

Torcross to Start point paddle

The sun was shining, the wind and rain were non-existent, the sea was flat calm, it must be a Saturday and a club paddle.

17 paddlers met up at Torcross, a quaint fishing/tourist village on the South Devon coast. Although the beach is over a mile long we were very limited as to where we could launch due to the hundreds of fishermen spread along the beach. The beach has a lovely profile (I must be sad noticing that), we managed to find a nice place suitable for a gentle slide launch down the shingle gradient into the sea.

Once on the water the plan was to follow the coastline close inshore along to Start point. Heading in that direction the group settled down, chatting merrily away and paddled towards Beesands then on to Hallsands. Nice pleasant paddling with some cliffs and lots of shingle beach to admire!

After Hallsands the coastline changes, the first thing you notice are the deserted ruins of the old fishing village (a quick on water history lesson followed as to why it was deserted). The cliffs loom up, towering above us and continue to the end of the headland and Start point. Did I mention it was bright sunshine and flat calm, ideal conditions for exploring this coast.



Lots of rock formations and caves to paddle into and around as the kayaks darted in and out of view. After a short time after the ruined village the first cry of 'seal' went up. The group eagerly congregated to observe the seals at a distance, there were now a pair of them bobbing up and down. A beautiful marine animal which always excites me when I see one especially up close and at their level from a kayak. The sightings continued as we headed towards the lighthouse. While exploring one of the caves a snort and a big pair of eyes greeted us, no it wasn't Steve D in the dark but an inquisitive seal poking his head up.

As we rounded Start point the tide race could be seen some distance offshore.

Cry's of is it lunchtime yet were starting to ring around the group. We landed at the first beach around the headland which happens to be right under the lighthouse. A glorious little bay bathed in sunshine and home to another seal.



After a restful 30 minute break with us all fed and watered including being supplemented by another lovely cake baked by guess who, yes Mary (must be someone else's turn soon). We had a look around the corner towards Lannacombe and had some more seal sightings and a view of the rugged exposed coastline. Time to turn and follow much the same route back that we had come out on. A nice gentle paddle back in the wonderful sunshine, in fact it had got warmer and the sea flatter. Before long the Torcross beach came into view and time to land, still lots of fishermen lining the shore but we managed to pick a spot and negotiate the steep beach.

It was such a lovely afternoon that we made use of the excellent tea room and ice cream facilities at Torcross before dispersing.

Paddling this area was a first for almost all of the paddlers. I will definitely be doing this paddle again. We were fortunate with the tide/wind/sea conditions and had a glorious day.

This paddle was dedicated to the memory of club member and fellow paddler Ian Goddard, during the paddle those that had known Ian chatted and reflected on their memories of him.

Terry C