

The Tipton Circuit.

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

Time: About 7 miles .4 hours including breaks.

Grade: Easy. Wonderful green lanes and tracks plus riverbanks and Inns... and only a couple of gentle hills with wonderful views.



*D*rive to the Bowd Inn from Ottery St Mary and turn left on the Sidford / Seaton road. Look for the large lay-by (GR 110 900) on the right and cross carefully to park in it. Sometimes it is said to be closed for District Council works but at weekends it is alright to park there. (During the week it might be better to go back and park in the Bowd Inn car park.) With great care (!) cross the main road and look for a gap in the brush and trees that lies opposite a point half way along the lay-by or about 60 paces downhill from the road signs. No sign but you will see the gap and if you really get lost walk back up to the Inn, turn right and take first lane to the right. Follow this and you will meet the exit of the track you could not find! Assuming you found the little track via the gap, move up this magic little sunken lane to emerge on the aforementioned lane. Right here and then bear almost immediately left. (not up the Private Rd.) Plod slowly up the road , not forgetting to look back at the great views back to the sea. Stay on the road – Do not take first Public Bridleway up right to Fire Beacon Hill – curving round the hill and ignoring the next Public Bridleway sign pointing to the right.

*T*ake the next Public Footpath , just after the right hand bend in the road, off to the right leading up into and following the edge of the wonderful woods. This is a magical track – look out for an ancient coach that will travel no more on the left – and it passes a small clearing, just before a brick house, in which there was once an ancient cottage. Little sign of it now. Bear right uphill by the house – bit steep but take it slowly and enjoy the trees – to emerge beside a pair of Public Footpath signs. Here, bear right up the slope for about 20 yds to emerge at a cross-way beside a small boundary stone on to a really well defined and made up track. Left at this cross-track and stay on this good track for some considerable distance to eventually emerge in a good clearing on a bend in a small road. This is White Cross. Good spot for a coffee and break to look at the incredible views.

Now, leave the car park area and move on almost doubling back on yourself through a wide metal gate to follow a wide green track that follows the line of the valley and the edge of the woods. It drops downhill to a gate and footpath sign. Pass through the gate and move diagonally left down the open field to a stile that leads you on to a small road. Right here down the road then left at the Public Bridleway sign to enjoy a great green lane to a road. Left here down the road to a combined Public Footpath and Bridleway sign on a left hand bend in the road. Right up the Bridleway and then left at the 3-way Public Bridleway sign. Emerge on to the main road. Great Care Here!.Right down the road a short way and then cross carefully to the Public Footpath on the left. ***(SEE NOTE AT END OF PAGE)** Over a little wooden bridge and then follow the hedge on your right for the length of the field to meet the River Otter. Left along the bank to a small stile and gate tucked away in the corner. Up a bit and pass above a weir eventually going over a stile and through a works yard. Look for the **Archimedean screw, in a small brick building**, lifting water from the river. Carry on through the old mill with its neglected buildings. If, when you visit, it is still dilapidated then peek through the broken windows and see the old mill wheel and water race. Follow the narrow track along to eventually emerge on to the road in Tipton.

Right here – striving to avoid stopping at the Inn – and just over the bridge over the river Otter take the Public Footpath to the left. Follow this track and the river all the way to Harpford. Great chance to see kingfishers along here and an abundance of other wildlife. Once at Harpford cross the narrow bridge and move left up to the Church. At the junction turn left and then almost immediately right up Knapps Lane. In a few yards, on a bend, drop down right – track signposted to the Bowd – and follow what has to be one of the most wonderful paths you have ever been on. You are following a path below the old railway embankment and look out for an interesting low bricked culvert that runs under the railway.(Do not take this turning !) Soon you come to a brick bridge carrying the rail line and here pass under the bridge but immediately take the steps on the left up on to the route of the old line. (A permissive path). Continue left to meet the road just before the Bowd Inn – yes, resist the temptation again – and walk right, over the main road and down to the lay-by from whence you started.

***NOTE: AT THE TIME OF REVISING THIS WALK – OCTOBER 2012 – A FOOTPATH DIVERSION WAS IN PLACE ON THIS FOOTPATH TO ALLOW THE LAYING OF GAS PIPES. THIS WILL POSSIBLY APPLY UNTIL JANUARY 2013. IN THE MEANTIME, MOVE LEFT UPHILL ON THE ROAD UNTIL, OPPOSITE SOME HOUSES, YOU CAN TURN RIGHT DOWN TO TIPTON MILL. PASS STRAIGHT THROUGH THE YARD DOWN TO MEET THE RIVER JUST BY THE BRICK PUMPHOUSE IN WHICH LURKS THE ARCHIMEDEAN SCREW MENTIONED ABOVE. TURN LEFT AND YOU ARE BACK ON THE ORIGINAL PATH AS DETAILED ABOVE.**