

## To Core Hill from White Cross on East Hill Strips

OS Explorer Map SY 115 Exmouth and Sidmouth. 1:25000

A short drive from Ottery St Mary – or maybe a walk for some! – some of it along the exquisite forested East Hill Strips followed by a wonderful mostly level walk along wide forested tracks, open heath that shields the rare Dartford Warbler and back up, sorry, a somewhat steep old track.

Only 3.3 miles or 4.9 with Core Hill option. Magic.



*L*eave Ottery Square by way of Yonder Street and drive for about 2 miles to the top of the obvious Chineway Hill. At the marked Chineway Head / White Cross sign turn right and enjoy the drive along East Hill and East Hill Strips with its ample parking spots if you are so inclined to potter through the woods. Soon reach and park at White Cross, a small junction where your road veers off sharply to the left.

*W*alk straight ahead from the muddy parking area on to the wonderful, wide East Devon Way. Cannot describe this, you just have to walk it. Ancient woods and banks, light, level, just a dream. Soon, at a junction, Hollow Head Cross, continue straight ahead and at the next fairly vague divergence of tracks bear right slightly uphill into the woods. You will come to a metal gate that opens on to Harpford Common and Beacon Hill. A good information board gives all the details including the fact that you are in Dartford Warbler country. What a contrast to your path so far – open, views of the sea, gorse, heather, - a true heath. Potter on straight across the centre of the heath to find a Public Footpath sign. Left here on a good track and in about 200m look to your right for the trig point at 224m and GR 1116 9093. Probably worth a potter over to it for a rest and look over the landscape. Return to your track and move right, soon bearing left into Core Hill Woods. Move ahead through the woods to find a good, firm

wide and stony track. Right here to wander along a descending beauty of a track through the ancient woods.

*Y*ou will meet a small road and waste area and here look for the Public Footpath climbing left up into Core Hill Woods. A good information board here. Climb fairly steeply up a wide gully and at the top, where it opens up into a number of forest tracks you may see a small direction post.

*T*here is an option here. Our route carries on in a straight line to drop down along a narrow path but it really is worth the extra potter up to the right to follow a one-way walk along Core Hill. In the season this would be a mass of bluebells and it snakes through rhododendrons and very ancient trees. Alas, it's U- turn at the end so back to our little post and junction to drop downhill right to a metal gate. Pass over open pasture to another gate and drop down on to a narrow lane. Left here to potter along to where the lane becomes a stony track. Press on for about 800 yds. (Wee bit steep) to arrive at the junction of Hollow Head Cross. Remember it? Right here and now wander pleasantly to your car.