

1—TOPSHAM FOOT FERRY

Runs on demand daily (except Tuesdays) April to September 9.30 – 17.30. Also weekends and bank holidays in Winter 10.00 – 17.00

Adult single £1.20
Does not run at low tide.
Check times at 07801 203338.

2—TOPSHAM TO TURF FERRY

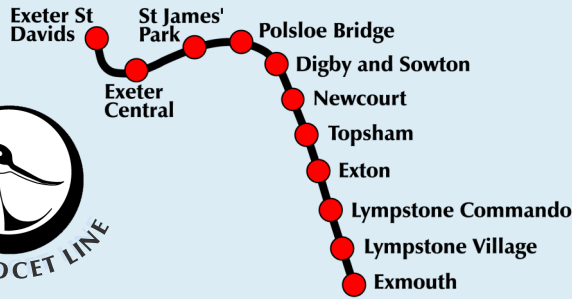
Four return trips daily late May to mid September
Additional sailings some weekends and in July & August

Adult single £4
Check times and prices at www.topshamtoturfferry.co.uk

3—STARCROSS FERRY

Hourly service runs daily Easter to end October.
Departs Starcross 10.10 - 16.10
Departs Exmouth 10.40 - 16.40

Adult single £4.50
Check times and prices at www.exe2sea.co.uk/ferry.shtml



RAIL INFORMATION FOR THE AVOCET LINE

- Journey time – approximately 30 minutes.
- Regular half hourly services during the day – hourly in the evening.
- All trains stop at Exeter Central, Digby & Sowton, Topsham, Lymstone Village and Exmouth.
- St James' Park and Polsloe Bridge have an hourly service in each direction as do Exton and Lymstone Commando, which are request stops.
- Weekday and Saturday services from 6 am - midnight.
- Half-hourly service on Sundays from 9 am.

The fares are reasonably priced (for example the return fare from Exeter St Davids to Exmouth in 2016 is £4.30 or £2.85 with a railcard). For other fares and ticket options, and for timetable information, visit gwr.com. Timetable information is also available from staffed stations (Exeter St Davids, Exeter Central and Exmouth) and station notice boards.

The Avocet Line Rail Users Group (ALRUG) represents users of the Exmouth to Exeter Line (the Avocet Line), presses for action to improve rail services on the line, and is a forum for local rail users. Visit www.avocetline.org.uk or see the information on our station notice boards.

This leaflet is the third in a series being prepared by volunteer members of ALRUG. The routes described use either public rights of way or permissive paths and were checked during 2016; ALRUG accepts no responsibility for any alterations since that time.

This leaflet has been funded by the Avocet Line Community Rail Forum, Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership and the Designated Community Rail Development Fund (supported by the Department for Transport and the Association of Community Rail Partnerships).



FCN: 507781/00



Avocet Ambles

Walks from Exmouth Line stations



No
3

Topsham - Ship Canal - Exeter Central

Digby & Sowton - Topsham

Newcourt - Clyst St Mary - Digby & Sowton



Walk 3: Newcourt to Digby & Sowton via Clyst St Mary

At a Glance

A 5½ mile walk around Sowton in open country and Devon green lanes with some superb views. The shorter walk to Clyst St Mary is about 3 miles.

