

## *The Exmouth Circuit.*

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

14.5 Miles

A long but hugely varied walk. No great hills, considerable use of East Devon Way and Coastal Footpath. Wonderful long green lanes and some quiet lane walking. Short unavoidable stretch of main road. Great points of interest – A La Ronde 18C 16 sided House, Geoneedle, Bystock ponds and miles of green lanes.



**L**eave Ottery St Mary on the B3174 and then take the B3180 Exmouth Road, crossing the A3052 at Half-Way Inn. Stay on this B3180 for some distance, passing over Woodbury Common. Some 100 m after the road off right to Exmouth turn left up a minor road and park at the side of the road in a minor pull-in. (GR SY 023 846) Walk back to the B road, turn left and in about 150 m take the road off right, Higher Morley Rd. Walk this road for nearly 1 km and on a pronounced left hand bend carry straight on to what was the old road. This is now devoid of traffic, quiet and in its lower stages, green with grass beginning to fight its way through the old road. Carry on for about 1 km, crossing a fairly busy road and, passing through bollards, coming to a small housing complex close to an insignificant bridge over a stream. (More of a culvert!) Now, do not follow the road left but move up right into the trees on to the East Devon Way in the shape of a narrow overgrown path. Follow this path and cross another road on to Public Footpath and E D Way. Carry on for some distance to meet Summer Lane.

**L**eft here, passing a la Ronde on your left, and down to cross the main A376 and on to a fairly quiet road (Courtlands Lane). Look for the Public Footpath sign off right at a stile and wooden gate and follow the well-marked East Devon Way path, firstly alongside a low banking and then alongside open pasture with the hedge on the left to emerge via a stile on to a quiet lane. Straight across on to a wonderful green lane and follow this all the way down to a road. (Ignore a gate of right). Right on the road and follow this all the way down to the railway bridge. Just before the bridge move left up on to the cycle track.

**N**ow stay on this track and follow the Estuary all the way into Exmouth. Near town you will pass over a bridge and bear right into the park. Here look very soon for the gate and

path to lead you over the railway line (Care!). Move up to the cycle track and then left to arrive at large car parks. Pass through these car parks and following the edge of the Estuary come to the Exmouth Rugby Club ground. Bear left to the roundabout and cross diagonally right. Follow this road to find the sea front. Now, move left along the sea front for quite some way, maybe taking in an ice cream, coffee, or even a beer at one of the many vendors. Eventually, at the Ocean Bar and Grill move left behind this new looking building to take the good public footpath. This path curves gently uphill for quite some way to meet the road. Right here to a small roundabout where you cross and for a very few yards move up Foxholes Hill. Look for the Public Footpath off right – now on the Coastal footpath proper! Pass the Geoneedle and move up taking time to look back and around at the incredible views. Pass through the enormous holiday complex and the Straight Point Firing Range following the well placed signs. Climb fairly steeply up staying close to the sea (Not too close!) to pass one seat and arrive at another seat on a signed junction, on the corner of the Golf Course at West Down Beacon. If you look behind the seat beside the Public Footpath sign you will see the old Trig Point.

**N**ow, follow the footpath sign off left through gorse and scrub with an array of wild flowers. You pass a type of underground water storage on your left and then via a wonderful leafy track you will emerge on the golf course at a Public footpath sign! Beware low flying balls! Aim slightly right over the green at about 2 pm and see the footpath post. Left here staying on the wide cut track and keeping the trees and scrub on your right. Don't branch off right. Pass the sign "PF to Knowle" on your right and eventually, on a good track, you arrive at a wooden gate and meet a small road. Carry on right along the road looking out for access to the old railway line on your left. On the line turn right and walk NE in the Budleigh direction for a considerable distance.

**W**alk to the end of the line and emerge on a narrow lane. Turn left uphill past East Shortwood House and at the top move right on to an earth track. Uphill and then drop to a left hand bend where you plod round and uphill on a wonderful deep green lane. On a left hand bend see a yellow arrow post and moving just inside the woods see a Public Footpath sign. Bear left uphill into the woods and common. Emerging into the open, ignore the first unsigned track and carry on to a yellow marker post. Carry on past this a few yards to a stile and here follow the arrow right keeping the hedge on your right to a metal gate. Turn left on the really good track (Hayeswood Lane track). Carry on dropping downhill for a considerable distance to a distinct junction and move straight ahead and uphill on the main track into the woods. Soon, out in the open you will follow an excellent track, again for some distance and slightly uphill to come to a small parking area, information board and road. Left down the road for just under a kilometre and look for Bystock Fishponds – a small nature reserve on your right – just fabulous! Onwards up the road to the main and horribly busy main road. Turn right and taking care walk along here a short way to the first road off to the right. Go along this very lovely quiet lane for some way and take the first road left – and back to the car!