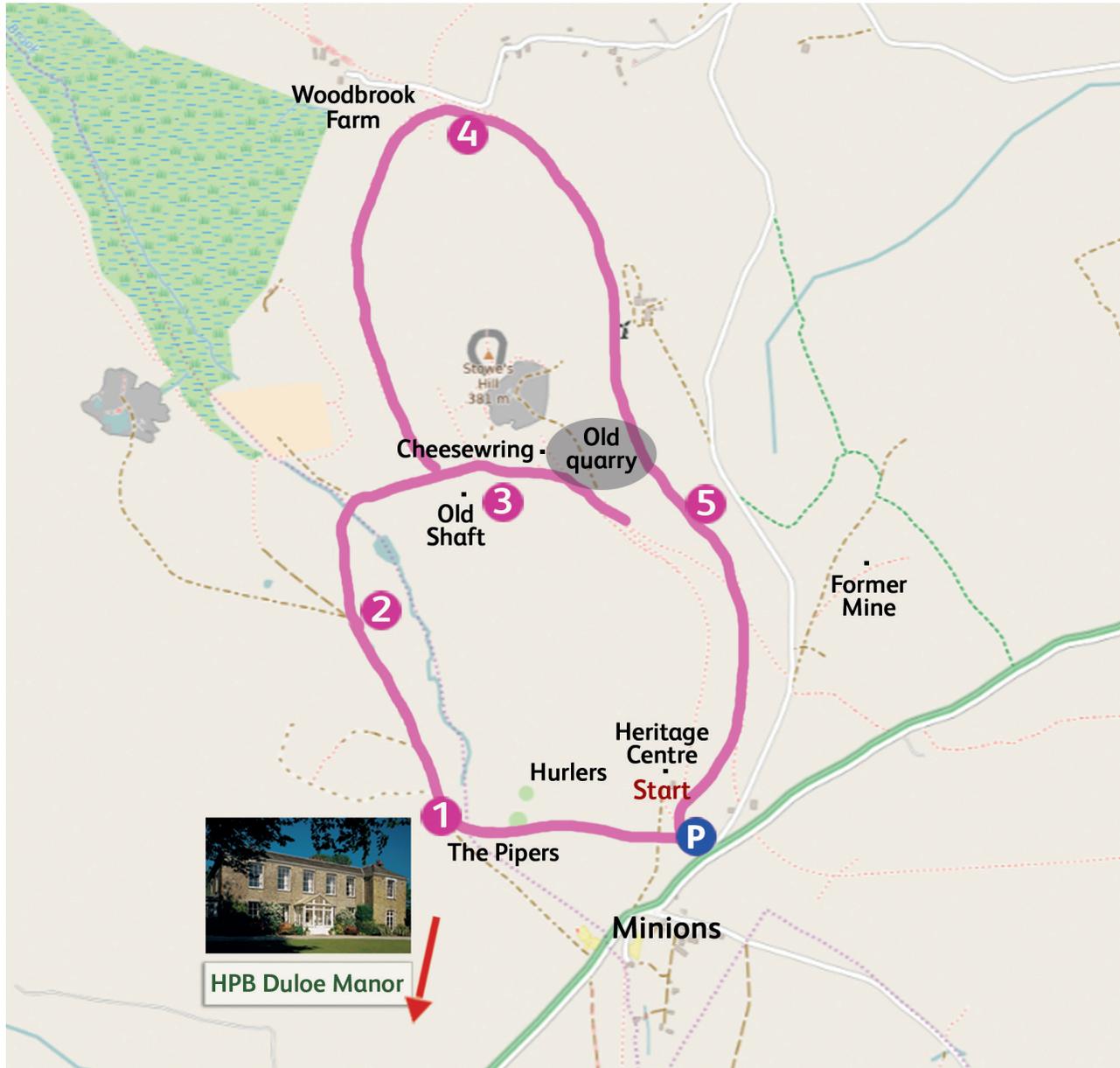


Minions and the Cheesewring

Distance - 5½km (3½ miles) Map Ordnance Survey Explorer 109, Bodmin Moor, 1:25,000. Ascent 55m (181ft) not including the steep little ascent to the Cheesewring



— - Walk

① - See attached instructions for details of points

P - Carpark

Disclaimer:

This route was correct at time of writing. However, alterations can happen if development or boundary changes occur, and there is no guarantee of permanent access. These walks have been published for use by site visitors on the understanding that neither HPB Management Limited nor any other person connected with Holiday Property Bond is responsible for the safety or wellbeing of those following the routes as described. It is walkers' own responsibility to be adequately prepared and equipped for the level of walk and the weather conditions and to assess the safety and accessibility of the walk.

