



Walk 35. Brayford and Hole Water.

- 5.6 miles, ascents and descents of 320 metres. 2 hours 25 minutes constant walking, allow 3-3½ hours.

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

Access: By car, park in Brayford on the through road close to the Methodist church or immediately east of the bridge where you are not inconveniencing other traffic (SS 687 347, EX32 7QH).

Map: OS Explorer OL9 Exmoor.

Refreshments: Nothing in Brayford. The Poltimore Arms is on the Simonsbath road, otherwise South Molton or Simonsbath.

BRAYFORD IS A SMALL, PLEASANT VILLAGE BYPASSED BY MAIN ROADS, straddling the River Bray just off the A399 South Molton to Combe Martin road. This walk combines rolling country with the wooded valley of Hole Water, with an option to continue via walk 35 on to the high downs of southern Exmoor. The final section is along a stony track to the attractive hamlet of High Bray, then across fields back to Brayford.

From the church in Brayford go over the bridge and turn left towards Lydcott (the short alternative walk keeps right). Walk to the top of the hill and come to a crossroads (25mins, [1]); turn right towards Whitefield and Kedworthy. Follow the road down into a valley, across a small bridge, and steeply up the other side. As it bends left (40mins, [2]) turn right on a signposted footpath (continue on the road past the Whitefield farms to join walk 35). In less than a minute come to a footpath sign pointing downhill to the right. Follow the path alongside the fence down to Hole Water, cross the bridge and go through a small gate into a wood. After an initial climb the path levels out, and eventually arrives at a road. Turn right on the road, then left down the lane (signposted as the Tarka Trail) to Lower Hall Farm (55mins, [3]).

Follow the footpath to the left of some farm buildings, go through a gate, down steps, and back over the stream on the substantial footbridge. Cross a field to an iron gate and turn right on to the road. In less than five minutes turn right on to a broad track signposted 'Tarka Trail', where there is limited parking; this can be used as an alternative starting-point. Go through the gate at the end into the woods; this is a permissive path through private woodland. Follow the stream on a broad track. Just before it goes through a ford, take the left fork (not the uphill path). Soon afterwards look out for a footbridge on the right (1hr20mins, [4]), possibly not signposted. Cross it and keep left on the walkway, then follow the path. In around fifteen minutes a forestry track comes in from the right; ignore it to continue ahead

through first one gate, then a second one about a minute later. After the second gate turn immediately right on to a rough track, just before the road at Rocks Head (1hr40mins, [5]).

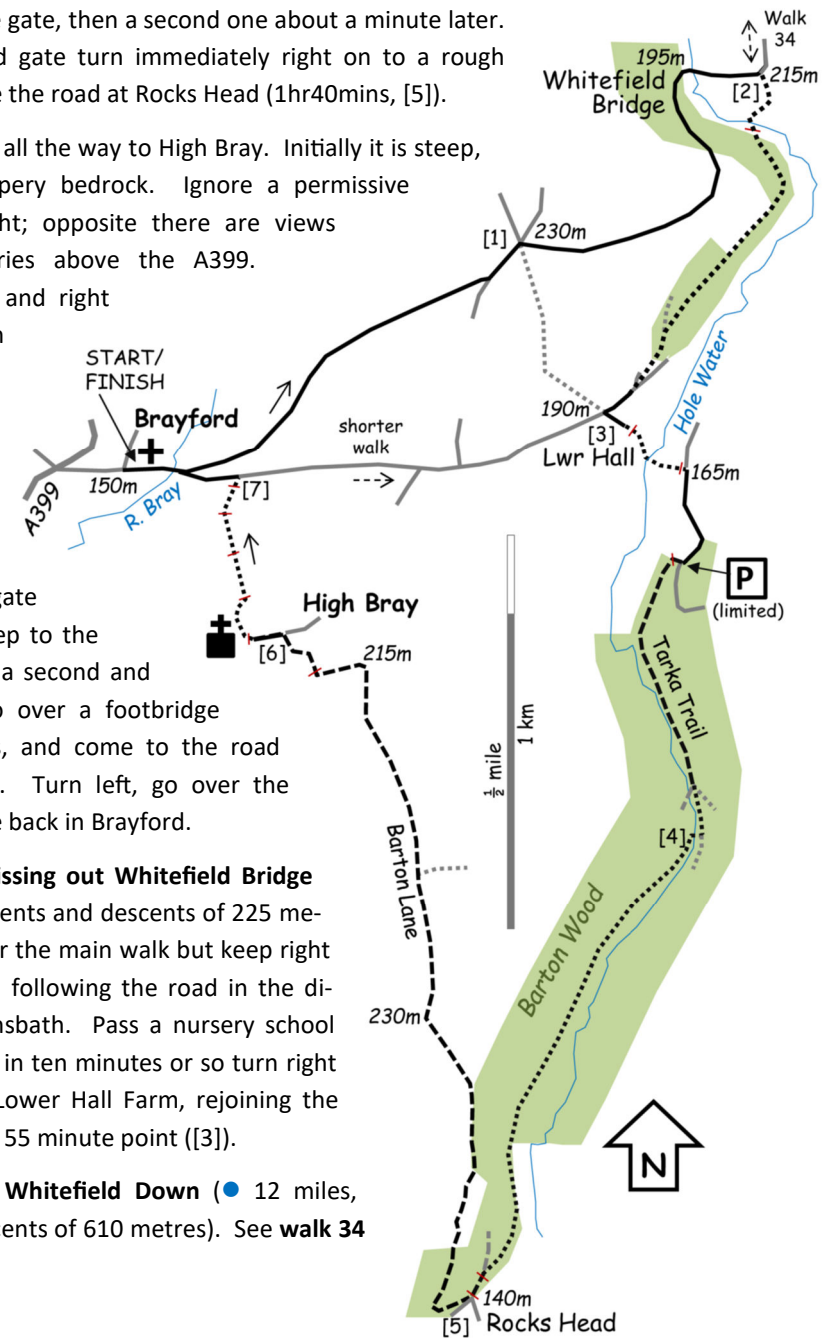
Follow this track all the way to High Bray. Initially it is steep, on possibly slippery bedrock. Ignore a permissive path to the right; opposite there are views across to quarries above the A399.

After sharp left and right bends turn left in front of a row of houses (2hr15mins, [6]). Enter the churchyard, turn right and go through a gate into a field. Keep to the right, cross into a second and a third field, go over a footbridge and down steps, and come to the road (2hr20mins, [7]). Turn left, go over the bridge and arrive back in Brayford.

Shorter walk missing out Whitefield Bridge

● 4.3 miles, ascents and descents of 225 metres). Start as for the main walk but keep right after the bridge, following the road in the direction of Simonsbath. Pass a nursery school on the left, then in ten minutes or so turn right on the lane to Lower Hall Farm, rejoining the main walk at the 55 minute point ([3]).

Linked walk to Whitefield Down ● 12 miles, ascents and descents of 610 metres). See **walk 34** for details.



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