

31. South Gower Coast: Long Hole Cliff

Overton, Gower, Swansea

Grid References	O.S. Explorer map 164 Gower. Main entrance: SS455852, Site centre: SS450850
Status	Part of the South Gower Coast SSSI, which in turn is part of the European Natura 2000 site, the Limestone Sea Cliffs of South West Wales SAC. The reserve contains a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the western half of the site is registered common land, being manorial waste, and has been declared open access.
Tenure	The Trust purchased this site in September 1970 with financial help from B.P. Chemicals plc.
Size	20.7 ha (50.2 acres).
Location and Access Notes	1 km west of the village of Overton, adjacent to Overton Cliff nature reserve. Access is from the track that leads westward from the village of Overton, or from the path leading through Overton Cliff. Not accessible to wheelchairs.
Public Transport	Bus numbers 117, 118, 115 and 21a from Swansea Quadrant Bus Station to Overton village.

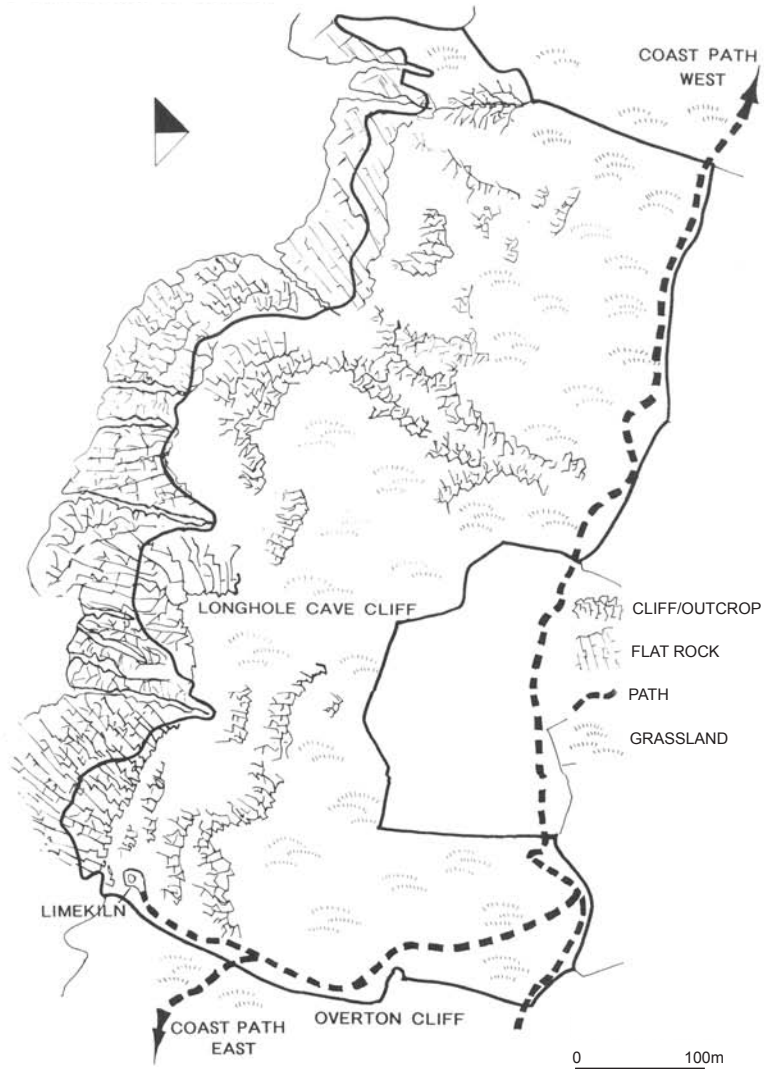
Description: Sea cliffs, limestone grassland, heath, and caves.

Long Hole Cliff is named after a small cave in the centre of the reserve, which during nineteenth century archaeological excavations yielded Stone Age tools and the fossil remains of Ice Age animals which can be seen in The Royal Institution in Swansea.

Parts of the cliffs closest to the sea in the south east corner of the reserve have been quarried for limestone, which was burned in the adjacent limekiln, the ruin of which is still visible, to provide lime for spreading on fields further inland.

The reserve displays a very clear difference in vegetation between the deeper cliff top soils which support Gorse scrub and heath and the thinner soils of the slopes, cliffs and scree with limestone grassland flowers. Spring brings a flush of blue to the cliffs as Spring Squill (4-5) flowers, followed by a wide range of other flowers including Bird's-foot Trefoil (6-9), Kidney Vetch (5-7), and the nationally scarce Portland Spurge (5-9).

Weasel is often seen hunting for Rabbits or Voles along the boundary walls.



Management Objectives: The limestone grassland and heathland scrub is maintained by a system of light sheep grazing and removal of Gorse as required.

Good times to visit

Mar - Jul	Coastal flowers
Apr - Jul	Breeding birds
Aug - Sept	Heathland flowers
Sept - Nov	Fungi, particularly Waxcaps
Nov - Mar	Sea watching