

The Land's End Trail

Part II – Tavistock to Avebury



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NOTE:

1. Stages 14 & 15 and 14/15 offer alternative easy and hard routes across Dartmoor
2. Mileages after South Molton may be subject to amendment

INTRODUCTION to the complete Land's End Trail

This long distance path makes its way up the central spine of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset and on to Avebury. It originated with an idea by Hugh Miners in 1984 and has been developed by Robert Wicks, Robert Preston and Robin Menner. The Trail complements and relieves the over-used South-West Coast Path. It does not use the Michael-Mary line and links directly with the Wiltshire Ridgeway and with paths leading to the Cotswold Way, and so on to Eastern England and the Midlands. Eventually it will be part of the long awaited Land's End to John o'Groats path.

The Trail starts at Land's End, joining the Tinnens Track for 9 miles towards Trencrom Hill. From St. Erth it leads to Carn Brea and Carn Marth then to Chiverton Cross. From Mitchell it crosses farmland to Castle-an-Dinas and on to Bodmin. Then it uses the Camel Trail to reach Bodmin Moor, climbing Brown Willy, Cornwall's highest point, before crossing the high moor to Caradon Hill. Then on by Callington to Horsebridge to cross the Tamar into Devon. After Tavistock the trail crosses Dartmoor by a choice of two routes to join the Tarka Trail, leading to southern Exmoor. It then it crosses the Quantock Hills and Somerset Levels to Glastonbury, through Pewsey Vale to Warminster and over Salisbury Plain to Avebury. It ends inside Avebury stone circle, linking directly to the Ridgeway.

The route avoids towns except where lodging is available. Villages encountered have a variety of cottage architecture and fine old churches. Much of the Trail crosses open moorland with evidence of prehistoric habitation and abandoned mines contrasting with farmland and woods elsewhere. Scenery may surprise those accustomed to coastal or mountain landscapes. Mixed broad leafed trees are more picturesque than coniferous plantations. The route uses some riverside routes, a fine contrast with the high places of open granite moors.

The Trail is mostly on registered footpaths or Open Access land, with some farm lanes and minor roads. Permissive paths are shown in the text. Stout boots, 1:25000 maps and a compass are essential when first walking the Trail. Parts may be overgrown and tough going; way-marking is sparse. Paths may be under water even in summer. Cornish rain is wind driven so walking the Trail north-easterly keeps the rain from the face. Because of sudden low cloud, you should use a compass crossing moorland. Direction and condition of footpaths alter with time; please tell local Ramblers of any problems encountered. Please treat the countryside kindly and follow the Country Code. Never leave gates open for animals to stray and leave no litter, especially cans, bottles or plastic, animals may be cut or choked. Consideration for the countryside helps keep the goodwill of the farmers who work the land that the Trail crosses.

Please do let us have your feedback – email contact button on html web pages

The Land's End Trail

Part II Tavistock to Avebury

Published to the web by Oliver's Cornwall



Some notes about the Tavistock to Avebury section of the route

Robert Preston, one of the original Land's End Trail researchers, walked Belstone to Avebury in April 2009. Most of these pages are based on his revised notes so anyone familiar with the original route details will find changes. (a) The Dartmoor stage now has a two stage alternative via Lydford. (b) The Tarka stage has been divided into two stages with a break at Sampford Courtenay. (c) Later stages have some route variations. Robert's walk was charitable, fund-raising for the Truro Cathedral Central Tower Appeal. Stages 14 and 15, and 14/15 from Tavistock to Belstone, were walked by Oliver Howes. Directions for the route crossing Dartmoor have been expanded from the original but the route remains the same. The moorland route over Dartmoor is definitely not recommended for less experienced moorland walkers and, on occasion, may be closed for military live firing exercises. The alternative route offered via Lydford, using well established existing trails, is very easy going and many may choose to do it as a single stage.

Now that the Land's End Trail has left Cornwall, the character of the landscape changes., although the moors will feel a little familiar to those who have already crossed West Penwith and Bodmin Moor. Most notable landscapes are those of Dartmoor, Exmoor, the Quantocks, the Somerset Levels and the Wiltshire Downs. After Dartmoor, Cornish hedges and Cornish stiles mostly give way to drystone walls, Devon banks, hedgerows and wooden stiles. Points of particular interest appear in *bold italics*. These are described, with photos, in the **Trail Interest** page. There is also a **Robert's : Land's End Trail** page; this is his personal commentary on the Tavistock to Avebury section.

Glossary of Terms

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Barrow | Bronze age (usually) burial mound. In Cornwall called cairn, made of rocks, may be grassed over |
| Clapper bridge | Rough stone piers, large flat stones laid across. Best known example at Postbridge on Dartmoor |
| Furze | Gorse. In places this can be more than head height and quite impenetrable |
| Cornish Hedge | A Cornish hedge is a soil bank faced with stone, battered for strength, usually growth covered |
| Hedge | An English hedgerow, made of trees and shrubs, traditionally trimmed and layered for strength |
| Leat | Man-made watercourse, usually serving a mine or a mill waterwheel |
| Peat Pass | Passage cut through blanket bog on Dartmoor. More information on the Trail Interest page |
| Rhyne | Man-made drainage channel on the Somerset Levels. Sometimes rhine, reen or rean |
| Stiles | <i>Proper Cornish stiles</i> (cattle, sheep and coffin) are of stone, usually granite or slate <i>Wooden stiles</i> are used by the English; most on this section are wooden and just called stiles <i>Crude stiles</i> (my term) are too haphazard to meet any of the above descriptions |

Abbreviations used in the text – They may be obvious but here they are anyway

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| CP Car parking | L Left | R Right | T T junction | FB Footbridge |
| FP Footpath (sign) | LH Left-hand | RH Right-hand | WM Way-mark | X Cross (roads) |
| Chevron WM | Yellow single chevron denoting Land's End Trail direction, encountered where no other WM | | | |

Accommodation: You can download a PDF file. **Links** - LET, Cornish Section and Tavistock to Avebury home pages

Trail Maps

Each stage is headed by its own map. Scale of these is mostly about 1 inch to the mile, printed on A4. Orientation is north in every case. Points are shown to help location; these appear on the relevant OS map. Roads are shown where they relate to the trail. The Trail is shown in red; roads black, railways hatched black, coast and rivers blue. Stage and intermediate distances in the text are adjusted to take account of terrain but are approximate. These maps are intended only to provide rough stage guidance. We hope to include improved maps later. .

OS Explorer 1:25000 maps required for the complete route

Cornwall: 102, 104, 106, 109, 108;

Dartmoor National Park OL28. On to Exmoor 113, 127; **Exmoor National Park OL9.**

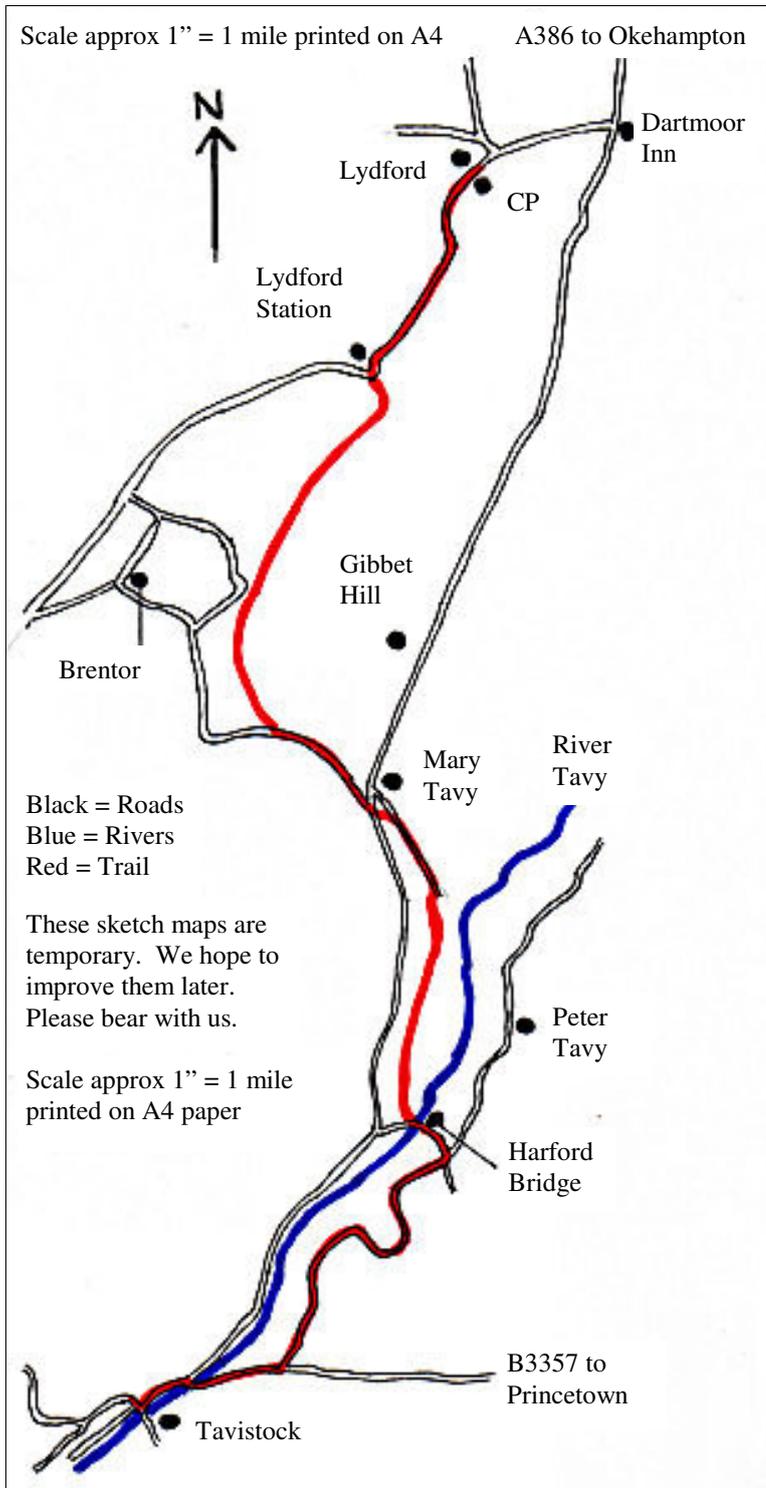
Eastwards to Avebury: 140, 141, 142, 143,130

STAGE 14 DARTMOOR FRINGE I Tavistock to Lydford 10 miles Maps OS112 and OL28

Car Parking: Public Car Parks in Tavistock on south side of river.

Trails: This stage utilises the West Devon Way (newly waymarked 2009) Shown as WDW in text.