Start

Newcourt Station

Finish

Digby & Sowton Station

Duration

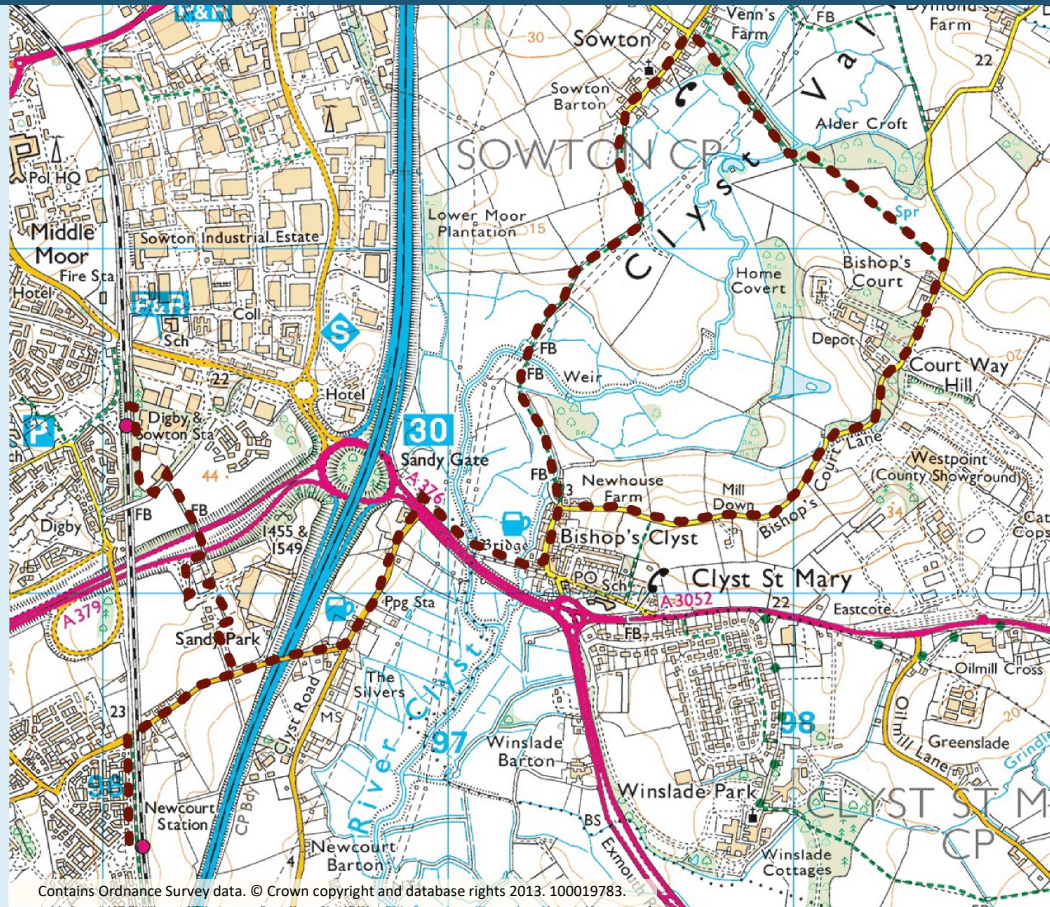
About 2½ hours (1 hour for the shorter walk)

Going

Easy going with gentle climbing. The longer walk to Sowton may be muddy when wet.

Refreshment

Pubs and shops at Clyst St Mary



Contains Ordnance Survey data. © Crown copyright and database rights 2013. 100019783.

On leaving the platform turn right onto a tarmac path which follows the railway. At the end of the path go down the steps and turn right under the railway into Old Rydon Lane. Carry on down the lane, cross the M5 and turn left at the T junction into Clyst Road, passing the Blue Ball pub. (15 Minutes).

On reaching the dual carriageway use the light controlled crossing to the right and turn right on the cycle path pavement on the far side. This leads to the ancient Clyst River Bridge and to the village of Clyst St. Mary. Our short amble ends at the Half Moon pub (26 minutes). Return by the same route as far as the bridge over the M5, but then turn right into the entrance road for Sandy Park stadium. Go up the hill and follow the road round to the right; turn left after the covered cycle rack and head towards the David Lloyd centre. At

the end of the car park, cross the road and turn left. Follow the pavement: as it turns right it becomes a footpath which leads to a footbridge on the left over the A379. Cross the footbridge, and turn left at the T junction. Take the next path on the right (signed for Digby & Sowton station) and follow it down and round to a T junction, where you will see the station entrance on the left (1 hour 2 minutes)

For a longer walk, turn left at the Half Moon in Clyst St Mary. After a few minutes, where the lane turns right, follow the footpath straight ahead past Mill Cottage. Go left behind a garage to a stile, beyond which the footpath crosses a stream, then follows it with a barbed wire fence on the right to another stile and beyond that to a bridge across the River Clyst. It then roughly follows tall electric pylons to a gate just before reaching another stream. Turn left through the gate, looking toward Sowton



Church beyond the farm ahead of you. Be warned that the section from here to the farm can be very muddy indeed.

Pass through the farm (1 hour 5 minutes) into Sowton village with the quite grand church on the left and thatched village hall to the right. On meeting a larger road with a war memorial in the hedge, turn right onto the footpath through the gates of Court Lodge. After 10 minutes on a wide straight leafy track, a gate is reached with a good view of the distant Bishop's Court.

The footpath kinks left to a stile, after which keep near the right hand fence of the next large field to reach a gate and stile into Bishop's Court Road (1 hour 31 minutes). Turn right here and follow the road with care back to the Half Moon at Clyst St Mary (1 hour 57 minutes) and from there via the Blue Ball to Old Rydon Lane, returning to Digby & Sowton station as described above. (2 hours 33 minutes).



