



Walk 41A. Dulverton and Bury.

- 9 miles, ascents and descents of 520 metres. 3 hours 45 minutes constant walking, allow 4½-5½ hours.

Terrain: Paths, tracks, roads and fields; expect some mud and slippery bedrock. Three fairly steep ascents. There is a stretch of over half a mile on a fast road, where care is needed. Be prepared to encounter pheasant shooting in winter, particularly on the first part of the walk through the Hollam estate.

Access: By car, park in the long-stay car park next to Exmoor House (SS 912 280, TA22 9HL, £). Dulverton is served by bus 25 from Taunton and Bampton, 198 from Minehead and 398 from Tiverton and Bampton (no service on Sundays).

Map: Split between OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor and 114 Exeter and the Exe Valley.

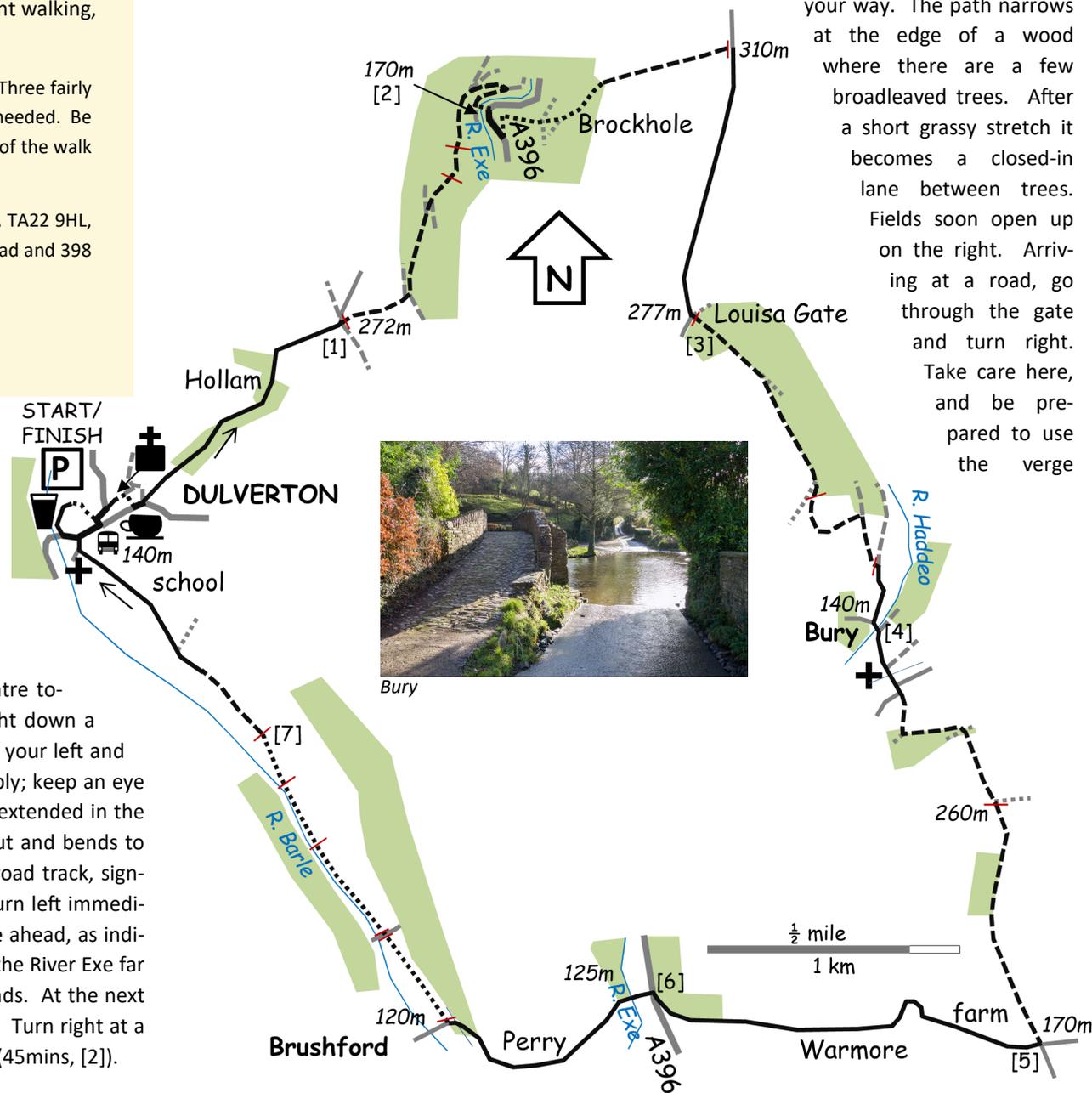
Refreshments: Plenty of choice in Dulverton, nothing on the route.