Bus: Beacon Bus 118 runs between Tavistock, Lydford and Okehampton. For timetable ring Beacon 01805 804240 or contact Tavistock TIC 01822 612938 or Okehampton TIC 01837 53020



From the Church and Town Hall in Tavistock cross the bridge over the River Tavy and follow footway along A386 Okehampton road past roundabout. At fork turn R uphill on B3357 Princetown road. After school entrance turn L (first WDW) on unsigned Old Tavistock Road (lane, occasionally track) to follow it for about 2 miles. At Xroads after Radge Farm turn L (sign Tavistock) to cross Harford Bridge (caravan site on your L). **(3 miles)**

Shortly, by red post box, bear R (FP and WDW) on track past Beggars Hatch. At end of track go through galvanised gate (no WM) and bear R through gap and diagonally L to ladder stile (FP). Continue roughly N to galvanised gate (WM) then follow LH hedge, passing isolated granite gateposts, to cross ladder stile. Go R & L into next field and follow LH hedge through 3 fields (passing WDW and FP) and with Mary Tavy church ahead. Over stile on L and go R down green lane between hedges. Cross FB and follow path up to stile to lane. L on lane (WDW), passing church, to T. Go R on minor road signed Horndon (WDW). Ignore next Hordon turning and at the top of the hill by Oak Hayes go L (WDW) on bridle path to busy A386 at Downs Garage at Mary Tavy. **(5 miles)**

Cross A386 and continue on Brentor road (WDW) uphill. At open ground on R, take broad bridleway (WDW), the middle of three grassy tracks. This climbs contours obliquely, starting NW, passing low modern cairn and veering NNW. After crest it veers NE to join a tarmac lane (WDW) which becomes stony track. Where track bears L to house bear R (WDW and NCN 27) to follow grassy, becomes stony, track through furze to pass smallholding on L. **(8 miles)** Here go through wooden gate on L (WDW) on to track over bridge at former Lydford railway station. Go R on road and follow it into Lydford village, passing church and castle, to Castle Inn and car park opposite

High ground variation after Mary Tavy:

After Moorland Hotel take bridleway on R past Lower Spring Farm, through wooden gate and go NE to climb Gibbet Hill (1200 ft). From summit head due N to rejoin WDW at wooden gate to bridge over former Lydford Station.

Lydford: Parking: Free Public Car Park opposite Castle Inn OS OL28 500/849
Interest: *Lydford Gorge and Lydford Castle*

STAGE 15 DARTMOOR FRINGE II Lydford to Belstone 13 miles Map OS OL28

Car Parking: Lydford free CP opposite the Castle . Belstone free CP N side of village OS OL28 622/937

Beacon Bus 118: Tavistock, Lydford, Okehampton. Timetable Beacon 01805 804240 or Tavistock TIC 01822 612938

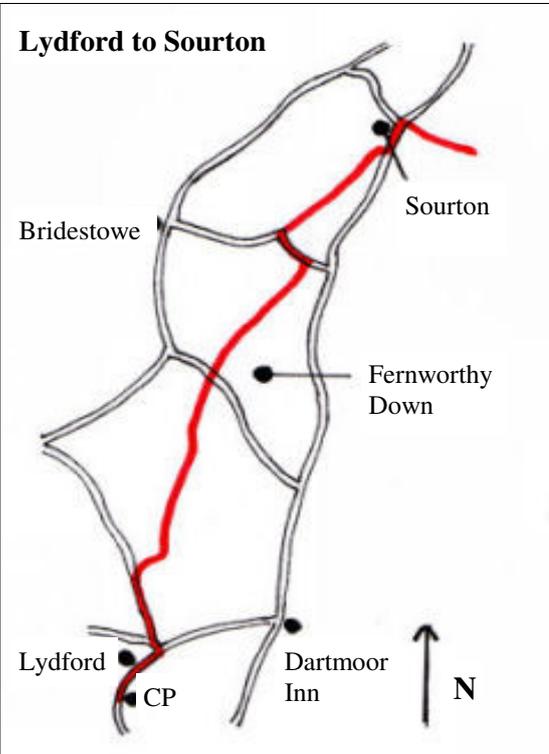
Trails encountered along the way – West Devon Way and Tarka Trail available from <http://www.walkingpages.co.uk>

West Devon Way: Plymouth to Okehampton – 36 miles – newly waymarked in 2009, shown in text as (WDW)

Granite Way: Lydford to Okehampton – 11 miles – cycle path on former railway, part follows Dartmoor Railway

Devonshire Heartland Way: 43 mile trail Okehampton to Exe Valley; here it links the Granite Way and Tarka Trail

Tarka Trail: N. Devon figure-of-8 between Barnstaple and Belstone – 180 miles – part cycle way, (TWM) in text



Lydford to Sourton

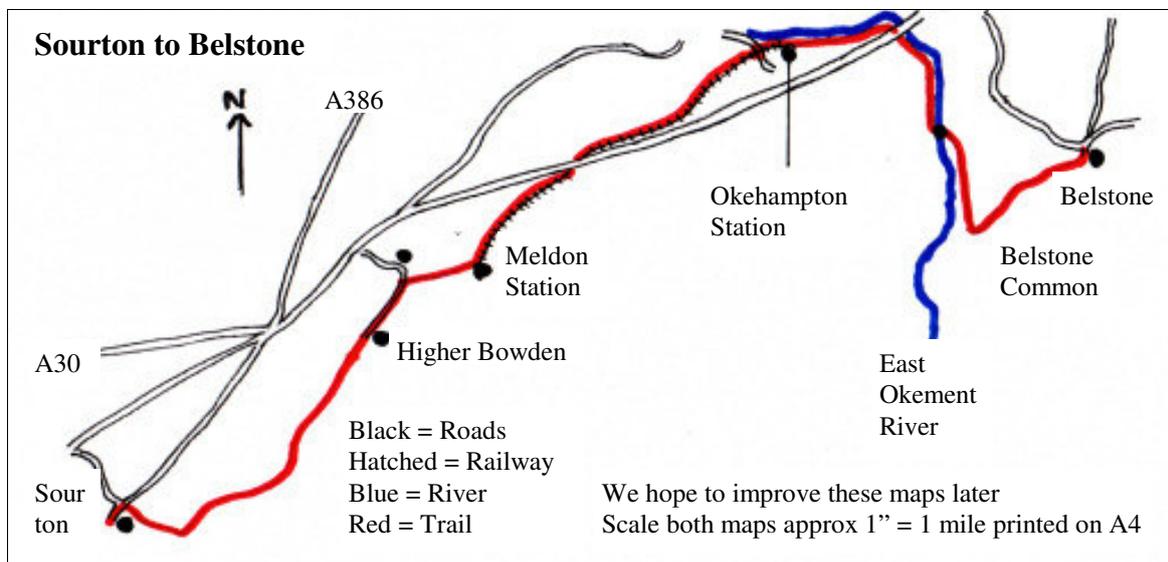
From Castle Inn go N on road to War Memorial. L on road (WDW) then R (WDW) past Lydford Caravan Park. After cottages on R go R down bridle path (WDW) to T. R on track (WDW), through wooden hunting gate (WDW), over clapper and bear L on track which follows W edge of Fernworthy Down. At end go through galvanised and wooden gates on byway (WDW) to Bridestowe road. Continue past Little Cranford and cross two clapper bridges, then up to road leading to Lake. **(3.5 miles)**

L on road (WDW) to T. L (WDW) and at L bend cross ladder stile on R (FP & WDW). Follow RH hedge over two ladder stiles, one stile (WM) and continue through gap. Cross to stile (WM), follow RH hedge over two wooden stiles (second, by barn, has WM). Follow LH hedge to stile (WDW) and gate. Continue past buildings to gate (WM) to cross busy A386. Go L on footway to green opposite Highwayman Inn. **(4.5 miles)**

Sourton to Belstone

At green bear R (WDW) on lane past church, becomes track over bridge. Go though gate (WDW) onto open moor below Sourton Tors. Follow LH hedge and continue ESE for 200 yards to turn L on clear grassy track NE veers E for 0.5 mile to where low bank joins high hedge. Through gap on L and on to wooden gate (WDW). Follow track between hedges. 100 yards after next gate follow FP Meldon (WDW) and continue on track between hedges to Higher Bowden House on R. **(6.5 miles)**

Follow lane to T at Meldon Bridge, go L up slope and R on Granite Way. Cross Meldon Viaduct and pass Meldon Station (**Dartmoor Railway**). 0.5 miles after station the Way jinks L & R under A30 road to follow Dartmoor Railway. At Okehampton Station (good café) **(10 miles)** L on Klondyke Road and R on Devonshire Heartland Way, signed FP East Okement Valley. Follow path through 3 hunting gates and under A30 road to Fatherford Viaduct. At Tarka Trail (TWM) go SE to follow W bank of East Okement River. Cross tributary by FB and continue S along river to cross wooden FB (TWM) **(11.5 miles)** onto Belstone Common. Bear L uphill on lower of two clear paths At top go R (no WM) on clearly defined stony and grassy track to follow LH hedge in direction of Belstone Tor, passing ruined Watchet Cottage on L. After end of hedge take any grassy track which hairpins L to follow line of LH drystone wall After farm on L go through iron gate (TWM) and down lane to southern green at Belstone and the Tors Inn.



Belstone: Parking: on N side of village, on minor road from A30, opposite village hall OS OL28 622/937

STAGE 14/15 THE HIGH DARTMOOR ROUTE Tavistock to Belstone 22 miles Map OS OL28

Car Parking: Tavistock: Public CP on S side of river. Belstone: Free public CP on north side of village.

WARNING At 22 miles this is a stage only for truly serious walkers. The route across *Dartmoor* from Lanehead to Belstone is over open moorland. After Lanehead there is no clearly defined path for 7.5 miles to Hangingstone Hill and there are no waymarks. High moorland can be subject to bad weather so always check the local weather forecast before setting off. And, unless you are an experienced moorland walker, or foolhardy, do not attempt this route in bad weather. Be sure to take a good compass and a large scale map. A handheld GPS may be useful. The route crosses two Army firing ranges, Willsworthy and Okehampton. Do not take this route on a live-firing day when warning flags will be flying. Go to <http://www.dartmoor-ranges.co.uk/> or ring 0800 458 4868 or 01837 650010 to check the situation.

Tavistock to Lanehead (8 miles).

From town hall cross the road bridge over River Tavy. L along A386 Okehampton road past roundabout. At fork turn R up B3357 Princetown road. After the school entrance, L (WDW) Old Tavistock Road. Follow lane for 2 miles. At Xroads after Radge Farm (2.5 miles) on to Peter Tavy and on past Cudlipp town. Then at spot height 239m (5 miles) L through gate (FP) and follow LH hedge to gap, then bear R downhill to gate, through woods to steps up to Horndon Bridge. L on stony track, crossing River Tavy, and uphill to leat. R over stile (FP) through Creason Wood to Hill Bridge. (6.5 miles) L to wooden gate and L on lane to Lanehead CP on moor.