Walk 2: Digby & Sowton to Topsham

On leaving the platform turn right up the ramp and cross the line. Bear right around the station car park, following signs to the Park and Ride for the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. After passing the bus shelter turn left through bollards into a lane and then take the first path on the right, following it to the left of a children's play area. Ahead is the former Digby Psychiatric Hospital, now converted into dwellings – the whole of the new housing estate was once the hospital grounds. On reaching the main building turn left and, at the end of the fence on your right, take a path to the right which winds through open space giving views of the impressive building.

Passing the far end of the main building, ignore a path on the left but take the second path (past a house numbered 14) and turn left at the road immediately ahead.

At the T junction turn left and shortly afterwards up steps to the right, bringing you to a busy roundabout (15 minutes). Take the road opposite, but turn left just before the bus stop through a small car park leading to a pedestrian crossing in front of the Tescos Super Store. Use the crossing, then bear right through Tesco's car park to another pedestrian crossing leading towards Currys store. Follow the pavement around into Digby Road, then turn left up the footpath to the left of Currys.

At a T junction, take the cycle path to the left, shortly afterwards bearing right down to a pavement leading to traffic lights at Pynes Hill. Cross the dual carriageway at the lights and continue along Pynes Hill opposite. Turn left at the T junction and soon afterwards right through a kissing gate into Ludwell Valley Park (30 minutes). Bear diagonally left through the first field and along the far hedge to a kissing gate.

Through the gate you can savour views down the Exe Estuary to Exmouth, before passing through another kissing gate immediately to the right, then left through a third to be confronted by views across the city and the Exe Valley.

Bear diagonally right down the field with the housing estate below ahead of you. Once the path starts to drop steeply, bear right behind an outcrop of brambles to head for a gate which is now visible at the bottom right hand corner of this large field. The left hand of two kissing gates leads to a footbridge over a stream (45 minutes).

At a Glance

A 5½ mile walk in open country and urban byways with some superb views. Easy going with gentle climbs

Start

Digby & Sowton Station

Finish

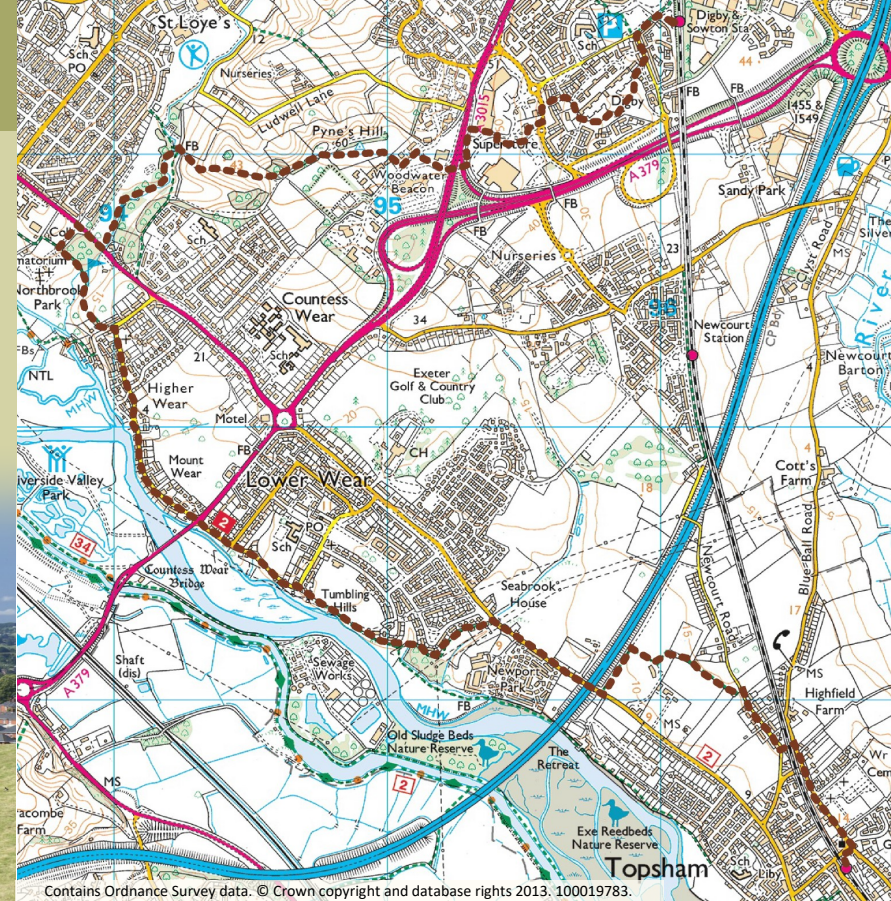
Topsham Station

Duration

About 2¼ hours

Refreshments

Numerous in Topsham



Cross the bridge, turn left and follow the stream until reaching the main Topsham Road. Turn right here, crossing at the nearby light controlled crossing take the turning towards the Exeter and Devon Crematorium. After 100 yards go left through a tree lined avenue – this is part of the Exeter Green Circle. After crossing the stream the path bears right alongside it, skirting the Northbrook Golf Course (1 hour).

