

# Dulverton & Hawkrigde loop

Starts at Dulverton, Somerset. TA22 9HL

4 hours 30 minutes | 10.4miles 16.7km | Moderate



ID: 0.2110 | Developed by: John Cole | Checked by: Edward Levy | [www.ramblersroutes.org](http://www.ramblersroutes.org)

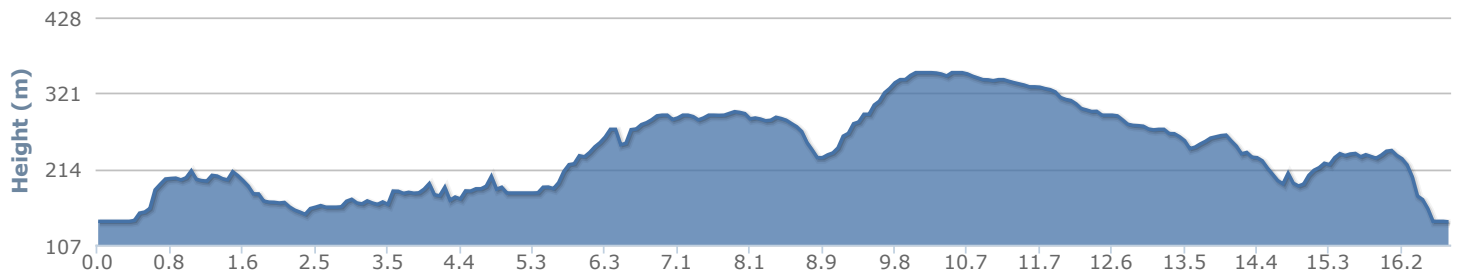
A pleasantly varied 18km (11mile) circular walk from Dulverton, with fine views of the River Barle and across several wooded valleys in the area. The route avoids sections of the river path damaged in the floods at the end of 2012.



— Main Route    — Alternative Route    **H** Point of Interest    **4** Waypoint

Distance: 16.65km    Ascent: 598m    Descent: 598m

## Route Profile



\*move mouse over graph to see points on route

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## **Starts at**

At the well-know statue of Lorna Doone, Grid ref: SS912279, in front of the Exmoor National Park headquarters. It's close to a public car park, the Caravan Club campsite, and the bus stop in High Street.

## **Ends at**

Back at the start.

## **Getting there**

*Most visitors come to Dulverton by car. There are also several bus routes linking Dulverton with Taunton, Minehead, and Tiverton.*

*Buses: <http://www.travelinesw.com>*

## **Route instructions**

**[1]** The walk starts at the statue of Lorna Doone. Turn right onto High Street and cross the nearby bridge across the River Barle. On the other side, turn immediate right and keep right up the hill. *Lorna Doone is the heroine of the 1869 novel by R.D.Blackmore. The statue (A) was donated to the town by an American, Dr. Whitman Pearson, in 1990.* Take the fork to the right (waymarked Tarr Steps). The steep path coming down from the left will be the way you return at the end of the walk. Leaving the main river path, take the narrower uphill path which is first on the left,. This diversion follows the river at a higher level, avoiding the damage caused by the heavy rains at the end of 2012. *A side path on your left leads up to Oldberry Castle (B), the first of three Iron Age forts along the route.*

**[2]** Turn right at the "T" junction of paths (waymarked Middle Path) and make way back down to the floor of the valley. Turn left to rejoin the main route towards Tarr Steps (waymarked Marsh Bridge). After passing between the buildings of Kennel Farm and through two gates, turn right down the tarmac road.

**[3]** Just before Marsh Bridge crosses the River, turn left onto the sign-posted path with a private garden on either side. Follow the main waymarked path along the meandering valley, ignoring side paths into the woods and to the river bank. Two small streams are easily stepped over, then a larger stream (Dane's Brook) is crossed by a stone bridge.

**[4]** Immediately after the bridge, you see a junction of three clear paths. Take the middle one to your half-left (waymarked Hawkridge) which climbs into the trees above Dane's Brook.