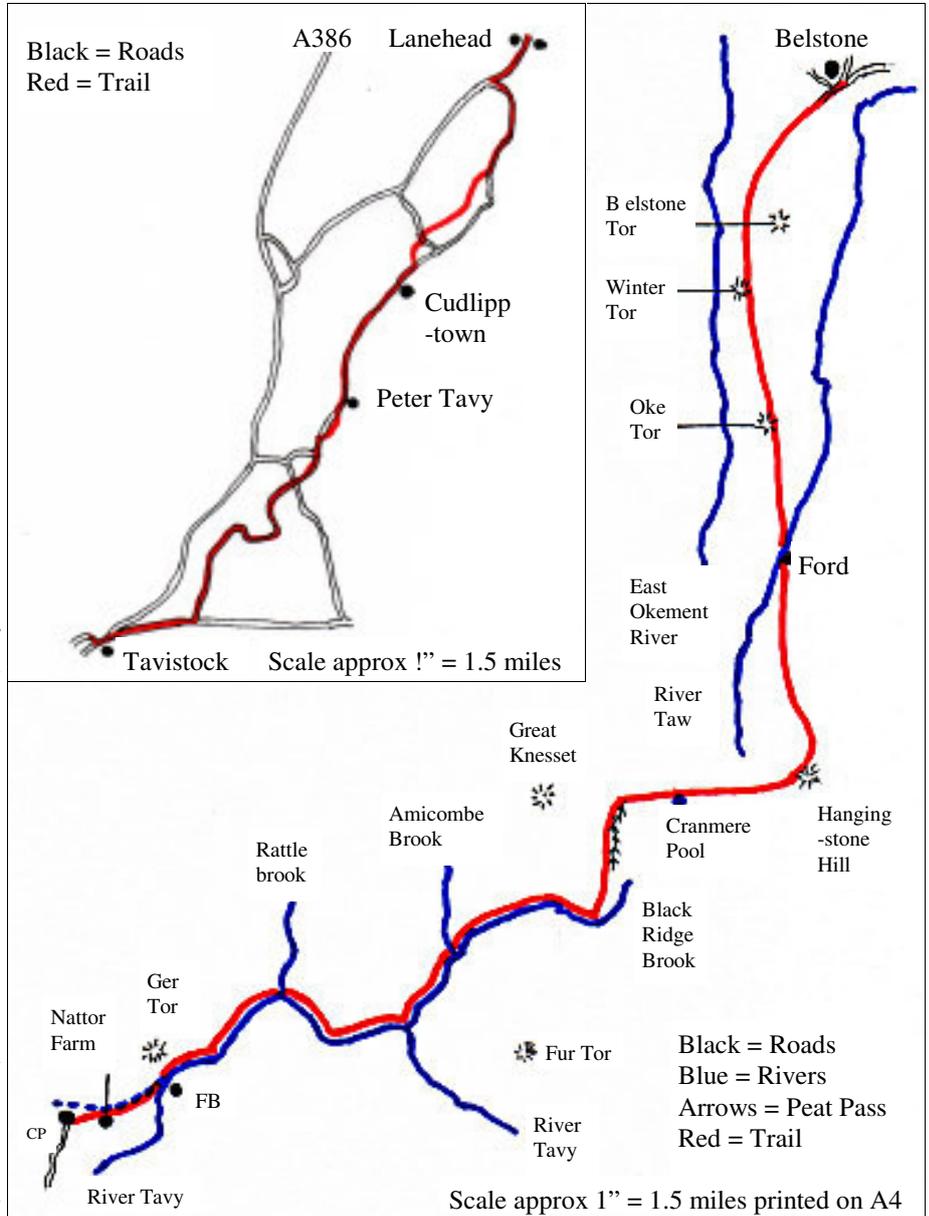
Lanehead to Black Ridge (6 miles)

A mix of moderate path, very rocky ground and partly dried blanket bog means that this section may take longer than the map suggests. Along the rivers and streams the ground is generally easier near the water. Go R on farm track to Nattor Farm, then turn L uphill to mine leat. Follow leat on clear path, entering Willsworthy Range, keeping leat on your L, for 0.7 mile. Leat leaves R. Tavy at stone sluice hut. Cross a small concrete bridge so that the river is on your R. Follow river for about 1 mile until Rattlebrook comes in from N. Cross brook on convenient rocks to follow River Tavy for about 1 mile to Sandy Lake, (entering Okehampton Range halfway). River Tavy now leaves to S. Follow Amicombe Brook for about 1 mile more to approx. 447 spot

height. Cross the now very narrow Amicombe Brook and follow Black Ridge Brook for about 1 mile before heading N across largely dried blanket bog to climb Black Ridge to southern end of **Peat Pass** number 2 (shown on OL28 but not named). Follow peat pass to N end, at N limit of peat hags. Peat pass hard to find but follow its line. Some may prefer to climb Black Ridge once across Amicombe Brook. You can see Hangingstone Hill OP from Black Ridge.

Black Ridge to Hangingstone Hill (1.5 miles) Ground may be saturated, especially from Black Ridge to Taw Head. From N end of Peat Pass Number 2 head just S of due E past Cranmere Pool (letter box) and continue to just S of Taw Head. From here head ENE to Army OP and Cairn on northern summit (2000 feet) of Hangingstone Hill.

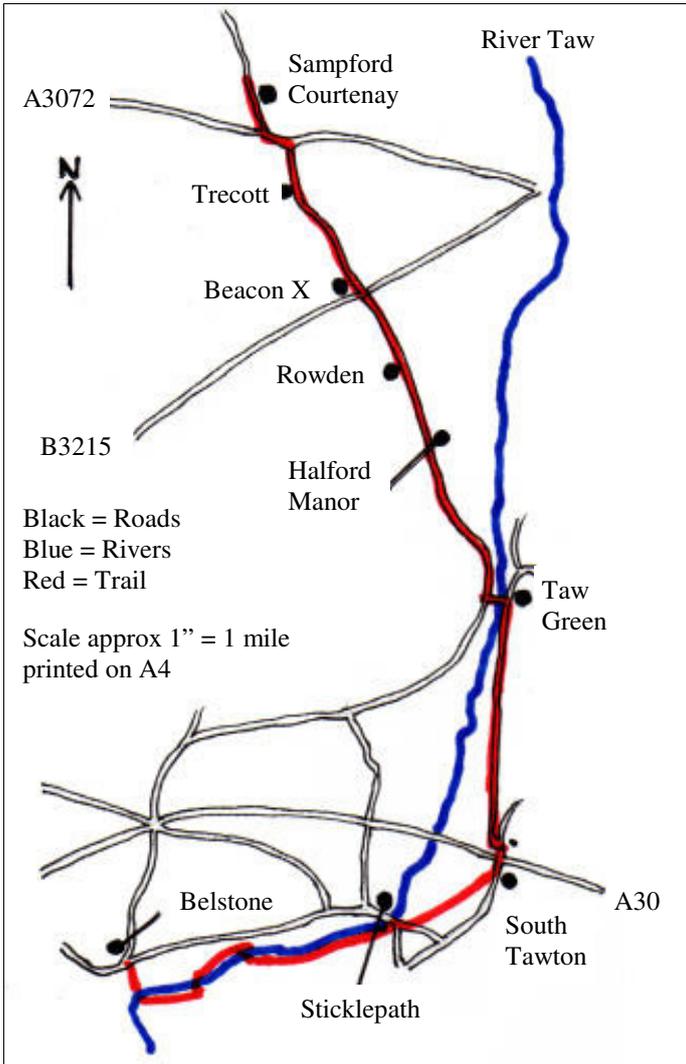
Hangingstone Hill to Belstone (6.5 miles) Easy going, mostly on tracks, variously rocky, grassy, wet or indistinct. From Cairn and Army OP on northern summit track heads first N then generally NNE (heading is Steeperton Tor) down to easy ford over stream at 'Knack Mine' in Steeperton Gorge. Track then climbs steeply. At the top heading is Belstone Tor. Track passes Oke Tor, just to its E, and undulates gently to pass just E of Winter Tor, leaving Okehampton Range at red and white post. Track now descends, with Belstone Tor to E but, where track bends L to valley, bear slightly R and continue past **Nine Stones Cairn Circle**. After a while follow LH drystone wall past farm to iron gate (Tarka WM) and down lane to Belstone village near the Tors Inn..



STAGE 16 TAW STAGE Belstone to Sampford Courtenay 8 miles OS OL28

Parking: North side of Belstone village, on minor road to A30, opposite village hall OS OL28 622/937

Trail: This stage uses the Tarka Trail – available from <http://www.walkingpages.co.uk> – shown in text as (TWM)



From southern village green follow lane past Tors Inn to open ground. Go SE downhill on grass, becomes stony path, to a wooden (gated) FB just S of ford. Cross FB to S bank of river. Go L on stony path and take L fork on rocky path to roughly follow S bank of **River Taw**, entering woodland after a while. Before long the path bears L down to river and hugs it for 0.5 miles to FP Skaigh sign. Cross river to N bank on second wooden FB and continue for approx 0.25 miles along N bank through woodland on path nearer to river. **(1.25 miles)**

At third (gated) wooden FB cross river to S bank and follow path close to river through Skaigh Wood. After 0.75 miles go through wooden gate and follow clear well defined path which becomes track, (*Sticklepath village is now on N bank*) passing weir at Cleave Mill on N bank. At T (FP sign Sticklepath) go L and through wooden gate to follow well made track between Cornish type hedges. (*Soon FP L goes to centre of Sticklepath village and Finch Foundry*) The track continues to former A30 at medieval bridge over River Taw. (By the bridge is the first identifiable TWM) **(2.5 miles)**

Cross road, fork L past Tawside House for 100 yards and turn L on metalled track (TWM) between high banks. Track climbs to 800 feet then descends to **South Tawton** close to the church. **(3.5 miles)** Here go L on road passing Blackhall Farm on L. Follow road on bridge over A30 and continue N for 1 mile to Taw Green. **(5 miles)**

Turn L (signed Halford, Langabeer) to cross River Taw then R (signed Halford, Rowden). Narrow, winding, blind-cornered minor road passes Halford Manor **(6 miles)** and Rowden. At Beacon X **(7 miles)** cross B3215 and continue past Trecott to fast A3072 road. Go L and turn R at New Inn into **Sampford Courtenay** to church at top of hill.