On reaching bollards near the derelict Countess Wear Paper Mills go straight ahead along a tarmacked path which emerges onto Mill Lane.

Turn right, following the street, which becomes a tarmacked lane, then right onto Mill Road. There are glimpses of the River Exe to be had between some interesting houses.

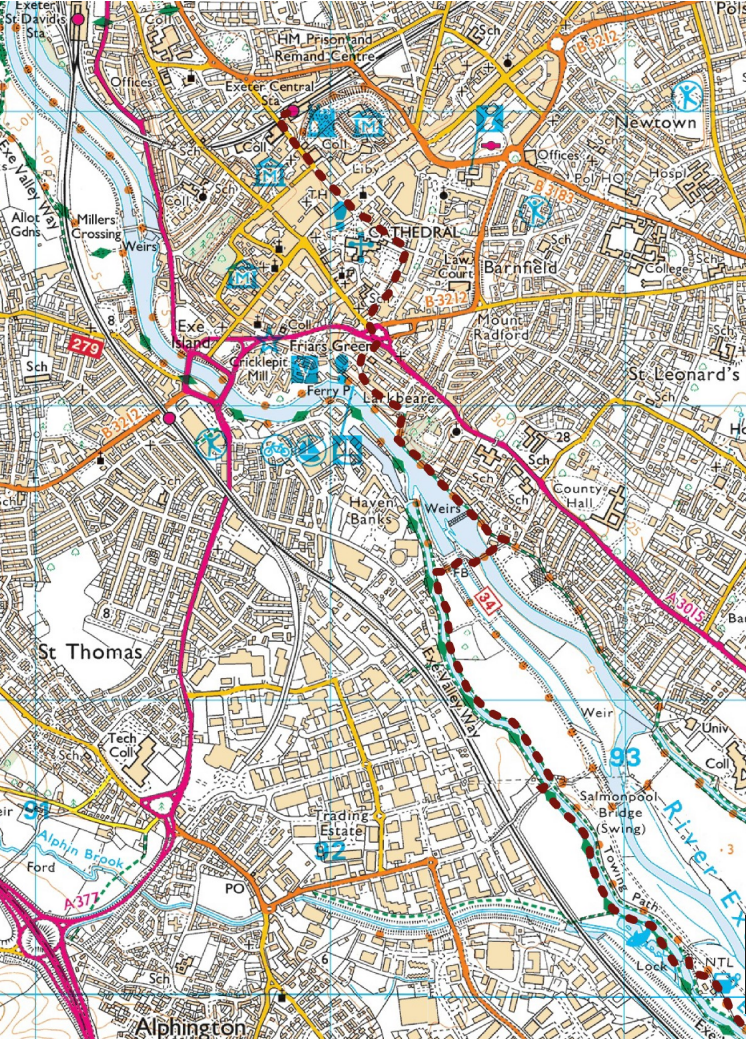
On reaching the Exeter bypass (1hour 20 minutes) use a nearby light controlled crossing to access Glasshouse Lane opposite. At Lower Wear Road carry straight ahead down the hill and, when the lane bears left at the cottage, turn right onto a footpath signposted for Topsham.

At the T junction (1 hour 35 minutes) turn left onto a path away from the river and after passing through a gate turn right to join a path through trees. This follows the back fences of houses to a metal gate before emerging onto the main road next to a garden centre.

Turn right, crossing the road at the lights by Newport Caravan Park and, after passing under the M5 (1 hour 50 minutes), take a footpath to the left which runs between University sports grounds and the motorway. After 200 yards, having passed the cricket pitch, turn right through the first gap in the tall fence, on a public footpath through these private grounds.

Having passed a rugby pitch, turn left past a car park, then right to exit the grounds by a metal gate. A second metal gate brings you to Newcourt Road – turn right and continue to a T junction, turning left here to go under a railway bridge (2 hours 5 minutes). At the T junction turn right, passing Topsham Cemetery to reach a small roundabout, then turn right to reach the level crossing with the station on your left. (2 hours 10 minutes)

Walk 1: Topsham to Exeter Central via the Ship Canal



From the level crossing at Topsham station, turn left. After about 200 yards, cross the mini roundabout into Follett Road and where this meets Ferry Road turn left. The slipway to the foot ferry across the river (see panel) is on the right after some 50 yards. Once across the river, walk up the slipway to arrive on the bank of the Exeter Ship Canal. (15 minutes)

Exeter is to the right. There are paths on both banks of the Canal: that on the left bank, as you face Exeter, doubles as a cycle path and can be very busy; the right bank is quieter as it leads you past reed beds between the Canal and the River Exe. This is the only part of the walk which is unsurfaced – it is uneven in places, and can be muddy in wet weather.

