



# The Archangel's Way

wander and wonder

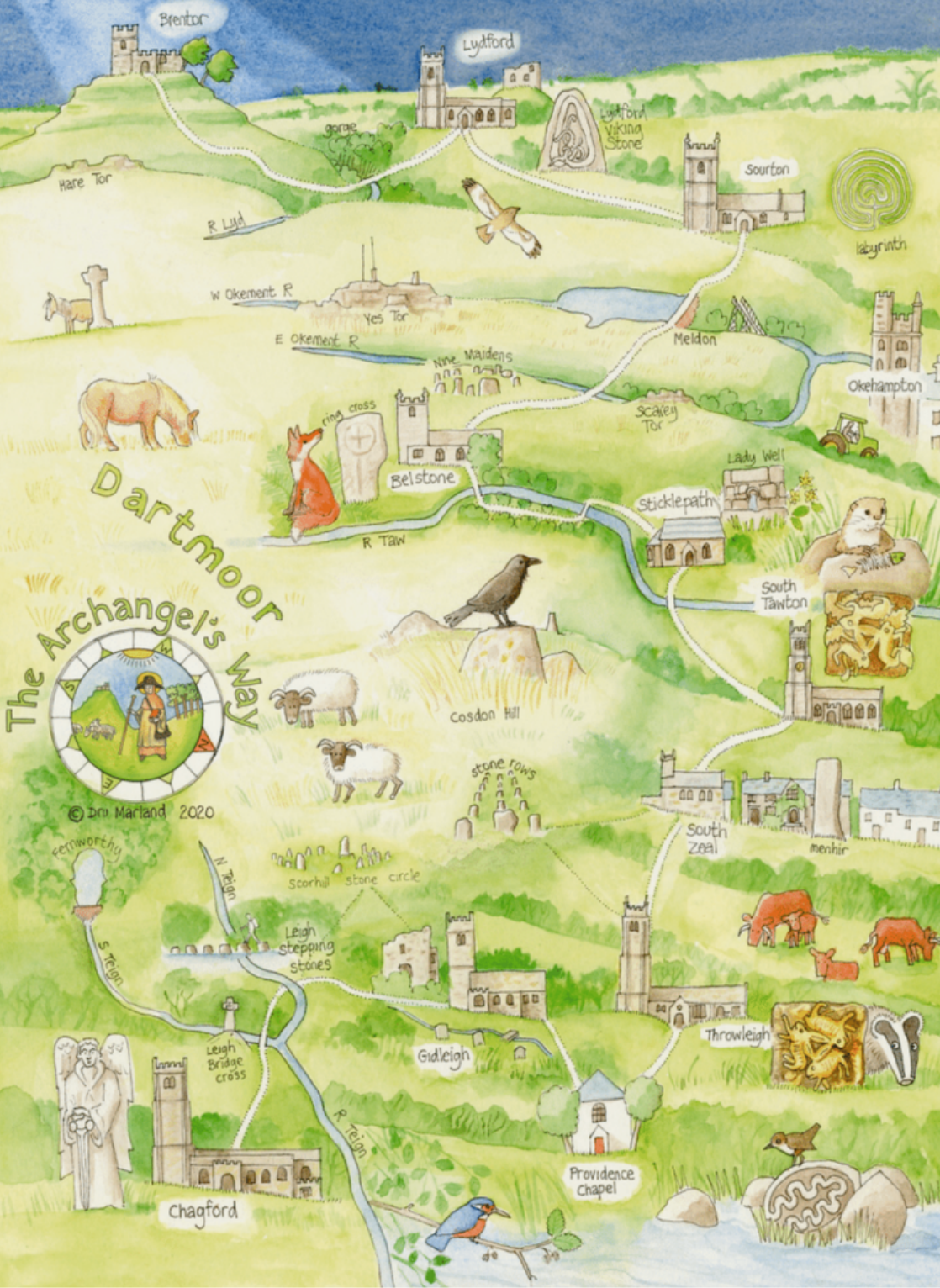


*Second Edition*



# Dartmoor The Archangel's Way

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**The Archangel's Way** is a pilgrimage route across the northern edge of Dartmoor, from the majestic Brentor and its iconic church of St Michael de Rupe, to St Michael the Archangel in Chagford. It is broken down into stages, each with an option of: **Low** routes which are largely dominated by quiet lanes, villages and riverbeds; or **Moorland** routes, which are more challenging walks with the reward of stunning views across Dartmoor and beyond.

Both the **Low** and **Moorland** routes visit 12 of Devon's oldest, most beautiful churches and chapels. They are almost always open during the hours of daylight, throughout the year, but to avoid disappointment you may wish to contact the churches in advance: [devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way](http://devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way)

Below you will find the details of each stage of The Archangel's Way, along with their respective page numbers in this route guide.

Stage	Option	Route	Distance	Duration	Page
1	Low (no alternative)	Brentor - Lydford	5½ miles / 9 km	2½ - 3 hours	6
2	Low	Lydford - Sourton	5 miles / 8 km	2½ - 3 hours	12
2A	Moorland		7½ miles / 12 km	3½ - 4½ hours	
3	Low	Sourton - Belstone	8 miles / 13 km	3½ - 4½ hours	20
3A	Moorland		8½ miles / 14 km	3½ - 4½ hours	
4	Low	Belstone - Throwleigh	6 miles / 10 km	3½ - 4½ hours	26
4A	Moorland		7¼ miles / 12½ km	4 - 5 hours	
5	Low	Throwleigh - Chagford	5 miles / 8 km	2½ - 3 hours	30
5A	Moorland		8½ miles / 14 km	3½ - 4½ hours	
All Low stages (shortest route)		Brentor - Chagford	30 miles / 48 km	2-3 days	
All Moorland stages (longest route)		Brentor - Chagford	38 miles / 62 km	3-4 days	

## An introduction to pilgrimage

To be a pilgrim is to wander on a journey with a purpose, to engage your heart, body and soul, to begin a journey of discovery. A pilgrimage has a sacred intention. It's a path of wandering and wondering as you journey into relationship with God and his creation.

There are differing approaches to pilgrimage. The early Celtic practice of pilgrimage draws its inspiration from the Latin word 'peregrinatio', meaning a long, meandering journey for the love of God. Celtic Christians understood the whole of life as pilgrimage; of journeying towards - and in the presence of - Christ in real and tangible ways.

Later, the Medieval Church taught that making a pilgrimage to a holy site or shrine to pray would mean you might be forgiven for your sins. People travelled to shrines hoping to be cured from illness or disease, often leaving small figures symbolic of the healing they were seeking.

Today both forms of pilgrimage remain popular. We still yearn for connection in our journey through life, and seek out hope and help in times of need.

The Archangel's Way is closer to the Celtic tradition, taking inspiration from Esther De Waal in her book 'The Celtic Way of Prayer'. It is an invitation to an inner journey, as much as an outer one. It is more about how we travel than our destination. We are encouraged to be 'hospites mundi' - guests of the world - who travel in the name of love. As pilgrims we are invited to walk silently and use contemplative and creative practices to help us to be more present and listen more carefully to what we encounter along the way, both outwardly and inwardly. The act of pilgrimage can be healing and transformative. We hope and pray this will be the case for you.

As you walk through this beautiful corner of creation, may you journey into a new or deeper relationship with God the Creator.





## Walking instructions

Whilst it is possible to follow the instructions and maps in this booklet, it is recommended to carry an Ordnance Survey map and a compass just in case! A detailed digital map of The Archangel's Way can be downloaded from [devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way](http://devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way)

## Pilgrim safety

When beginning any journey, it's important to ensure you have everything you need to complete it safely. Being prepared practically for your pilgrimage will allow you to relax and really enjoy your time on The Archangel's Way. Visit [devonpilgrim.org.uk/wander-safely](http://devonpilgrim.org.uk/wander-safely) for more guidance.

## Tread lightly

To tread lightly is to engage with creation in a way that has a positive impact; to leave no mark on the places we visit save the footprints we leave behind. We seek to fully appreciate, and indeed celebrate, the rich variety of environments that Dartmoor provides. Visit [devonpilgrim.org.uk/tread-lightly](http://devonpilgrim.org.uk/tread-lightly) for more guidance.