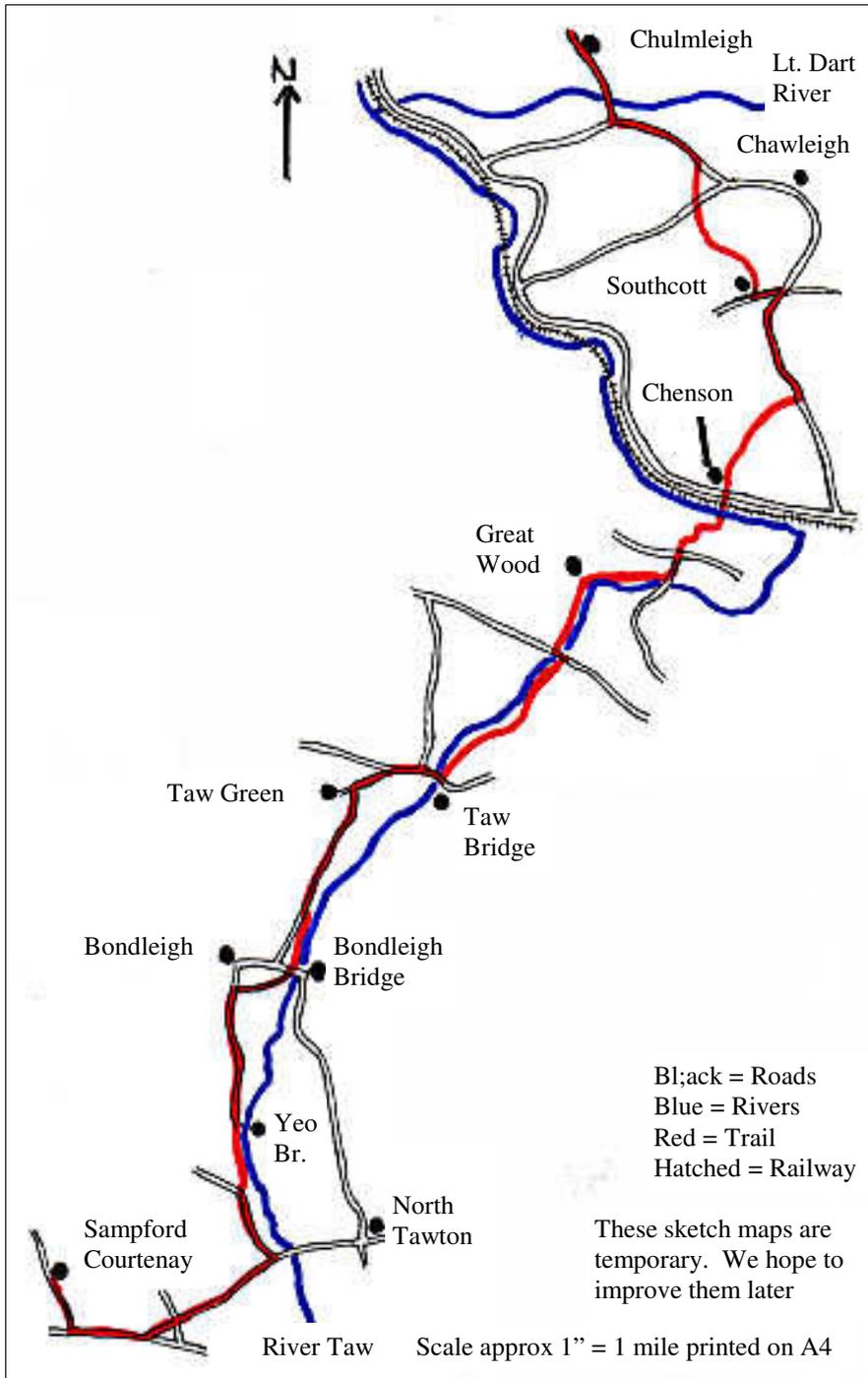
Refreshments: **Sticklepath**, Devonshire Inn, Taw River Inn, Finch Foundry (NT)
South Tawton, Seven Stars Inn **Sampford Courtenay**, New Inn

Interest: **Sticklepath** Finch Foundry
South Tawton 15th century church and Tudor Church House museum
Sutton Courtenay 15th century church

STAGE 17 TARKA STAGE Sampford Courtenay to Chulmleigh 15 miles Maps OS 113 & 127

Parking: Some street parking in centre of Sampford Courtenay

Tarka Trail: Stage uses Tarka Trail – available from <http://www.walkingpages.co.uk> – WM shown in text as (TWM)



From Sampford Courtenay church go S on village road to A3072. Go L (E) on A3072 for 0.5 mile to fork. Bear L along A3124 to Culm Cross Xroads and forward on minor road to bridge over **River Taw** at **North Tawton** (*good verge to walk on*). **(2.5 miles)** Turn L along W bank on minor road past Bridge Farm. At LH bend turn R (TWM) to wooden gate. Path bears L and R, follow TWM's to metal kissing gate and into wood to track to Yeo Bridge. Continue straight on to Bailey's Ford and FB. **(4 miles)** Follow muddy track to L uphill to Bondleigh Wood Xroads. **(5 miles)**

Turn R on minor road to Bondleigh Bridge for 0.5 miles then go L on path along W bank of River Taw to stile at minor road. Go R and follow road to Tawgreen Cross. **(7.5 miles)**

Go R at T and R on B3220 to Taw Bridge for 0.5 miles. **(8 miles)** Turn L over stile (TWM) to E bank of River Taw and go through field to metal gate and stile. Follow RH hedge to stile. Turn R on track to metal gate, then L (TWM) in field to FB. Follow River Taw to Westacott Wood, over stile and follow track through metal gate to minor road. **(9.5 miles)**

Turn L to cross River Taw then R (TWM) on E bank of river through field and over FB to metal gate. Head NNE to LH corner, with Wood Farm (derelict) on L and head NE to wooden gate. Take track through Great Wood and Burrowcleave Wood. **(10.5 miles)**

Go in SE direction through field to wooden stile and metal gate, then follow RH hedge to metal gate (TWM). Turn L on a minor road uphill to T at Hawkridge Farm. Turn R and L, through two metal gates and yard, then down concrete track to wooden gate on L, and then down a track through wood to River Taw and Chenson Bridge. **(11.5 miles)**

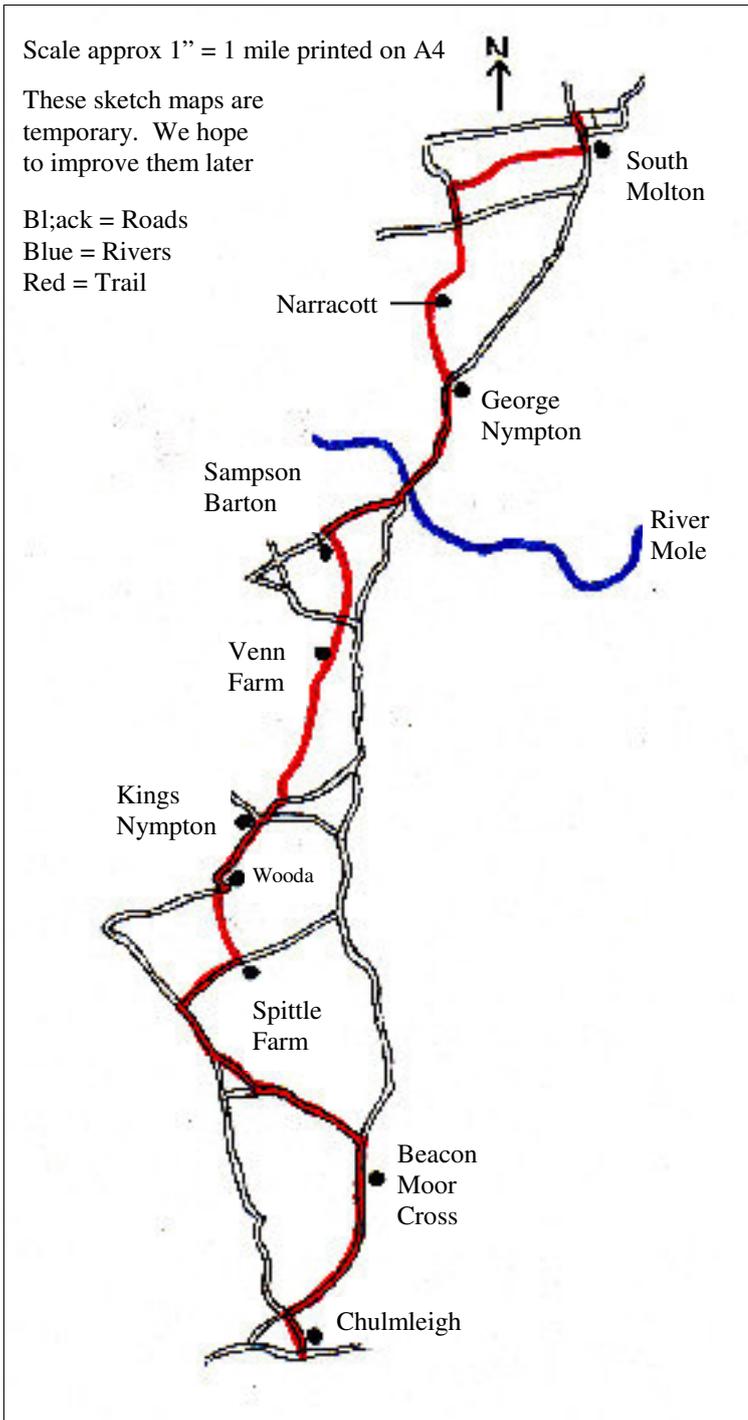
Cross railway line to main A377 road. Cross road and take path (FP Chawleigh). Turn L

along track and follow LH hedge and track which can be very muddy in wet weather. Turn L on road to T at Southcott Cross. **(12.5 miles)** Turn L on minor road to stile on R (FP). Follow RH hedge to awkward gate, then downhill to footbridge and stile. Up very steep hill following RH hedge to B3042. Cross road, go through gate and follow LH hedge to gate and B3096 road. **(13.5 miles)** Turn L downhill to Moortown Cross and Chulmleigh Bridge. **(14.5 miles)** Across bridge over the Little Dart River and up very steep hill on main road to the centre of **Chulmleigh**. **(15 miles)**

Websites: **Chulmleigh** is at http://www.britinfo.net/index_Chulmleigh.htm & <http://www.chulmleigh.org/>

STAGE 18 NYMPTON STAGE Chulmleigh to South Molton 11.5 miles Map OS 127

Parking: Near Globe Inn next to Church in Chulmleigh. OS 127 Grid ref: 687/143



Go N on South Molton Street and head NNW to Xroads at Community College. *The direct route would continue NNW downhill and uphill via Bond's Cross and Trunk Bridge to Dobbsmoor Cross but the climb is very steep. To avoid this at Xroads go R to head NE via Parsonage X and N to Beacon and Dobbsmoor X. (1.5 miles)* Turn L on minor road NW to Tollbar Cross (1.75 miles) At Highlands, on your R, fork R to Cutland Cross (2 miles) and on to Spittle Cross. (2.5 miles) .

Turn R (NE) to just before Spittle Farm and L (FP) down track to Catham Lake stream. (3.5 miles) X FB uphill to minor road at Catham Bridge. Go R on road, bears L at Wooda Bridge and R uphill at Lower Wooda, to King's Nympton village and T junction. (5 miles) Turn R and L. Immediately after next R bend take track on L (FP). Follow track to stile in corner then LH hedge through gap and scrub to stile in corner and FB across Colley Lake. Go L of cottage and uphill along RH hedge through 2 wooden gates and metal gate. Then diagonally R to kissing gate near building. Turn R and L through gate (WM) and head for stile.. Continue to second stile and track to Venn Farm (6 miles) and minor road.

Cross and go down LH hedge to half way along, then slightly L and follow RH hedge to metal gate to tree on skyline (South Molton and Exmoor views) and follow LH hedge to metal gate, then RH hedge to stile. Now go downhill to stream and stile and on uphill to Sampson Barton (FP). (7 miles) Go R on minor road downhill to Wampford Bridge. At T turn L uphill, crossing River Mole, to George Nympton. (8 miles) On uphill on road past church, past Hillside on R, to R bend and take path (FP) on L. Follow LH hedge to small footbridges, follow LH fence to gap and gate, then RH hedge to stile on R to Narracott Farm. (9 miles)

Through stepping stones on R in wall, then follow farm lane to B3227 road (FP) Turn R on road for 70 yards, then L on minor road to stile on R (FP). (10 miles) Go ahead to next stile and follow RH hedge to another stile. Now go diagonally L, following LH hedge over stile into field with hedge on R. At stile near houses go along tarmac path to Normandy Way and Livarot Walk. Turn L to Raleigh Park and follow road to B3227. (11 miles) R West Street, R Barnstaple Street, L into South Molton centre.

