

SHORT WALKS

MADE EASY

DEVON'S JURASSIC COAST

10 leisurely walks
across the outstandingly beautiful area from
Exmouth to Seaton



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WALK 4



THE OTTER ESTUARY

The River Otter rises in Otterford in Somerset, flows through the Blackdown Hills and reaches the sea at picturesque Budleigh Salterton. The town takes its name from the salters who used to pan salt for the abbot of Otterton Priory, a practice said to go back to at least Roman times. A gentle stroll on surfaced paths along the peaceful lower Otter Estuary will be rewarded by the sight and sound of countless birds – don't forget your binoculars.

OS information

SY 072 820
Explorer 115

Distance

2.75 miles/4.4 km

Time

1½ hours

Start/Finish

Budleigh Salterton

Parking

EX9 6JD
Lime Kiln car park
(pay and display)

Public toilets

Nearest: Budleigh Salterton seafront, EX9 6JY, ¾ mile west of

Cafés/pubs

Budleigh Salterton

Terrain

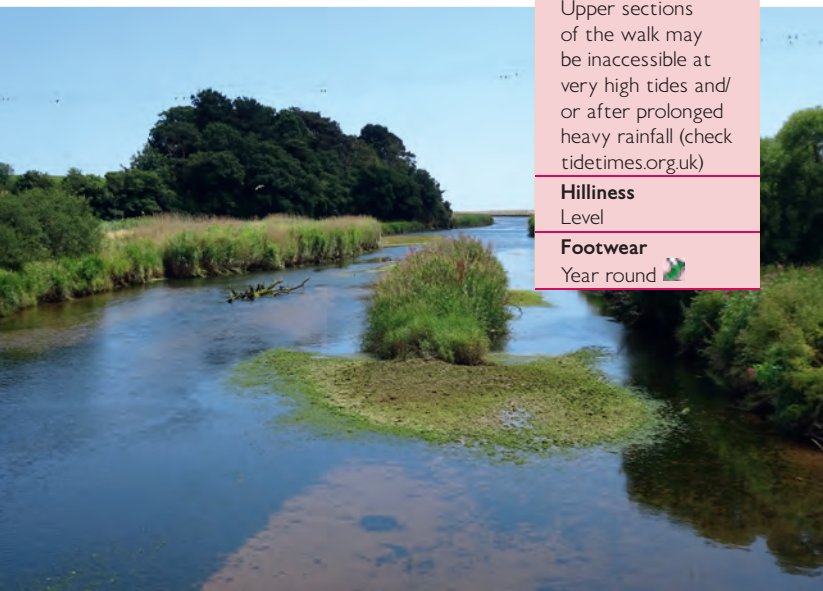
Surfaced paths. Upper sections of the walk may be inaccessible at very high tides and/or after prolonged heavy rainfall (check tidetimes.org.uk)

Hilliness

Level

Footwear

Year round




Did you know? Branscombe is said to be the longest village in England – one of several that lay claim to this title! In the 19th century, Branscombe was known for early crops of flowers, vegetables and strawberries grown on the Weston Plats, the clifftop area towards Sidmouth. Seaweed, used to fertilise the plots, was carried up from the beach by donkeys.

Local legend An intriguing legend relates to St Winifred, a seventh-century Welsh saint who has, surprisingly, become Branscombe's patron. St Winifred was decapitated by the nobleman Caradog, whose advances she had rejected. It is said that a spring appeared where her head hit the ground, becoming known as St Winifred's Well. More miraculously still, St Winifred was brought back to life by her uncle St Beuno, who managed to restore her head to its rightful position!

Hilliness

Mostly level; short ascent **5** to **6**, steepening briefly after **6**

Footwear

Year round 



Public transport

Bus service 899, between Sidmouth and Seaton, to the stops at **1** and near **6**: avmtbustimes.wixsite.com/mysite



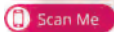
Accessibility

Suitable for powered wheelchairs and all-terrain pushchairs throughout



Dogs

Welcome but under control at all times. No stiles



STORIES BEHIND THE WALK



★ **Beer Quarry Caves** This extraordinary man-made complex of underground caverns dates back to Roman times and was worked until 1920 when a new quarry opened (it closed in 2003). Beer freestone is a chalk limestone laid down between 140 and 65 million years ago, which turns creamy white on exposure to the air and is ideal for carving. The stone has been used in 24 cathedrals, including Exeter (picture below) and St Paul's in London. The caves are also a world-famous bat hibernaculum, hosting most of Britain's 18 species (beerquarrycaves.co.uk).



★ **The Old Lookout** The unusual building encountered near ① – luxury holiday accommodation since autumn 2022 – has an interesting history. An early-warning signal station in the late 1700s prior to the Napoleonic Wars, it became an observation tower in an attempt to outwit local smugglers in the 19th century and continued in use as a coastguard lookout into the 20th century.

Beer Head
Caravan
Park (left)



Fork
(private
road right)

S o u t h D o w n

①

1/4 mile



P
Cliff Top
long-
stay car
park



Exeter Cathedral, built with
stone from Beer Quarry
Caves

- Leave the car park by the main entrance.
- Turn **left** up the lane, passing the entrance to Beer Head Caravan Park.
- At the top, cross a cattle grid to reach a fork (private road right).



NATURE NOTES

It is said that you can work out the age of a hedge by counting the number of plant species in a 30-yard section: the average number of species equates to the number of centuries the hedge has been standing. There is no doubt that many of the hedges edging the Devon lanes are of great age. In spring you will find alexanders, primroses, red campion, stitchwort and violets along the lanes around Colyton. In summer you'll see bedstraw, germander speedwell, honeysuckle, cow parsley, hogweed, hawthorn and tufted vetch, a climber, member of the pea family, and also known as cow vetch.

Swallows and house martins find perfect nesting places under the

edges of old barn roofs in the Coly valley. On warm summer days they swoop across the fields, feeding on the wing. Along the river look out for damselflies, and the bright blue flash of a kingfisher's wings.



Tufted vetch

Heathayne Lane
(bridleway)

  East Devon Way (EDW)

1 mile

5
Path
crossroads

1¼ miles

6
Gated/stepped
footbridge

River

- 4 ➤ At the turning, just before reaching Gittshayne Cross, go **left** through a gate on a bridleway track which leads to a gate/stile into a field.
- Follow the right hedge to meet a path crossroads.



- 5 ➤ Turn **left** across the field (East Devon Way), meeting a bend of the river by a seat in ¼ mile.



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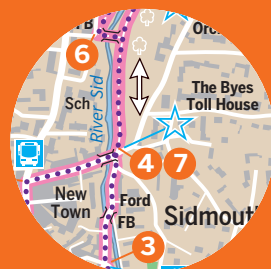
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for everyone



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route profile



Easy-to-use
walk maps

