

## Walk No. 36 Green Way to Greenway

### A Green Way from Greenway

The River Dart, its valley and estuary go together to form one of Devon's scenic highlights. An ideal way of exploring this outstanding landscape is to use the Dart Valley Trail. This footpath route follows both banks of the estuary and also goes upriver on the western side to link the estuary with Totnes.

This walk follows the stretch of the Trail on the eastern side of the estuary, between Greenway and Kingswear. Like the rest of the Trail, it can be combined with one or more of the various forms of public transport on and around the lower Dart; steam train, bus or boat. This walk goes together with three ferry rides to make an interesting and scenic round trip.

#### Fact File

Dartmouth is well served by buses from Totnes, Kingsbridge and Plymouth. Routes from Torbay serve Kingswear. More unusual transport access is provided by the Paignton and Kingswear Steam Railway and by River Link boat services to and from Totnes.

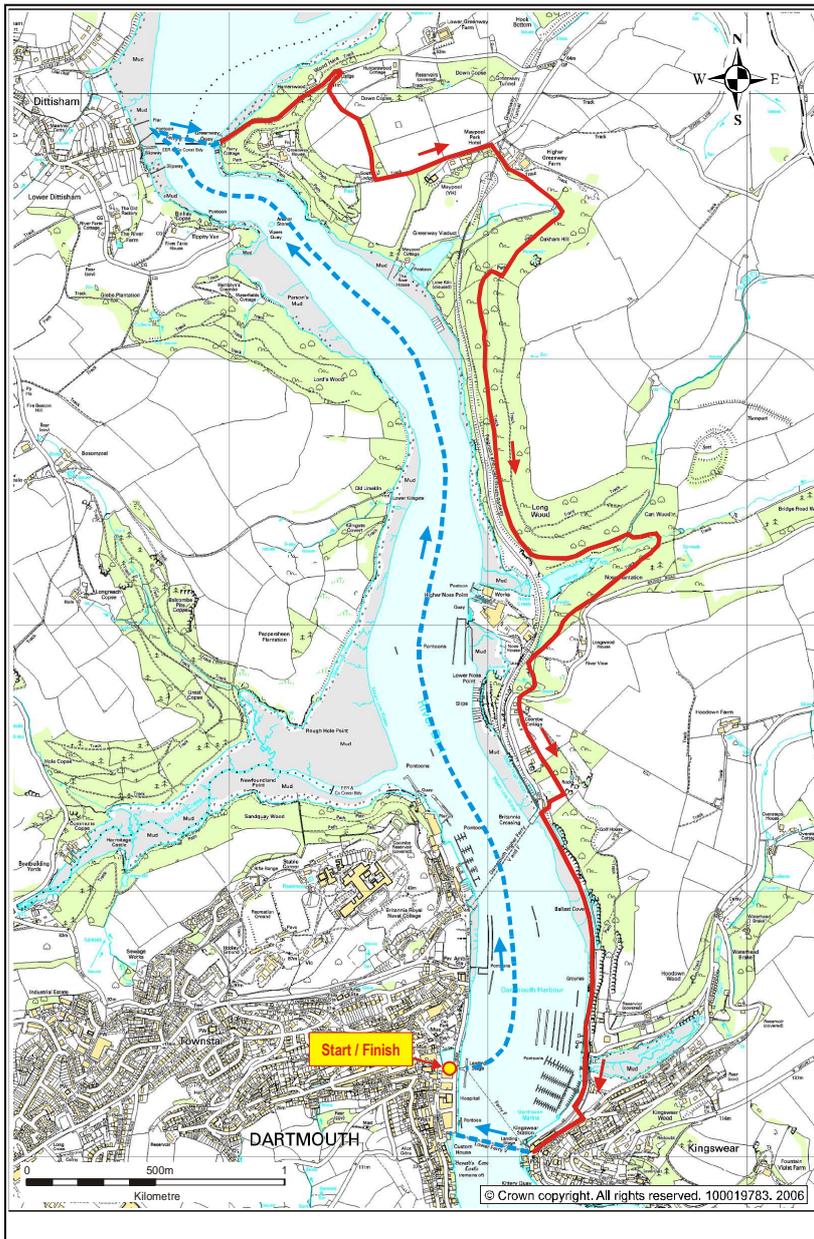
Remember that during the summer especially car parking can be very difficult in Dartmouth and it is recommended that visitors use the park and ride service provided.

**Walk Length:** 7km/4.5 miles : 2 stiles : 1 climb of 50m/160 feet on a lane.

**Facilities:** Dartmouth - all facilities; Dittisham - pubs, shop; Maypool - Youth Hostel; Britannia Halt - toilets; Kingswear - all facilities.

For bus timetable details contact Traveline on 0870 608 2 608 or visit [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk). For the Paignton and Kingswear Steam Railway, telephone 01803 555872, for River Link 01803 834488. This walk also makes use of the Dartmouth - Dittisham ferry, telephone 01803 833206.

## The Walk



**Start from Dartmouth by taking the ferry to Dittisham.**

This service is operated by small red and yellow boats which depart from the stone steps from the Embankment just above the main boat pontoon.

On arrival at Dittisham the ferry to Greenway is then used to cross the river. The boatman on the Dittisham ferry will radio ahead to the Greenway ferry to let him know passengers are on their way.