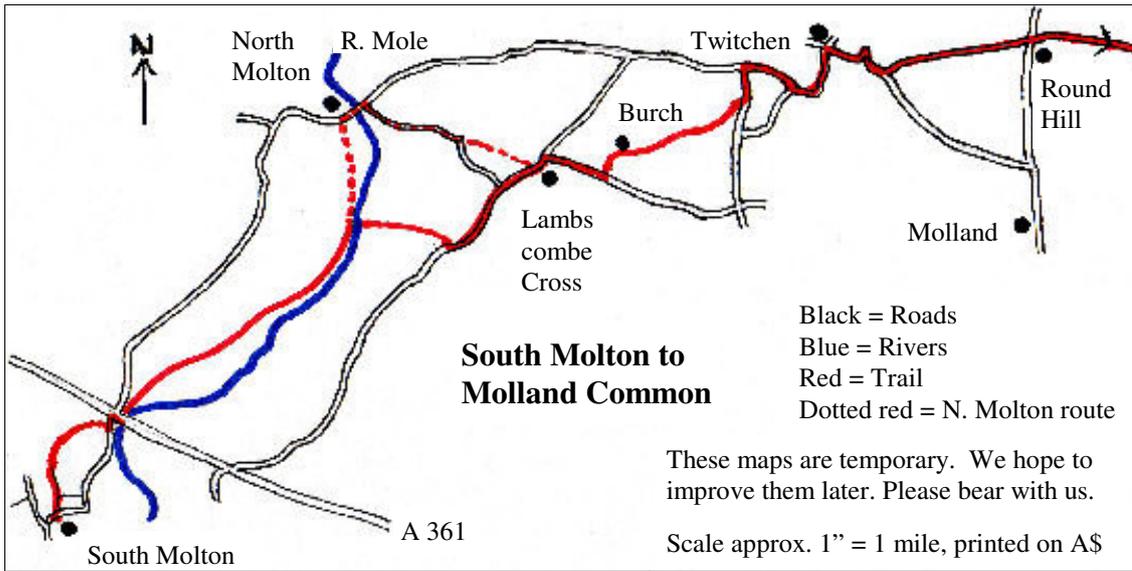
Some walkers may prefer to continue to North Molton, an additional 4.5 miles, making this a 16 mile day. This will shorten Stage 19 to 16 miles and give more opportunity to linger over the landscapes of Exmoor and the Exe Valley.

From Broad Street, at E end of The Square, L on Duke Street, L on North Street and R on Parsonage Lane which bends L/R. At the end go R (NE) along tarmac FP through Community Woodlands and into an Industrial Estate. The path bends L to a road which follow R to T at end of rugby ground. Turn R to road from South Molton. Turn L to A361 and go R for 10 yards to WM to follow path SE to N bank of River Mole. There go L on path following river under A361. Path continues N away from river to crossing track. Turn R along track which bears L and R and L and to East Marsh Farm. (13.5 miles) Track finishes, over stile into field and through wooden gate into next field, then follow RH hedge to Underhill Wood. Ignore cross track (may be double gated) to River Mole at Bicknor Bridge and continue NE along path and through sometimes boggy field with Holdridge Wood on L and River Mole on R to FB. (15 miles) Continue N with River Mole on R and wood on L and river on R to a fork where the path gradually goes NW to a stile onto a sunken lane. This goes L and R across a stream, then L again, as Dure Lane, NNW past cottages and over FB to East Street in North Molton. (16 miles)

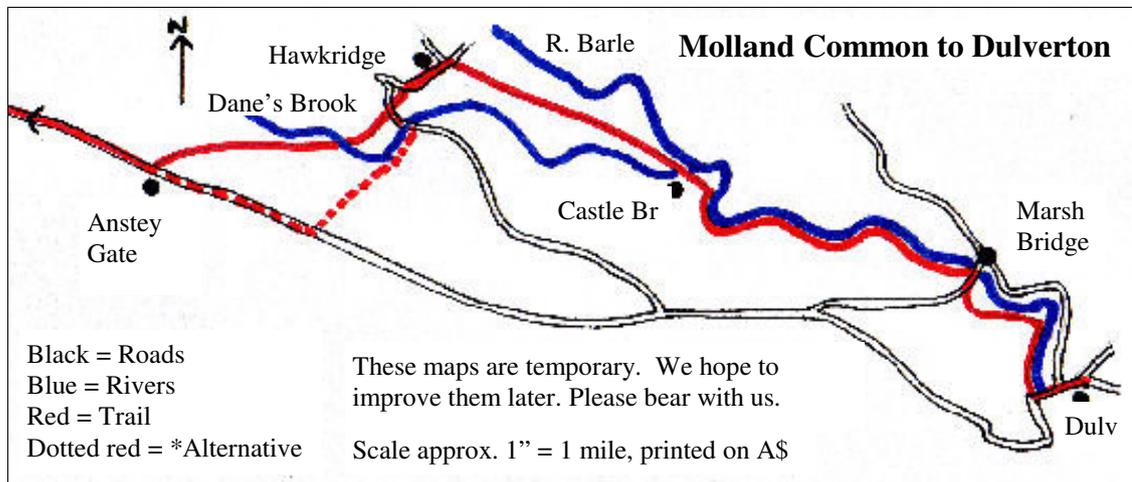
STAGE 19 EXMOOR STAGE South Molton to Dulverton 19 miles OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor

Parking: Large Public Car Park to south of Broad Street

Trails: **Exe Valley Way (EVW)**, inconsistently waymarked, is used for 5.5 miles between Hawkridge and Dulverton.
Two Moors Way, inconsistently waymarked, encountered briefly between Slade Lane and Hawkridge.



From E end of Square, go L Duke Street, L North Street, R Parsonage Lane which bends L/R. At end, R on tarmac FP through Community Woods into Industrial Estate. The path bends L to a road which follow R to end of rugby ground. Turn R to road and L to A361. Go R over stream and look for WM down slope to River Mole. Turn L to follow N bank of River Mole under A361 to track. Turn R on track, bears L/R/L to East Marsh Farm. (2 miles)



Track finishes, cross stile on R into field and on to wooden gate, then follow RH hedge to gate and Underhill Wood. Ignore cross track to River Mole at Bicknor Bridge and go along FP through field with river on R to far RH corner of field. Turn R to cross FB over River Mole (3 miles) and go uphill through wood and wooden

gate to follow RH hedge to gate and track. (WM) Follow track past Limeslake Farm to minor road. (3.5 miles) Turn L on road to Ley Cross and Lambscombe Cross. (4.5 miles) Turn R downhill to track on L (FP). Follow track bearing R and L uphill to Burch Farm. (5.5 miles) Go up green lane to wooden gate. Follow LH hedge to wooden gate, then RH fence to wooden stile. Skirt round Marledge farm on your R and go through two wooden gates to join track to minor road (FP sign). (6 miles) Turn L on road to crossroads at Headgate. Turn R and L to sharp RH bend and across stream to Twitchen church. (7 miles) Skirt R round church to Molland turning, go down steep hill across stream and then zig-zag uphill on road to Cussacombe Cross. Turn L on road uphill (just N of E) to Ridgway Cross. (8 miles) Continue on road E/SE to Brimblecombe Hill and Anstey Gate. (10.5 miles) After cattle grid take bridleway (sign) half L (just N of E) across Anstey Rhiney Moor. *Ford Dane's Brook and pass Zeal Farm to Slade Lane. (12.5 miles) Turn L uphill to L/R bend and take FP (Hawkridge 0.5 miles) on R through field to wooden gate, then R on road to Hawkridge church. (13.5 miles) From church, take clear byway on R (sign Dulverton 5.25 miles) along Hawkridge Ridge. Track is partly green lane, partly through fields (several gates). In last field go downhill to wooden gate to continue fairly steeply downhill to cross Castle Bridge. (15 miles) Bear L (FP), through woods above R. Barle, on track which bends L and R and comes to Marsh Bridge (B&B - and cream teas in the season). (17.5 miles) Go R on minor road for 250 yards, then L on **path (EVW) for 1.5 miles, then L/L on road into Dulverton.

*Dane's Brook may not be easily fordable. If in doubt, go R following Dane's Brook on your L to Slade Lane. Go L on lane, cross Dane's Brook at *Welcome to Somerset* sign and continue uphill to rejoin the route. Alternatively, from Anstey Gate you could continue SSE for 1 mile and turn NE on a bridleway (sign) for 0.75 miles to Slade Lane. (Adds 0.5 miles)

** If there is subsidence on path, best to turn L at Marsh Bridge to B3223 and turn R with River Barle on R for 1.5 miles

Walkers starting at North Molton, cross bridge over River Mole, turn R on minor road for 0.75 mile uphill to RH bend, take FP on L through gate and follow RH hedge to stile and gate to minor road. L on road then R at Lambscombe Cross.

Sketch map under development

Take the B3222 road eastwards uphill to Jury Cross and downhill to Hele Bridge across the River Exe and up to junction at A396 road. (*Beware of traffic here!!*) Turn R, then L and R again uphill on minor road which skirts round hill and to hamlet of Bury. (**3 miles**)

High Level Hill Route

For high level walkers, cross River Haddeo by hump-backed bridge on minor road to bridleway on L next to cottage (FP Haddon Hill 1.5 miles). Head uphill on mucky green lane through two wooden gates, bridleway bears L to wooden gate and eventually to stile and WM to Haddon Farm. (**4 miles**) Through farm along track to beginning of copse on L. Through copse to wooden gate which goes to Access Land. Up track for a little way, then look for path through heather to reach the trig point of Hadborough Hill at 1070 feet. (5 miles) From summit, head due East on path, then turn R on well defined track to just before car park. Head east on track which goes over minor road (**6 miles**) Continue straight on parallel with B3190 road on R, then dart L downhill steeply to bridleway. Turn R to wooden gate, and onwards to B3190 road. (**7.5 miles**)

Low Level River Route

For walkers who wish to walk on the valley bottom due to inclement weather on top of Hadborough, proceed from the hamlet of Bury turning L on road to Hunts Farm, take bridleway track on R, fork due N then NE along River Haddeo to Hartford. (**5 miles**) Continue on track across river and bear L on track which bears R to junction with another track. Ignore this and go uphill on track to Wimbleball Lake and Deer Park. The track now goes gently uphill, above Upton Cleave, and eventually comes to a wooden gate. (**6.5 miles**) Continue to the B3190 road. Turn L on road towards Upton Church on R and onto Lowtrow Cross Inn (**8.5 miles**) Turn R on minor road to Leeford Farm. Take Bridleway on L through Leemoor Plantation to Junction with track on R. Follow this to another X track. Turn L and follow LH fence uphill to wooden gate. Through to LH bend to gate, then turn L downhill to gate and road at Sholford Farm. Turn L on road and find FP sign on R. Go through metal gate and onto Higher Shute Farm. (**10 miles**) Through gate, find FP over stile and head roughly SE across field to another stile, then follow LH hedge to stile and barbed wire. Along RH hedge to Hart's Farm, around farm and follow LH hedge to cross tracks, and onwards to Paddock's Farm. Over new stiles along RH hedge to field hedge, then head NW to stile and follow RH hedge to gate into Huish Champflower. (**11 miles**) Turn R on road, then L to small track and gate. Head diagonally R to stile into field, path goes into RH corner. Through gate then R along LH hedge to footbridge across River Tone. Follow LH hedge through gap on L and over stile. Go uphill on path slightly R to metal gate and track leading to road. Turn L into Maundown (**12 miles**) and minor road to junction on R. Take road on R uphill which becomes a bridleway, Jew's Lane (West Devon Way), which goes R and L then heads downhill to junction on R. Follow track on R into West Street, Wiveliscombe. (**13.5 miles**)

Wiveliscombe: Ample public car parking North Street and elsewhere

The route for this stage is provisional and may be subject to subsequent minor amendment

STAGE 21 TAUNTON DEANE STAGE Wiveliscombe to Bishop's Lydeard 7 miles Maps OL 9, OS128

Parking: Ample public car parking North Street and elsewhere in Wiveliscombe.