## Other information

You will find up-to-date information on accommodation, refreshments, parking and toilet facilities on [devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way](http://devonpilgrim.org.uk/route/archangels-way)

## Journal

You will find some blank space on **pages 36-37** to journal your thoughts, feelings, prayers and worship to God through words or art.

## Passport

At the back of this booklet, on **pages 38-39**, you will find a pilgrim passport to stamp in each of the 12 churches.

## Revisions

This Second Edition redirects pilgrims onto a new path (Stage 2A) which avoids an eroding footpath. Some instructions for Stages 4 and 5 have been clarified for easier navigation. There are also some new illustrative maps to help guide you along the way.

# Stage 1



Low route



Brentor -  
Lydford



5½ miles /  
9 km



2½ - 3 hours

Start off with a visit to the lofty heights of St Michael de Rupe atop Brent Tor and descend back across the fields and along the lanes of North Brentor village before skirting the edge of Black Down en-route to Lydford village.



St Michael de Rupe,  
Brentor

PL19 0LP



Christ Church,  
North Brentor

PL19 0LR



St Petrock,  
Lydford

EX20 4BH



# Brentor to Lydford

## Reflection and prayer

Throughout history people have recounted stories of encounters with angels. They appear in many major religions, often as a messenger, (the word angel meaning messenger in Hebrew). In our modern culture many believe we each have a guardian angel watching over us and stories of encounters with angels are not uncommon. Whether you believe in angels or not, their prevalence in stories points to a deeply human yearning within us; a searching for a message to give us direction, or a need to feel safe and protected.

Pilgrimage is a space and time we can make for us to spend time apart from day to day life. To be still and listen. To attend to that emotional need of human existence. It can bring opportunities to connect to the others who share our path, and to allow the voice of that which is transcendent and beyond our understanding to speak into our lives. Our way is mapped out, so we walk the path that others have done before and chose our own path of our inner journey.

Each pilgrim walking this way will have their own reasons for undertaking this pilgrimage. It maybe that you are at a significant time in your life, or perhaps are simply relishing the break from the daily rush and routine. As you set out on your journey, may you allow your body and your mind to still, breathe deep and start to feel at one with the landscape around you, and may you draw closer to that which gives you life.

There is no wrong path  
except the path  
taken  
with regret  
without love  
in anger or from fear.

It's how we take  
the path we choose.  
How we breathe  
into each step, loose  
and free, and look up  
with expectancy;  
how we greet each fellow  
traveller we meet;  
and leave no record  
of our passing there  
bar the aroma of  
just extinguished prayer.



'No Wrong Path' from Unfurling by  
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# Directions



## Stage 1 (Low route)



From the Church car park, cross the main road with care and pass through a kissing gate. Follow the clear, steep track up to the Church. (Alternatively, there is a gentler ascent by following the ramparts of the Iron Age Fort round the Tor leading to the foot of the granite steps up to the churchyard gate). **St Michael de Rupe** is the 4th smallest, and highest, working church in England.

As you prepare to begin your pilgrimage, pause to consider the journey ahead and admire the stained-glass window depicting St Michael.

On leaving the Church, walk around to the south door and across the graveyard to a gap in the boundary and follow the faint pathway which leads south downhill to a gap in the earthen rampart. Go through this gap and descend carefully to a farm track.

Turn right along this to reach the end of the wall and a gate marked “Permissive path to road at Holyeat”. Go through the gate and follow left hand field boundary to the lane at Holyeat Farm. Turn left and follow lane through South Brentor, continuing straight along it until you see a gate ahead with views across the valley to Blackdown.

Turn left here along a well-surfaced farm track. At the end of this are two gates. Take the right-hand gate signposted “Public footpath”. This path crosses 5 fields:

- Cross field 1 ahead, keeping to the right of the pond, to a gate in the field boundary opposite.
- Cross field 2 diagonally to a kissing gate in the bottom right-hand corner.
- Cross field 3 to a second kissing gate with a gateway to the left into field 4.
- In field 4, head for the gateway in top left-hand corner.
- Cross field 5 to a padlocked metal gate. Part of this can be opened to give access into Darke Lane, leading into North Brentor.

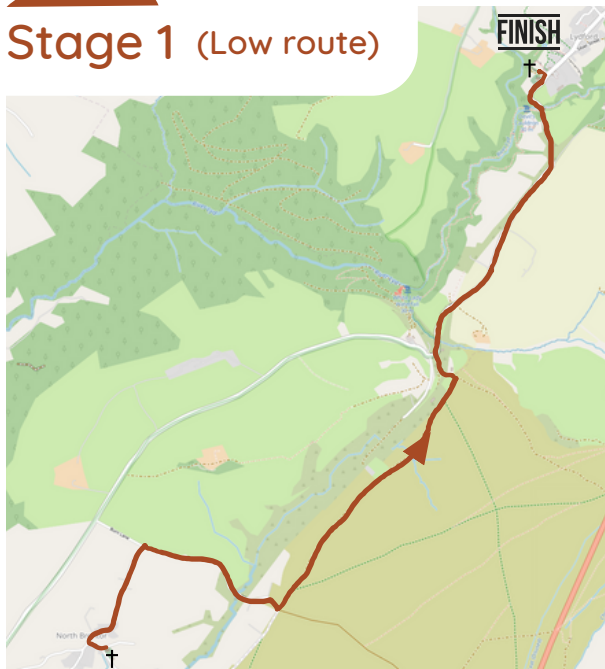
At the road junction, turn right towards the War Memorial. You will see **Christ Church** to your right. This is much more modern than its counterpart, but no less fitting as a place of reflection.



# Brentor to Lydford



## Stage 1 (Low route)



When you have reflected a while, return to the War Memorial from the church and turn right along the lane to the signpost beyond the playing field. Turn right into Burn Lane as far as the cattle grid onto West Blackdown.

Follow the road uphill until it bends right. At this point go straight on between stones onto the moorland track and across the leat to join Route 27 of the National Cycle Network.

Turn left onto this track and follow it until it starts to descend towards a white house. Bear right onto a grassy track and follow its boundary wall to a granite boundary stone marked "MT".

Continue on this track to the ford and then on to the summit of a grassy slope. Here, follow the stony track until you see a wooden five bar gate to your left and a row of cottages.

Pass through the gate and follow the access road across a former railway bridge to the junction with the main road from Brentor to Lydford (to the left is Lydford Gorge waterfall entrance - National Trust). HiVis is recommended for the next section.

Turn right along this road and keep to the right. Descend with great caution to cross the River Lyd and climb up hill over former railway bridge to top where road levels out past houses. Continue beside the former railway track as far as the bridge.

Proceed under the bridge in single file to descend to the entrance to Lydford Gorge (National Trust).

Cross the bridge over the Gorge itself before climbing the steep hill into Lydford using the footpath on the right-hand side of the road to the Church of St Petrock, Lydford.

Go through the church gate and you will find a granite wheelwright's stone to the right of the path and the unique watchmaker's tomb against St Petrock's church wall beside the porch. The lights come on automatically to welcome you as you enter.

# The Three Hares



We know of seventeen parish churches in Devon which contain at least one roof boss depicting the three hares, and here on The Archangel's Way can be found five examples:

- **The Castle Inn, Lydford** - stained glass door.
- **St Andrew, South Tawton** - south aisle.
- **St Mary, Throwleigh** - north aisle.
- **St Michael, Chagford** - one above the south door, and another in the chancel.

The majority of the bosses are medieval and have been skilfully crafted in wood.

The Three Hares is widely spread throughout the county however the eastern fringe of Dartmoor has a notable concentration. Often wrongly referred to as 'The Tinnars Rabbits', there is no evidence to support any link between the three hares motif and the tin mining.

The hare is strongly represented in world mythology and from ancient times has had divine associations. Its elusiveness and unusual behaviour, particularly at night, have reinforced its reputation as a magical creature.

The hare was believed to have mystical links to the female cycle and to the moon which governed it. The theory of the Ancients that the hare was hermaphroditic and could procreate without a mate led to the belief that it could give birth to young without loss of virginity.

