

Dittisham to Totnes - The Dart Valley Trail



A perfect, gentle day's journey, this walk links village to nestled, unspoilt village as it follows the silver ribbon of the River Dart through Devon's rolling hills.

- **Start:** Dittisham Ham car park, Dittisham
 - **Finish:** The Plains, Totnes
 - **Distance:** 8 miles
 - **Grade:** Moderate
 - **Terrain:** Footpaths, fairly even under foot, occasional mud in wet weather; surfaced roads.
 - **Obstacles and steep gradients:** 9 stiles; 6 flights of steps; 2 steep ascents.
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- **Directions**

Walk back up road to the village. At t-junction just past church turn right. (If coming to Dittisham by ferry, walk up through the village. Turn right at the t-junction and join the route by the church). Follow road down to Dittisham Mill Creek.

Turn right just before *Old Mill* over wooden footbridges onto public footpath leading along field edges and old green lane.

Turn left at the road. Climb hill after the bridge and take first right signed 'Coombe'.

Go straight on at Barberry Cross then turn right down green lane signed 'Broadgates Lane'. Follow lane and then road, and go straight over at Longland Cross.

Turn right at junction and walk down through the village of Cornworthy.

Just past Court Prior Farm turn right along footpath in front of cottages. Turn right into Charleycombe Wood and take the path ahead dropping down through the valley. Cross the footbridge and turn downhill through kissing gate onto public footpath.

When you reach the fingerpost, turn left signed 'Tuckenhay ¹/₂ mile'. Follow steps to left.

Bear left through next kissing gate along woodland path. At road turn right, and then right again over the bridge to follow road through Tuckenhay and along Bow Creek.

After 500m turn sharp right down steps and over stepping stones, then bear left up track and turn right at road. (At high tide continue along road, turn right over bridge by Waterman's Arms, and right again signed for Ashprington and Totnes).

Follow road up through Ashprington, past church on left and along Sharpham Drive. At the 'Sharpham' pillars, bear left along path.

As you emerge from the woods, turn right over stile and down path through field. Turn left along track at the bottom.

As the path rises and curves left, branch off right at the 'public footpath' fingerpost down and across field. Path follows river through woods and fields to emerge at the wharf in Totnes. Turn left and walk through to wharf entrance. Go straight ahead here along road. Just after Steam Packet Inn turn right along riverside path. Where path rejoins road, bear right and continue to The Plains.

Greenway Walk



Experience breathtaking views of the spectacular Tor Bay, discover ruins, follow in ancient footsteps along historic track ways, through rural villages and outstanding countryside to the beautiful River Dart estuary and visit the National Trust's Greenway.

- **Start:** Broadsands Beach
 - **Finish:** Broadsands Beach
 - **Distance:** 6.5 miles
 - **Circular walk:** Yes
 - **Grade:** Moderate
 - **Terrain:** Coastal and inland footpath, pebble beach, short section on estuary foreshore.
 - **Obstacles and steep gradients:** Two stiles, several gates, two short steep climbs and one main road crossing.
- **Directions**

Starting from Broadsands Beach take the Coast Path to Brixham. At the junction with the old tree, head right inland, then left across the golf course. Turn right into Green Lane, turn right at the end, then left into Bridge Road.

Cross the main road using the subway. Pass Churston Station to your left and take the next left. Just before the Manor Inn, take the left-hand fork to Greenway Garden. Beyond the village, turn left into Kennel Lane, over the railway bridge and turn right onto Coombe Lane. At the top turn right to Higher Greenway. At the next T-junction turn left into Greenway. Enter the National Trust's Greenway Estate and go through the gates on your right. Keep to the right-hand edge of the field. Follow signs to the right for Galmpton. Go through the gate and keep to the left-hand fenceline. Take the left-hand gate into the woodland. Go through the kissing gate and cross Greenway Road.

Climb the two stone stiles and turn right into Lower Greenway Farm yard. Turn left and head towards another old stile and gate. Go through the gate in the right-hand fence heading down towards the stile onto the foreshore. Continue right, along the foreshore. Walk up the short hill until you come to a right-hand bend. Here take the green lane ahead towards Galmpton Creek boatyards.

Follow the lane uphill past Dartside Boat Park. Turn right to Galmpton at Stoke Gabriel Road. Pass the Post Office and take Slade Lane on your left, to Galmpton Warborough Common. Head for the disused windmill. Cross the main road near the war memorial.

Walk downhill, alongside Bascombe Road until you reach the public footpath on the left. This footpath emerges on Broadsands Road. Turn right downhill to return to Broadsands Beach.