Sketch maps still under development

From High Street/West Street in Wiveliscombe centre, take Silver Street and Golden Hill NNE to a T Junction. Turn L then R into Cutthroat Lane (FP). Follow it until the lane ends, then follow LH hedge over four stiles to a minor road. Turn L on road then take the gravel track on R to Pitt Farm (*signpost*). (1 mile)

Go along the track to the farmyard, over a stile and follow LH hedge to gate at Ford Farm. Turn R to T junction at B3188 road. *Beware of traffic here*. Turn L along the road which bears R and then L past Higher Ford Farm. Continue uphill to the second track on R. Follow the track past a building on R and continue through woods to a disused quarry on R (2 miles) and on to a small wooden gate to a field. Cross field in SE direction to stile and follow LH hedge to two gates and a concrete track to a junction. Turn L and R through a wooden gap and then follow LH hedge to Knight's Farm. Go straight across and head E on a minor road to a T junction. Turn L and R and R again to Fitzhead Church. (3 miles)

Go along road to a T junction, turn L and R to the Fitzhead Inn, turn L again on road to a track on R. Follow this track past farm machinery on L, then follow RH hedge to the corner near a farm building. (4 miles) Turn L along RH hedge to a gap and stile and follow LH hedge which finishes, then continue E to a stile. Follow RH hedge to a stile and galvanised gate (*FP sign*). Turn L on a minor road downhill to just before its junction with a road on R. Go up wooden steps into a field with minor road on L to a gap on L. Go down a steep bank to a stile and a road. Cross the road and go down a track to a stream. Now head NE to a gate and continue uphill to a ruined building. (5 miles)

Turn R to follow RH hedge to a junction. Turn L on a track until you reach a minor road. Turn R to where the road bends R and go over a stile across a stream and along a footpath uphill, then turn R through a metal gate and follow RH hedge to a gate. Turn R on a minor road for 120 yards and then turn L through The Priory (*farm buildings*) along a track to a minor road. (6 miles) Turn R and immediately L along a gravel track to its end. Here look for a gap on R and go through a kissing gate. Cross the field SE to a FB and a gate to a road. Turn L along the road to a bridge over West Somerset Railway (*station on your R*) and bear slightly L to go under A358 road. Go along Station Road to the centre of Bishops Lydeard. (7 miles)

ROBERT'S COMMENTARY ON STAGE 21

After all the ups and downs of the previous stage, this one was a welcome relief with much easier walking. Only seven miles long, going is mostly gentle with only one hill, just after Higher Ford Farm, where you climb onto a plateau with minor roads, pleasant footpaths and some good path improvements. From there I enjoyed views ahead to the Blackdown Hills and back to Exmoor. Then the Quantocks came into view, and I found myself looking forward to the next stage to Bridgwater. Next was the hamlet of Fitzhead, with its lovely tithe barn, 15th century church with medieval pews and rood screen, and friendly Fitzhead Inn (*B&B*). You could consider a detour to Halse, about half-a-mile off trail, for the popular Halse Inn and lovely cottages. Next comes the small village of Ash Priors. Near Holy Trinity church is *The Priory*, probably rebuilt in the 17th century but, before the Reformation, owned by Taunton Priory. Half-a-mile from the trail is Ash Priors Common, a 52 acre nature reserve; the star features are the orchids - early Marsh, Heath Spotted and Twayblade. Next comes the West Somerset Railway, a restored steam line between Minehead and Bishop's Lydeard. The latter has a beautiful ornate church of around 1450, in the Somerset perpendicular style. Even Victorian over-restoration failed spoil it; inside are superb carved pew ends and a fine rood screen; nearby are 16th century almshouses. 18th century Lower Mill has been restored and is open the public.

STAGE 22 QUANTOCK HILLS STAGE Bishops Lydeard to Bridgwater 13 miles Maps OL9, OS140

Parking: The Lethbridge Arms, Gore Square, and elsewhere in Bishop's Lydeard

Sketch maps still under development

From the Lethbridge Arms go north up Mount Street and turn R along Quantock View to its end. Turn L on a narrow path to a gate. Go R along RH hedge to LH corner, then turn L along RH hedge to a gap and stile. Now head in a SE direction to a gate and follow LH ditch to a track (*1 mile*). Follow the track to Portman Farm, go through the yard. The track bears R and L and R again to a gate. Now follow LH hedge which bears L to a stile in a gap and continue to follow LH hedge to a track which ends just before Grove Farm.

Head around the farm on L into a field. Head to a stile and follow RH hedge to a minor road. Turn R and look for a small track (WM) on L (*2 miles*). Follow the track to a gate and head NE across a field to a stile in the RH hedge. Turn slightly L and follow the LH hedge to a gate and continue diagonally R to a gate to a road. Go R then L heading N to a kissing gate (*3 miles*) then go through a field with a stream on your L to a gate. The path begins to wind round L to a pool on L and on uphill to Ivyton Farm. (*4 miles*)

Go through the yard to join a tarmac road and follow this round to the R and L to a junction. Ignore the road on L and take the green lane downhill to a road. Cross the road at Raswell Farm. Here a bridleway bears L and R downhill to a stream, then uphill steeply, levelling out (*a welcome break!*) to another bridleway on R. Continue uphill to a road. (*5 miles*) Turn R at junction for 100 yards then L to Broomfield Church and Fyne Court.

Just before the church go through a kissing gate and along the LH hedge and track to a field. Head NE to RH hedge and wood. Continue to cross a road and go through a wooden gate. Head NE on a path which becomes a track for a short stretch, continuing as a footpath to a wooden stile in the LH corner. (*6 miles*) Go over the stile and turn L along the LH hedge; the path narrows here, passing farm buildings on R, then becomes a track to a gate. Now follow RH hedge to a gate to a road. Turn L on the road to a junction. Cross road and follow a bridleway (WM) downhill fairly steeply along the RH hedge to a gate. The track now becomes very wide, with extensive views of the South Wales coastline and Glastonbury Tor in the distance. Follow the track to a gate leading to a track (*7.5 miles*) Continue on the track to Cobb's Cross Farm.

The track leads to a road; follow this round to the R and SE to a junction. Turn L, passing the Mone Testament Temple on R, and continue E to the village of Goathurst. (*8 miles*) Turn L on the road northwards, bearing R and L to Chantry Cottage. (*8.5 miles*) Turn R on a footpath (WM *Samaritans Way*) eastwards through a field, following a wood on L and then the LH hedge, to cross a stream by a FB at the junction with a path. Continue through a ploughed field to a gate at Rhode Lane. (*9.5 miles*)

Turn R on the lane then L through a gate (WM) into a field, with stream on R, to a FB. Into a field with stream on L. Go under pylons (*10.5 miles*) and head NE to LH corner to cross a FB. Keep the stream on your R and cross another FB. Continue through a field with stream on L to a stile in LH corner. Cross stile to a gap and a gate, then head to RH corner to join another path. (*11.5 miles*) Go through a galvanised gate and follow LH hedge to a wooden kissing gate over a small stream. Now head NE to ramparts and ditch and go L through a gap. Follow LH hedge to the recreation ground, cross this to end and to a road. Follow the road, which crosses the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, to the main A39. Cross this road with care using traffic lights and continue into the centre of Bridgwater. (*13 miles*)

Robert's Commentary

A lovely stage on which I enjoyed the complete contrast to the day before. Going was easy at first, meandering through farm and pasture in a north-easterly direction. Eventually I began climbing up into the Quantock Hills with Ivyton Farm looming. I took a well earned rest there, admiring the view of the Brendon Hills. There is a very steep ascent to Broomfield, where St. Mary's Church, well worth a look, dates from around 1320, its tower being completed around 1440; I found it a good dry coffee stop for rainy weather. To the left is the National Trust's Fyne Court Garden, a woodland garden with a 20 acre nature reserve managed by Somerset Wildlife Trust. Eventually, as I got down to lower levels, there were glorious views of South Wales and of Glastonbury Tor in the distance. Here I was able to put on a spurt down a wide track heading into Goathurst, where I broke for lunch at the church. St. Edwards Church dates from the 15th to 16th centuries, mainly in the perpendicular style; it was restored in 1884. I stopped for a while at Halswell House, half-a-mile to the south, rebuilt in 1689 by Sir Halswell Tynte. About a mile north of Cobb's Cross stream I found West Bower, a much diminished great manorial property dating partly from the 15th century. Eventually I reached the town of Bridgwater. There are plenty of places to stay here but, much preferring the country, I chose to continue for 3 miles to Temple Farm near Chedzoy and spent the night there.

STAGE 23 SEDGEMOOR STAGE Bridgwater to Glastonbury 17 miles Maps OS Explorer 104, 141
Car Parking: in public car parks in Bridgwater

Sketch maps still under development

From Taunton Road, go R into Cranleigh Gardens, R again into St John's Street, then along the main road to the junction at railway station. Over FB into Redgate Street, turn L before main A372 road, bear L on tarmac FP to T. Across this, path bears R and L, and R again onto Longstone Avenue. Go L to T, and R into Fairfax Road to Parkway dual carriageway. Go R past Youth Centre on L, and L by swings to end of park. Bear L and follow grassy track, becomes tarmac path leading to Wilkins Road. Go L then R into Beech Drive. At end, bear R then follow a footpath between houses to Walton Close. Continue on Avebury Drive to junction with Eastern Ave. Turn R to junction with Magnolia Tree Road, and go right to its end. Go R along side of house to Bower Lane. Turn L then R over stile into field to another stile, and across M5 by footbridge. (2 miles)

Footpath goes L and R over FB and stile. Go east on track, then L and R to Fisher Farm and road. Follow road NE to Chedzoy. (3 miles) Admire the fine church here and continue on the road, bears R/L through Parchey hamlet to King's Sedgemoor Drain. (4 miles) Continue E on road over West Moor to R bend, look for WM. Over FB on L and through field SE to single plank FB, then head to gap and wooden kissing gate (WM). *This saves walking on the road!* Turn L along road to T, and R to Sutton Parish Church. (5.5 miles) Turn L to T, continue straight on to track (WM) in SE direction, bends L uphill gently to Pit Hill (*glorious views over the Sedgemoor area*). Track goes downhill to T at road. (8 miles)

