



EAST DEVON WAY LINK ROUTE - COLYTON TO KILMINGTON

Route Summary

Leaving the East Devon Way at the historic Chantry Bridge on the edge of Colyton and finishing in Kilminster, this route takes you on a journey through the valley of the Umborne Brook and a range of hidden habitats including fields, woods and unimproved marshy areas rich in wildlife. You will pass the late Palladian Shute House before descending through woods to Kilminster.

Start: East Devon Way at Chantry Bridge, Colyton

End: Kilminster Village Hall

Distance: 4 miles/6.6km

Estimated time: 1 hour 54 minutes

Difficulty: Category 3

Nearest postcode: EX24 6DS. **What Three Words:** ///clearly.swinging.melts

Access: Category 3 - Some sections are not accessible to mobility vehicles and buggies/pushchairs due to stiles, kissing gates, steps and narrow footbridges.

Terrain: Tarmac, stone, grass and mud.

Field furniture: 7 gates, 2 kissing gates, 10 stiles, 9 footbridges and 35 steps.

Total ascent: 430ft (131m)

Maximum gradient: 1 in 10 (10%) ascent for approx 50 metres; 1 in 7 (14.3%) descent for approx 70 metres.

Narrowest path width: 50cm

Map: OS Explorer 116 Lyme Regis & Bridport

Other useful information:

Dogs: Welcome under close control.

Refreshments: There are shops and places to eat in Colyton at the start of the walk. Kilminster has a farm shop and cafe at the end.

Highlights: A chance to explore several different habitats and see woodland, water and marshland birds and flowers and to walk past the late Palladian Shute House.

A landscape of history

The circa 18th century Chantry Bridge was built of stone rubble and has three spans with segmental ashlar arches and cut waters on both sides. The parapets also have refuges for walkers.

Colyton, now a market town with a range of shops and places to eat, was reputedly one of the first Saxon settlements established in Devon. It is known as 'the most rebellious town in Devon' due to the 105 local men and boys who supported the Duke of Monmouth in the Monmouth Rebellion, a plan to overthrow the King James II in 1685.

New Shute House is a late Palladian house built in the grounds of the old Shute House between 1785 and 1789. It was once the scene of lavish parties and the future King George IV is thought to have visited in late 1789.

Kilmington has been in existence for over a thousand years with a mention in the Domesday Book in 1087 when it was known as Chinemetona. In more recent times it has benefited from the philanthropic activities of a Victorian gentleman who built himself a house in the area and had a particular interest in cricket. Arthur Hitchcock had a cricket pavilion constructed in 1910 which has since been replaced, but the Arthur Hitchcock Charity continues to maintain the recreation ground for the Parish of Kilmington. A Monterey Pine was planted in the playing fields by Arthur Hitchcock and is thought to be nearly 100 years old.

Important wildlife

Look out for wetland flowers, particularly in the unimproved areas, including orchids and kingcups. The area also supports many birds and mammals that favour woodlands, hedgerows and river margins. Prints in patches of wet mud will give you an idea of what has been there before you, maybe a wader or even a badger. If you're particularly lucky you might spot the ghostly shape of a barn owl hunting over the fields and wetlands during the day.

Directions:

1. **Head north from Chantry Bridge before forking right** towards Umborne. Pass Road Green Farm and look for a footpath sign on the right.
2. **Climb over the stile into a field and head slightly left** to a pair of metal pedestrian gates on either side of a farm track. Go through the gates and head diagonally to the left of the telegraph pole down to the bottom left corner of the field.

3. **Turn left and go over the stile and ditch boards** to follow the path alongside the field edge on your right.
4. **Go through the gate into the next field** and follow the right hand hedge until you come to a stile on your right into an area of woodland. Go over the stile and turn left following the path over a ditch board to reach a footbridge over the Umborne Brook.
5. **Go over the bridge and head diagonally left across the field** to a stile in a wire fence. Climb the stile and continue diagonally left across the next field to another footbridge.
6. **Cross the footbridge and follow the hedge** on your right to a stile into another field.
7. **Head diagonally left along the footpath with the brook on your right**, following it around until you come to a footbridge.
8. **Go over the footbridge and turn left through an uncultivated marshy area** rich in wildlife to reach another footbridge.
9. **Cross the footbridge into another field** and go diagonally left heading for a gap near the top of the left hedge. Go through the gap and onto a concrete drive.
10. **The public footpath goes left along the drive** and to the right of the farmhouse, before bearing right to a gate into a field. From there bear diagonally left to a stile into woodland.

An alternative route goes straight across the concrete drive and over a stile into the field. From there head straight on, keeping left of a large oak tree, to the stile into woodland.

11. **Climb the stile and follow the footpath through the trees** to a metal pedestrian gate.
12. **Go through the gate and turn left to reach a footbridge over the railway.** Go over the footbridge and turn right along Shute Road. Follow the road to a junction just before a road bridge and look for a footpath on your left.
13. **Go through a gate into a field** and follow the hedge on your right climbing over a stile and continuing straight on with the hedge on your right towards Woodend Farm. The path becomes a track.
14. **Follow the track until you come to a footpath on the right.** Climb the stile into a field and walk diagonally left downhill to a pair of kissing gates on either side of a farm track.
15. **Go through the gates and head straight across the field** and over a stile onto a fenced path. Follow the footpath signs turning left onto a concrete drive and then right along the drive past Shute House.
16. **Where the drive divides, keep straight on following the footpath to a minor road.**

17. **Head diagonally right across the junction** and follow the minor road around to the left until you come to a footpath on the right.
18. **Turn right along the footpath and then after short distance** right again along a bridleway through woodland. Continue to follow the bridleway until you come to the end of a road.
19. **Bear right (straight on) at the junction and follow Springfield Lane** to the next junction.
20. **Bear left (straight on) along The Street** and follow it ignoring all side turnings until you come to the T-junction with Whitford Road with The Green straight ahead of you.
21. **Turn left and follow Whitford Road** past St Giles Church to Kilmington Village Hall.

This route was originally developed by James Baldwin and checked by Ted Swan. It was reviewed and updated in 2026.