Minions and the Cheesewring

Walk 12

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Bodmin Moor is one of the great granite uplands of the West Country, rich in stone circles, standing stones and other monuments, largely of the late Bronze/early Iron Ages, when the relatively benign climate permitted some primitive farming. This ancient landscape has long yielded tin and other minerals and in the 19th century its fine building stone was extensively quarried.

The Hurlers comprises three adjacent Bronze Age stone circles, whilst the Cheesewring is the finest of several similar examples of the result of prolonged weathering by wind and water on the softer rocks which formerly surrounded the now exposed cores of very hard granite. Not surprisingly, legends have grown concerning druids and magic golden cups at this potentially mystic site.

Early in the 19th century a golden cup was, in fact, found with a skeleton in a nearby burial chamber. Ownership of the cup passed to the Royal Family; according to different accounts the late King George V used it either as an ash tray or as a receptacle for his collar studs. The adjacent Cheesewring quarry was large and highly productive of good quality stone, used for many major structures, including London's Tower Bridge and Westminster Bridge.

Stone was taken from this and from other quarries in the area by a long tramway/railway to Moorswater, near Liskeard, for onward transit to Looe by canal and, from 1859, by railway; many of the granite slabs used to anchor the rails are still in situ. Daniel Gumb was an 18th century mathematician who worked as a stonecutter. He lived with his wife and family in a house/cave, close to the present quarry. The dwelling has been partly reconstructed.

Windswept Minions, claiming to be the highest village in Cornwall, is hardly pretty but does have tea shops and a heritage centre which is located in the engine house of a former mine just outside the village. Despite the overall ruggedness of Bodmin Moor, this is an easy walk, with no

serious ascent. After visiting the Cheesewring the path used for the full walk is rather vague for rather more than half a mile, but the overall direction is clear and there is no difficulty underfoot. Care is required for the short ascent to the Cheesewring.

WALK

From the signpost at the top left corner of the car park follow 'The Hurlers'. Above, to the right, is the former engine house, now Minions Heritage Centre. Go straight across a broad track and walk along a grassy path leading directly to the celebrated stone circles. After the circles continue in the same direction for about 200m. to reach a broad, stony, track. The Pipers standing stones are close to the track.

- 1 Turn right here to follow the track, rising gently, with tors including the Cheesewring visible ahead to the right. There are tracks to the left leading to other Bronze Age features and to former quarries.
- 2 At a three-way junction bear right to head towards the Cheesewring, descending gently to cross a shallow valley. Rise up the far side of the valley, passing close to the top of a fenced-off mining shaft.
- 3 At a junction near the top of the rise, a broad grass track forks to the left to provide a route for those wishing to see the rock tors at close quarters and with a view into the former Cheesewring Quarry. Above the grass track there are various little rocky paths leading to the top. Follow the fence above the quarry. **With or without the ascent to the Cheesewring there is a choice here. For a shorter walk continue along the main path, over a low summit before descending to rejoin the full route at point 5.** For the full walk retrace the route by descending towards the main path and the shallow valley.

Start/car parking Car park at the north-east end of Minions village, [grid reference 261712](#).

Refreshments Tea shops in Minions village.

Daniel Gumb's Cave can be found by making a short detour to the left, towards the quarry, well before returning to the main path. Some distance before reaching the valley bottom on the main path, turn right along a fairly clear path, almost opposite the fenced-off shaft top. There are scattered thorn bushes to the right. Pass below the bushes to continue along the side of Stowe's Hill; the path is not always clear but the walking surface is good and the route is level. Wardbrook Farm comes into view ahead; the path bends to the right to pass approximately 200m above the farm. The rock-strewn Sharp Tor is now ahead and the route joins a surfaced farm access road at a gate.

- 4 Do **not** go along the road; follow a narrow but clear path to the right of the roadside fence, soon reaching the granite blocks on the line of the former mineral tramway. This tramway provides an entirely certain route back to Minions. Cheesewring Farm is below to the left as long views open up to the east and north-east, including the village of Henwood. The communications mast on Caradon Hill comes into view ahead, with the Cheesewring tors now above to the right and the huge quarry spoil heaps adjacent.
- 5 There is a stone wall close on the left as a track (**the short cut**) joins from the right. At a fork stay with the tramway. At the next fork, with four large boulders, bear right towards the former engine house, rising gently. Turn left to return to the car park.