



> Walk 1 - Boatstrand beach

The walk eastwards and over the rocks should only be undertaken at an outgoing tide – ask local advice first. Also remember the cliffs are subject to frequent cliff-falls so care should be taken.

Boatstrand harbour was built in the late 1880s though as the name implies the strand had been used for boating and fishing for generations before. On the cliffs behind the harbour is a well, the remains of a 19th century lime kiln and an exploratory level looking for copper in the 19th century.

The ebbing tide on the beach to the east reveals rock pools, miniature universes in themselves. At low tide the ubiquitous bladder-rack dominates with its blister-like “blisters” and its rounded regular leaves. The red thin strips of dilisk (called dulse elsewhere in Ireland) left plastered on the rocks by the ebb of the water is a local delicacy once washed and boiled.

The cliffs immediately east of the harbour are a soft mudstone laid in an Antarctic ocean 460 million years ago. Further east lava dykes can be seen intruding into the mudstone and baking it into a harder consistency. At various places on the cliffs and on fallen rocks patches of iron pyrite, “Fools gold”, glitter in the sun. All along the cliff-tops lie the debris from the glaciers deposited a mere 12,000 years ago.

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> Boatstrand beach at low tide (above), dilisk (below)

