

Hike Description

STAGE 1

The hike starts from The Lifeboat Station on Victoria Road, North Berwick. It is just before the harbour. Start west down the slipway for launching the lifeboat and follow the fine sandy beach towards the rocks at the end of the bay. If the tide is very high, there are obvious alternatives along the shoreline. Continue between the golf course and the rocks at the west end of the beach. If the tide is well out you can go closer to the sea avoiding the rocks. Look out for a small cave.



STAGE 2

There are now a series of smaller beaches, with minor rocks at the end of each. You come to a stream called the Eel Burn, easily crossed if the tide is out or by a small bridge over it at the edge of the golf course. Continue along the broad beach with tall sand dunes to your left. At the end of the beach the distinctive island of Fidra, with its lighthouse, comes clearly into view opposite the middle of the next bay called Yellowcraigs. After some little rock outcrops you can just continue along the beach or the path above it.



STAGE 3

At the end of this bay there are some small rock outcrops below an old villa on a hillock. You pass a single storey event venue immediately before it. Beyond here the path forks; the right hand branch leads down onto the rocky shore (and a possible continuation if the tide is low); the left branch continues through the sea buckthorn above and soon reaches an old concrete pill-box from World War Two. Go past the pill-box and follow the path which reaches the shore down a short steep bank of sand and rock. The path is good until that point. Someone has handily put a rope to one side to help if needed. Now join the shore route that continues past three rocky outcrops, the last of which includes the Iron Age Hanging Rock caves. If you feel like some clambering, do go and explore, but take care.



STAGE 4

Continue around a series of 3 bays, along the shore and skirting the rocks at the end of each bay on grassy paths beside the shore. At one of these points you will see some old ruins. Pass these and keeping on the grassy path closest to the shore head for your next bay. At the end of this small bay there are steep rocks to be easily passed on their left. Continue on close to the rocks beside the sea until you come to the long expanse of Gullane Beach. Along it you come to a series of big rocky outcrops on the last quarter of the bay. These can all be passed on the sea side unless the tide is in or turned on the inland side if it is not. You can enjoy a little bit of scrambling to find the best way though the rocks.



STAGE 5

At the very end of Gullane Bay you can see signs for the Nature Reserve. This area can still be walked observing any signs in place to protect nesting birds. There are good paths along the side of the shoreline. And if the tide is out you can walk across the great expanse of sand of Aberlady Bay. Once you come to the headland turn left and find the grassy tracks. They will lead to signs showing the route. It will eventually lead you past Marl Loch on your right, with golf courses on your left, to the bridge across the Peffer Burn. Finally there is a car park at the entrance to the Reserve. This is 1km east of Aberlady village.

