

Hemyock, Culmstock Beacon & Wellington Monument

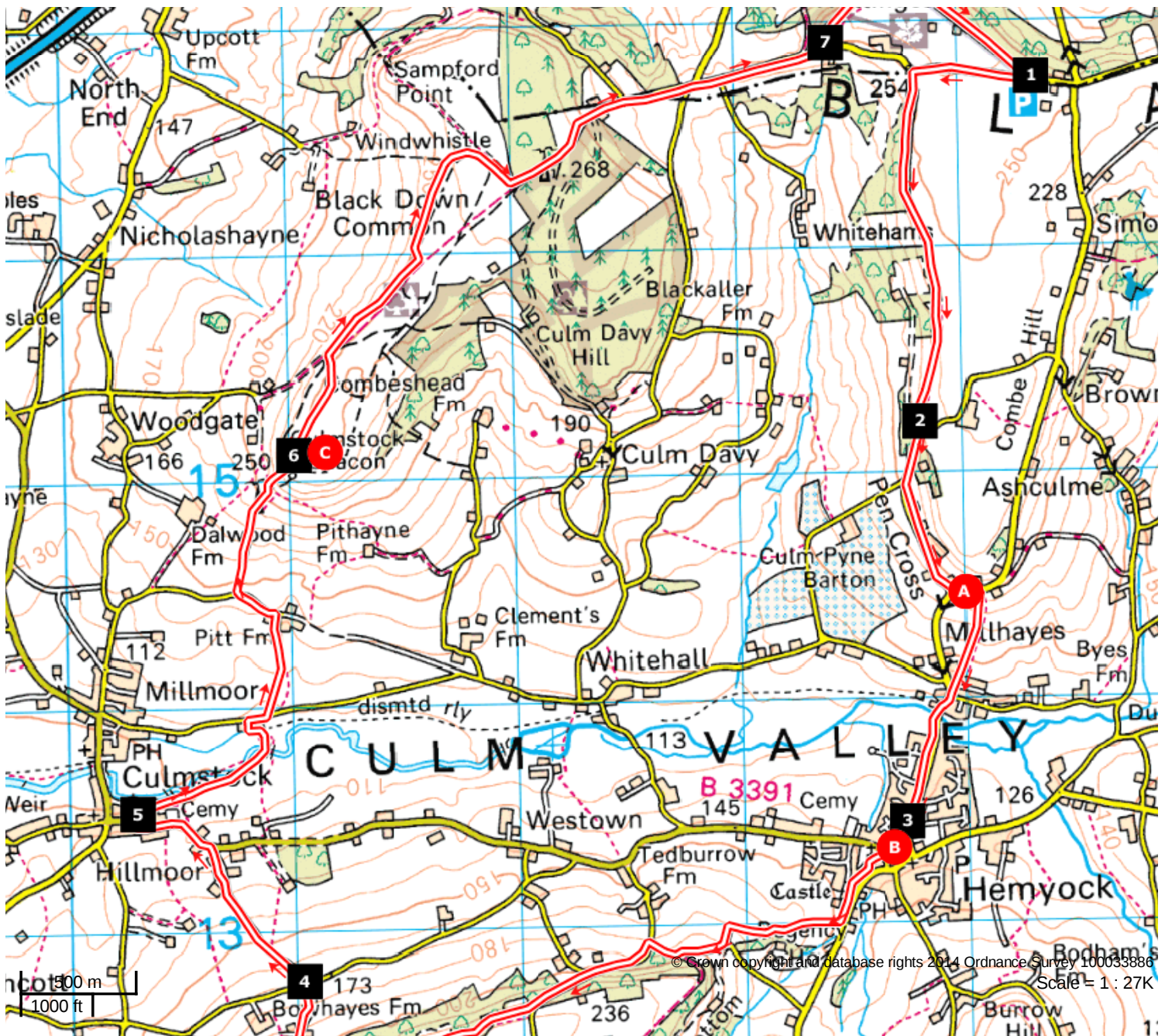


Starts at Wellington Monument Car Park

5 hours 0 minutes | 10.0miles 16.1km | Moderate

ID: 0.2325 | Developed by: Edward Levy | Checked by: anthony strange | www.ramblersroutes.org

