



## The highest on Exmoor

**Highest point** The highest point on Exmoor (and in Somerset) is Dunkery Beacon, 519 metres according to the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map. The old six-inch OS map has it at 1707.7 feet, which is just over 520m.

**Highest sea cliff** Great Hangman near Combe Martin has the highest sea-cliff on the Exmoor coast and the highest in England or Wales. The hilltop is 318m high and is the highest point on the South West Coast Path. The cliff face has a drop of 244m into the sea. Slightly more difficult to verify, Culbone Hill (414m) is claimed to be the highest point in England with an uninterrupted drop into the sea, though this is over a distance of nearly a mile.

**Highest village** The highest village on Exmoor (and in Somerset) is Simonsbath, 325m at the entrance to Ashcombe Gardens. Cutcombe/Wheddon Cross are often claimed to be the highest villages, though none of their houses are above 300m (the B3224 Summerway just to the south of the village rises to 369m). This may be due to Simonsbath being seen as an estate development rather than a proper village (it was developed by the Knight family in the nineteenth century), though it now has a church, pub and hotel, and used to have a shop and tea room. Cutcombe is undisputedly the highest parish as it includes Dunkery.

**Highest town** Both Lynton and Dulverton range between 140m and 190m above sea level, though Lynton can claim to have a few houses at 200m. Dulverton is the highest town in Somerset (not Wiveliscombe as sometimes claimed).

**Highest church** Simonsbath church is 349m above sea level, compared with Stoke Pero at 309m. Stoke Pero is sometimes erroneously claimed as the highest church in Somerset (and even England). Even the prominent Brentor church on Dartmoor (338m) is not as high as Simonsbath. A better contender for the highest in England is Flash in Staffordshire, at 468m. Stoke Pero must however surely be the only church to be built from materials hauled up the hill by a single donkey, Zulu.

**Highest inn** There are several hostelrys above 300m on Exmoor. Until recently there were two claimants to being the highest, the Culbone Inn on the A39 near Porlock and the Sportsman's Inn at Sandyway, both around 393m. The Sportsman is currently for sale as a house, while the Culbone (Stables) Inn is now only bookable for shooting parties and other events. This leaves Raleigh's Cross in the Brendon Hills (353m) with the crown, with honourable mentions to the Poltimore Arms near Brayford (325m) and the Exmoor Forest Inn in Simonsbath (315m).

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