Turn sharp L (WM) on narrow FP through metal gate to orchard. Over stile then uphill to Moorlinch church on R. *Worth a stop here for glorious views of Quantocks*. FP leads to road at grid ref. 397/371. Cross to track NE to R bend and look for *gate on L at 400/371. Follow FP N and NE through rank vegetation and wood to A39 at 404/375. Straight across on Wood Lane, over X roads, head NE then E on road to Shapwick. **If you fail to find gate, continue E on track to L bend at Holcombe Farm at 408/373 (good views) and L to A39. Go R SE on road for 400 yards to E end of Loxley Wood at 413/373. Go L (WM) through wood to stile to field, follow LH hedge to gap, then NE to stile to minor road (High Street). Turn R then L into Shapwick.* (10 miles)

Turn first R in village by church, then look for lane on L. Down lane, passing vicarage, to end then along LH hedge to kissing gates to road. Road bears R, look for WM on L. Follow RH hedge over four stiles and gate to track, and turn R uphill to T. L on minor road to sharp L bend, straight ahead to Millslade Farm (12.5 miles). Follow track to R bend, then L to follow RH hedge to gate, then diagonally R across field to gap, then R through two gaps to stile and plank bridge and follow hedge to minor road (WM). Go L along road to second T ignoring other minor road on L. Keep straight on to black railing gate, open adjacent kissing gate (WM), follow drive to Private Road sign. Go R through wooden gate/stile, and follow LH hedge down mucky wide track to stile, go R and L to track. Turn L along Small Moor Rhyne track to large metal gate (WM). Go L on minor road to metal gate on R. Go through field to metal gate, follow WMs, then L and onto large plank bridge. Go L with stream on L to Hulk Moor Rhyne. Go R to follow this to a wooden stile at road. Turn L to Cradle Bridge. (15 miles) Turn R along Porchestall Drove Road to T, and continue on to another junction with builders merchants on R. Cross to main A39 bypass and head into Glastonbury to church on R, slightly L to road on R. (17 miles)

Robert's Commentary

I said goodbye to the beautiful Quantocks, with their gorgeous views, and entered the totally different landscape of the Somerset Levels, almost entirely flat and much of it below sea level. The only two hills, Pit Hill and that up to Moorlinch church, seemed quite steep in comparison. If, as I did yesterday, you find the directions out by Sydenham confusing, just follow the Westonzoyland road, past Parkway and Eastern Avenue, taking the next left on Bower Lane to a stile on the right to pick up the route. I had spent the night in Chedzoy, but lingered to admire the church with its Norman chancel. The church still shows the marks where the Duke of Monmouth's troops sharpened their swords before defeat at the Battle of Sedgemoor. In no time, I was crossing the King's Sedgemoor Drain, one of the major man-made cuts draining the Levels. It runs for some 10½ miles and was completed in 1795. Between Sutton Mallet and Moorlinch I was on an ancient Lych Way, a coffin path. Here I enjoyed the views from Pit Hill and from Moorlinch church, looking south across Sedgemoor and back to the Quantocks of the previous stage. I liked the buildings of blue lias in Shapwick, southern end of the prehistoric Sweet Track, then found a pleasant lunch stop by the church in Ashcott, which has a good pub, the 16th century Ashcott Inn. Reaching Glastonbury, I spent some time exploring its Abbey, the Chalice Well, the Tor (what views!) and the town's early Christian and Arthurian connections.

Stage 24 Pennard Hill Stage Glastonbury to Bruton 16 miles OS Explorer 141 & 142

Parking: Ample CPs in Glastonbury, including by the Abbey.

Sketch maps still under development

From High Street, take Bove Town Road uphill to junction. Here take Wick Hollow Road, ignore the road on the R and proceed to next junction where you turn R and then L. (*1 mile*) Follow minor road ignoring junction on R. It becomes a track, continue downhill to Norwood Park Farm. (*2 miles*) Cross road into open compound, go through three metal gates and follow a track (WM) to where it ends. Go through metal gate and follow LH fence to stile. Head slightly R across FB and through open gate at East Street Farm. (*3 miles*)

Follow tarmac road E then SE to junction with A361. Turn L in West Pennard and go past Lion Inn to X roads. Turn R then L uphill on Cottles Lane which becomes a track. (*4 miles*) Now head due E through two gates to a minor road. Follow this road to junction where road bears L and turn R along track to minor road. Turn R and L along track to just before Pennard Hill Farm. (*6 miles*) Go through gate and field SE to stile, over another stile to minor road. Turn L to T junction, turn R, follow track to kissing gate, and follow LH hedge and track to East Pennard Church. (*7 miles*) Turn R on road and, just after farm on L, look for new stile on L (WM) into field, over metal gate and track, and follow LH hedge and metal gate to stile. Turn R over stile into short lane to A37 road. **CROSS WITH CARE!** (*8 miles*)

Across road, then slight L into field downhill, over stile and follow WM's to go through vineyard to road. Turn L then R down track and L again to follow WM on tarmac drive to just before Wraxhall House. Turn R to metal gate, around hedge to metal gate and stile, then head SE to small wooden gate to follow path around Dairy House Farm to two small wooden gates. Head due E under electric fence to new wooden stile, over this and over two more stiles and small FB. Follow LH hedge to metal gate, then RH hedge to end, then head towards new wooden stile into field, and to small stile inside garden and a wooden gate. Turn L on road to Ditcheat. (*10 miles*)

Take small path from church to road, then L and look for gap on R, along track and RH hedge to stile. Head slightly R to stile and follow LH hedge to FB, passing an awful eyesore builders centre! (*This part of the route, from Ditcheat to Lamyatt, may be subject to change to avoid the eyesore of builders centre*) The path bears R and L on a track to A371 road. **CROSS WITH EXTREME CARE!** (*11 miles*)

Turn R then L along LH hedge (WM) and head slightly R to farm buildings and stile. Turn R down track and then L, to follow concrete track to Higher Redlands Farm. Bear diagonally R to metal gate and follow LH hedge to another metal gate to small track. Turn L on minor road to Lamyatt Church. (*13 miles*) Follow road uphill to LH bend. Go through kissing gate (WM) on track uphill, bearing L and R to gate on B3081 road. (*14 miles*) Turn R and ignore the track to Creech Hill Farm on R and continue downhill to battered gate at LH hand bend. Go R on path and head over brow to hedge and look for stile, then downhill steeply to Coombe Farm, and follow track to road. Then, on L bend, turn R on footpath into Cheeks Lane, and then L into Higher Backway. Turn R into the centre of Bruton. (*16 miles*)

Robert's Commentary

The last stage was fairly flat so here I enjoyed the hills and views. Although the route doesn't climb the 520 foot Tor, I can recommend the detour for the view over the Levels. After West Pennard, I loved the view across the Mendips from Pennard Hill. I enjoyed a coffee stop, protected from the rain, in the porch of East Pennard church, 14th century with a Norman font and a fine oak altar screen. Near Wraxhall I discovered a new, to me, footpath diversion at Dairy House Farm, complete with new stiles and gates. After the diversion I had some difficulty finding a somewhat obscured stile. After crossing the Roman Fosse Way, I could have lingered some while in the village of Ditcheat. It's a delightful place with a beautiful church with 12th century origins. I enjoyed my lunch in the porch, though I was sorely tempted by the nearby highly recommended Manor House Inn. Other impressive buildings include 15th century Abbey House, formerly the Priory, and the 17th century Manor House. Nearby, at Maryland Farm, are Barber's Farmhouse Cheesemakers. I took a well earned tea break in the hamlet of Lamyatt and enjoyed its delightful church. I certainly needed the break before climbing to Lamyatt Beacon (Romano-British temple site) at the summit of 600 foot Creech Hill. There I was able to look back and reflect on my day's walk before heading down to Bruton with its ample facilities for a welcome night's rest and relaxation.

Stage 25 Longleat Stage Bruton to Warminster 18 miles OS Explorer 142 & 143
Car parking: in Coombe Lane OS 183 684/349

Sketch maps still under development

From centre of Bruton follow main road to LH hand junction, carry straight on to junction on R. Follow FP (sign *South Brewham 1.75 miles*) on track to River Brue. Take footpath on L over stile, go through gap and look for small FB and kissing gate on L. Follow river to large FB and metal kissing gate/stile. Go R under the railway and bear L along track through flood alleviation scheme to wooden stile. Path follows the railway and bears NE to FB across river into field to stile. Head NE to gap and metal gate, joining farm track. Head NE through wire fence to double metal gate at corner of hedge. Follow RH hedge along track to stile. Continue along RH hedge to stile and follow path to R of South Brewham Church to metal gate and stile. **(3 miles)**

Go L on minor road downhill to T junction, then R on minor road bearing L and R to just before Haven Farm. Go L on mucky track until it finishes, through metal gates and narrow field then over two stiles. Cross to FB and stile. Head NE to next stile and gate, into field and head to small kissing gate. Now head due E to two more stiles and FB. Head to RH hedge and metal gate to compound. Go R at wooden gate and follow drive around Brewham Lodge Farm on to the farm road. **(5 miles)** Cross River Brue and head uphill to T junction. Go R downhill to Druley Hill Farm, and then turn L on Macmillan Way downhill to double wooden gate at road. Go along road uphill fairly steeply to T junction at Yarnfield Gate at the border of Somerset and Wiltshire. **(7 miles)**

Here turn slightly L and R to stile (WM). Follow LH hedge to stile and continue to stile (WM) to minor road. Go L on minor road to fork. (*Good view here of Long Knoll*) Continue on road to Manor Farmhouse on L and on to WM on R. **(8 miles)** Through metal gate, head NE in field to metal gate (WM), follow LH hedge around Mapperton Hill (*passing reservoir*) to gate and stile. The path bears L with a small copse on L. Continue to gate and a short track to minor road. Go R to main B3092 road and village of Maiden Bradley. **(10 miles)** Go L on road 300 yards to a welcome lunch break at the Somerset Arms Pub. A little further on you come to the parish church. From here you can go via Back Lane to get back onto the trail. Cross B3092 road with care and head NE on minor road to Baycliffe Farm. Just before pond on L, turn L at metal gate (WM). Head N to where track ends, over stile **(11 miles)** and through field to stile, then downhill steeply to metal gate (WM). Go L on Pottle Street to a junction. Go R downhill on road to a junction, road bears R to Horningsham Parish Church, well worth a look. **(12 miles)**

Bear L downhill to WM on R, through wooden kissing gate and field to another kissing gate (WM). Onto road and then uphill to LH bend, and follow bridleway uphill to road (WM). Go L on the road, beware traffic, to car park. **(13 miles)**. Follow road NE, beware traffic, to sign to Safari Park on L. Soon after, look for path on R which follows road through trees until you get to road to Centerparc. **(14.5 miles)** Cross road, look for bridlepath WM, down track to road. Go R down road SE and look for WM (*Bridlepath No 49*). Down concrete track E then SE. This bends L and heads NE into Cannimore Road under A36 road bridge. **(16.5 miles)** The bridlepath turns into a tarmac road and heads to a junction. Go L here into South Street which leads to a roundabout. Take third exit into Pound Street which heads NE and bears L to junction with Vicarage Street. Turn R into the centre of Warminster. **(17.5 miles)**

Robert's Commentary

Another very different stage, more hilly particularly on the Somerset/Wiltshire border, where the landscape changes to rolling chalk grassland. I had enjoyed Bruton with its lovely parish church, old wool and silk mills and two dovecotes, an NT one overlooking the town. Now I set off along the River Brue to South Brewham, where I enjoyed the lovely church, 13th century but rebuilt in the 19th century. I then found myself in arable land and gradually climbed to reach the Wiltshire border at Yarnfield Gate. Now I was in the rolling chalk grassland which I so love. In due course I came to Maiden Bradley, where I can recommend the Somerset Arms for its delicious food - a great lunch stop. Just down the road, I came to the 12th century parish church - I do enjoy my churches. I then found myself on Lord Bath's Longleat Estate, passing through the delightful estate village of Horningsham, much of it built to accommodate stonemasons, many Scottish, who worked on Longleat House. The parish church dates from the 12th century but was rebuilt in 1683 and 1743. Passing through Longleat Park, I wished I had had the time to enjoy the superb house, Safari Park and mazes but contented myself with the glorious view from Heaven's Gate. I was soon in the corn market town of Warminster, with its delightful 12th century Minster Church, nestling beneath Arn Hill and Battlesbury Iron Age Hill Forts, with Cley Hill Fort to the west.