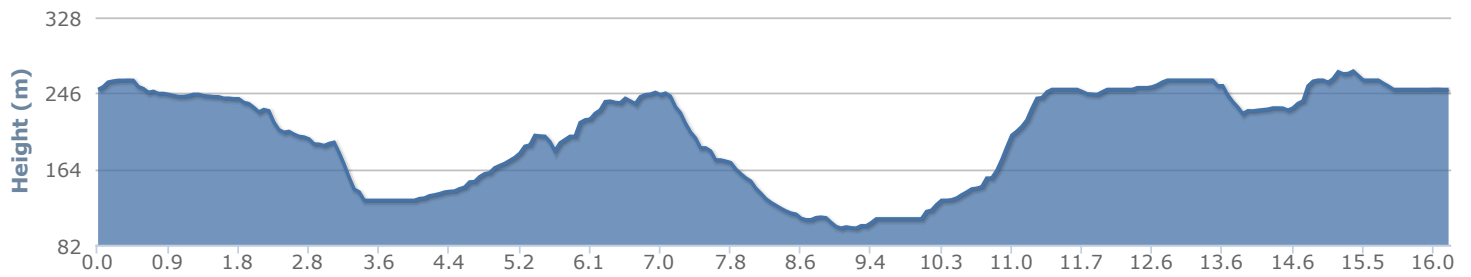
A circular walk across the Blackdown Hills on the borders of Somerset and East Devon, passing through the villages of Hemyock and Culmstock and then up to Culmstock Beacon and over the hilltops to Wellington Monument.



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

Distance: 16.07km Ascent: 387m Descent: 387m

Route Profile



*move mouse over graph to see points on route

The Ramblers is Britain's walking charity. We work to safeguard the footpaths, countryside and other places where we all go walking. We encourage people to walk for their health and wellbeing. To become a member visit www.ramblers.org.uk



Starts at

Car Park for Wellington Monument on minor road on top of Blackdown Hills. OS Map Explorer 128 GR:ST144168

Ends at

Wellington Monument Car Park

Getting there

Wellington Monument can be clearly seen on top of the Blackdown Hills when traveling along the M5 between junctions 26 and 27. Leave the M5 at junction 26 and follow the access road to Wellington. At roundabout leave on the first exit and follow the A38 for approximately 1 mile where turn left (signed Hemyock). Follow road up onto Blackdown Hills and at crossroads after a steep section turn right. The Wellington Monument car park can then be found a short distance ahead on the right.

Route instructions

[1] Leave car park at road entrance and turn right to follow road. (This road has fast moving traffic so take care walking well to the edge facing oncoming traffic in single file). Where road bends to the right downhill turn left onto a waymarked path (cross with great care). Follow this path which runs straight ahead until it reaches a minor road which joins from the left.

[2] Go straight ahead downhill passing a minor road turning off to the right. On reaching a junction with a major road go left uphill and past a large stone seat on the right.

(A) a good place to stop for a drink and take in the view.

Shortly after the seat turn right onto a footpath running straight downhill. The path runs down to some houses where it joins a road. Follow the road which initially turns right and then reaches a "T" junction. Turn left at the junction and follow the road across a bridge over the River Culm and on into the village of Hemyock. Continue to follow the road through the village to a point where the road narrows and turns slightly left. At this point look for a waymarked path off to the right through a kissing gate (KG).

(B) Hemyock is located approximately five miles from the town of Wellington. The River Culm flows through the village. Hemyock was the former home of the St Ivel dairy processing plant, formerly where the butter-spreads 'St Ivel Gold' and 'Utterly-Butterly' were produced before being moved to a factory in the north of England.

[3] On turning right through the kissing gates follow tarmaced path running along the back of houses. On reaching a road cross over bearing slightly to the left to continue along a path which runs alongside a stream at the side of the village church to reach a road. Turn right and follow road out of village and then turn onto the first signed path on the right. Follow the footpath uphill keeping the hedgeline to the right and pass into another field continuing in the same direction now with hedgeline to the left. On reaching a rough track turn right and when this meets a small lane some 100 metres further up turn left uphill until you come to a waymarked path on the right. Take this path which skirts the top of Conigar Plantation for some 900 metres until you emerge on a small tarmaced lane. At this point, turn right downhill for approx 200 metres where you will find a waymarked path off to the left. (Alternatively, where the rough track meets the small lane instead of turning left continue downhill to a "T" junction where you should turn left and follow road uphill passing a road junction on the right. At top of hill where road turns left go straight ahead onto a signed footpath). Follow this path straight ahead through 5 small fields. On leaving the 5th field keep your

eyes peeled as the path then bears slightly to the right and then runs downhill through woods to reach Hill View Farm (the path is not particularly well marked especially through the trees). At the farm turn right and follow the access road to the farm downhill to reach a minor road.

