

WALK 3 2.75 miles/4.5 km

Colyton, Heathhayne, Ox Hill, The Ridgeway, Colyton

A lovely walk along the River Coly and through a wood. There is one steep hill that gives views over the Coly Valley and the sea.

Timing: 2.75 miles/4.5 km. Allow 1.5 hours to complete the walk at a relaxed pace.

Terrain: Through fields alongside the beautiful River Coly followed by a steep climb to the top of Ox Hill through a wildwood, then more fields and an easy descent to Colyton.

Number of stiles: 2.

Refreshments: pubs, tea rooms, and restaurants in Colyton.

Toilets: in Colyton car park opposite the Colcombe Castle pub.

Always follow the Country Code <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code>. The most important advice is

- keep to public rights of way
- leave gates as you find them (either closed or open)
- keep your dog under effective control

Abbreviations used in the text:

FB: Footbridge.

KG: Kissing gate (a narrow gate hung in a stock-proof U or V-shaped enclosure).

PG: Pedestrian gate (narrow gate designed for walkers).

SP: Signpost.

WM: Waymark (a Devon County Council sign with a yellow arrow on a green background bearing the legend 'PUBLIC FOOTPATH', or a blue arrow on a white background indicating a 'PUBLIC BRIDLEWAY').

Route description

1 From the Market Place in the centre of Colyton, **walk downhill** keeping the Colcombe Castle pub on your **right**. A few metres beyond The Little Shop, **bear right** and walk down Church Path keeping the railings on your **right**. Just beyond the War Memorial **turn left** down a short, wide alleyway that joins a road.

2 **Continue ahead** along the road noting the elaborate gateway of Colyton House on your left. **Ignore** Rosemary Lane on your right and **continue ahead** to reach a road junction where you should **bear right** to the picturesque Chantry Bridge.

3 **Cross** the bridge and immediately **turn left** through a **KG (WM)** at an East Devon Way **SP** to enter a field. Follow the well-defined path that runs close to the river to reach a **KG (SP)** that gives access to a charming, narrow woodland glade. **Continue ahead** through the glade to a **KG (SP)**.

4 Pass through the **KG (WM)** on a short post) and continue along the well-defined path that leads to a **FB** with **PGs** and **WMs** at each end.

- 5** **Cross** the **FB** noting that the **WM** indicates that you should continue **straight ahead** along a path that runs through the **middle** of the field. (The path that runs near the seat on your left and follows the river bank is **not** a right of way.)
- 6** Follow the path across the middle of the field to the far end where the two paths meet beside the river at a **KG (WM)**. **Continue ahead** to a substantial **FB (WM)** across the River Coly.
- 7** **Cross** the **FB (WM)** and **turn left (WM on fence)**, and through a **KG (WM)** to follow the well-defined path along the river bank. The path gradually curves to the **right** to pass a **WM** on a post and reaches a **double gate (WM)** that gives access to a track that runs uphill between hedges to reach a **gate (WM on gatepost)**.
- 8** Go through the **gate**, pass Heathayne Farm on your right, and **bear left** to follow the access lane that joins the Colyton - Southleigh road. **Cross** the road to reach, a few metres later, another road, which should also be crossed, and enter a wood via a **KG (WM)**.
- 9** Follow the well-defined path that climbs **uphill** through the wood for 600 metres (15 mins) to cross a **stile (SP and WM)** that gives access to a field.
- 10** **Continue ahead** along a faint path keeping close to the hedge on your **left** to reach a **PG (WM)** beside a field-gate in the **left-hand corner** of the field. (Ignore the adjacent locked **PG** that leads into a wood.)
- 11** **Pass through the PG (WM)** and immediately **turn left** and keep close to the hedge on your **left** (there is no visible path). After 240 metres (4 minutes), there is often a manger for feeding cattle with a **gate (SP)** just beyond that gives access to an enclosed track. The ground around the manger is likely to be cut up by the hooves of cattle, so it is wise to skirt round it and continue to follow the hedge for another 40 metres (less than a min) to a **stile (SP and WM)** on your **left**.
- 12** **Cross** the **stile** and turn **right** to follow a broad track that runs between hedges all the way to the Colyton-Sidmouth road.
- 13** **Turn left** and walk down the road for 240 metres (4 minutes). Just before reaching a slight bend to the right you will see a **SP** and a **KG (WM)** and **PG** set back from the road on the **right**.
- 14** Pass through the **PG** and follow the well-defined path downhill, with a hedge on your **left**, to reach a **gate (WM)** at the bottom of the field.
- 15** Pass through the **gate** and continue in the same direction to a **KG (WM)** that gives access in 50 metres to another **KG (SP and WM)** at a lane. Follow this charming lane downhill until reaching Burnards Field Road at an offset crossroads. **Cross** the road and **continue ahead** downhill to reach the Colyton-Sidmouth road.
- 16** **Bear right** and walk to the **T-Junction** then **turn right** and almost immediately **left** into **Church Street** which leads into the Market Place.

