

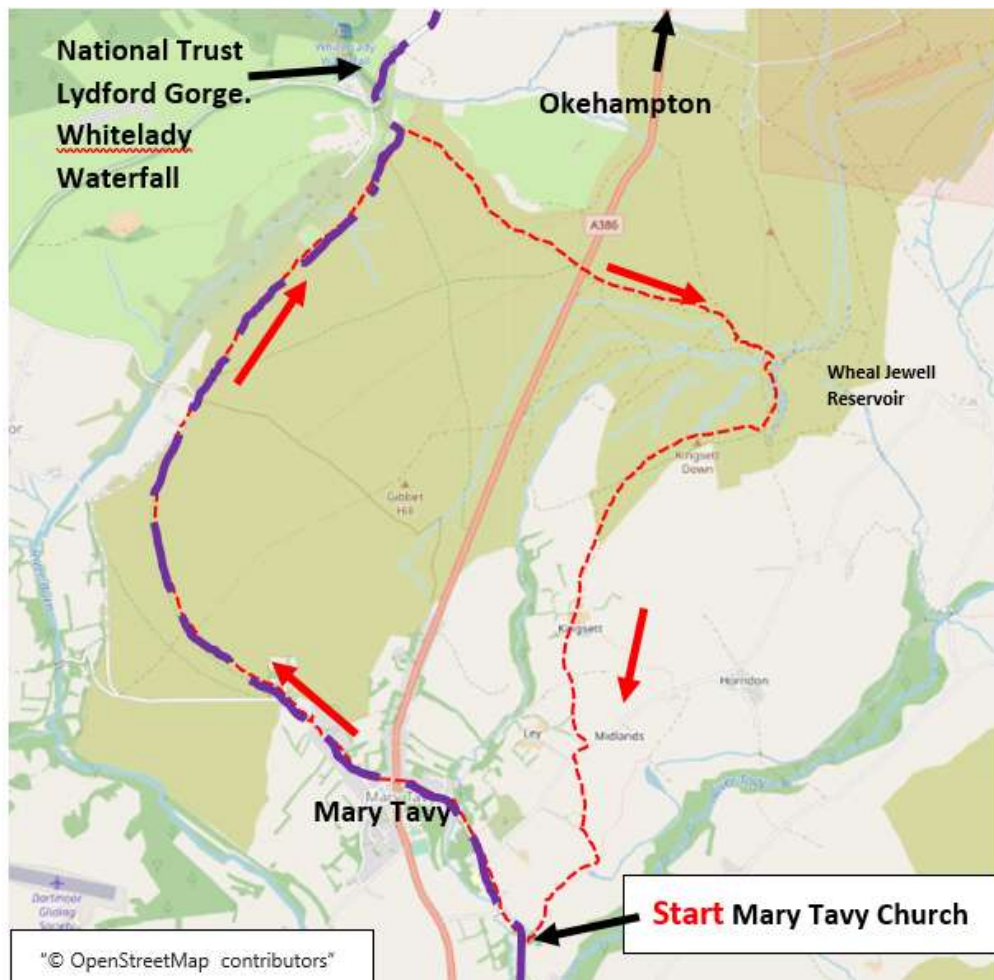
Walking the West Devon Way

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 even 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. To reach the church from the A386 turn down next to the Mary Tavy Inn and at the bottom of the hill turn right and park in front of the church. Set off back along the road with the church on your right.



At the first T junction turn 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 vehicle track...



...that will take you all the way to the A386. Go straight across to take the road signposted to Brentor. Then half a mile further on go over a cattle grid.



50m further on fork right up a concrete track.



In just a few meters along the track fork left up the way marked bridleway and stay on it 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 way markers.



Go past two large cairns (piles of rock) 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 that leads to a house.



**When the track splits left and right
fork right and head towards the tors
on the horizon.**



**Go around or through the wet bit and
then begin to follow the telegraph poles
on your left.**



Walk up to the house

This is where you leave the **West Devon Way** 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 on your left and take the track down to the road and turn left and follow the NT signs.



Walk on, passing the house 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.



When you meet this cross roads of tracks keep going up hill bending slightly left.



**Before you reach the top of the hill and the A386
you pass a useful rock to sit on and have a rest**



**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.**



**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.



Turn slightly right and then left to follow a wide mostly grassy track that 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 and field gates on your left.



Go through the gate and down the track that soon becomes a tarmac road passing Kingsett and Axna farms for three quarters of a mile. At the T junction turn right.



In no more than a 100m turn left to go over a stile and 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 just a few paces then bear left up to a grassy plateau.



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



When you meet a farm track go straight across. Staying fairly close to the left hand field boundary walk on down to another farm track.



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



Stay on the farm track to go through a gate



**then keeping close to the stone wall
on your right follow it to reach...**



**...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 over a stile and follow the field edge path that makes a lefthand turn when it reaches the bottom of this field.



Arriving at the corner of the field go through the gate and down the field edge towards Mary Tavy 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. Keeping the church on your right walk all the way around and back to your car.