[4] Turn left and immediately right into a sunken lane. Follow lane to junction with a road. Turn left and follow road into village of Culmstock.

[5] Turn right into a road running along left hand side of church and then turn right again at Cleeve Cottage onto a path leading into a field. In field walk ahead with river on left to reach a footbridge across the river. Cross footbridge and follow path a short distance walking to the left of the stables to reach a minor road. Turn right and then turn left at the first waymarked path on the left and proceed uphill alongside the left hand hedge. Where hedge turns sharp left continue ahead to the top right hand corner of field to exit over a stile into another field. Go ahead towards the left hand side of Pitt Farm to a large white metal gate. Pass through gate and go ahead alongside farm buildings to reach farm access road. Turn left and then at road junction ahead turn right and head uphill passing a tall metal mast on right. At "T" junction turn left and almost immediately right to pass through a gate onto a path running steeply uphill to Culmstock Beacon.

(C) Culmstock Beacon. This stone hut stands 250 m above sea level, close to a triangulation pillar and on the edge of the Blackdown Hills. It partially encloses a pole-beacon which was a communications signal ready for use when the Spanish Armada was sighted in the English Channel in 1588. Fires on the coast would be lit and then one by one a network of fire beacons set ablaze. This was the signal for all able-bodied men to assemble at their local church, await instructions and arm themselves. This is possibly the only beacon hut in the country to survive in its original form. It linked with others at Holcombe Rogus, Upottery and Blackborough. This slit window allowed observers to watch for a light at Upottery beacon. Looking west-north-west.

[6] On reaching beacon bear right to follow wide grassy path running across the hilltop. The path eventually begins to go downhill. Here turn right to continue onwards on hilltop. To your right you will see a tall communications mast in the trees. Follow the path heading for the mast and pass through a gate into a wood just before reaching it. Follow the path straight ahead and on down to Crossways Farm. Continue ahead now on a minor surfaced road to reach a "T" junction on a bend with a major road. Bear right (ignoring road on right) and follow road for some 600 metres (traffic moves fast on this road so walk in single file on right to face oncoming traffic). Ignore the first path on the left which is a bridle way.

[7] In a short distance turn next left onto a footpath just before a bend in the road. Head uphill with field boundary on left and continue over stiles to reach Wellington Monument.

(D) The Wellington Monument is a 175 feet (53 m) high triangular tower located on the highest point of the Blackdown Hills. It has been designated by English Heritage as a grade 2 listed building. It was erected to celebrate the Duke of Wellington's victory at the Battle of Waterloo. The foundation stone was laid in 1817, on land belonging to the Duke, but the monument was not completed until 1854. Its design was inspired by an Egyptian obelisk, but in the shape of the type of bayonet used by Wellington's armies. It is 80 feet (24 m) wide at the base. A counterweight hangs inside to help balance the Monument in windy weather. An internal staircase ascends to a viewing platform.

It is now owned by the National trust, and is floodlit at night. Originally four cannon surrounded the Monument, but these were removed during the Second World War (1939-1945) and used for scrap to help the war effort. In 1985, the Wellington Rotary Club donated the cannon currently standing at the base of the Monument. The viewing platform is currently (2007) closed due to safety concerns.

After viewing monument turn right to follow wide access path back to car park.

Acknowledgements

Developed by: *Edward Levy*

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Ancient Stone Hut On Culmstock
Beacon
Photo taken by: Jack Holliday



Stone Sculpture on Culmstock
Beacon
Photo taken by: Jake Holliday



Wooden Seat on Culmstock
Beacon
Photo taken by: Jake Holliday



River Culm Near Culmstock
Photo taken by: Jake Holliday