DULVERTON, THE HUB FOR SOUTHERN EXMOOR, has already been encountered in several of the earlier walks, and picturesque Bury features in walk 39A from Wimbleball. This route connects the two via a combination of paths, tracks and roads. It links up the rivers Exe, Haddeo and Barle, which converge within a short distance of one another and continue to the sea at Exmouth. Visiting three rivers in hilly country means that the walk has some steep climbs, but the reward includes hanging woods, changing views and secluded paths.

Starting in Dulverton, walk away from the bridge and through the town centre towards the church. Enter the churchyard and keep right; leaving it, turn right down a cobbled alley in front of houses. At the road turn left, then pass a garage on your left and head up a narrow lane with the Rock House on your right. This ascends steeply; keep an eye out for farm and estate traffic. Hollam House, rebuilt in Victorian times and extended in the mid-20th century, is on the left. Arrive at an area where the lane widens out and bends to the left (Hollam Cross, 30mins, [1]). Continue ahead through a gate on a broad track, signposted as a footpath to Brock Hole. Ignore a private track to the left, then turn left immediately afterwards at a T-junction. Tracks head off first left then right; continue ahead, as indicated by a footpath marker. In the winter you will be able to see glimpses of the River Exe far below through the trees. Go through a pheasant enclosure, gated at both ends. At the next junction, take the rightmost fork downwards as indicated by another marker. Turn right at a T-junction, then left on a narrow footbridge: this takes you over the River Exe (45mins, [2]).

At the far side of the river, steps take you up to the A396. Turn right, watching for traffic. Cross over before the next right-hand bend, and turn left on a restricted byway signposted Lyddon's Hill, which doubles back and heads uphill through the woods. The path bends right and continues steeply upwards over rock. Various forestry tracks cross (the area was partly cleared in 2020), but continue heading upwards; an occasional purple or black mark confirms

your way. The path narrows at the edge of a wood where there are a few broadleaved trees. After a short grassy stretch it becomes a closed-in lane between trees. Fields soon open up on the right. Arriving at a road, go through the gate and turn right. Take care here, and be prepared to use the verge



on the left: this fairly fast road is used as an alternative to the A396. Haddon Hill is to the left, and the Wimbleball dam soon comes into view in the distance. In a little under 15 minutes come to a bend where there is a house on the right. Turn left here on a wide track through a high gate, ignoring the footpath to its left (this is Louisa Gate; 1hr25mins, [3]).

Pass a pair of grain silos, then in a little over five minutes keep right at a fork, continuing next to the hedge. Further on the track goes through a gate. When you come to a T-junction turn right on an enclosed track; a view opens up here over the Haddeo valley. At the bottom go through a gate and turn right on to a surfaced lane. This takes you past Hunts Farm and into the attractive small village of Bury. Bear left and walk over a stone bridge beside a ford (1hr50mins, [4]). There is a convenient seat at its far end, overlooking the River Haddeo on its way from Wimbleball to join the Exe, a meandering mile downstream. Head uphill on the road, pass a telephone box, go straight on at the junction, then when the road bends right continue ahead on a byway. This becomes a steep and possibly very muddy track between high banks. Keep left at a junction, taking care on the slippery bedrock. The track bends right and comes to a crossing of sorts: your way on is straight ahead, but divert briefly to the left at the bend for views back over Bury and down the Haddeo valley. When the path starts to level out, go through a gate (crossing into Devon) and continue ahead. The path narrows and starts to descend; its surface again reverts to slippery bedrock, and depending on the recent weather it may carry a babbling stream. Follow it for around fifteen minutes from the 'Devon' gate as far as a road junction (2hr25mins, [5]). You are exactly halfway between Bampton and Dulverton. From now on the walk is much flatter.

