

A Walk Up and Along Pen Hill – A Sidbury Gem.

Map OS Explorer 115 – Exmouth & Sidmouth. 1:25000.

6.8 miles. About 3 hours

Grade: Must be honest- a wee bit steep for short stretch near the end BUT incredible views from Pen Hill, glorious long green lane and long downhill to finish !



Start from the free Car Park in Sidbury, East Devon. (Grid ref SY 388 918). Return to the main road and turn right down to the Church. Follow aptly named Church Street round the back of the Church and, passing over the old brick bridge, move on to a junction. Left here towards Cotford and in about 600m at the main road turn right. Short nasty bit of road for about 300m then right to Roncombe and Sand.

In 400m, having passed the historic house and garden on your right, look for the Public Footpath off left through double metal gates. Follow this good, wide stony track for some way bearing sharp right uphill before the gate and at the yellow arrow. Follow the hedge uphill – bit steep but take time to look back at the views – to the small wooden gate. Into the woods, meandering uphill and round to soon emerge into the open. Onwards along the ridge to the unmarked summit of Pen Hill. (Not too critical, plenty of trunks for a coffee break) Forwards along the broad ridge towards the trees, looking for the solitary marker post directing you to the left. Almost immediately, sharp right on a thin grassy track into the trees. Now you follow the good track through a really magical avenue of trees and scrub. Straight on, ignoring the footpath sign to the right. Eventually, a wooden gate. Again, onwards across open ground towards the farm buildings and here follow well signed path round to the left of the buildings to emerge on a good stony wide track. Left here on a good and very peaceful farm lane for about 1 Km.

Within sight of the main road take the Public Bridleway to the right along a tarmac road and on the bend carry straight on through a couple of gates. At the path junction, bear right into the woods via a small metal gate. Move left around the large house then

left again downhill, leaving the gardened area to emerge on steep open ground. Look for the solitary marker post and aim diagonally left steeply downhill towards the centre of the scrub and bracken. Bit diffuse here but there is a track through bearing right at the bottom near the trees and then about 20m before an old metal gate bear left into the woods via a couple of stiles. Using the wooden walkways emerge into open sloping grassland. Wander diagonally down to the left aiming for a small gate about 100m to the left of the buildings. Follow the signed path through the holiday complex – HPB Lower Knapps Farm – and then down the concrete road to the Public Highway. Amble right for a few hundred metres and take the Public Bridleway off left, opposite the farm complex. Pass over the stream and then right uphill.

This is the earlier mentioned Wee Bit Steep section! Take it slowly and emerge into much easier pasture land and track up to the road. Maybe a breather here but then right for a very short way to find the Public Footpath signed to Sidbury off to the right beside a house. Few nettles here so maybe not shorts! Now, on the East Devon Way, – a gem. Over a Km of a wonderful downhill track through woods to emerge into open pasture. Straight across here towards the trees. Take a moment to look over to the right to see Pen Hill and the start of your walk – a wonderful horseshoe. Take the stile / gate into the woods and soon emerge into a small area of grassland. Curve up and right to the road. Right here and, yes, downhill on the very quiet lane to the junction. Left and then first right back to the Church.