

Walk No. 11 - Torbay and the Dart Valley

This walk offers a superb means of enjoying the countryside between the well-known coastline of Torbay and the beauty of the Dart Valley.

The walk starts at Broadsands, between Paignton and Brixham, and includes spectacular views over Torbay and the River Dart. The eastern end of the walk links with the Coast Path at Broadsands, while the western end meets the Dart Valley Trail. This Trail gives further opportunity for walks up and down the Dart, to Totnes and Dartmouth.

Most of the route is waymarked; look out for the Greenway waymarks.

Fact File

Buses on the main seafront route between Torquay/Paignton and Brixham pass the top of Broadsands Road. This is a frequent and regular service; for details contact Traveline on 0870 608 2 608. There is a large car park on the sea front at Broadsands.

Walk Length: 9km/5.5miles. Some relatively minor hills; a total of 8 stiles. There are three main road crossings where great care is needed. They are marked on the map.

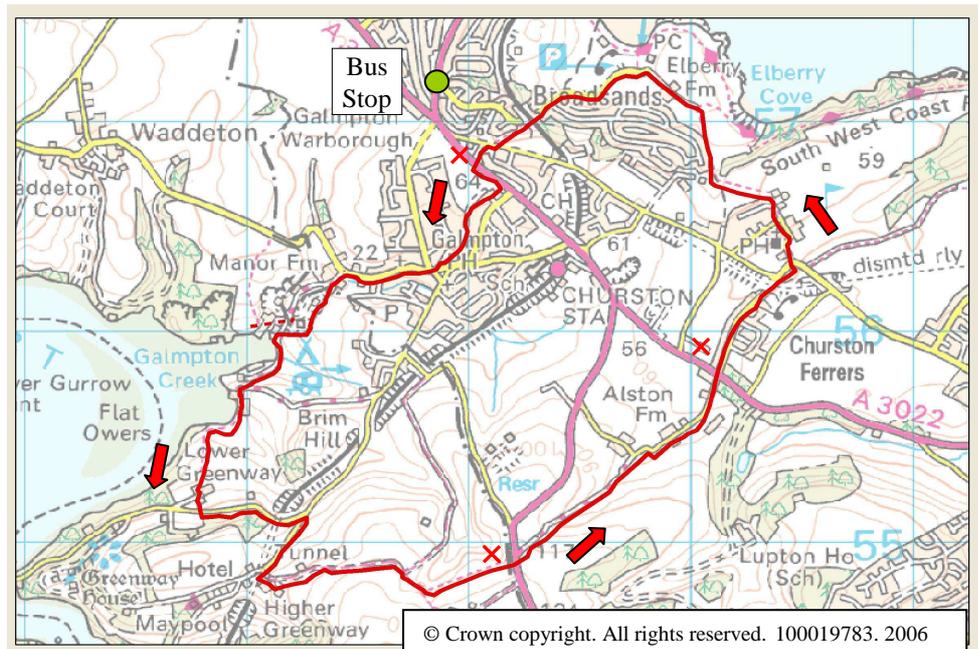
OS Maps: Explorer (1:25,000) no. OL20 South Devon
Landranger (1:50,000) no. 202 Torbay and South Dartmoor

Facilities: Broadsands Road (shops and café); Broadsands (refreshments and toilets); Galmpton (village shop); Churston Ferrers (pub and restaurant).

The Walk

From the bus stop walk down Broadsands Road towards the railway viaduct. Take the path on the right 50 metres before the viaduct.

(If starting at the car park, walk up Broadsands Road and pass under the viaduct. Take the path on the left 50 metres after the viaduct).



Key
X Major Road Crossings Take Special Care

The viaduct carries the private Paignton and Kingswear Railway and if you are lucky you will see one of the company's steam trains. The line dates back to 1861 and the modern steam railway has run it since the 1970's.

At the top turn right, across the grass, cross the road and follow the tarmac path to the main road. Gather any children and dogs here, and taking care, cross the road to the open area opposite.

This is Galmpton Warborough, an area of common whose name indicates it was once a look-out area. The view is still very extensive, over Torbay to the East Devon coast visible beyond on a clear day. The remains of a windmill may be seen at the rear of the common.