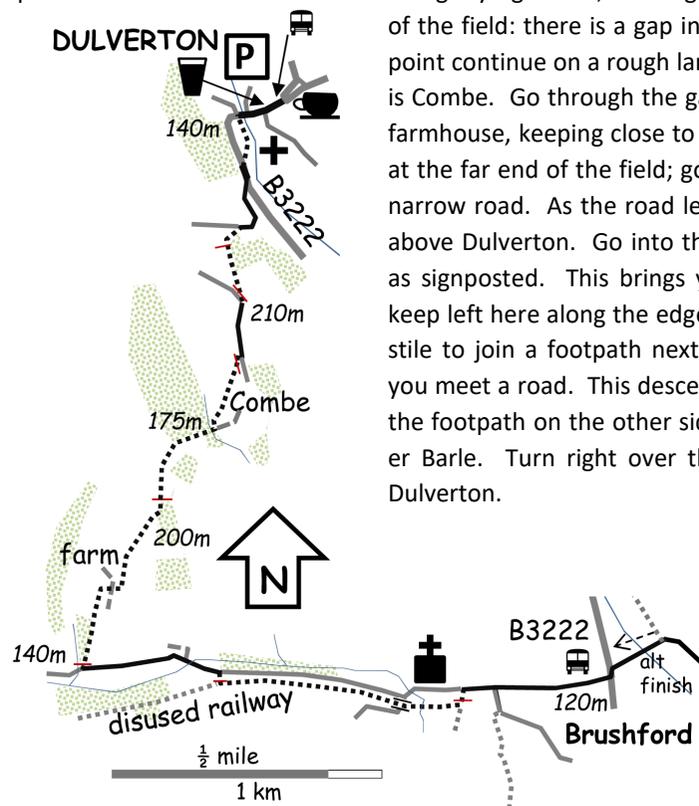
Turn right on the narrow lane; it is normally fairly quiet, but you are likely to encounter the odd car or farm vehicle. In about 25 minutes this will bring you through Warmore and back to the A396 (2hr50mins, [6]). Cross straight over, then follow the road over the River Exe (and back into Somerset). Pass Perry Farm on the right. Brushford comes into view ahead; the somewhat imposing building is the former Carnarvon Arms Hotel, once busy with traffic from the former railway station, now divided into apartments. After right and left bends, turn right through a gate on a footpath to Dulverton. Your way ahead is diagonally across to the far left-hand corner of the field. Cross a driveway just before a bridge, and enter the next field to walk parallel with the third river, the Barle. Ahead to the right are some new houses clustered on the hill above Dulverton. In about ten minutes come to a turbine; start heading away from the river here, to the right of a derelict tin shack. Go through the gate on an enclosed path (3hr25mins, [7]). This brings you into the outskirts of Dulverton; ignore a footpath to the right, pass a school, then pass a sports field to the left and on the right individual houses set back in large plots. The lane eventually becomes a narrow alley, passing a church and the former mill, before arriving into the town. Turn right for the town centre, left for the bridge and car park.

Alternative finish: over the hills from Brushford (● total 10.5 miles, ascents and descents of 600 metres). After the 2hr50min point ([6]) follow the instructions to the right and left bends,

but then continue on the road until it crosses the river and comes to a T-junction. Cross diagonally left over the main road to continue into Brushford, signposted to the church and village hall (and, on a smaller sign, 'circular walk'). Pass the village hall, then ignore a road turning on the left. Two minutes or so later, immediately before Ashleigh House, turn left on a footpath, through a metal gate and up some steps and then right on the track of the old railway. Go over a road bridge then in seven or eight minutes take a path to the right signposted 'circular walk'. Turn left on the road, go over a bridge, then about five minutes later (before coming to a house set back from the road) turn right over a stile to join a footpath (the distance to Dulverton is now less than two miles, not four as shown). Keep to the left of the trees and head upwards; as you come into the open head for the far right-hand corner of the field, turn right as signposted, then left behind the buildings.

Go into the next field, then keep parallel with the left-hand boundary. In the next field follow the path around to the left. Go through the gate, and head diagonally right to the telegraph pole in the centre of the field. Bear slightly right at it, heading not quite for the lower corner

of the field: there is a gap in front of the first tree. At this point continue on a rough lane towards farm buildings; this is Combe. Go through the gate, then head left around the farmhouse, keeping close to its hedge. Make for the barns at the far end of the field; go through a gate here to join a narrow road. As the road levels out, come to a viewpoint above Dulverton. Go into the field heading diagonally left as signposted. This brings you to another footpath sign; keep left here along the edge of the woods, then go over a stile to join a footpath next to a fence. Turn right when you meet a road. This descends steeply to the B3222; take the footpath on the other side, which descends to the River Barle. Turn right over the bridge and walk back into Dulverton.



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