

Saint Hill & North Hill Gliding Club

Walk 17

Distance - 9 miles Map: OS Explorer 115. Exmouth & Sidmouth

Broadhembury is an exquisitely beautiful village. Thatched cottages with colourful gardens.

A church dedicated to St. Andrew. Also there's a public house, the Drewe Arms that's been awarded numerous accolades for its fish dishes. London standards, rarely found in a quiet backwater of Devon.

The Drewes bought the entire village of Broadhembury many years ago. I'm told they own every thatched cottage. Their wealth was accrued from Home and Cologne Tea. The late Mr Drewe is reputed to have built the last castle in England. A management company now attends to the affairs of the village.

Start/car parking - Broadhembury

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!

WALK

Leave the war memorial behind, march along the main road through Broadhembury to cross the bridge. A short distance ahead, opposite the last thatched cottage, leave the road on the right, entering a wide lane. Cross a stile then walk along the right hand edge of a field, seeking another stile tucked away in the right hand corner (well concealed). Cross this and the next field (clear row between crops) aiming towards the tallest trees. Once there, keep to the right hand edge of the field to exit onto a road. Turn right.

Stride out along the road for approximately 1¼ miles to the second crossroads (Orway Cross), which is slightly staggered. Veer left, then right, to walk in a deeply sunken lane, which reveals spectacular root formations.

Keep to the road as it bends left, then 50 yds beyond the houses leave the road on the right and follow the direction of the signpost, across a narrow field to reach a stile. Cross the stile and turn left to walk around the perimeter of the farm for about 300 yds, seeking a stile in the hedge on the left. **(It's important that you locate this stile - it has a small stream on the far side).**

Having located and crossed the stile, turn right and make towards a wide gateway situated at the top end of the field. Follow the right hand boundary, towards a farmhouse, passing to the left of the house walking along a pleasant grassed track.

Merging with a road turn right, to begin the long slog to the appropriately titled hamlet of Saint Hill, which reveals a small Baptist church and a superb collection of vintage tractors (ironically, Massey-Fergusson had just announced the closure of their Coventry factory).

The route continues its upward course (passing a bench – the inscription hard to resist) until the road abruptly ends. At that point enter the woodland straight ahead, continuing the upward slog.

Ignore a signpost on the left, but when merging with a wide, well used woodland track, swing right. (Ignore a public footpath sign close to this junction). The exertions over, stroll through the woodland for a mile, emerging at a viewpoint where extensive westward views are available. Continue along the road and turn left.

The road walk is brief. Enter a small car park on the right, then proceed along an obvious path, around the external perimeter of the Devon and Somerset Gliding Club. **This is the highest point of the walk, 283m above sea level.**

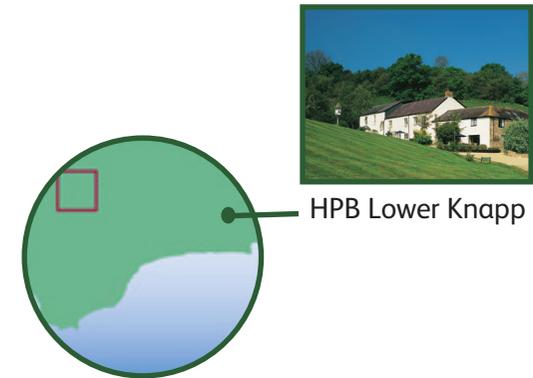
Walk beyond the first gate and notice board, and eventually the route enters the confines of the gliding club (be vigilant). Once inside the boundary veer right. Keep close to the boundary, head towards the clubhouse and depart along the access road. Reaching a road junction turn right and right again after 100 yds. (signpost) to enter a bridleway that soon turns left through a wide gate.

After walking in an enclosed section cross an open field, towards a wide gate, then veer slightly right (ignoring another obvious gate) to enter an enclosed track, running alongside the woodland. Follow the track to merge with a road (Stafford Hill) and turn right for a downward stroll to Broadhembury.

Revised 4 January 2015 Hugh (Sutherland)

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