Woodhuish & Mansands



Beautiful beaches, the silvery sea, and the curves, cliffs and coves of a superb stretch of the coast

- **Start:** Scabbacombe Car Park, Scabbacombe Lane
- **Distance:** 3.5 miles
- **Circular walk:** Yes
- **Grade:** Moderate to Strenuous
- **Terrain:** Fairly even coastal footpath; green lane with soggy and muddy sections in wet weather; surfaced road
- **Obstacles and steep gradients:** 1 stile; 2 steep ascents; 1 steep descent
- **Accessibility:** This route is not suitable for wheelchairs or pushchairs.

Directions

Leave car park through gate and follow green lane down hill signed 'Scabbacombe Sands Link to Coast Path'.

Where you enter field, follow left hand field edge down.

At the bottom, if you wish, detour right to visit Scabbacombe Sands then retrace your steps. Otherwise, turn left and follow coast path, climbing steeply over the cliffs and dropping down to Mansands.

Cross the shingle bar between the former lagoon and beach taking particular care crossing the stream bed, then bear left along footpath up Mansands Lane. (If you would prefer not to risk wet feet – follow the signed alternative inland route)

At the next junction turn left signed 'Mill Lane'.

At the following junction turn left signed 'Woodhuish Lane'.

At the top turn right and follow road for ½ mile back to car park on left.

Kingswear to Froward Point



Castles and cliffs, seals and skylarks, on a coastal circular walk rich in views, history and natural abundance.

- **Start:** Marina car park, Kingswear.
 - **Distance:** 5 miles
 - **Circular walk:** Yes
 - **Grade:** Moderate to strenuous
 - **Terrain:** Coast path with some uneven sections and long flights of steps; 2 steep descents; 1 steep ascent.
 - **Obstacles and steep gradients:** 2 Stiles; 4 flights of steps; 2 steep descents; 1 steep ascent.
- **Directions**

Turn right out of the car park along the road, then bear right again. By ferry slipway, pass under the arch, then left up Alma Steps.

Turn right onto Beacon Road. This becomes a tarmac footpath, and then joins a road again.

Turn right down wooden steps, signed Froward Point 1 1/4 m.

Just past Mill Bay Cove, turn right onto private drive, and then left after 30m, up steps and through woods. Pass above Newfoundland Cove to Brownstone Battery. (To explore the Battery, drop down the path to the right by the coastwatch station. Turn left by the first searchlight post, then left again following the 'acorn' waymarker. Fork left once more to wind back up to the coastwatch lookout).

Bear left onto the track signed 'HG Brownstone'. Past the Day Mark, fork left onto a green lane signed for Kingswear.

Turn left at Brownstone and follow the footpath through the farm and past Crocker's Cottage. The footpath joins a private road. Bear left where the road forks, and then left again.

Turn right back down Alma Steps. Retrace your steps past the steam railway, and fork left past the bus shelter to the car park.

Dartmouth to Brixham

Length: 11 miles (17km)

Grading: Strenuous

Summary:

The journey begins with a ferry trip across the River Dart from the town of Dartmouth to Kingswear. The Path then climbs through wooded areas containing Monterey and Corsican Pines, with fantastic views glimpsed back over the Dart to the spectacularly sited 15th century castle. Much of the first section is managed by the National Trust, who take great care to ensure a safe habitat for birds. A good place to spot many different species is along the stretch of cliffs around Froward Point, where you may see linnets, skylarks and the rare ciril bunting. The Path goes through Berry Head National Nature Reserve where the cliffs are home to the largest guillemot colony to be found along the south coast of England. The limestone cliffs also support a number of nationally rare plants and are full of beautiful wildflowers from May to August. From the tip of Berry Head you may see harbour porpoises and seals, although you are unlikely to spot any of the threatened Greater Horseshoe Bats who live in caves in this area.

Highlights along the path:

- Taking the ferry across Dartmouth harbour to Kingswear and looking up the beautiful River Dart.
- Looking and listening out for the Dart Valley Steam Train, which follows the line that was opened to use in 1864.
- Kingswear Castle: Slightly hidden amongst the trees is a 15th century square artillery tower and a 16th century blockhouse. These are now owned by the Landmark Trust and can actually be hired as holiday accommodation.
- Spotting grey seals around the Mew Stone. This is one of a number of offshore rocks with this name due to the nesting colonies of gulls (or mews).
- The remains of WWII defences at Froward Point, decommissioned in 1956.
- The lovely views from above Pudcombe Cove.
- Scabbacombe Head: The National Trust manages this site using wild ponies to keep down the scrub and consequently encourage maritime plants and butterflies.
- Swimming at Scabbacombe Sands or at one of the other beaches you pass.
- The flowers of Long Sands Cliff. Along this stretch you may see bird's-foot trefoil and early purple orchids, as well as some of the beautiful butterflies who also enjoy the many different species of flowering plants growing amongst the maritime grasses.
- Man Sand with the remains of a 19th century lime kiln. Limestone was brought by boat and burnt to make lime which was used as a soil conditioner and a wash for the walls of the local cottages.
- Views from Sharkham Point over St Mary's Bay and on to [Berry Head](#). Now managed as a conservation area, the Point was once an important site for iron mining, as well as serving as the town tip for Brixham.
- Spotting the nesting kittiwakes, guillemots (known locally as the Brixham penguin) and fulmers.
- Looking down on the long stretch of sand and shingle of St Mary's Bay. Access to the beach can be difficult, but there are often people here searching for fossils, as well as enjoying the peace away from Brixham and the other holiday resorts of Torbay.
- Walking round the high cliffs of Berry Head: This limestone peninsula is a National Nature Reserve and the site of an Iron age hill fort and also has two well-preserved Napoleonic fortifications. Beyond the coastguard station is the [Berry Head lighthouse](#) which is known as the smallest, highest and deepest light in the British Isles. Due to the height of the cliffs, the tower only needed to be built 5 metres high!
- The fishing port of Brixham: Built around the quay, this historic town has a range of shops, galleries and cafes to welcome walkers. There has been a settlement here since Saxon times and the town went on to become the home of trawling and had one of the largest fleets of wooden trawlers in the world. There is a statue of William of Orange on Brixham Quay as he landed a crew of 20,000 men here in 1688 and here you will also find a full-size reconstruction of Sir Francis Drake's vessel the Golden Hind.

Worth a look (interesting places close to the path):

- Walking the Dart Valley Trail through Long Wood on the banks of the Dart estuary: An ancient sessile oak wood, which is home to many birds, including woodpeckers, buzzards, treecreepers and nuthatches as well as bats and roe deer.
- Catching the ferry up the River Dart to Totnes or Greenway and returning along the Dart Valley Trail.

- The Tower Day Marker: Follow the path from Inner Froward Point towards Brownstone. The Beacon was built in 1864 to help guide ships towards the River Dart.
- [Coleton Fishacre](#): This National Trust property has fine examples of Art Deco interiors as well as a beautiful garden of rare and exotic plants. For details tel: 01803 753017.
- Learning all about Torbay's most important site for wildlife and geology at the Berry Head Visitor Centre. Tel: 01803 883262.

Public transport info:

There is a mainline train station at Totnes and from here you can take the regular Stagecoach 111 service to Dartmouth. The ferry from Dartmouth to Kingswear runs daily throughout the year, tel: 01803 752342. From Kingswear you can take one of the very regular Stagecoach Devon bus numbers 22 and 24 all the way to Brixham. For further details visit [Traveline](#) or phone 0870 6082608.

Refreshments:

There is a good selection of shops and cafes in Dartmouth where you can stock up on supplies for the day. Further on, there is a National Trust tearoom at Coleton Fishacre, but not a lot more until Brixham. Brixham has a good range of pubs, shops and cafes. Establishments that serve local produce include The Brixham Deli on Fore Street, where you will find a great selection of patisserie.

Nearest Car park:

Dartmouth, Coleton Fishacre, Sharkham Point, Berry Head and Brixham.

Toilets:

Dartmouth, Kingswear, Berry Head and Brixham.

More information:

[Dartmouth Tourist Information Centre](#) Tel: 01803 834224

[Torbay Tourist Information Centres](#) Tel: 01803 211211

Brixham to Babbacombe

Length: 13 miles (21km) alternatively, the route to Paignton is approximately 5.6m

Grading: Moderate

Summary:

If you are expecting the walk through the English Riviera to be a trudge along pavements, you are in for a pleasant surprise. You may not actually spot any of the famous coral fossils of Hope's Nose, but you cannot fail to notice the extraordinary geology along this stretch of coast. The Path passes around the limestone peninsula of Berry Head and wave cut platforms of red sandstone at Shoalstone into the thriving fishing port of Brixham where your walk begins. The hustle and bustle of Brixham's port is soon left behind as you head through woodland and past some lovely beaches to emerge on the edge of Paignton. The Path along Paignton and Torquay sea fronts is very easy as it runs along promenades, from which you can easily find refreshments and other distractions. From here on, views of the rich red Devon sandstone rocks towering above the sea draw you through the urban landscapes with promise of exhilarating cliff walks ahead. Leaving bustling Torquay harbour behind, the Path becomes surprisingly rural and rugged, passing golden beaches and headlands on its way to the gardens of Babbacombe Downs.