In Christian contexts, the three hares may therefore be associated with the Virgin Mary. The three hares boss is often juxtaposed in western European churches with a boss of the Green Man, perhaps a representation of sinful humanity. Linking the motif with the Christian Trinity appears to be an association made long after the image was originally worked.

The motif is an ancient archetype and has leapt faiths, stretching across diverse religions and cultures over many centuries and many thousands of miles. It is part of the shared medieval heritage of Europe and Asia and appears not only in Christianity but in Buddhism, Islam and Judaism, with the earliest known examples painted onto the ceilings of the Buddhist cave temples at Mogao near Dunhuang and on the edge of the Gobi Desert in north west China. Dunhuang is situated at the western end of the Great Wall of China and was an important trading post on the Silk Road, a major conduit for the exchange of goods and ideas for many hundreds of years. Whatever the mode of transmission, the journey of the three hares is remarkable indeed.

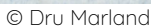






...the blackened beams  
of Dartmoor churches  
at the edges of the earth, bear  
a trinity of hares, three in one, the risen son,  
beneath a moon that pins  
the universal oceans.

map © Doru Marland      except from 'Full Circle' © Deborah Harvey



# Stage 2/2A



There is a choice of routes between Lydford and Sourton. **Stage 2** takes the easier low level route, while **Stage 2A** describes the higher level, more challenging moorland route.

## Stage 2



**Low route**



**Lydford - Sourton**



**5 miles / 8 km**



**2½ - 3 hours**

Take time to see St Petrock's and the Castle before following the old Saxon Lanes out of the village. The route follows the West Devon Way across Fernworthy Down and along old green lanes and tracks before dropping down to Lake where we walk under and then over the old railway viaduct to continue along the Granite Way to our destination at St Thomas à Becket, Sourton.

## Stage 2A



**Moorland route**



**Lydford - Sourton**



**7½ miles / 12 km**



**3½ - 4½ hours**

Take time to see St Petrock's and the Castle before following the old Saxon Lanes to leave the village via Silver Street. The first glimpse of the Moor and its tors comes on High Down before following the River Lyd to the river crossing where a decision has to be made whether to ascend Brat Tor and visit Widgery Cross. After continuing along the riverbank, the old peat railway track is then used around Great Nodden followed by moorland tracks past Sourton Tor and the Ice Works down to St Thomas à Becket, Sourton.



**St Petrock,  
Lydford**

**EX20 4BH**



**St Thomas à Becket,  
Sourton**

**EX20 4HN**

# Lydford to Sourton

## Reflection and prayer

Pilgrimage is often used as a way to describe our journey through life. This section of The Archangel's Way offers opportunities to reflect more deeply on this concept.

Lydford itself is the final destination of the Lych Way or Way of the Dead, the path along which the dead from remote moorland homes were carried for burial at Lydford. Devon band **Show of Hands** have written a beautiful haunting song, The Old Lych Way. If you are able to, spend a moment in the churchyard of St Petrock's church and listen to it. (It can be easily found on YouTube, simply search for The Old Lych Way)

We live in a society where we so often try to deny the reality of our own mortality. Time flies by so fast, we get caught up with worries and forget to live each moment in its fullness. So as you continue your pilgrimage, live each mile, each step, in all their fullness.

May we discover that  
the road we didn't  
choose,

Didn't want to travel,  
Is a highway that leads  
unerringly

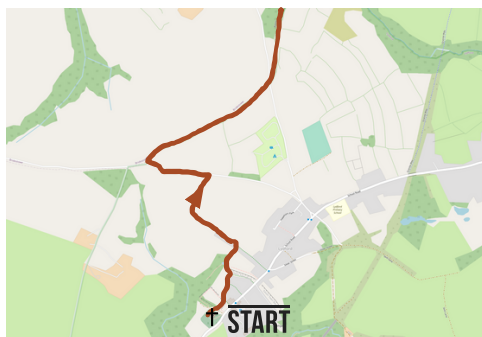
Towards the light.

Frances Copsey,  
A Book of Blessings (2014)



# Directions

## Stage 2 (Low route)



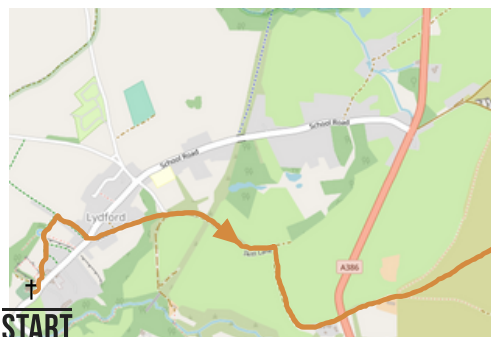
From St Petrock's Church, walk through the Castle grounds and exit into the lane behind the Castle Inn. The lane joins into the other old Saxon village streets and takes you past The Ancient Spring.

Continue along the bridleway, up to the junction where you turn left along a trackway past a stone cottage on the left and continue between mature hedge banks. (This track can be very muddy after wet weather). Follow sharp bend to the right and continue up to the road.

Turn left along the right-hand side of the road and follow it round the bend until you reach the granite boundary stone on the grass verge to your right (marked with an 'L'). Turn right onto the Public Bridleway.

After a boggy start, this track descends through a hollow funnel of spreading trees along a stony track between high hedge banks to Bolt's House. Cross the lane here and proceed straight ahead on the Public Byway which descends gradually between hedge banks. (This can be muddy and slippery after wet weather).

## Stage 2A (Moorland route)



From St Petrock's Church, cross the Castle grounds into the lane behind the Castle Inn. The lane joins other Saxon village streets and takes you past The Ancient Spring. At the T-junction turn right and continue past the old Chapel, crossing the main road into Silver Street. This lane is the last leg of The Lych Way, the "way of the dead" that starts in Bellever, near Postbridge and traverses 12 miles of Moor to Lydford.

Continue straight on at the crossroads and pass under the old railway bridge along a green lane that then turns sharp right, becoming Skitt Lane and leading to the main A386 road.

Cross straight over with great care following the lane uphill to a gate onto the Moor, alongside Highdown. This leads you out onto the Moor proper, with splendid views across to Brat Tor, Sharp Tor, Doe Tor and Hare Tor.

Continue across the top of the moorland but do not take the lower paths, heading straight out directly in line with Brat Tor and its cross on the top.

# Lydford to Sourton

## Stage 2 (Low route)

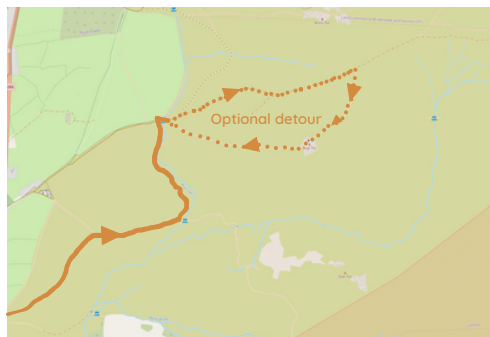


At the junction with another track turn right towards a large metal gate. Pass through and follow path to the left across a stone clapper bridge and onto the track which leads round to the left across Fernworthy Down.

As you climb up onto the down, views open up to the right and you will see first Sourton Tor and then Great Nodden to its right. Pass through the gate onto a metalled drive flanked by ancient oak trees. Follow this drive until you reach Station Road leading from Fox and Hounds pub (1km down the road to the right) to Bridestowe.

Take great care crossing the road and proceed along the well-maintained metalled drive opposite. This begins as an avenue of beech trees.

## Stage 2A (Moorland route)



Follow the faint path through the gorse that soon becomes a clear route that brings you to a path crossing where you go right following the curve, across another path before heading down a track towards the River Lyd. This brings you down to the old Wheal Mary Emma mine, at which point you continue alongside the river (on your right) tracing a narrow and rocky path that climbs up to Captain Hunter's Rock and Plaque, always a fine spot for a break and contemplation on the bench admiring the view up to Brat Tor.