Stage 26 White Horse Stage Warminster to Market Lavington 17.5 miles OS Explorer 143 & 130
Car parking: Near TIC and at Sandbourne Road OS 143 873/451

Sketch maps still under development

Before tackling this stage, bear in mind the very severe ascent up to Upton Cow Down using the Imber Perimeter Path, starting just N of Warminster via Elm Hill Road and Kidnapper's Hole. This particular route is strictly for the very fit walkers! However, there is an alternative via Upton Scudamore village, described as (b) below.

(a) Start from George Street, go L into Portway and under the railway bridge to junction of Westbury Road. Bear slight L then R into Elm Hill, and look for track on L towards Golf Clubhouse. (Track finishes, well defined path goes round perimeter of course.) Just before clubhouse, Imber Path bears sharp L/R around Kidnapper's Hole (*1 mile*) and heads NE on a level plateau. Now head downhill on a track to Field Barn Farm. (*2.5 miles*) Track bears L then sharp R up a very severe steep path to the top of Upton Cow Down. (*3 miles*)

(b) Alternative easier route is to head N along Bath Road to the Minster Church, and then take a tarmac path on Dorothy Walk, through a playing field to a housing estate. Turn L, take tarmac path on R round housing estate, along Arn View to end. Turn L over stile (WM), cross railway with care to stile, head NW over two stiles into field, cross field to gap (WM) and minor road. Follow minor road to main A36. (Beware traffic) Go straight ahead to T at Upton Scudamore, where 12th century St Mary's church on L has a fine Norman arch. (*2 miles*) Turn R and L to another T, turn R at the Angel Inn. Continue E across main A36 by bridge, bear immediately L along old main road to WM. (*2.5 miles*) Bear R and start to climb Upton Cow Down on tarmac road (less steep). Extensive views on a clear day. (*3 miles*)

The tarmac road leads to a track and heads NE along the Imber Perimeter Path. Continue on track past Lafarge Cement chalk quarry on R. (*4 miles*) Ignore track on L and carry on to junction with Long River Road. Go straight ahead to the Westbury White Horse, restored in 1778, panoramic views, well worth a stop. From the car park at the White Horse, go S towards White Horse Farm then turn L. (*5 miles*) *If you prefer not to visit the White Horse, simply turn R on Imber Perimeter Path and then L to White Horse Farm.* From White Horse Farm, continue E on wide track until it becomes a tarmac road, follow this to T. (*7 miles*) Turn R and L, over brow, then turn L and R at junction (*8 miles*) and head NE to Tottenham Wood on L, suitable for lunch, superb views. (*9 miles*) Continue on track to Coulston Hill, then go R on very wide track to fork, and follow tarmac road to Stoke Hill. (*10.5 miles*) On reaching Stoke Hill, the tarmac road becomes a track. Now head SE to where track finishes at New Zealand Farm Camp. (*12 miles*)

From here there are three choices of route.

(a) *To Market Lavington on White Horse Trail.* From New Zealand Farm Camp, head E on a tarmac road to Highland Cottages (*13.5 miles*) and Highland Farm on R to T. Go L to the A360 road. (*14.5 miles*) Cross with care. Head NE uphill on lane following Ridgeway to a T. (*16.5 miles*) Go L down hill to Market Lavington (*17.5 miles*)

(b) *Alternative via West Lavington.* For those preferring to go into West Lavington and on by a different route, follow tarmac road from New Zealand Farm Camp for 1.5 miles to R bend just before Highland Cottages. (*13.5 miles*) Take bridleway (WM) on L, NE down slope to metal gate, then to wooden gate and small kissing gate to wood. Go through wood along track to X track (*14.5 miles*) and continue on track to minor road. Along road, past Strawberry Hill on L, and turn R passing late 12th Century West Lavington Church. Go L on main A360 to R bend, turn R up minor road to LH corner, (*15.5 miles*) bear L and R, follow RH hedge to bridleway, bear L, follow LH hedge to minor road, bear L to centre of Market Lavington, once a bustling cattle market village. (*16.5 miles*)

(c) *To stay overnight in Littleton Pannell.* Go L at WM on bridleway, head steeply downhill bearing L and follow track to Bolter's Barn via a wood on L and on to B3098 road. (*14.5 miles*) Go straight across road on bridleway (WM), bears R to Littleton Pannell on main A360 road. B&B nearby. (*15 miles*)

Robert's Commentary

I enjoyed this as a very different stage from the last - few stiles to negotiate, just four from the railway at Warminster to the road SE of Upton Scudamore. There only two serious climbs, going up onto Upton Cow Down via the Imber Path instead of via Upton Scudamore, and a short climb up Stoke Hill. Most of this section is on high ground following the Imber Path which is clearly marked and has glorious 70 mile views. The trail starts in the former corn market town of Warminster, noted first for wool and cloth, later for silk and paint. I describe two routes out of town, but chose to go via Upton Scudamore avoiding the steep Upton Cow Down ascent. The trail goes NE to White Horse Farm from where you can look left to the Westbury White Horse. This is believed to have been cut to commemorate King Alfred the Great's victory over Guthrum's Danes in 878. Re-cut in 1778, it was restored in 2006. The trail continues E on a plateau, then heads NE to Tottenham Wood where I had a pleasant lunch stop with glorious views. Eventually West Lavington, with its fine 17th Century church, came into view, nestling below the plateau. The West Lavington estate was bought by the Duke of Marlborough in 1766, hence the excellent pub is the Churchill Arms (thank you, Eileen McCabe, for 25 years resident there, now working at Truro Cathedral).

Stage 27 Pewsey Vale Stage Market Lavington to Avebury 15 miles OS Explorer 130 & 157
Car Parking: Market Lavington on verges at OS 130 015/543.

Sketch maps still under development

From X-roads at Market Lavington, take minor road on L, White Street, uphill to join Wessex Ridgeway Path. (**1 mile**) Turn L along wide track NE to a circular wooded plantation on L (**3 miles**) and on to a trig point. Turn L on bridleway downhill to B3098 road at Urchfont. (**4 miles**)

*For those who don't want to be up on the Ridgeway in inclement weather, there is an alternative. Head NW from centre of Market Lavington at X-roads, along Parsonage Lane which leads into Spin Hill. Look for bridleway on R (WM) and follow to junction with King's Road. R on King's Road NE to sharp R bend at Easterton Sands (**1.5 miles**) Along wide track NE via Sands Farm to junction. (**2 miles**) Go R and L on track to junction on L, then head due E passing Oakfrith Wood on L to sharp RH bend, then turn R to Newsyde Farm on B3098. Turn L on road into Urchfont. (**4 miles**)*

From R bend on road, go N on High Street to junction of Saint Michael's Close. Find a tiny footpath (yellow chevron WM) between buildings to junction with Friars Lane. Go R, continue on Friars Lane, which bends L to Uphill Farm on L to beyond houses. Go R at gap, follow RH hedge to a stile and head to gap to a track, passing farm machinery. Here, you come to Manor Farm (Good refreshment stop in the old Potato Yard). (**5 miles**)

Go L on minor road to main A342. (Beware traffic) Go R at garage, look for track on L. Bear L on bridleway N, bears R and then L, continues N to railway level crossing. Over stile, head to new FB and kissing gate. Follow LH hedge to two stiles, head to Hatfield farmhouse and stile. (**6 miles**) Take tarmac drive to minor road and Heath Knapp Cottage. Turn R on road NE to just past a stream, then look for stile on L. (**7 miles**) Into field, head NE between wire fences to Manor Farm. Bear slightly R and L through farm buildings, pond on R, to farm track and minor road, late Norman All Cannings Church on R. Go L at church on FP (WM) over FB into field. Go R along RH hedge to gap and swing bridge over Kennet & Avon Canal, follow RH hedge to track and minor road at Manor Farm, Allington. (**8.5 miles**)

Head N on minor road to T at Park Farm. Turn R on road to WM and metal gate at RH bend. Head NE on tarmac drive which bears L and R uphill to metal gate and cattle grid. (**9.5 miles**) There is then a steep ascent going over Wansdyke. Continue on track over brow until you get to T junction and cattle grid. Turn R on track SE and Wansdyke Path to WM, follow RH fence downhill to where track turns R. (**12.5 miles**) Track bears L and L again to farm and minor road N to T. Go L on path over stile, follow RH fence to gravel track, R through kissing gate and onto busy A4. (Beware traffic) (**13.5 miles**) Cross road, follow path over two stiles and through kissing gate with infant River Kennet on L. Path joins bridleway which leads to A4361. Go R (beware traffic) then L into main Avebury CP. FP leads from CP into the centre of Avebury and the famous henge and stone circle. (**15 miles**)

Congratulations!! You have now completed the Land's End Trail from west to east. Now get a fellow walker to take a photograph of you with one of the standing stones!

Robert's Commentary

I particularly enjoyed this last stage as I knew that it was the end of my trek and, after a fortnight, I felt I was due a well earned rest. Reinvigorated by a very nice stay at Market Lavington, I was ready for the very steep ascent to The Wessex Ridgeway, where I was rewarded with glorious views (70 miles on a clear day) overlooking today's walk. I then dropped down to Urchfont with its delightful late 14th century church. In seemingly no time at all, I was having coffee at the Old Potato Yard off the A342 at Manor Farm (also workshops, crafts, food, country clothing and horsy things; even open on Sundays). Then it was on to All Cannings with its delightful early 13th century church. Soon I reached the Kennet and Avon Canal, constructed 1796-1810 to link Bristol and London, now restored. During a pleasant lunch stop I enjoyed watching passing narrow boats. It was then steeply uphill to the best preserved section of ancient Wansdyke, a great 5th Century defensive bank of which 23 identifiable miles remain. From there, I could see my destination and I carried on over the lovely downs, past neolithic West Kennet Long Barrow and Silbury Hill and on into amazing Avebury with its remarkable massive henge and stone circles and stone avenue. Happy to be there, I relaxed over a well deserved pint at the Red Lion Inn.

After completing this superb walk in memory of the late Hugh Miners, inspiration of the Land's End Trail, I felt that my efforts had paid him a suitable tribute. I also felt exhilarated that I had at last come to the end of my long trek, and had walked through some of the most wonderful scenery which our Lord had created; I hope that fellow walkers will have similar thoughts on completing this trail.