

River & sea

Distance - 6 miles Map: OS Explorer 115. Exmouth & Sidmouth

Walk 7

Otterton is situated “off the beaten track”; This is a characteristic that has enhanced this typically Devon village which comes complete with thatched roofed dwellings, colourful gardens and of course, friendly inhabitants; people who have time to converse and who eagerly display a pride in their surroundings. In the times of Sir Walter Raleigh cargo ships sailed up the estuary as far as Otterton.

Otterton also has a pub (Kings Arms), post office and a working flour mill. There’s also plenty of roadside parking and a rather special church – St. Michael’s, the site of worship since Saxon times. It is the start point for this exhilarating ramble.

The church was endowed by the Right Honourable Louisa Lady Rolle, then resident of Bickton Hall in 1869. Lady Rolle had decided the original church “wasn’t good enough” for the village. At her behest, the old church was demolished (save for the tower), and the present church erected at a cost of £12,000. Limestone, quarried at Berry Head east of Lyme Bay was used for exterior walling. Softer limestone, sent from the underground quarries at Beer, being used internally.

But that’s not all. The church was constructed by a remarkable local builder – one Henry Burridge of Sidmouth who, according to the brass plate affixed to the wall behind the font, completed the work within twelve months.

That plate reveals the first stone being laid on 22nd March 1870, and the church being consecrated on 29th March 1871 by the Bishop of Exeter.

Start/car parking - Otterton Church

Terrain: Some slopes.

WALK

From the church walk towards the main street, turn left past Otterton Mill, cross the road bridge and immediately turn left (signposted to Budleigh Salterton) to walk alongside the river Otter. A footbridge, known as Clamour Bridge, offers a quick return to Otterton, (but should be ignored for this outing). Perhaps this was once a busy crossing point?

Continue on the right (west) bank of the river until a road interrupts the riverside footpath. At that point turn left, crossing the river (signpost Ladram Bay) to walk along the road towards a house. Immediately before the house turn right (signpost Ladram Bay) to walk along a field edged with high trees to your right. When the sea appears, look for a redundant pill box (which is now occupied by hibernating bats) at the bottom of the dip. Budleigh Salterton becomes evident to the right across the estuary.

A waymark situated near a telegraph pole indicates the way to the left along the coastal path. This undulating route presents wondrous vistas and colourful meadows, the landscape further enhanced by the dark red soil. The coastal section is unforgettable, looking along the coast to Sidmouth and Beer Head. In season, one experiences seagulls twirling and screeching to the right and skylarks hovering and twittering on the left. Idyllic.

Half a mile beyond the derelict barn at Brandy Head, ignore a permissive path to Otterton (so avoiding a sewage farm!). Instead, march onwards another half-mile towards a second gate and, with the unmistakable outline of Peak Hill in sight, swing left

(signpost Otterton). The sea stacks at Ladram Bay (and the Holiday Park) are directly ahead at this point, but not visited.

The foot path passes through a gate and becomes a lane. Just before the road junction, turn right down another lane (with a football field to your left). At the end, turn left and follow the road back towards Otterton. To avoid the holiday traffic, fork left at the top of the hill and follow the line of the road (Behind Hayes) back to the church.

Revised 5 May 2014

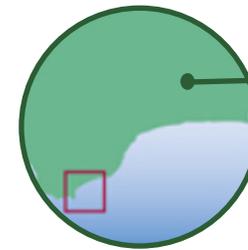
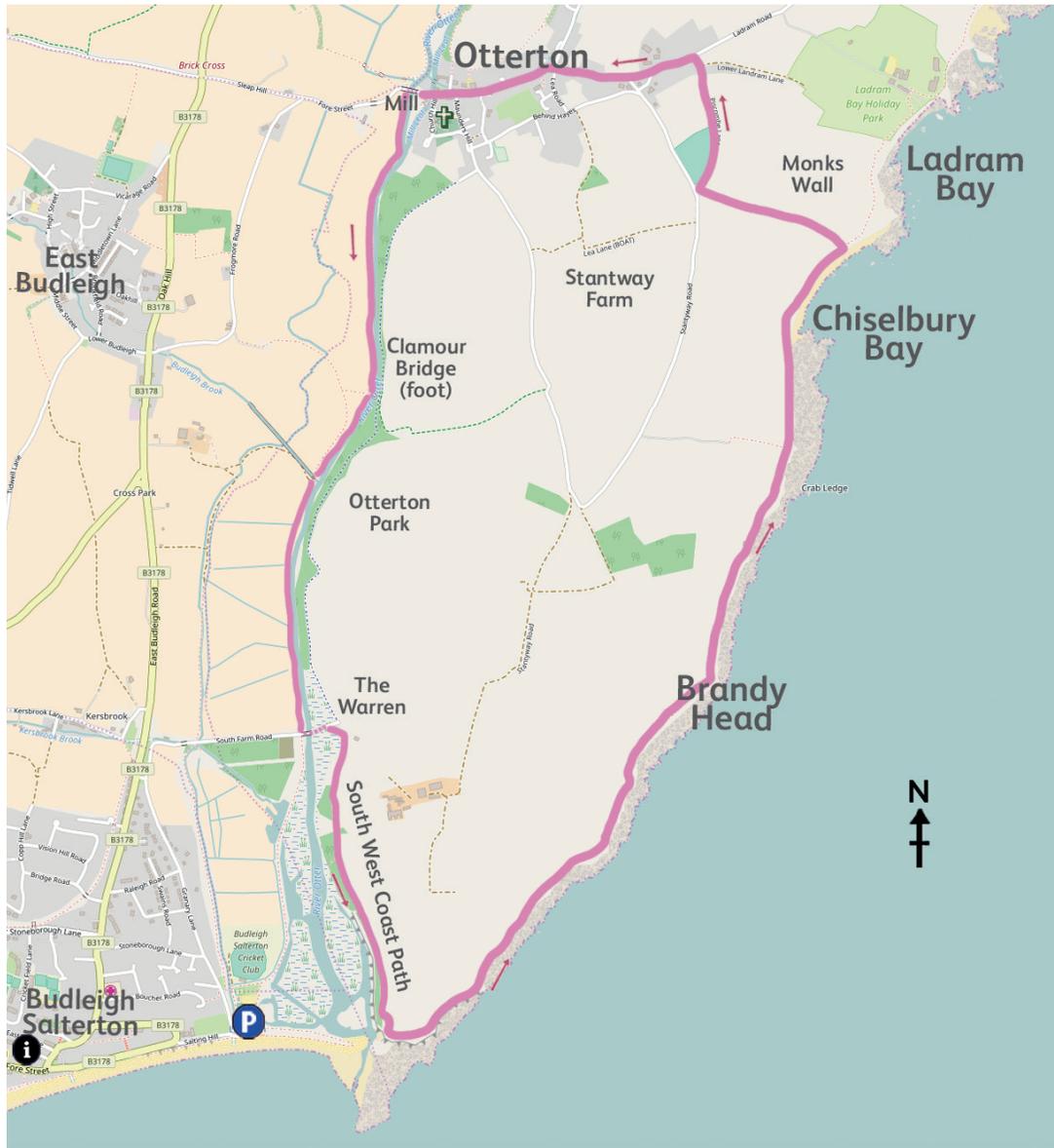
It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made.

Thank you. Happy walking!



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HPB Lower Knapp

 - Walk

 - B3178

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