

WALK 8 3.5 miles/5.5 km

Colyton, Nunford Dairy, Cownhayne, Colyton

*There is a steep climb out of Colyton followed by level field paths along the rivers Axe and Coly. **Note that some fields may become waterlogged after prolonged rain.***

Timing: Allow up to 2 hours to complete the walk at a relaxed pace.

Terrain: A steep climb followed by a descent along a dead-end lane thereafter the walk is through level fields.

Number of stiles: 5.

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, leave the road and walk down Church Path past the War Memorial to reach a road junction with the Gerrard Arms on your **left**.

2 **Cross** the road junction and turn right into **Rosemary Lane (SP 'Tramway')**

3 Walk along Rosemary Lane for **200 metres** to reach a main road where you should follow the pavement above the bank of the River Coly to the Umborne Bridge. (The sight-lines are poor so it is safer to cross to the other side of the road **before** reaching the bridge.)

4 **Cross the bridge** and immediately **turn right** into **Station Road** which should be followed for **180 metres** to the first road junction. **Fork left** and walk under the old railway bridge which will bring you to the **Tramway Station**.

5 Here the lane turns **sharp left** and runs **uphill** past some cottages for **900 metres** (15 mins) to reach **Nunford Dairy** where the tarmac ends.

6 Continue ahead and follow a wide, unsurfaced track that runs between hedges for **160 metres** to reach a narrow **FB** across a tiny watercourse.

7 Continue along the path, which narrows significantly, for **40 metres** to a **stile (SP and WM)** in the hedge on your **right**. (Note that you have now joined the East Devon Way which has its own mauve waymarks.)

8 Cross the stile and follow the direction indicated by the waymark (the path is not always visible in the next three fields) to **cross a ditch** and pass through a **KG (WM)** into the next field, then follow the hedge on your **left** to reach a **stile (WM)**.

9 Cross the stile and aim slightly uphill to a gate visible in the hedge ahead. Just before reaching the gate you will observe that the part of the field you are in extends for 90 metres. **Do not pass through the gate** but instead **bear slightly left** and walk, with the hedge on your **right**, to the end of the field where there is a **KG (WM)**.

10 Pass through the **KG (WM)** and follow the direction indicated by the waymark and you will reach a bend in the River Axe. At this point, walk to a **gap in the trees ahead** and **cross a culvert (SP)** over a watercourse.

11 Bear slightly right and aim for a **SP** in the middle of the field. **Cross the adjacent culvert** and **continue ahead** to a **stile (WM)**.

12 Cross the stile and **turn left** to follow the hedge on your **left** to reach a dilapidated **KG (WM)** (which may have been replaced by the time you read this).

13 Continue ahead, still keeping the hedge on your **left**, until reaching a **PG (WM)** on your **left**. Pass through the **PG** and immediately **turn right** to follow the hedge on your **right** all the way to the end of the field to a **KG (WM)** that leads into a track that will take you to **Cownhayne Lane**.

14 Turn left along the lane for **360 metres** (7 mins) to a **stile (SP)** on the **right** (ignore the two SPs on the left-hand side of the lane).

15 Cross the stile and follow the hedge on your **left** (the aroma comes from the sewage treatment works on the other side of the hedge) to a **stile (WM)**.

16 Cross the stile and follow the path **diagonally left** across the field to reach the **steps** that give access to the tramway (**WM**).

17 Turn right for a few metres to the crossing point. Look in both directions before **crossing the tracks** and then **descend steps (SP and WM)** into a field.

18 Turn right and walk **parallel to the tramway embankment** until reaching a **culvert** where you should **bear slightly left** and aim to pass a little to the **right of a utility pole** to reach a **stile** in the corner of the field.

19 Cross the stile (WM) and immediately **cross a FB (WM and SP)** and then **turn right** to a **PG (WM)**.

20 Pass through the **PG** and immediately **turn left** and follow the hedge on your **left** until reaching the River Coly. **Turn right** and follow the well-walked path to a substantial **FB (WM)**.

21 **Cross the bridge** to the far river bank. A few metres after descending the steps the path **forks**. **Take the right hand fork** and follow the river for **200 metres** (4 mins) to reach a **KG (WM)**.

22 **Continue ahead** through a small business park, past some waste collection skips, to reach a **road** on the outskirts of Colyton. **Cross the road** and **turn left** along the pavement above the River Coly.

23 The pavement will take you into Rosemary Lane at a **right fork (SP 'Town Centre')**. Continue for **200 metres** (4 mins) to the Gerrard Arms. Here **turn left** and almost immediately **turn right** and walk up the tarmac path that runs past the church to the Market Place.