Head along the river until the ford and the bridge. If you choose **not** to walk the following optional 1.5 mile detour, **do not** cross the bridge and continue to follow the directions on the next page.

### 1.5 mile optional detour

If the weather is good, consider taking the loop up to Widgery Cross and back. Cross the bridge and take the track between Arms Tor and Brat Tor. Once at the top it is a simple excursion south to the top of Brat Tor and Widgery Cross. Take in the views before heading straight back down to the bridge. Cross back over the bridge and head straight up the hill to reach the gate and stile in the directions on the next page.

# Directions

## Stage 2 (Low route)



Continue along this track which eventually begins to descend where there is a cottage on the right named 'Bramblemoor'. Descend past a pair of Estate cottages towards the ford. There is a shady grass area near the ford where you may decide to rest.

Cross via the stone clapper bridge and then turn left again to cross another bridge to the drive serving the house you have just passed. Turn right and follow the track up the Lane. Turn right and follow the lane down to the main A386 road, emerging opposite the Bearslake Inn.

Take very great care crossing the road and continue straight over taking the track alongside the Inn, sign-posted as part of Route 27 cycle way. The track takes you under the imposing Lake Viaduct where you turn immediately right, through a gate, following the incline that leads up to the Granite Way track.

## Stage 2A (Moorland route)



Turn left up the hill away from the river to the gate and ladder stile on your right (110 metres). Take this and follow the direction of the finger post across the field to its far northern corner, crossing through old field boundary mounds as you do. Go through the gate, turn right then right again through another gate, passing another Lydford Boundary stone between the

two. This is Nodden Gate and takes you out onto the Moor. Follow the stony track straight on, with the wall on your right, then it bears left as it curves high above the river giving splendid views across to the tors beyond (Great Links, Arms and Brat Tors).

You are walking on the bed of the old Rattlebrook Peatworks tramway which headed above the River Lyd towards Great Nodden, the rounded hill in front of you. Stay on this track through the cutting and then turn right at the end, still on the track.

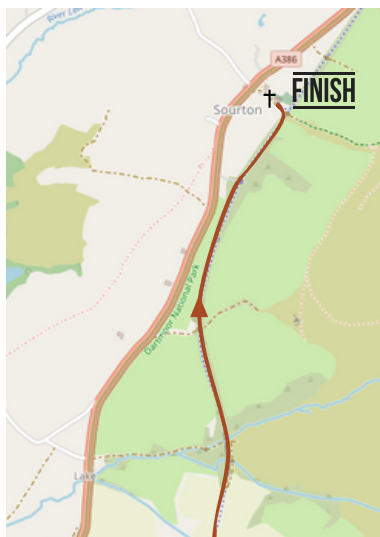
Carry on as the track rises to shortly cross over a timber bridge, admiring the views into the Moor and Great Links Tor, together with those in the opposite direction, west, across the Devon countryside. Shortly before the stony path ends, you will see a grassy track to your left leading away to Sourton Tors.



# Lydford to Sourton



## Stage 2 (Low route)



At the top turn right and continue over the viaduct enjoying fine views in both directions. In about 1km you will pass under a bridge with an attractive Granite Way signpost beyond. Turn left here for St Thomas à Becket church at Sourton.

## Stage 2A (Moorland route)



Follow this and bear right downhill when another path comes in from the left.

Follow this track that keeps to the right of the base of Sourton Tor. This curves around to the north reaching a series of depressions that were the former Sourton Ice Works, dating from 1880's. Go left and through the Ice Works to reach another track that leads down into the funnel and the bridge over the Granite Way (the old railway line) to Sourton Church.

Cross the bridge to visit **St Thomas à Becket church** and OXO cross if desired with The Highwayman Inn opposite providing a quirky additional attraction.

## Reflection and prayer

As you reach St Thomas à Becket church, through a gate in the field behind you'll find a small labyrinth. Take off your shoes, feel the earth beneath your feet and walk slowly and mindfully along the single path to the centre. Think perhaps of the things that are holding you back from living your life in its fullness. As you reach the centre and turn to return back out to the journey ahead, maybe offer up what holds you back and commit to walking a closer path to the one you were made for.



# Dartmoor's industrial heritage

Dartmoor's reputation as a pleasant holiday resort and a delightful place for retirement is of very recent origin and disguises a completely different history. Nature has a remarkable ability to reclaim its own, so that what look today like grassy bumps in an otherwise unspoilt landscape would once have been sites of intense industrial activity. Tin and copper were the key raw materials of the Bronze Age and the first smelters would have used cassiterite pebbles (source of tin) in the streams and green malachite found in caves (source of copper). These minerals defined Dartmoor's industrial importance for three thousand years.

A more obvious raw material is granite, the very rock of which Dartmoor is made. This hard, grainy, igneous rock with a significant quartz content has been in demand for construction ever since the Dartmoor ancients raised their stone menhirs, circles and rows and is still used today for such diverse purposes as monuments and curling stones.

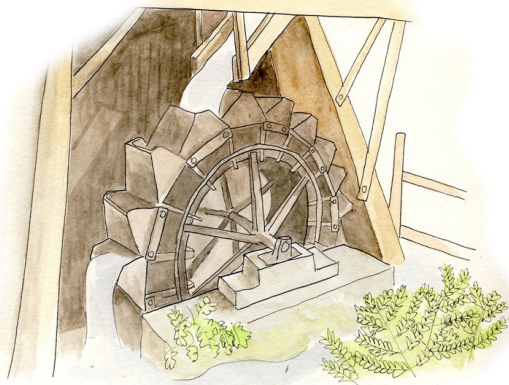
The other precious natural attribute of Dartmoor is the fast-flowing streams cascading down from the many river-heads which, until the Industrial Revolution, were the primary source of power for industry.

The mighty rivers on which Plymouth, Dartmouth, Barnstaple and Bideford stand all share the same source – marshes on central Dartmoor. With all these natural advantages, it is no surprise that until comparatively recent times Dartmoor and its immediate surroundings have been the site of industry on a significant scale.

On The Archangel's Way, a very typical example of this heritage is Sticklepath. The village lies on the "Sticklepath Fault", a flaw in the Earth's surface caused by tectonic movement, which probably had advantages for mineral miners by pushing valuable ores closer to the surface. Sticklepath also stands astride, and is a natural crossing place for, the River Taw, and so possesses in miniature all of the industrial benefits listed above.

In the 19th century the village was something of an industrial powerhouse. Overlooking the settlement to the west was a copper mine. The remains of the wheel pit can still be seen from the road between Sticklepath and Skaigh. Slightly closer to the village was Lady Well Quarry, started in 1875 and Finch foundry, now owned by the National Trust, at its height was producing 400 tools a day.

Probably the largest of the mills was Cleave Mill, opened in the 1820's as a producer of serge, much of it for military uniforms, by John Pearse and his two sons George and Thomas. The younger brother Tom is the man who loaned his grey mare in the famous song Widescombe Fair.



# Standing stones and crosses

## Standing Stones

On The Archangel's Way you will pass two of the four standing stones in the area thought to be of 10th century Christian origin, although the purpose the stones served is a mystery. At Sourton, opposite on the green is a large standing stone known as the OXO stone. The face of the stone has a circle and cross carved out, with another circle underneath. The other 10th century Christian stone stands at the foot of the Sticklepath ('stickle' - steep). It is tempting to run your fingers gently over the moss and algae-coated surface of the Sticklepath Stone, seeking subtle "O" and "X" indentations. The other two stones are the Sourton Down Cross and The Honest Man.

## The Nine Maidens Stone Circle

The legend of the Nine Maidens stone circle at Belstone is that nine maidens were turned to stone for dancing on the Sabbath and that at noon the church bells bring them to life and they dance. In fact, the stones were placed by Bronze Age man and form the outer wall of a long vanished burial chamber.

## Belstone Ring Cross

The carved stone found inside St Mary's Church has been dated between the 7th and 9th centuries, suggesting that there has been active worship at Belstone since before the Norman Conquest. It was discovered during the 1861 demolition of the Church meeting room and almshouses. The stone had been used, face down, as one of the outdoor steps up to the meeting room. It then became part of a wall at the Rectory, a mile away, but was returned to the Churchyard in the 1930s and was placed in its present position in 2005.

