



Walk 87. Wiveliscombe and Heydon Hill.

- 8 miles, ascents and descents of 500 metres. 3 hours 30 minutes constant walking, allow around 4½ hours.

Terrain: Paths, green lanes, roads and fields; there are some wet sections including paths that can run with water and a potentially boggy path soon after leaving Huish Champflower.

Access: By car, park in the free town car park off the B3227 in Wiveliscombe (ST 080 277, near TA4 2BF). If it is full there is an alternative car park in North Street (ST 080 280) and limited on-street parking. By bus, no. 25 runs Monday to Saturday between Taunton, Wiveliscombe, Waterrow, Bampton and Dulverton.

Map: OS Explorer 128 Taunton and the Blackdown Hills.

Refreshments: Several options in Wiveliscombe.

THIS SECOND WIVELISCOMBE WALK sets out westwards like walk 86, but then crosses the River Tone to head to Chipstable, over Heydon Hill and to Huish Champflower, before returning along another section of the Tone and down a long track back into Wiveliscombe. It is a quiet route, despite the roads; this hinterland between Wiveliscombe and Clatworthy Reservoir attracts few visitors. The countryside can be described as steeply rolling, which makes for fairly continuous ascents and descents, but also good views - to the Blackdowns, the Quantocks and as far as Dartmoor.

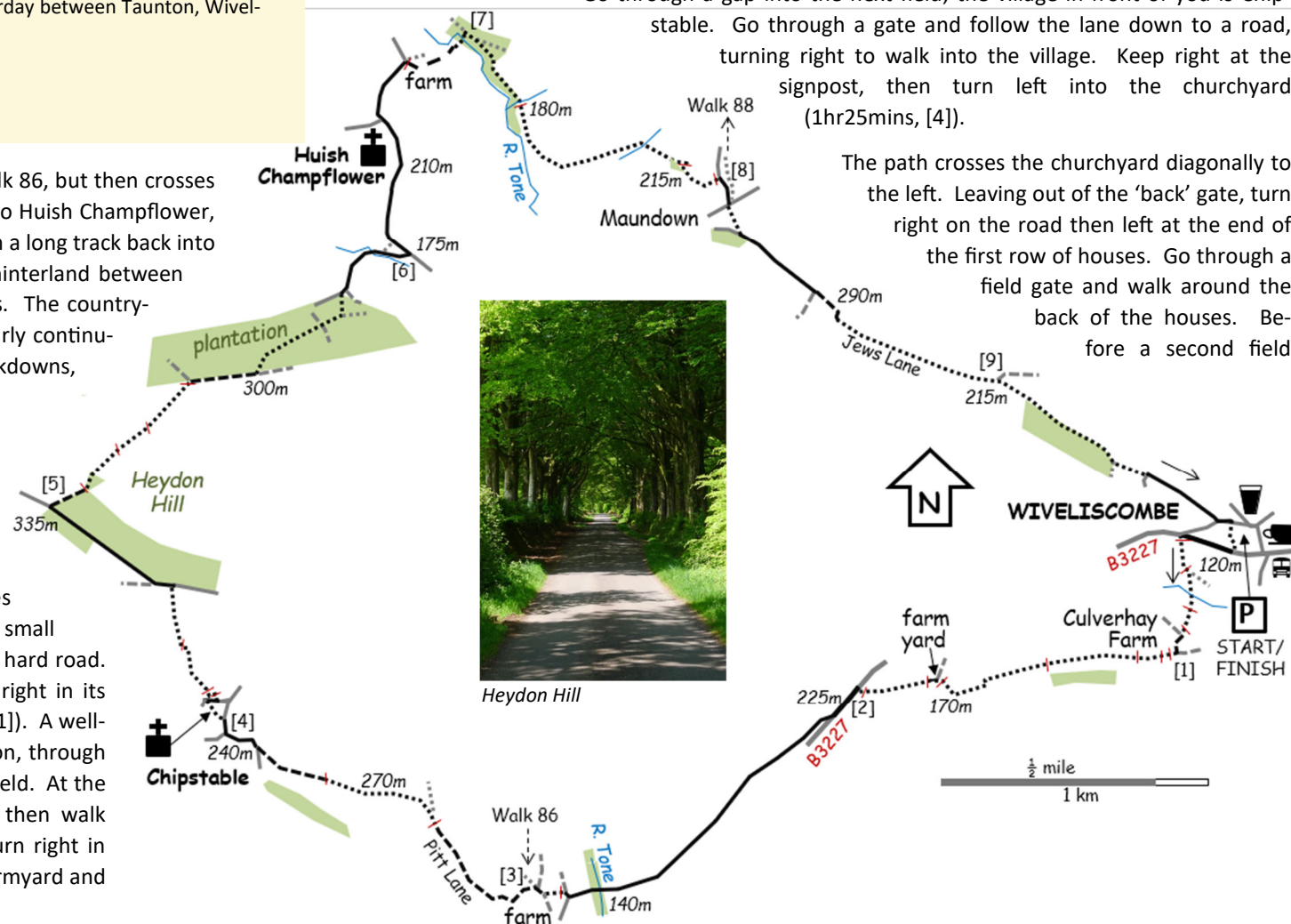
Start from the main car park in Wiveliscombe, off the B3227. Walk down to the main road and turn right. Where a road comes in from the right, cross over and go through a metal kissing gate to walk along an enclosed path next to the sports field. Go through another gate then bear right to cross the field, heading for the group of houses (Culverhay Farm) on the hill above; you will first cross a small stream then go through two more gates before coming to a hard road. Turn left here, then at the end of the second house turn right in its driveway to go through a gate and join a footpath (10mins, [1]). A well-defined grass path takes you through two gates in succession, through a pedestrian gate, then along the right-hand edge of a long field. At the end you are funnelled towards a field gate; go through, then walk alongside the vegetable plot to a gap in the far hedge. Turn right in front of a barn, go through a gate then turn left through a farmyard and

