

Route Description:

This walk passes through attractive valleys and ancient woodland. You will get some excellent views over and along the Abbey River valley. The walk passes the beautiful large St Nectan's Church which is well worth a visit to see its painted wagon roof and intricately carved rood screen and 128ft tower. The walk also follows some ancient tracks and part of an old coaching road before returning to Hartland.

Directions to start:

From the A39 between Bideford and Kilkhampton, take the B3248 on the Kilkhampton side of Clovelly Cross, towards Hartland. Continue ahead through the village street, turning right by the church and memorial cross into The Square to then turn right again in front of the Hart Inn to the free car park.

Route Directions:

1, SS 259 244: Leave the car park from the main entrance, by the Hart Inn and turn left to pass the church and then turn right. Shortly continue into Spring Field, pass the telephone box to the gate ahead.

2, SS 257 243, 0.1 mile: Pass through the gate or kissing gate beside it and cross the stile by the next gate. Now take the right-hand fork which keeps level. After a short way drop down to cross the footbridge over a stream and bear right to cross the next footbridge by the track.

3, SS 253 241, 0.4 miles: Now take the path bearing left uphill signed to Elmscott, ignoring the track along the valley bottom. Follow this path up through the woods. Near the top bear left over to a stone stile in the stone wall (Devon bank).

4, SS 251 241, 0.5 miles: Cross this stile and continue ahead on this track ignoring the gate down to

the right. On reaching the small road, continue ahead over the bridge over a stream. Follow this small road uphill to pass Newton Farm to reach a T-junction.

5, SS 245 236, 1.1 miles: Turn right on to this road, keeping on it to Stoke. Soon the church with the folly behind and the Abbey valley open in front of you, with Lundy Island over to the right.

6, SS 237 245, 1.8 miles: When this road forks by the 30mph signs, bear left and follow this small road to the next crossroad of tracks, turning right towards the church.

7, SS 235 246, 2.0 miles: On reaching the next road, turn left towards the toilet block. The large church is well worth a visit. Return to the toilet block and take the small road down into the valley signed 'unsuitable for motors'. Follow it down into the valley to cross the river bridge with Hartland Abbey over to your right. Continue along this road up the other side of the valley.



Abbey valley towards Blackpool Mill



A view of Hartland Abbey

8, SS 235 252, 2.6 miles: Just before the brow of the hill, go through the gate on your right signed 'Public Footpath' and follow this alongside the hedged Devon bank on your left. Cross the next double stile into the field ahead to pass

by the next stile in the broken down wire fence. Pass the next abandoned stile and standing stone to reach the gate on the far side of this field.

9, SS 243 251, 3.1 miles: Pass through it and turn right down the small road.

10, SS 245 248, 3.4 miles: At the bottom, opposite the iron gate to Hartland Abbey, take the track opposite on your left which goes up by Home Lodge. Follow this sunken lane up between the Devon banks until it emerges out of the woods. Continue ahead until reaching a junction of tracks and selection of gates.

11, SS 250 250, 3.9 miles: Go to the gate hardest on your right to cross the stile. Now follow the fenced Devon bank on your left down to the bottom left corner and stile. Follow the path down through the woods, soon following an old Devon bank on your right into the valley.

12, SS 252 248, 4.1 miles: On reaching the track along the bottom of the valley, bear left on to it and cross the stile by the gate. Bear right from here to cross the footbridge over the river. Now follow the path ahead and slightly left to follow an old track through the woods.

13, SS 255 246, 4.3 miles: At the end bear right to go along beside a chain-link fence to reach a kissing gate.



Old coaching road through woods

14, SS 257 245, 4.4 miles: Turn right on to the road and on reaching the main road bear left along West Street. There is no pavement in places so watch for cars. Springfield Pottery is on your right.

15, SS 258 244, 4.6 miles: At the next junction take the road ahead by the public toilets, keeping straight on to the car park. We hope you enjoyed this walk.

Walks on The Hartland Peninsula

Hartland via Stoke

4.6 miles, circular



Fact file:

Highlights: St Nectan's Church, Hartland Abbey, ancient woodland and old coaching road

Start Grid ref: SS 259 244

Distance: 4.6 miles, circular

Height gained/lost: 184 metres, starts easy, becoming moderate, finishing easy.

Highest Point: 118 metres

Lowest Point: 47 metres

Toilets: Stoke, Hartland

Eating Places: Hartland, Stoke (in season)

Time required: 2hr 40 min, plus stops

Mileages shown are cumulative

The route directions will take you around this walk without using the OS grid references, if preferred.

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