## Cosdon Triple Stone Rows

This triple stone row and nearby cairn are on the eastern side of Cosdon Hill. It is known locally as The Graveyard and is a 138m long triple row of 118 stones gradually increasing in height towards the cairn. Many stones have been removed for wall building over the ages but what remains is still one of the finest examples in the country.

## Scorhill Stone Circle

Scorhill is one of the most visually impressive stone circles on Dartmoor and formed a significant ritual area. The circle is situated on a west facing slope overlooking the North Teign valley. It is made up of 23 upright granite slabs with a further 11 stones lying nearby.



# Stage 3/3A



There is a choice of routes between Sourton and Belstone. **Stage 3** takes the easier low level route, while **Stage 3A** describes the higher level, more challenging moorland route. If the Red flags are flying, denoting that the Okehampton Military Firing Range is active, you **MUST** take the Low route (Stage 3).

## Stage 3



**Low route**



**Sourton - Belstone**



**8 miles / 13 km**



**3½ - 4½ hours**

Leaving by the Granite Way, we cross Meldon viaduct and descend alongside it to view what is such a fine example of Victorian engineering. Through the old quarry area and alongside the Red-a-Ven brook, the path ascends steeply keeping on the northern edge of the High Moor. After the Military Camp, lanes are followed to Lower Halstock before a wooded stretch down and across the East Okement River. The path steadily ascends to Nine Maidens stone circle and across Watchet Hill into Belstone.



**St Thomas à Becket,  
Sourton**

**EX20 4HN**



**Moorland route**



**Sourton - Belstone**



**8½ miles / 14 km**



**3½ - 4½ hours**

A short section of the Granite Way takes us onto the Moor at Prewley where we drop down to Vellake Corner and along the West Okement valley to the delightful Black-a-Tor Copse. A steep ascent to the tor takes us across open moorland with paths and tracks leading to the bridge at Cullever Steps. Skirting Scarey Tor, Nine Maidens stone circle is reached before dropping down into Belstone village.



**St Mary the Virgin,  
Belstone**

**EX20 1RB**



# Sourton to Belstone

## Prayer

I lift up my eyes to the mountains -  
where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord,  
The Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip -  
he who watched over you will not slumber;  
indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.

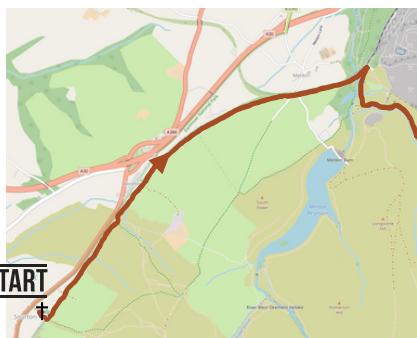
The Lord watches over you -  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm -  
he will watch over your life;  
the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121, NIV

# Directions

## Stage 3 (Low route)



From the church, return towards the moor, but do not cross the bridge. Instead, take the lefthand path towards the Granite Way. Turn left and keep on the tarmac surface past Prewley Moor.

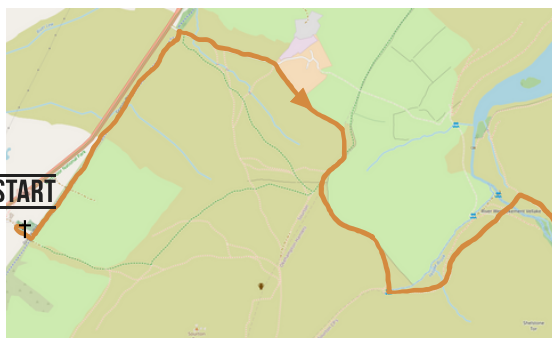
You will soon reach Meldon Viaduct, and at its end, turn right and head for the steps below the old railway coach.

Descend the steps to the bottom, turn left and follow the path.

Cross the road and take the path opposite that will lead you to a gate. Go through the gate; there is an old lime kiln to your left and other ruined buildings, as you are now entering the old Meldon Quarry works, with the river on your right.

Follow the track as it winds its way eventually up to the left, through another collection of buildings and structures before heading right following the Red-a-Ven brook up to the south-east.

## Stage 3A (Moorland route)



If the red flags are flying, denoting that the Okehampton Military Firing Range is active, you **MUST** take the Low route (Stage 3).

From the church, return towards the moor, do not cross the bridge but take the lefthand path and follow the Granite Way to the Prewley Works entrance (on the Moor side), and take the track up towards the building entrance.

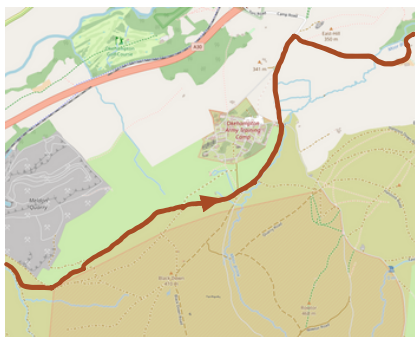
Bear right, keeping the works and wall on your left and head for the stone wall in front of you, bearing right to pass between two granite posts where Sourton Tor can be seen directly in front. Bear left and then left again onto the grassy track that leads down towards the stream.

Cross this, follow the tracks left and cross another stream and then along the top of the hill in front, the side of Homerton Hill. The track brings you out above Vellake Corner and with a bit of slaloming you arrive down at the weir, crossing the West Okement River that feeds Meldon Reservoir.

Cross the river and turn right at the wide path leading along the north-east side of the West Okement River. Stay on this path, rounding a walled enclosure, negotiating the rocks and wet areas, then work your way along the bank of the

# Sourton to Belstone

## Stage 3 (Low route)



Do not cross the bridge on your right, but continue along the track, following it up to the left, in front of an old mine working.

Head up to the stone wall corner. This marks the boundary of part of the quarry (and danger area).

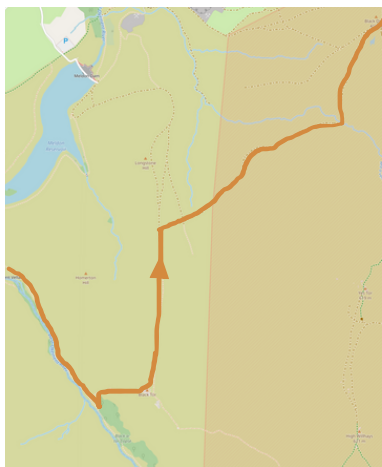
Follow this wall, keeping it on your left, all the way to Okehampton Army camp.

**Make sure you don't stray across the red and white marker poles to your right. These denote the limits of the Okehampton Firing Range.**

The track leads onto a tarmac road, before a bridge is reached. Do not cross this, but turn left, crossing the cattle grid. Then turn right and follow the road out away from the camp.

Shortly, there is a road to the right, leading to Lower Halstock Farm. Follow this road right through the farm, until it bears right after the buildings. Then take the signposted footpath to the left.

## Stage 3A (Moorland route)



river following the paths until you reach Black-a-Tor Copse, a rare stretch of ancient oak woodland on Dartmoor. It is worth spending some time here.

Just before entering the Copse you passed a path going left up the hill to Black Tor and you now need to return to this.

Head north from the Tor and take the trackway north for 1km. Just after a track comes across from the south west, veer off the track to the right heading NE.

After a couple of hundred metres, you will see another track at right angles to your direction with a path continuing beyond it, heading NE. Keep on this path until you can follow some waymarker posts indicating the route around the edge of Okehampton Common.

Excellent views down and across Red-a-ven brook are in front of you and then to your left as you proceed eastwards and slowly descend to the brook. Cross the brook via the stepping stones and then head on the clear track north.

This track levels out, with Okehampton Camp to your left and Rowtor and West Mill Tor, to your right.

# Directions

## Stage 3 (Low route)



This track leads between some old stone walls, before curving right well above the Moor Brook. Pass through some trees and a gate, then down through the woods, and you will reach a delightful spot alongside the East Okemont River. Sit a while either side of the bridge – it is a lovely spot. You will also need a rest as it is all uphill to the finish at Belstone!

