane entrance is immediately to the right of a gate marked 'Private'. Follow this lane uphill.

Although only passable on foot, this section is still part of the road network. It is part of the 'old coach track' to Boswarthen; the remainder of which has long been lost to blackthorn and scrub. This old lane follows higher and drier ground than the new track to Boswarthen which runs lower in the valley.

**5.** You reach a granite stile, and the footpath crosses a field which is currently grazed pasture. Expansive views across Mount's Bay open out behind you here. Head up towards the metal field gate; the footpath stile is to the left of the gate, obvious when you get nearer. Follow up the edge of the next (long) field, keeping the hedge on your right, until partway up you see a stone stile in the hedge – here the footpath crosses over and continues up along the opposite side for a way. Cross the stiles in the top-right corners of the next two fields; the second one takes you back into the top of the long field – and the final stile is ahead in the top right corner, out onto the road.

*The hedges along here have an abundance of plant species, with Foxgloves being particularly spectacular during June. Some of the fields here are being used as forage leys. From the stile at the very top, make sure you look back to take in the view!*

**6.** Turn left and follow the Madron road as far as the next junction. Caution! This road can be busy, and vehicles do travel fast.

*Take any glimpses of the views over the hedge on your right (west) from here. The rough ground immediately beyond contains remnants of a [prehistoric field system](#).*

**7.** Turn a sharp right into the lane signposted Newbridge. This is a much quieter road, with great high hedges containing abundant vegetation. Keep to the road past Pedn Venton and Higher Boswarva.

*Pedn Venton, in Cornish, means 'spring-head'. Higher Boswarva (Boswarva Wartha) translates as 'dwelling on a wooded slope'. Both names are very descriptive of the landscape around them. As you drop down the lane, ahead of you on the horizon you can see St Buryan Church, Sancreed Beacon, Bartinney Downs and Bosvenning Common.*

**8.** On the left, look for a gate and stile marking the start of the bridleway that heads towards Trengwainton Carn. Cross the stream, noting the 'clapper' style bridge made from single slab of granite. Almost immediately a path forks off to the right – take the left-hand branch, at first climbing slightly then levelling out, heading in the general direction of Trengwainton Carn, visible as a rocky outcrop in the distance.

*Note that the used path doesn't necessarily follow the straight line of the bridleway. This area is all open access land and grazed by cattle. In the past it was used for stone cutting and quarrying – you may note pits in the ground where stone has been removed.*

*This area is an interesting example of the ecological process known as succession. All around you it is clear how heath or moorland gradually turns into woodland as woody shrubs take over for a few years, then eventually give way to trees. This process is slowed or reversed by the activities of*

grazing animals, creating open areas of grassland and low herbs. Amongst the Gorse and Bracken are clumps of an invasive *Rhododendron* species, *Rhododendron ponticum*, probably introduced to Trengwainton as an ornamental plant in the early 20th Century. If left unchecked this can become dominant and outcompete other plant species, resulting in a reduction in biodiversity. There have been great efforts to remove this in recent years but there is still some way to go to complete the removal.

Many species typical of acid heathland can be seen here, depending on the time of year. Notable species include Dartford Warbler, gorse loving small greyish brown birds with a red eye ring, and reddish breast. Scattered amongst the turf in summer are yellow flowers of Tormentil, and in late summer the purples of Foxglove, Heathers and Rosebay Willowherb.

**9.** Reach a point where several paths meet - pass through a gateway, continuing towards the Carn. A short way on, to visit the Carn follow one of the paths off to the right. Trengwainton Carn is a fantastic viewpoint; Trewern Round and standing stone can be seen nearby to the West.

The [Trewern Round](#) is an Iron Age round, and while not accessible to the public, Trengwainton Carn is a brilliant place from which to see it from above, set within the wider landscape. Looking towards Newbridge, look at the field systems on the broad ridge below you – and for an obvious circle built from the hedges. It's clear on the map too. Rounds are small embanked enclosures dating to between the later Iron Age and the early post-Roman period. Usually circular or oval, they have a single earth and rubble bank and an outer ditch, with one entrance breaking the circuit. Excavations have revealed paved or cobbled entrance ways, post built gate structures, and remains of timber, turf or stone houses of oval or rectangular plan, often set around the inner edge of the enclosing bank with the centre as a usable farmyard. Other evidence includes hearths, drains, gullies, pits, rubbish middens, small scale metal working, and among the domestic debris, items traded from distant sources.

The Medieval 'Cross' marked on the ordnance survey near Trengwainton Carn is has recently had a large amount of overgrown vegetation cleared from around it, allowing it to be visible once again.

**10.** The bridleway ends at a stile, a white gate and finger post where it meets the road. Walk straight ahead down the road towards Madron. Note again this section of road can be quite busy, proceed with due caution.

The cottage to the left here is 'Keepers Cottage', built in the mid-19th Century in a distinctive style as part of the Estate.

**11.** You reach the junction with the road signposted to Boswarthan Celtic Chapel and Well. If you started from the car park for the Chapel, follow the lane here back to Point 2, otherwise take the footpath crossing the fields back towards Madron Village.

*Fields here are a mixture of arable and forage leys. Note the shape of the wider landscape; having descended from the high, rough ground around the Carn, you now return across a much flatter plateau, with richer soils. The lane back to the well, and the route to the well itself, lie in a small depression within that plateau, which collects water from the surrounding area, and feeds down towards the Chyandour Brook, eventually reaching the sea at Chyandour, on the east side of Penzance.*

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