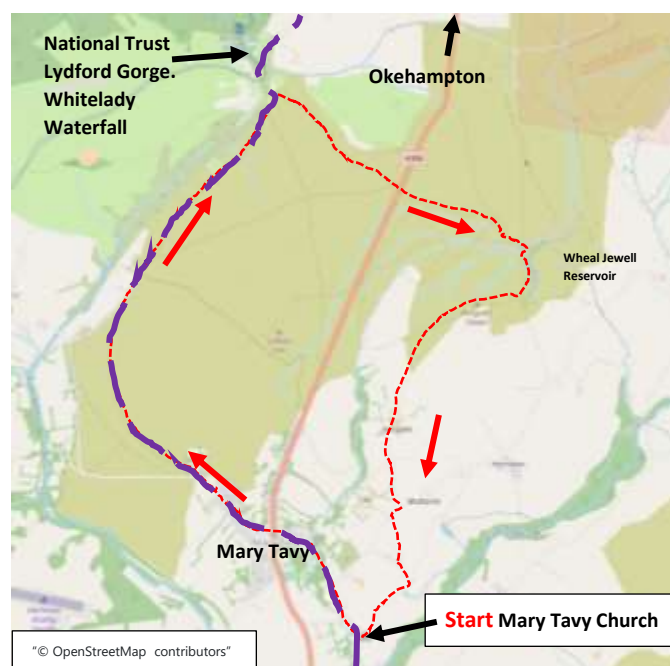


Walking the West Devon Way

Walk 11 Mary Tavy to Lydford



This walk is about 7.5 miles with 3.5 miles on the West Devon Way. The walk starts by the church in Mary Tavy where if you go inside you will find some wood carvings made by the famous Pinwell sisters. You will walk around Gibbet Hill once also known as Gallows Hill for this is where criminals were hung or strung up and left to die. On the way back you will walk along the length of Wheal Jewell reservoir perhaps the narrowest reservoir in Britain and which provides water for the Hydro-electric power station in Mary Tavy. You could make a day of it by visiting Lydford Gorge.





We start at Mary Tavy Church 150m further along the road from where we left the West Devon Way in Walk 10. Set off along the road with the church on your right.



At the first T junction go right. Stay on the road to go past the school and a T junction and then after no more than 10 minutes go over a small bridge.



Coming up from the bridge as the road bends right keep straight on to walk up a wide unmade up track



that will take you all the way to the A386. Go straight across to take the road between the coach park and garage. Then half a mile further on go over a cattle grid



and in a further 50m fork right on a concrete track.



In just a few meters along the track fork left and stay on the grassy track to walk around the base of Gibbet Hill. On your left you soon have a very fine view of the Church of St Michael de Rupe on top of Brent Tor which features on the West Devon Way waymarkers.



Go past two small cairns and when you reach the road at West Blackdown turn right and walk along the road but only until the next sharp left hand bend.



Here come off the road by continuing straight ahead along a track. When the track splits left and right



at a blue Route 27 sign fork right and head towards the tors on the horizon



and then the white gable end of a cottage.

We leave the **West Devon Way** at the gate by the cottage and return to the start via Wheal Jewell reservoir. From here the next section of the **West Devon Way** is entirely on the road all the way into Lydford village. It's a well used road particularly with summer holiday traffic so the next walk will avoid it and start from the village centre. However quite close by is the entrance to the National Trust Lydford Gorge White Lady Waterfall which from here is a worthwhile excursion. To get there go through the gate and take the track down to the road and turn left and follow the NT signs.



Walk on, passing the cottage on your left, and then quite quickly turn right to walk up between two telegraph poles. Stay on this wide well defined track all the way up to the A386 in just about a straight line.



On reaching the road cross over, there is good visibility both ways, and stay on this well used track all the way to the reservoir without turning or forking left or right.



As you walk along you will see on your right the chimney of Wheal Betsy silver and lead mine now owned by the National Trust.



When you reach a wide track go straight across and up to the edge of the reservoir.



Turn right and walk next to the reservoir



Soon you will reach a small building a good place to stop admire the view and have a cup of coffee. Setting off from here with the building in front of you and the end of the reservoir on your left go down the bank on



your right and then go slightly right and then left to follow a wide mostly grassy track



which ends at a wall. With the wall on your left at all times follow it down or at least keep it in sight all the way to a moorland access gate passing mine working on your right.



Go through the gate and down the track. Go past the entrance to Kingsett and Axna farms on your left and then at the T junction turn right.



In no more than a 100m turn left to go over a stile



Ignoring the finger post as its pointing in the wrong direction walk up the field staying reasonably close to the left-hand boundary.



Keep straight on past the exposed end of a wall and



up to and over a ladder stile. Now on the other side there is a good deal of vegetation and no clear path. Having gone over the stile fork right for a few paces then bear left up to a grassy high spot.



Then keeping close to the gorse bushes on your right walk down a vague path that becomes quite steep and well used by sheep.



You will then meet a track. Go straight across and staying fairly close to the left hand field boundary walk on down to another vehicle track.



Turn left to go through a gate and into a farm yard



Staying on the farm track go through a gate



then keeping close to the stone wall on your right follow it down and around the field boundary to



another gate. Go through the gate and walk on down the track with a paddock on your right.



The building you pass next to is called a miners dry and is where the miners dried their wet clothes. It is I believe the only remaining miners dry on Dartmoor.



Keep straight on through another gate and follow the field edge path that makes a right-hand turn when it reaches the bottom of this field. Stay on the path that is well signposted and then go through another gate to



walk on down to the church



The public footpath then goes over a very challenging stile some might call it a barrier on top of a wall. On the other side the public footpath goes through the cemetery to the left of the church. Go around the church to the church gate and back to your car.