Having crossed the bridge, head left along the track that leads steadily northwards and upwards.

When you reach a higher track, turn right and follow this track back south, enjoying wonderful views both ahead and behind along the East Okemont valley.

Once the ground levels out and opens up, take a path diagonally to the left. When you reach the stony track coming up from the right, cross it.

## Stage 3A (Moorland route)



Take a path leaving the track on the right, heading down to a further, obvious track crossing a stream, towards Row Tor.

After the stream, continue on the track contouring around the northern flank of Rowtor for about 0.5km until you see a grass path leading off to the right, heading ESE.

This will take you up to one of the military roads where there will usually be cars parked. There is a barrier across the road leading south into the moor.

Cross this road and head for the upper road and follow this to the right (south-east). You will pass a small car park area in an old quarry on your left.

Do not continue on the road towards the ford but take the track to the left.

This track leads down to the East Okemont River at Cullever Steps, an area steeped in military history, dating back to horse drawn gun carriages being pulled through the water.

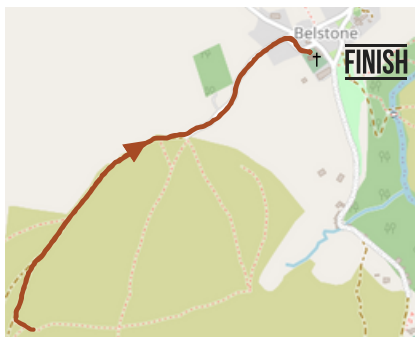
Cross the river, then fork left with Scarey Tor on your left and the Belstone Tor ridge on your right.



# Sourton to Belstone

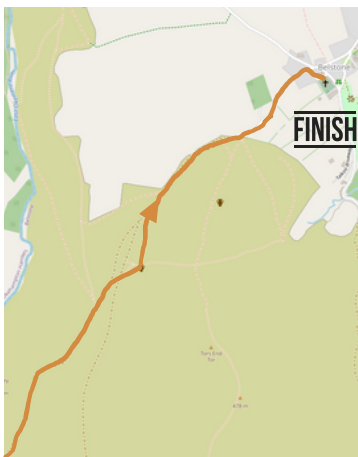


## Stage 3 (Low route)



At the next track, find a narrow path opposite leading to the Nine Maidens stone circle. You may not hit them first time but persevere, they are there (all 13 of them)!

## Stage 3A (Moorland route)



This track leads continuously uphill for a while and when it joins a stony track coming in from the right, cross it and find a narrow track on the right heading NE to Nine Maidens stone circle.

You may not hit them first time but persevere, they are there (all 13 of them)!

## Reflection

The 'Nine Maidens' stone circle is a Bronze Age burial mound. As you look around you take a moment to remember that Bronze Age people lived and worked in this area over 4,000 years ago and in fact humans have inhabited areas of Dartmoor for over 12,000 years.

As you drop down into the little village of Belstone this is an opportunity to consider how adaptable we are as a species. Perhaps give thanks for all the modern inventions that you are grateful for in your own life, and be encouraged that others have weathered many storms here and found strength.

(Both routes follow these directions):

After getting your breath back, head northeast towards the flagpole on the top of Watchet Hill. Reach this, and it is then all downhill to the gate and the lane into Belstone village.

Inside St Mary's Church you'll find a standing stone with a simple cross etched into it. The stone dates from the 7th century and is one of the earliest examples of a stone cross found on Dartmoor. Trace your finger along the etched cross. How many others have traced this cross with their finger? Where did they find their strength?



# Stage 4/4A



Stages 4 and 4A from **Belstone** follow the same route for the majority of the walk. After South Zeal, **Stage 4** carries on directly to Throwleigh, where **Stage 4A** detours via Cosdon Stone Rows.

## Stage 4



**Low route**



**Belstone - Throwleigh**



**6 miles / 10 km**



**3½ - 4½ hours**

A wooded high level path along Belstone Cleave descends down to the riverside arriving at Sticklepath village. Lanes are taken to South Tawton and back to South Zeal before ascending Ramsley Hill. The quiet lane to Throwleigh is then followed, arriving at the church on the right.

## Stage 4A



**Low route with Moorland detour**



**Belstone - Throwleigh**



**7¾ miles / 12½ km**



**4-5 hours**

Taking the Stage 4 route to Ramsley Hill, we leave via old walled green lanes up and along the side of Cosdon Hill to reach the triple stone rows and cists. Moorland tracks and paths then cross Blackaton Brook and Throwleigh Common to lead to Shilstone Tor where the lane is taken the short way to Throwleigh, arriving at the church on the left.



**St Mary  
the Virgin,  
Belstone**

**EX20 1RB**



**St Mary,  
Sticklepath**

**EX20 2NL**



**St Andrew,  
South Tawton**

**EX20 2LW**



**St Mary,  
South Zeal**

**EX20 2JY**



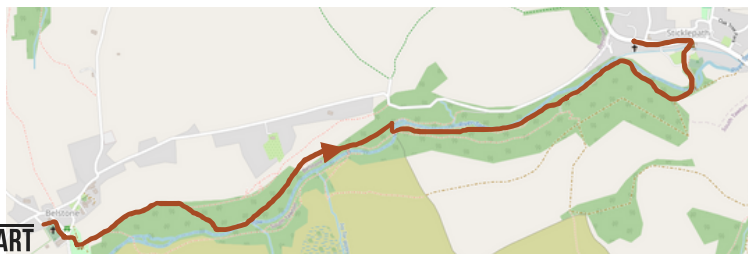
**St Mary  
the Virgin,  
Throwleigh**

**EX20 2HT**

# Directions



## Stage 4 / Stage 4A (Stage 4A follows the same route as Stage 4 until indicated otherwise)



From Belstone Church, turn right at The Tors Inn onto the Green looking out across the Taw valley. Keep slightly left and take the upper path past the bench high

up above the banks of the river, keeping the wall and fence on your left. Continue straight on following the path (an old leat) until you reach a small well on your left. Take the path that goes downhill to your right, to join another broad track.

Turn left here and then veer right through the trees, to cross the footbridge over the River. This bridge features quotations from Tarka the Otter, the book by Henry Williamson.

Follow the path, with the river close on your left and continue through woods along the bank.

### Reflection

As you follow the river, you might like to think of how it flows, the waters constantly moving forward, over and around the rocks, giving life to the land around and the wildlife who drink from it as it journeys from the spring to the sea, joining with other waterways as it flows.

Have you ever thought about what your life's journey to this point might look like if it were mapped out as a river? If you have a notebook and pencil perhaps stop for a while and sketch it out. What fed you and helped you to grow when you were young, what twists and turns have you been through, have there been times when life felt like a period of drought and waters dried up, what have been the occasions in your life when the river was full and flowing majestically?

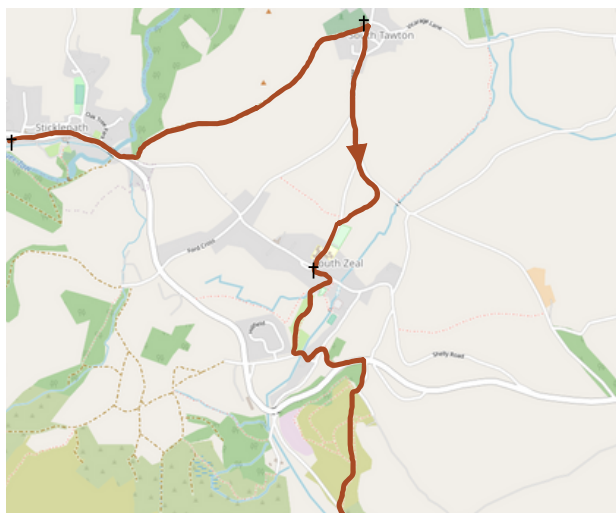
At the end of the path turn left through a gate to another footbridge. Cross this and follow the path to Finch Foundry.

The path enters a narrow-banked lane, with the Quaker Burying Ground on your right, before entering the gardens of the National Trust's Finch Foundry. Continue through and under the building, turning left along the main road through Sticklepath. St Mary's Church is 400 metres on your left. Rest and reflect a while on this site where worshippers have gathered for almost 1,000 years.

