



Walk 34. Whitefield Down.

- 5.8 miles, ascents and descents of 250 metres. 2 hours 20 minutes constant walking, allow 3-3½ hours.

Terrain: Roads, tracks and fields, parts uneven and muddy.

Access: Park in a small layby (2-3 cars) on the road between Kinsford Gate and the Sloyey Stone, at the northernmost corner of the walk where there is a fingerpost (SS 726 376). Alternatively you may be able to park near the Poltimore Arms, on the Brayford turn-off from the Simonsbath to South Molton road (SS 725 356), and start the walk from the 35 minute point.

Map: OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor.

Refreshments: The Poltimore Arms is just off the route, or there is an inn and seasonal tea room in Simonsbath.

THE SOUTH-WESTERN EDGE OF EXMOOR ATTRACTS RELATIVELY FEW WALKERS, perhaps because of the difficulty of finding circular off-road routes. This walk takes in some of the high downs of southern Exmoor. It reaches a height of 460 metres, providing panoramic views across North Devon from Dartmoor to Hartland Point and in the far distance Lundy. Variation is provided by tree-lined lanes and a descent to the head of Sherrycombe. The route is easily linked with walk 35 to include Brayford and Hole Water.

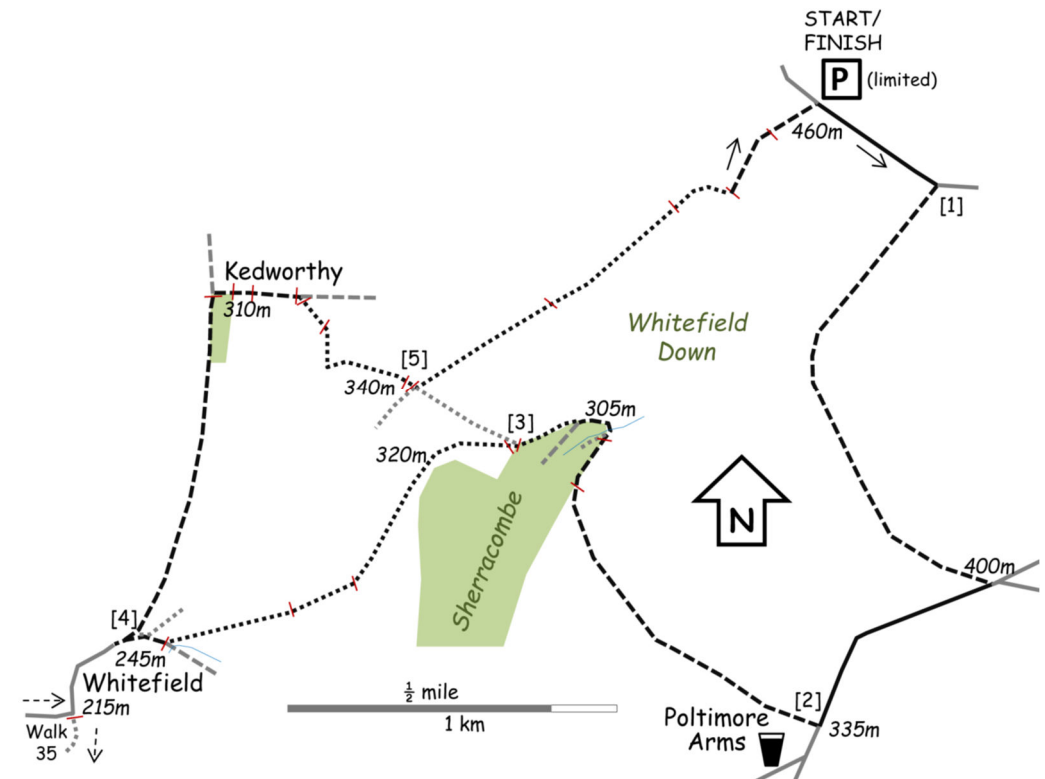
The parking area on the Kinsford Gate road is the highest point of the walk and provides far-reaching views over north Devon. Start the walk by heading back towards Kinsford Gate (with your back to the finger post, turn right). At the second line of trees where the road bends left (7 minutes, [1]) turn right on a roughly-surfaced lane. This heads gradually downhill; in about 20 minutes come to a road at a crossroads and turn right. There are more views across lush North Devon farmland to Dartmoor on the left. The road soon bends left; three or four minutes later, turn right on a track towards Whitefield and Kedworthy (35 minutes, [2]). (To visit the Poltimore Arms continue for another 150 metres or so and turn right on the road to Brayford; return the same way).

The track starts off level then goes through a gate and drops towards a stream; after another gate follow the path left around the end of the valley, keeping right and uphill at a fork. Go through a field gate then turn immediately left through a kissing gate towards Whitefield (1hr, [3]; turn right in front of the kissing gate for the short walk). Clip the edge of the trees ahead of you, then gradually head diagonally across the field. In about eight minutes come to another kissing gate in its right-hand boundary. Your route across the next field is marked by

a footpath sign, but head slightly to the left of the direction indicated to go over a slight crest and come to another gate with a signpost. Now go straight ahead, aiming for a small concrete structure like a miniature pillbox. You will gradually converge with a small stream that cuts across the field. Meet a track at the end of the field, bearing right to go through a gate and over a stile. Soon arrive at a T-junction with a concrete track (1hr15mins, [4]).

Turn right on the track towards Kedworthy. In a little under 20 minutes go through a gate at Kedworthy Farm. Turn right to go through the farmyard (not past the front of the house). Leaving the farmyard head uphill on the track, go through a gate with a brick pillar, then immediately through another gate diagonally opposite to enter a field. On a clear day Dartmoor will be visible to the right. Bear slightly right across the field and go over a stile. Turn right and follow the field edge along two sides until it comes to a gate. Go through this and the next gate (1hr50mins, [5]), then turn left alongside the field boundary. The path goes through several gates before joining a vehicle track, eventually arriving at your starting-point.

Shorter walk around Whitefield Down (● 4 miles, ascents and descents of 175 metres). Follow the main walk to the 1hr point ([3]), but turn right along the field boundary in front of the kissing gate. At the far side of the field (the 1hr50mins point, [5]) turn right to rejoin the main walk.



Linked walk: Brayford, Whitefield Down and Newtown Bridge (● 12 miles, ascents and descents of 610 metres). This circuit combines this walk with **walk 35** via Whitefield. Follow the main walk to the 1hr15min point ([4]), but now turn left and walk past Whitefield. The track becomes a surfaced road, heading steeply downhill; just as it bends to the right turn left on a signposted footpath, joining walk 35 at its 40min point. Follow the complete circuit of walk 35, then keep on the road to walk back past Whitefield and rejoin this walk at the 1hr15min point ([4]).



Whitefield Down