

GSWW 364 Golden Cap Stiles to Kissing Gates Project



The National Trust's Golden Cap Estate is situated between Bridport and Charmouth in West Dorset. It is a coastal property with a range of habitats and contains the highest point on the south coast, Golden Cap at 191m. There are several car parks and access points

and the South West Coast path runs the entire length of the Estate, a distance of 8 miles. The estate hosts several thousands of visitors each year and we know that over 100,000 climb to the top of Golden Cap, using the South West Coast Path, every year. All the paths across the estate have numerous stiles and very few gates so access can be a problem.

During the summer months we carry out a visitor survey and analyse the results. It is noticeable that each year we receive a poor score on accessibility and are also marked down on the "ease of getting around". We have also received a lot of feedback from walkers that the estate has too many stiles and it is difficult for people to walk the SWCP and link paths.

Project Aims

We would replace all the stiles on the SWCP with kissing gates. Also replace the stiles on the main link paths, that link car parks to the SWCP, with kissing gates. This gives a total of 22 gates to be built. This has been a long held ambition but the barrier to this ambition has always been funding.

The project would benefit every user of the South West Coast Path and other footpaths on the Golden Cap Estate. It will make access easier and hopefully when we carry out the visitor survey the accessibility score will go up and we will get positive feedback regarding the ease of getting around.

Project Review

All the stiles have been replaced by kissing gates. Using Oak timber and traditional Dorset Rod gates we have removed all the awkward stiles and built easy access kissing gates.

The result is 8 miles of the most spectacular section of the SWCP accessible by everyone with ease of access and not an awkward stile in sight.

Photos of Project

	<p>Existing Stile on SWCP as people access the Golden Cap estate at Eype. On a hill and difficult for people to use.</p>
	<p>New Kissing Gate built to replace stile at the above location. Access is now much easier. One of 22 to be built on the SWCP and link paths to enable easier access.</p>
	<p>Existing stile on SWCP above Eype. A gap is created inland of the field gate to enable a new kissing gate to be built. By moving it inland it escapes coastal erosion for a longer period.</p>
	<p>New kissing gate built in the gap to enable easier access. Old stile is removed.</p>