# Directions



## Stage 4 / Stage 4A (Stage 4A follows the same route as Stage 4 until indicated otherwise)



On leaving the church, retrace your steps along the main road past Finch Foundry. Cross the River Taw and take the left fork immediately after the bridge. Shortly turn left again along a track, part of the Tarka Trail, leading to South Tawton.

**St Andrew's Church**, with its impressive roof bosses, is on your left. During your visit to the church, perhaps reflect on countless others who have sat in these pews and looked up to the roof bosses, perhaps turning their attention to the heavens beyond.

From the church, head back down the main road to the south, forking left at Moon's Cross. Go downhill past a turning to the right and, before you get to the river crossing, take the signposted footpath to the right across fields, turning left when it reaches the lane. Follow the lane to the centre of South Zeal and the little church of **St Mary**. Both the chapel and garden are places of peace and sanctuary.

From St Mary's, go downhill past the Village Shop and Café and The Oxenham Arms, before turning right onto a footpath between the houses set back from the road. The path leads across grass to another tarmac lane, where you turn left. Follow the lane round to the left then just before the sign, turn right up the signposted footpath that winds its way up the hill between the houses. Ignore the path to the left where a garden opens up and continue to a gate where you turn sharp left and climb steeply up to the main road. Count the steps!

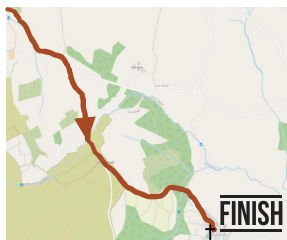
Turn left and stay on the pavement before carefully crossing the road at the bend and taking the lane uphill to the right of the houses at Ramsley. Take the track in the trees off to the right that will bring you out to the common land. After the trees, bear left up the hill for splendid views across the valley to Cosdon Hill and over South Zeal. Continue on the grassy tracks to the south steadily going downhill, steep in places, until the road is reached, where you turn left.

(The route splits here into **Stage 4 (Low route)** which follows the road to Throwleigh, while **Stage 4A (Moorland route)** takes a 1¼ mile detour via Cosdon Stone Rows before arriving in Throwleigh).

# Belstone to Throwleigh



## Stage 4 (Low route)



For the direct route to Throwleigh, continue along the road for just over 0.5 miles, then keep right at the fork, heading for Clannaborough. At the next fork, after a cattle grid and just before Clannaborough Farm, keep left. Follow this lane downhill and at a left bend you will see a gate with Dartmoor Way signs.

You can use this track across fields with several stiles and a boardwalk that will bring you into the church from the north side. If you prefer keeping to the lane continue past before climbing up to Throwleigh.

You will arrive at the Church Lych Gate on your right, one of the few thatched ones surviving.

## Stage 4A (Moorland route)



For the detour to Cosdon Stone Rows, take the next signposted track on the right (to Nine Stones). There follows a series of walled tracks and lanes that meander left and right but always uphill to

take you onto the Moor and the eastern flank of Cosdon Hill.

Keeping the last stone wall on your right you will reach its corner with the Moor and Cosdon Hill beyond. Keep on the path leading away from the corner and this will lead you up to the triple stone rows and other chambers and stones that feature here.

On the left-hand side of the stone rows, as you will have entered them, you will see a clear grass track leading away, heading south east, above Cheriton Combe. Take this and when it curves to the left follow the lesser track to the right that leads down to Blackaton Brook where you will cross at the head of its small gorge. Keep to the track on the other side, straight up heading south east across Throwleigh Common, ignoring the tracks to the left. You will eventually see Shilstone Tor ahead where you can take a break before crossing the lane below.

Cross the lane and take the lane that leads down through the gateway towards Higher Shilston, passing this ancient farmstead on your right. Keep on the lane past houses on the left until it descends into Throwleigh. Opposite a track leading off to the right, take the steps in the bank that lead you into the churchyard.

Here, at St Mary the Virgin, you will again find roof bosses depicting the Three Hares and the Green Man.





# Stage 5/5A



Stages 5 and 5A from Throwleigh follow the same route until Gidleigh, where **Stage 5** carries on directly to Chagford, while **Stage 5A** detours via Scorhill and Kes Tor.

## Stage 5



**Low route**



**Throwleigh - Chagford**



**5 miles / 8 km**



**2½ - 3 hours**

We leave Throwleigh by Deave Lane, a wooded old trackway that joins the lane outside Wonson to take us to Providence. Footpaths then lead up to Gidleigh from where lanes are taken to Murchington, with a wooded section and delightful riverside path circling around Chagford to bring us in from the north-east side. A walk through the village leads to our finish at St Michael The Archangel church.

## Stage 5A



**Low route with Moorland detour**



**Throwleigh - Chagford**



**8½ miles / 14 km**



**3½ - 4½ hours**

Following the route from Stage 5 to Gidleigh, we then take the lanes out to the eastern edge of the moor and the wonderful setting of Scorhill stone circle. This is followed by the clapper bridge crossings of the Walla Brook and North Teign rivers and the path up to Kestor from where magnificent 360 degree views should be enjoyed. A steady descent along paths, wooded tracks and lanes takes us down to the River Teign where the historic stone bridge is crossed to meet back up with the riverside path around Chagford and our finish at St. Michael The Archangel church.



**St Mary  
the Virgin,  
Throwleigh**

**EX20 2HT**



**Providence  
Chapel,  
near Throwleigh**

**EX20 2HZ**



**Holy Trinity,  
Gidleigh**

**TQ13 8HR**



**St Michael the  
Archangel,  
Chagford**

**TQ13 8BN**

# Throwleigh to Chagford

## Reflection and prayer

As you embark on the final stage of The Archangel's Way, thoughts might turn to the life you are returning to.

You may have travelled alone or in the company of others.

You have followed the route, but what journeys have your meditations, prayers and conversations taken you on?

Perhaps there have been unexpected moments of clarity or comfort?

Perhaps you are simply grateful to be refreshed after some time out.

Take time to ponder these questions as you walk. Perhaps thank God for the remarkable natural environments you have walked through.

Lord of every pilgrim heart,  
bless our journeys  
on these roads  
we never planned to take,  
but  
through your  
surprising wisdom  
discovered  
we  
were  
on.

Peter Millar,  
A Book of Blessings (2014)

# Directions



## Stage 5 / Stage 5A (Stage 5A follows the same route as Stage 5 until indicated otherwise)



With Throwleigh Church porch at your back, take the steps up onto the grass path. This leads away from the church into the upper south east corner of the churchyard, where you exit via a metal gate.

An enclosed path takes you to some steps down to the road, where, opposite, you will see another wide track. Cross the road and take the track that will lead you to Forder along Deave Lane. This is an ancient byway (probably Death Lane) formerly used between churches and burial grounds, a “Way of the Dead”. Continue until you reach the road where you turn left. Stay on this lane until it takes you through Providence and alongside the Chapel on your left. A pleasant place to stop for a break with WC facilities to the rear.

Leaving the Chapel, shortly turn right down the footpath to Coombe. After passing some cottages, the path joins a tarmac lane where you turn left. Cross a bridge and then turn right up a signposted track at Gidleigh Mill.

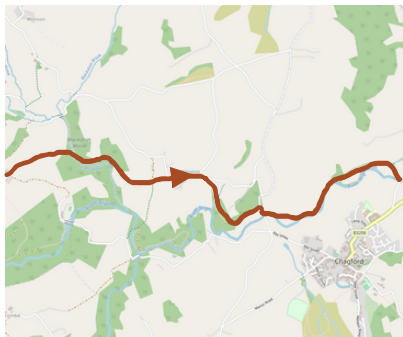
A long uphill stretch will bring you into Gidleigh where you turn right to reach the Church of Holy Trinity. This unassuming little church boasts a churchyard which is one of only a handful in the country with a watercourse flowing through it. A wonderful place to sit and reflect in almost perfect peace, save for the babbling water, the birdsong and the occasional tractor in the distance.