then through a conspicuous metal gate into a field. Continue ahead, uphill. Make for the right-hand of the two gates. This brings you to a road, the B3227, but before continuing look back for views over Wiveliscombe and the Quantock Hills beyond (35mins, [2]).

Turn left, taking care on this fast road. In just over a minute turn right on a narrow lane. For the next fifteen minutes the lane heads downhill, finally arriving at a small bridge over the River Tone. Ahead of you on a slight rise is a farmhouse. Before reaching it turn right on the drive towards Wadham's Farm, then almost immediately left through a small gate with a blue bridleway marker. A short track brings you to a junction with a farm lane; turn right here. In less than half a minute come to a crossroads and turn left on a green lane (1hr, [3]). This climbs steadily until it ends at a grassed area with several gates. Your way on is through the gate directly ahead of you, but once you are in the field bear left to follow the field boundary.

Go through a gap into the next field; the village in front of you is Chipstable. Go through a gate and follow the lane down to a road, turning right to walk into the village. Keep right at the signpost, then turn left into the churchyard (1hr25mins, [4]).

The path crosses the churchyard diagonally to the left. Leaving out of the 'back' gate, turn right on the road then left at the end of the first row of houses. Go through a field gate and walk around the back of the houses. Before a second field



gate, turn right along the side of a metal barn, over a stile and in to a field. Keep to its left-hand edge, then at a gap (or stile) swap to the other side of the hedge and continue uphill. Cross a cattle grid and come to a road with a beech wood behind. Turn left and follow the road around to the right, where it becomes a beech avenue. Just before it starts to bend left, turn sharply right on a broad track signposted as a footpath (1hr50mins, [5]). This is the highest point of the walk, not quite at the summit of Heydon Hill. Go through a gate then after a small area of trees bear diagonally right across the field to a gate. Follow the path at roughly the same angle across a second field and a third, coming to a corner next to a belt of woodland. Go through the gate and follow the track ahead at the edge of the woods. Just before a kink in the main track, take a path downhill to the left; it is easy to miss. Cross a broad track then soon afterwards turn left on a narrow path that descends more steeply. In winter or after heavy rain you will be accompanied by cascading water. At the bottom meet a road and continue ahead downhill. Soon cross a small bridge and walk beside a stream, a tributary of the River Tone. Come to a road junction and turn left towards Huish Champflower (2hr15mins, [6]). The name means the Champflowers' *hiwisc* or hide, an area of farmland that can support a family.

The road heads steeply uphill then brings you into the village. The church is on the left. Continue along the road and out of the village. Scott's Hill Farm is on the right, then at the bend just past it turn right through a gate on to a green lane with footpath signs. Pass a chalet and then go over the River Tone on a narrow footbridge (2hr25mins, [7]). Turn left then immediately right on a woodland path. Take the right-hand, narrower path when it forks soon afterwards. This somewhat broken-down path follows the river. Go through a gap with a footpath sign, keep to the right by the river, cross a small stream then go through a gate with another footpath marker. The ground can be quite waterlogged here. After the boggy section keep to the left-hand side of the field. Go through a gap into the next field. Pass a pond on the right then head right, making for two posts which mark a bridge over a small stream. Cross over then take a narrow path up a bank and upwards to the corner of the field. A gap takes you into the next field. Keep right; soon after the gap go through the hedge on the right via an almost-hidden stile, now continuing with the hedge on your left. At the end of the field go over a stile and come to a narrow lane (2hr50mins, [8]). Turn right. Soon meet a wider road; cross over, and continue into a driveway and then upwards on a narrow path. The path brings you to a lane; turn left and upwards. When the tarmac runs out keep left on a rough-surfaced track. This soon narrows to an enclosed stony path and begins to descend towards Wiveliscombe. After eight minutes or so on the path keep right at a fork (3hr15mins, [9]). Another seven minutes of descent will bring you on to a surfaced lane; keep ahead and downhill here, soon arriving at a T-junction in Wiveliscombe. Turn left for the town centre. A path opposite the mini-supermarket - not the driveway on the right - will take you back to the car park.

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