Crossing a long-derelict lock, continue ahead with the M5 bridge ever visible: pass under the bridge and you will find on your right a sign indicating that you have reached “The Old Sludge Beds”! (35 minutes) Don't be put off – although this patch of land certainly had a nifty past it has been transformed by the Devon Wildlife Trust into a nature reserve which is worth a diversion that will only add minutes to your walk; information boards include a simple map.

Beyond the reserve and a South West Water plant, the path merges with the plant's drive to reach the A379 (1 hour) – turn left to use the light controlled crossing. In front of you

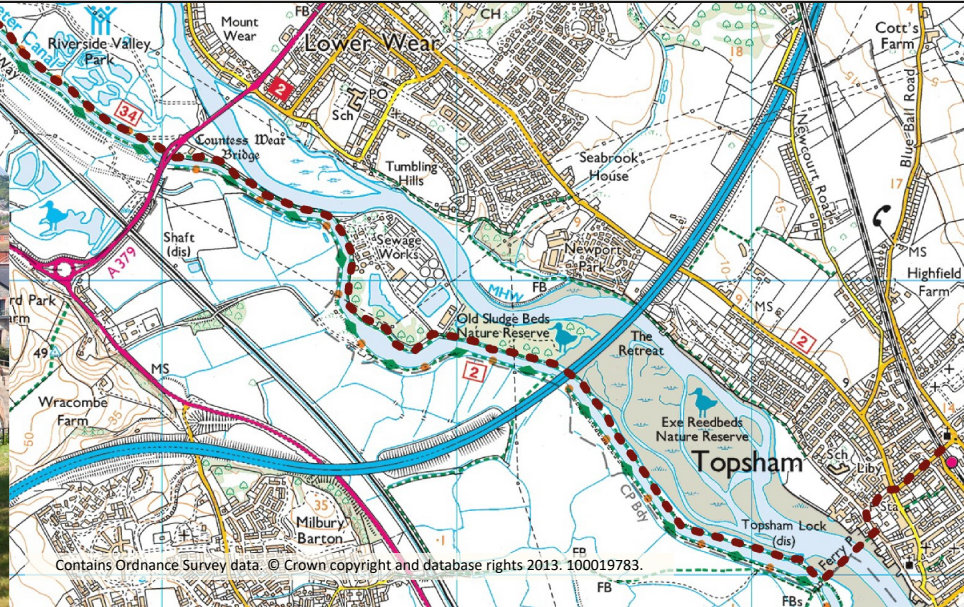
another cycle free path will bring you to the popular Double Locks pub half a mile distant. (1 hour 20 minutes)

Beyond the pub keep on the left bank until you reach a bridge. Cross here and follow the canalside path with open ground to your right until, after new houses on the opposite bank, you meet a path to the right leading to a bridge (1 hour 45 minutes). Follow this, kinking right and left to cross the River Exe at Trews Weir Suspension Bridge.

Across the second bridge follow the path, turning left to follow the river bank at a sign to the Quay. After passing the Port Royal pub take the second turning right up steep Colleton Hill and left at the top to gain the handsome Colleton Crescent (2 hours 5 minutes). From here there are splendid views of the confluence of canal & river and of the quay area.

Follow the Crescent into Friar's Gate, at the end of which a short alley brings you to a busy road junction. Head, via light controlled crossings, for the Mercure Hotel diagonally opposite and take the footpath to the left, Little Southernhay Lane. Follow the ancient City walls to a flight of steps, at the top of which turn left into a cobbled lane. After passing the Cathedral, take Martin's Lane to the right of the Royal Clarence Hotel, cross the High St and gain Queen Street (2 hours 25 minutes). Exeter Central station is on the right in 350 yards.

**TOPSHAM FERRY IS SEASONAL AND MAY NOT OPERATE AT LOW TIDES:
CHECK FERRY TIMES BEFORE SETTING OUT!**



At a Glance

Start
Topsham Station

Finish
Exeter Central Station

Duration
About 2½ hours

Distance
5½ miles easy going with gentle climbing.

Refreshment
Numerous in Topsham, the Passage Inn is on our route: the Double Locks Hotel right on the Canal bank: huge choice in Exeter including the Dock area, a short deviation from the walk.

Useful Reference
Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 114