The church itself is beautiful in its simplicity, its glory being found in the many faithful worshippers who have gathered here over many hundreds of years. When you can tear yourself away from this delightful spot, turn around and head back on the road you came on, continue past the telephone box and village hall to reach a T-junction.

The route splits here into Stage 5 (Low route) which follows the road and wooded riverbanks to Chagford, while Stage 5A (Moorland route) takes a 3½ mile detour via Scorhill and Kes Tor, before descending into the final destination of Chagford.

# Throwleigh to Chagford

## Stage 5 (Low route)



To take the direct route to Chagford, turn left here and continue on the lane to Murchington, a small hamlet with some wonderful buildings.

Keeping straight on after the village, take the footpath on the right just as the lane forks right. This footpath is part of the new Dartmoor Way.

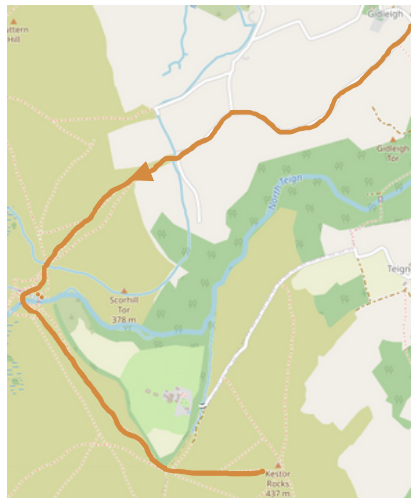
This path takes you down towards the River Teign, before swooping around to the left through the trees to emerge on the road to Chagford alongside Chagford Bridge.

Turn right and before crossing the bridge take the footpath through the gate on the left.

Follow the left-hand bank of the river along the well-trodden paths. Keep going, though some gates, passing the weir.

You will cross a footbridge, taking you across the fields to the right before joining the road at Rushford Bridge.

## Stage 5A (Moorland route)



For the detour via Scorhill and Kes Tor, turn right here and continue on the lane past Berrydown. Carry on, signposted Scorhill, past Scorhill farm where the end of the lane is reached.

Follow the clear track out onto the Moor, but ensure you head right approaching the top of the hill in order to come down the path above Scorhill Stone circle. After admiring the circle turn left to take the path towards the river. This is well defined and crosses the leat shortly before curving around to the right to the clapper bridge over the Wallabrook.

Before crossing this, you may wish to take the narrow path down to the left that will take you to the mysterious Tolmen Stone in the river, used by Druids for purification. Then follow the track back along the riverbank and to rejoin the track back to the clapper bridge over the Wallabrook.

Cross this clapper bridge and follow the clear track to the next, larger Teign-e-Ver clapper bridge over the North Teign River.

From here the tracks and paths lead up the hill with the wall and woods to your left, eventually reaching Batworthy Corner. You will see the clear track leading up to Kes Tor.



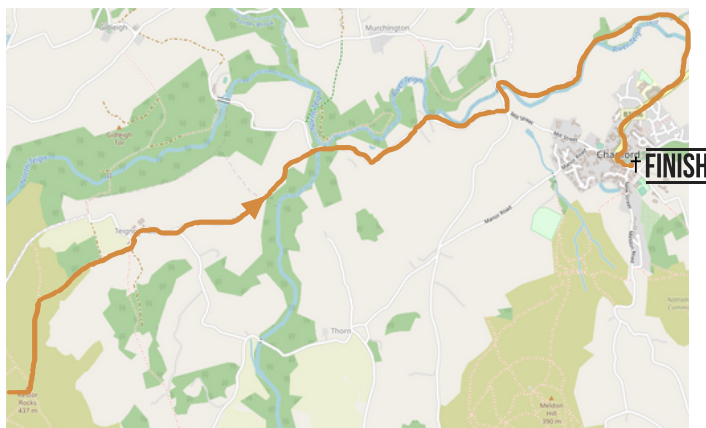
# Directions

## Stage 5 (Low route)



Turn right and then right again at the main road into Chagford. This will bring you into the centre where you turn left to reach St Michael the Archangel Church, Chagford - the end of The Archangel's Way.

## Stage 5A (Moorland route)



From the top of Kes Tor, head down on the track towards a small rock outcrop due north. Do not follow the line of stones. From the rock outcrop head down to the stone wall, through and past several old settlement circles and huts. Keeping the wall on your left, follow it downhill to go through a gate into a lane in the trees.

Follow the track downhill, go past the buildings to reach the road where you shortly turn right at Teigncombe. The road curves right, left and right again -where you should go straight on down the track to eventually reach the road again at Leigh Bridge. Carry straight on crossing Leigh Bridge and then follow the road past Holystreet Manor, where you will then come to a crossroads past the kennels and old mill.

Turn left and cross the bridge before taking the footpath through the gate on the right. Follow the left-hand bank of the river along the well-trodden paths. Keep going, though some gates, passing the weir. You will cross a footbridge, taking you across the fields to the right before joining the road at Rushford Bridge.

Turn right and then right again at the main road into Chagford. This will bring you into the centre where you turn left to find St Michael the Archangel Church, the end of The Archangel's Way.

# St Michael the Archangel, Chagford



## Reflection and prayer

Take time at this journey's end to reflect on the pilgrimage you have undertaken.

What have you seen?

Who have you met along the way?

What have you heard?

What have you learnt?

How will this pilgrimage change your onward journey?

May our God of the high moor, of tor  
and of the singing rivers

guide you, protect you and inspire you

with truth, goodness and beauty until  
your journey's end.

Amen



# Pilgrimage journal

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Feel free to use this blank space to journal your thoughts, feelings, prayers and worship to God.



Artwork by Dru Marland  
[www.etsy.com/uk/shop/DruMarland](http://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/DruMarland)

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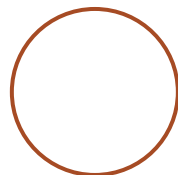


# Pilgrim passport \_\_\_\_\_

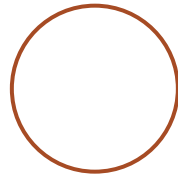
Medieval pilgrims would be given a metal badge stamped with the symbol of each shrine or holy site of their pilgrimage. These badges were then fixed to the pilgrim's staff or hat so that people would know they had visited the shrine. Along The Archangel's Way, you are invited to use the stamps provided in each church to mark the milestones of your journey.



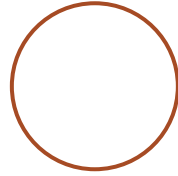
St Michael de Rupe,  
Brentor



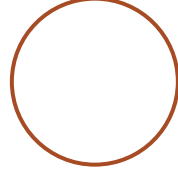
Christ Church,  
North Brentor



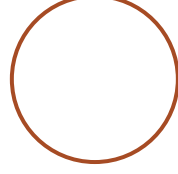
St Petrock,  
Lydford



St Thomas à Becket,  
Sourton



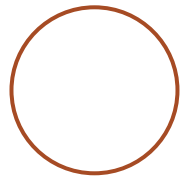
St Mary the Virgin,  
Belstone



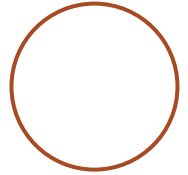




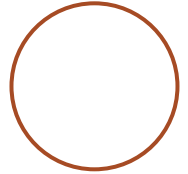
St Mary,  
Sticklepath



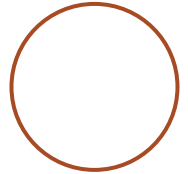
St Andrew,  
South Tawton



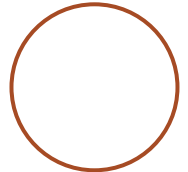
St Mary,  
South Zeal



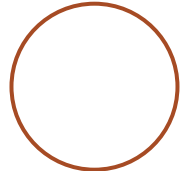
St Mary the Virgin,  
Throwleigh



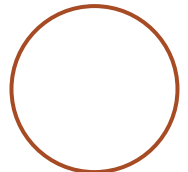
Providence Chapel,  
near Throwleigh



Holy Trinity,  
Gidleigh



St Michael the  
Archangel, Chagford





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THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
IN DEVON