*Look back across the Barle for a view to Mounsey Castle (C), another Iron Age hill fort. Above you as you climb is Brewer's Castle (D), the most easily accessible of the three along the route, reached by a side path on your right.*

Take the main path through the gate into open grassland. You are now starting along the actual ridge of Hawkridge, with fine views over the wooded valleys to either side. Keep right, avoiding the path to the left that descends back to Dane's Brook. Next the open bridle path becomes Row Lane with hedges on either side.

**[5]** Entering the village of Hawkridge, turn left along the road. St Giles church is on your left. Almost immediately there is a road junction where you keep left.

*St Giles Church (E) was extensively restored in Victorian times, but retains some Norman features dating back to the 14th century.*

Where the public road turns sharp right, immediately after West Hollowcombe Farm (now holiday accommodation), take the bridlepath on the left with the buildings on your left. Go diagonally right down the slope. Head for the gate in the hedge that slopes down from your right. Turn left onto the tarmac Slade Lane and follow it down the hill. It crosses a bridge over a stream then goes very steeply uphill.

**[6]** In approximately 150 yards turn right at the waymarker post carrying the MW symbol of the Two Moors

Way. The stony path is narrow but clearly defined across scrubby ground. At cross paths half way up the hill continue straight ahead. Join the wider path, running alongside boundary on your left. Towards top of hill look out for a small gate in the fence. Go through onto Venford Moor. This Open Access land has many random and indistinct tracks, bearing little relation to the official Rights of Way. Head south-east (slightly diagonally to your right), keeping at much the same level. After about 700m the way becomes more distinct and follows parallel to the road on your right. The broad path goes through a gate in a sparse hedge and continues parallel to the road. Almost at the end of the common land, go through the gate onto the road and turn left. This road is part of the National Cycle Network but also carries fast motor traffic.

**Watch out for traffic, walk on the far right of the carriageway, and use the verge as far as possible. Be especially careful in bad visibility.**

**[7]** At the five-way junction, take the second small road on the right. Just after the grounds of Chiltons, take the footpath on your left crossing a field and keep the high (deer-proof) fence on your left. At the end of the field pass through a gate and bear left to pass through a high gate and immediately bear right to cross a stile. The clearly marked footpath goes diagonally right down the slope. It crosses a small stream, climbs the opposite slope, then follows along the field boundary on your right. After two gates you reach Chilcott Lane. Turn right onto the road, down the hill. After passing between the buildings of Higher and Lower Chilcott, look for a gate on the left off the broad farm track.

**[8]** From the gate take the marked Right of Way (diagonally to the right). It goes through two more gates then follows an indistinct path diagonally right down the steep slope to a tree-lined stream. Alternatively you may prefer to follow the clear way along the field boundary to your left, then along the line of the stream at the bottom of the slope. Cross the footbridge over the stream, follow the edge of the trees on your right, and ford a smaller stream. Head up the grassy saddle in front of you, then towards the house that gradually comes into view, and finally to a gate onto the tarmac road. Turn right along the road, past the house on your left. Be careful not to turn into the drive to Old Shute on the left, but look for a stile just beyond.

**[9]** Cross onto the indistinct footpath. The way meets and follows the curving hedge bordering the right of the field, to a stile near the top right hand corner. Cross it and head towards the top right hand corner of the buildings of Old Berry Farm in front of you.

**[10]** Go through the gates either side of the farm lane, immediately to the right of the buildings, then follow the left hand field boundary. Go through the gate and follow the steep and winding 'sunken lane' down to **[2]** to retrace your steps back into Dulverton.

**This short section can be very slippery when there's ice or a layer of wet leaves on the stones.**

### **Additional 'Point of Interest' information**

*The Iron Age hill forts date from the millennium before the Roman Conquest, when England was divided into small tribal chiefdoms. Though clearly designed for defence, they may also have been intended as ostentatious displays of power. The earth ramparts would originally have been reinforced with stone or logs, and required much labour and organisation to build.*

*Hill forts: <http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/archives/ASH/Hill-forts.htm>*

### **Acknowledgements**

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### Hawkridge Church from Anstey Money Common

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