**The walking begins at Greenway Quay.**

**Walk up the lane from the Quay and continue following it uphill, bearing back sharp right at the main entrance to Greenway House and gardens. There is a blue Dart Valley Trail signpost here.**

The whole route follows one leg of the Dart Valley Trail, which is well signed, so look out for the blue and white signposts and waymark arrows.

Greenway House will have been seen from the Dartmouth - Dittisham ferry, an imposing white Georgian building overlooking the river. The earlier house on the site was the birthplace and home of Humphrey Gilbert, stepbrother of Sir Walter Raleigh and the founder of the British colony of Newfoundland. The present house is best known as being the holiday home

of Agatha Christie, and a number of her books are set in locations clearly based on the Dart and its creeks.

The house is not open to the public but the gardens, owned by the National Trust, are open on certain days of the week.

**Follow the drive for a short way, then double back to the left just after the car park, up a clear track. Almost immediately afterwards, go through the gate on the right into the field and head for the top. Keep on to an old metal kissing gate. Continue climbing uphill next to the fence, then follow round to the right alongside the wood.**

There are superb views from this high spot both up and down the Dart, the meanders in the river showing up well from here.

**Continue to pass through two more gates then go left along the top of the field.**

The view ahead towards Dartmouth is magnificent. Obvious on the left is Philips Boatyard, to be passed further on the walk.

**Another gate leads to a track, then on to a lane at Maypool Youth Hostel. Continue ahead along the lane.**

The Youth Hostel, just off the lane to the right, is Victorian, built for the owner of Philips Boatyard in the late 1800's.

**Past the Youth Hostel, look out for a track on the right to Greenway Barton, opposite the white houses, and turn up here. Fork left just past the barn conversions then go immediately right and follow the right hand field edge. Towards the top of the field, cross the stile on the right to a track. Turn left and follow this track as it climbs then descends slightly to enter woodland.**

This is Oakham Hill, whose name reflects the covering of oakwoods on these flanks of the Dart. These are in fact semi-natural woodlands, the management of the woods once being for the building of wooden warships at Dartmouth. Now, management reflects the need to conserve the diversity of plants, birds and insects.

**The path continues into the National Trust's Long Wood. Bear right at the bottom of a steep flight of steps, following the blue and white arrow. The path descends then bears left, parallel to the river.**

The river may be glimpsed through the trees down to the right. The line of the Paignton and Kingswear Steam Railway will also be seen down here.

This was originally the GWR's main line to Dartmouth, although it never actually reached the town, its terminus being at Kingswear on the opposite bank of the river. This did not deter the GWR from building a station for no trains at Dartmouth, the unmistakable architecture now housing a cafe.

**The path descends around a side valley of the Dart and crosses two small streams. As the path rises on the far side fork right. The path now skirts the rear of Philips Boatyard.**

The yard was established here in the late 1800's and has built a wide variety of craft, including some of the local ferries. It also operates a marina.

**The path arrives at the Boatyard access road. Turn right, then immediately left just before the railway bridge. The path now rises to a road. Keep an eye open for traffic here and keep dogs and children under control. Turn left along the road then immediately right up a lane which is a private road but also a public footpath.**

Again, superb views over the Dart are obtained from here.

**About 100m beyond the last house in the lane a path leaves and descends some steps to the right, signed Dart Valley Trail. Follow this down to the road (Bridge Road) by public toilets. Go down the road to the level crossing.**

This is Britannia Halt, the station for the Britannia Royal Naval College, the building on the hill above Dartmouth. Built in 1905 to replace the previous college, which was on a ship moored in the Dart, the college trains naval officers, including a number of members of the royal family who have attended.

The link across the river here is supplied by the Higher Ferry. Technically, however, this is a "floating bridge", the boat being guided and constrained by two chains. It accounts for the name of the road, Bridge Road.

**Cross the level crossing and take the footpath on the far side of the railway and next to it. Keep on this scenic footpath between the steam railway and the river downstream to the Darthaven Marina. Then follow the narrow footpath at the rear of the marina to the iron footbridge over the railway. Cross the railway and on the far side turn right down the road into Kingswear.**

Near the bottom the railway terminus of Kingswear Station is passed. This has starred in a number of roles, including in the film of "The French Lieutenant's Woman" and, perhaps appropriately, in the television series featuring Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot.

At the Royal Dart at the bottom of the hill turn right under the arch and down the pontoon to the ferry landing stage, and so to the third and last ferry of the trip to return to Dartmouth.

#### Further Information

An information pack on the Dart Valley Trail is available from local Tourist Information Centres, price £2. It may also be obtained from the Discover Devon Information Line, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, EX32 8AW, telephone 0870 6085531, price £3.50 including post and packing. Quote reference DP42.

For information on the wider network of walks throughout Devon obtain the free leaflet "Discover Devon - Walking " from local Tourist Information Centres or the above address. Alternatively, visit the website [www.discoverdevon.com](http://www.discoverdevon.com) which has all the walks information and an order form.

In addition, there is a National Trust leaflet "Walks around Dartmouth South Devon", available from NT outlets price £0.75. The National Trust also has a free leaflet on Greenway Garden. For details on the garden opening times telephone 01803 842382.

OS Maps for this walk:

Landranger (1:50,000 scale) : No. 202 Torbay and South Dartmoor  
Explorer Leisure (1:25,000 scale) : No. OL20 South Devon