Highlights along the path:

- Watching the trawlers coming and going in Brixham harbour.
- Enjoying the fine many fine rock formations that have led to this section of Coast being designated an [Unesco Geopark](#). The geopark consists of 32 sites which between them cover 3 geological time periods and no less than 400 million years of earth history. Raised beaches and drowned forests tell of changing sea levels while the distinctive Torbay limestones are a record of coral-filled tropical seas. The South West Coast Path is the ideal way to view and discover much of the geopark as about three quarters of the sites lie along its route. These include Babbacombe Cliff, Hope's Nose, Berry Head, Sharkham Point and Walls Hill.
- Fishcombe Cove: It was on this small, secluded shingle beach that William of Orange landed a crew of 20,000 men in 1688. A statue to him stands at Brixham Quay.
- Exploring the rock pools on the long sandy beach of Broadsands. Look out for the steam trains crossing the viaduct. You may want to take a visit to the Seashore Centre where you can find out more about the local marine life. Entrance is free.
- Playing the slots on a traditional seaside pier at Paignton. The pier, which is 780 ft (236 metres) long, was first opened to the public in 1879 and has hosted many forms of classic English seaside entertainment including the famous Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera HMS Pinafore.
- Visiting Torquay's coastal zoo [Living Coasts](#), where you can get nose to beak with a penguin and have an underwater view of puffins hunting for fish. For admission details tel: 01803 202470.
- Keeping a look out for the commemorative plaques along Torquay's Agatha Christie Mile. The famous crime writer was born in Torquay in 1890 and went on to base many of her books around the English Riviera.
- The view from the 350 million-year-old Devonian limestone of Hopes Nose across to Thatcher's Rock and the many nesting seabirds.
- Walking through the woodland around Black Head.
- Babbacombe: A small village in its own right, Babbacombe offers a quieter alternative to the bustle of Torquay. The pier, which was built in 1889, is often populated by fishermen. Views from Babbacombe Downs reach out across Lyme Bay to Dorset, and Portland Bill is even visible on clear days.
- Walking from Babbacombe Downs to Oddicombe Beach and taking a ride on Babbacombe's historic cliff railway. Open from Easter until Whitsun - 9.30am to 5.00pm and Whitsun until 30 September - 9.30am to 5.30pm.

Worth a look (interesting places close to the path):

- [Torre Abbey](#): After 3 years of restoration, visitors can now access some previously unseen areas of the Abbey, which was founded in 1196. There are fine art galleries, beautiful gardens and a medieval tithe barn, which was used by Sir Francis Drake to contain 397 Spanish prisoners. For further details tel: 01803 293 593
- [Kent's Cavern](#): A Site of Special Scientific Interest due to the spectacular geology, the cave is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument as excavations have revealed extraordinary relics of Stone Age man. Open daily. For details tel: 01803 215136
- [Babbacombe Model Village](#): See thousands of intricate model buildings, people, vehicles and railways capturing the essence of England's past, present and future, all set within four acres of quirky award-winning gardens. Open daily. For details tel: 01803 315315

Shorter option:

Paignton (5.6 miles, 9.1 km)

Longer option:

Continue to Maidencombe (an additional 3.1 miles, 5.1 km)

Public transport info:

There is a mainline train station at Totnes and Newton Abbot and from these towns you can take one of a number of buses into Torbay. The Stagecoach Devon number 111 service runs regularly between Totnes and Torquay and the number 12 Stagecoach service runs very regularly between Newton Abbot and Brixham. There are also regular trains from Newton Abbot to Paignton and Torquay. The number 12 bus service runs every 10 minutes or so between Brixham and Torquay, stopping at Broadsands, Goodrington, Paignton and Livermead. For further details visit [Traveline](#) or phone 0870 6082608.

Refreshments:

You can buy locally produced food for a picnic at the beginning of the day in Brixham from The Brixham Deli on Fore Street and Tutti Frutti on Bolton Street, where you will find a great selection of ice creams and patisserie. Further on, refreshments are available throughout the Torbay resorts of Paignton and Torquay. Torquay has a wide range of restaurants, shops, pubs and cafes. Establishments that serve local produce include Taste of the West members: Azure@ Living Coasts on the Beacon Quay, tel: 01803 202499, The Orchid Restaurant in The Corbyn Head Hotel, on the Sea Front, tel: 01803 296366 and The Elephant Bar and Restaurant, 3-4 Beacon Terrace, Harbourside, tel: 01803 200044. Additional refreshments can be found in Babbacombe.

Nearest Car park:

Brixham, Churston Cove, Broadsands, Goodrington Sands, Paignton, Torquay and Babbacombe.

Toilets:

Brixham harbour, Churston Cove, Broadsands, Goodrington Sands, Paignton seafront, Torquay harbour, Meadfoot Beach and Babbacombe.

More information:

[Berry Head Visitor Centre](#) Tel: 01803 883262

[Torbay Tourist Information Centres](#) Tel: 01803 211211