Walk alongside the main road, with the road to your left. Turn right at the end of the open area, next to house gardens. Follow the path as it bears left and becomes a lane descending to the village of Galmpton. At the junction at the bottom turn right, along Stoke Gabriel Road, and walk through the village.

Although now an outer suburb of Torbay, Galmpton was once a quite isolated village and is recorded in the Domesday Book.

Pass the village shop, continue through the village, then turn left at the small traffic island at the junction for Galmpton Creek.

Note the old milestone alongside the road indicating the distance to Totnes.

Continue down the minor lane and keep straight ahead at the bottom.

Note the lime-kiln a short way down the lane with its explanatory board. The water at the bottom of the lane is Galmpton Creek, an inlet of the River Dart. The main course of the river is over to the right.

Keep ahead alongside the creek; the path then rises and falls to a pink cottage at the edge of the creek. Take the steps on the right to the foreshore just before the cottage. Follow the foreshore ahead as far as another lime kiln, then cross the stile on the left.

The creek is much used by water birds; you are almost certain to see geese. The village on the far side of the main river is Dittisham.

Cross the stile and bear right over the field ahead to another stile in the wire fence. Cross this stile and continue towards the farm ahead. Cross the stone stile into the farmyard, continue ahead and follow to the right.

Now go left over a further stone stile and follow the edge of the field up to yet another stone stile onto a road.

The walk has now reached an alternative length of the Dart Valley Trail. If you wish, turn right for the ferry crossing to Dittisham, from where the Trail goes on to Totnes or Dartmouth. This walk follows the Trail left, uphill.

Walking up the hill, notice the chimney in Lower Greenway Farm, which you have just passed through on the left. The farm had a steam engine in the 19th century, used to power a variety of farm machinery.

At the road junction turn right, towards Kingswear and Maypool on the Dart Valley Trail.

The line of the steam railway is again visible here, on the left.

On reaching the houses turn left along the track on the main line of the Dart Valley Trail. Bear left at the top, over the stile.

The Dart Valley Trail to Kingswear goes right here, over another stile. Our walk continues on the Greenway route.

Continue up the track ahead.

As the track rises, views on the left open up to encompass both Tor Bay and the Dart, with Dartmoor in the background.

A little way after the track descends to a junction, look out for a stile on the left. Cross this, and then bear right over the field keeping to the right hand rim of the valley. Cross a stile by a telephone pole and continue ahead to another stile, onto a road.

Gather children and dogs and cross the road with care. Take the track to the left and almost opposite.

As the track descends more panoramic views open up of Tor Bay to Hope's Nose, the northern limit of the Bay.

Continue ahead when the track meets a surfaced lane. At the main road, gather children and dogs for the last time and cross with great care into Churston Road opposite. Walk through the village of Churston Ferrers and under the railway bridge.

The bridge carried the railway of the Brixham branch. Unused by trains since the 1970's, it still carries the railway number 225.55, indicating it is 225 miles and 55 chains from the terminus at Paddington.

Continue ahead, taking some care here as this stretch of road is much used by traffic as a short cut. At the junction at the end turn left and follow to the right at Churston Court, past the church and then follow to the left past Churston Farm.

This is the original centre of Churston. Now a pub and restaurant, Churston Court is an Elizabethan house in origin. The church tower dates as far back as 1300.

As the road swings left continue ahead towards Broadsands and Links Close. Then go right and immediately left along a path to the golf course. Follow the path over the course and then through bushes to a track. Turn right, heading towards the sea. At the end go left. This lane leads to the car park at the bottom of Broadsands Road. To return to the bus stop, follow Broadsands Road uphill and under the viaduct to the top.

Further Information

Information on the Dart Valley Trail and other walking routes in Devon is available from www.discoverdevon.com and the Discover Devon Holiday Line 0870 608 5531 - quote DP42 for a Dart Valley Trail Walking Guide (£3.50 inc. p&p) or DP311 for Discover Devon Walking - A complete guide to walking trails in Devon (free publication). They can also be ordered from Discover Devon Information Service, Westacott Rd, Barnstaple, EX32 8AW quoting references above.